

BA (H) Sociology
Discipline Specific Elective 03
Environmental Sociology

Course Objectives:

1. This course is designed to allow students to reflect on the ‘environment’ as an object of sociological inquiry. It would orient them to the core debates of environmental sociology, different approaches within the sub-discipline and how these approaches may be used to understand environmental issues and movements in India.
2. The aim is to convey the fact that since environmental issues in contemporary times have come to assume utmost significance representing a complex interplay of several factors that are material, ideal and social in character; these linkages need to be analyzed from a sociological standpoint as they play out in our societies in varied forms.
3. The themes running throughout this paper highlight the interactive and unfinished character of causality in environmental sociology, the central role of social inequality in environmental conflicts, the important influence of democratic institutions, the connect between the local and the global and finally the role played by the community at large.

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. An understanding of dynamic between natural and social worlds from a sociological perspective.
2. A grasp of fundamental principles and core theoretical debates of the discipline.
3. An ability to contribute from a sociological stand point to any research endeavors or public policy conversations that assess causes, effects and possible solutions of environmental issues and problems.
4. To be alive to the questions of ecology and inequity and sensitive to the questions of environmental justice and ethics.

Course Content:

Unit 1: Envisioning Environmental Sociology

- 1.1. What is Environmental Sociology?
- 1.2. Realist-Constructionist debate.
- 1.3 Indian Environmentalism: Cultural Responses

Unit 2: Theoretical Approaches in Environmental Sociology

- 2.1 Treadmill of Production
- 2.2 Ecological Modernization
- 2.3 Risk
- 2.4 Ecofeminism and Feminist environmentalism
- 2.5 Social Ecology

Unit 3: Environmental Movements in India

- 3.1 Forest based movement – Chipko
- 3.2 Water based movement – Narmada
- 3.3 Land based movements – Anti-mining and Seed

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Unit 1. Envisioning Environmental Sociology [Weeks 1-3]

1.1 What is Environmental Sociology?

Bell, MM. (2008). *An Invitation to Environmental Sociology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage 3rd ed. Chapter 1. pp. 1-5

Hannigan, J. A. (1995). *Environmental Sociology*. Routledge, London and New York, 2nd ed. Chapters. 1 & 2 pp. 10-15, 16 - 35.

1.2 Realist-Constructionist Debate

Leahy, T. (2007). Sociology and the Environment. *Public Sociology: An Introduction to Australian Society*. Eds. Germov, John and Marilyn, Poole. NSW: Allen & Unwin, Ch. 21 pp. 431-442.

Evanoff, R. J. (2005). Reconciling realism and constructivism in environmental ethics. *Environmental Values*, 61-81.

1.3 Indian Environmentalism: Cultural Responses

Key, C. (1998). Toward an indigenous Indian environmentalism. *Purifying the earthly body of God: Religion and ecology in Hindu India*, pp 13-34.

Unit 2: Theoretical Approaches in Environmental Sociology [Weeks 4-10]

2.1 Treadmill of Production

Gould, K. A., Pellow, D. N., & Schnaiberg, A. (2004). Interrogating the Treadmill of Production: Everything You Wanted to Know about the Treadmill but Were Afraid to Ask. *Organization & Environment*, 17(3), 296-316.

2.2 Ecological Modernization

Mol, A. P. (2002). Ecological modernization and the global economy. *Global Environmental Politics*, 2(2), 92-115.

2.3 Risk

Beck, U. (2006). Living in the world risk society: A Hobhouse Memorial Public Lecture given on Wednesday 15 February 2006 at the London School of Economics. *Economy and Society*, 35(3), 329-345.

2.4 Ecofeminism and Feminist Environmentalism

Shiva, V. (1988). Women in nature. In *Staying alive: Women, ecology and development*. Zed Books. Ch 3. pp.38-54.

Agarwal, Bina, 2007. The Gender and Environment Debate: Lessons from India. In Mahesh Rangarajan. (ed.) 2007. *Environmental Issues in India: A Reader*. New Delhi: Pearson, Longman, Ch 19.(pp. 316-324, 342-352).

2.5 Social Ecology

Mukerjee, Radhakamal. 1932 (reproduced in 1994). 'An Ecological Approach to Sociology' in Ramchandra Guha (ed) *Social Ecology*. Delhi: OUP. Guha, R. (1994). *Social ecology*. Oxford University Press. pp (22-26).

Unit 3: Environmental Movements in India [Weeks 11-14]

3.1 Forest based movement – Chipko

Guha, R. Chipko : Social history of an environmental movement. In Ghanshyam Shah ed.(2002). *Social movements and the state* (Vol. 4). Sage Publications Pvt. Ltd., Ch. 16 pp.423-454.

3.2 Water based movement – Narmada

Khagram, S., Riker, J. V., & Sikkink, K. (2002). Restructuring the global politics of development: The case of India's Narmada Valley Dams. *Restructuring world politics: transnational social movements, networks, and norms* (Vol. 14). U of Minnesota Press. (pp.206-30).

3.3 Land based movements – Anti-mining and Seed

Padel, F., & Das, S. (2008). Orissa's highland clearances: The reality gap in R & R. *Social Change*, 38(4), 576-608.

Scoones, I. (2008). Mobilizing against GM crops in India, South Africa and Brazil. *Journal of agrarian change*, 8(2-3), 315-344.

Qaim, M., & Zilberman, D. (2003). Yield effects of genetically modified crops in developing countries. *Science*, 299(5608), 900-902.

References:

Compulsory Readings:

Agarwal, Bina, 2007. The Gender and Environment Debate: Lessons from India. In Mahesh Rangarajan. (ed.) 2007. *Environmental Issues in India: A Reader*. New Delhi: Pearson, Longman, Ch 19.(pp. 316-324, 342-352).

Beck, U. (2006). Living in the world risk society: A Hobhouse Memorial Public Lecture given on Wednesday 15 February 2006 at the London School of Economics. *Economy and Society*, 35(3), 329-345.

Bell, MM. (2008). *An Invitation to Environmental Sociology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage 3rd ed. Chapter 1. pp. 1-5

Evanoff, R. J. (2005). Reconciling realism and constructivism in environmental ethics. *Environmental Values*, 61-81.

Gould, K. A., Pellow, D. N., & Schnaiberg, A. (2004). Interrogating the Treadmill of Production: Everything You Wanted to Know about the Treadmill but Were Afraid to Ask. *Organization & Environment*, 17(3), 296-316.

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Hannigan, J. A. (1995). *Environmental Sociology*. Routledge, London and New York, 2nd ed. Chapters. 1 & 2 pp. 10-15, 16 - 35.

Key, C. (1998). Toward an indigenous Indian environmentalism. *Purifying the earthly body of God: Religion and ecology in Hindu India*, pp 13-34.

Khagram, S., Riker, J. V., & Sikkink, K. (2002). Restructuring the global politics of development: The case of India's Narmada Valley Dams. *Restructuring world politics: transnational social movements, networks, and norms* (Vol. 14). U of Minnesota Press. pp.206-30.

Leahy, T. (2007). Sociology and the Environment. *Public Sociology: An Introduction to Australian Society*. Eds. Germov, John and Marilyn, Poole. NSW: Allen & Unwin, Ch. 21 pp. 431-442.

Mol, A. P. (2002). Ecological modernization and the global economy. *Global Environmental Politics*, 2(2), 92-115.

Mukerjee, Radhakamal. 1932 (reproduced in 1994). 'An Ecological Approach to Sociology' in Ramchandra Guha (ed) *Social Ecology*. Delhi: OUP. Guha, R. (1994). *Social ecology*. Oxford University Press. pp (22-26).

Padel, F., & Das, S. (2008). Orissa's highland clearances: The reality gap in R & R. *Social Change*, 38(4), 576-608.

Qaim, M., & Zilberman, D. (2003). Yield effects of genetically modified crops in developing countries. *Science*, 299(5608), 900-902.

Scoones, I. (2008). Mobilizing against GM crops in India, South Africa and Brazil. *Journal of agrarian change*, 8(2-3), 315-344.

Shiva, V. (1988). Women in nature. In *Staying alive: Women, ecology and development*. Zed Books. Ch 3. pp.38-54.

Additional Resources:

a. Books & Articles

Guha, R., & Alier, J. M. (1998). The environmentalism of the poor. In *Varieties of environmentalism: essays North and South*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Osofsky, H. M. (2003). Defining Sustainable Development after Earth Summit 2002. *Loy. LA Int'l & Comp. L. Rev.*, 26, 111.

Baviskar, A. (1999). *In the belly of the river: tribal conflicts over development in the Narmada Valley*. Oxford University Press.

b. Audio Visual Material

1. "An Inconvenient Truth" Al Gore.

2. “On The Fence: Chipko Movement Revisited” By Neelima and Pramod Mathur.
3. “Drowned out” (2002) By Franny Armstrong.
4. “The Call of Mother Earth- A Documentary on Niyamgiri” By Saroj Mahapatra
5. “Seed: The Untold story” by Jon Betz and Taggart Seigel

Teaching Learning Process:

Environment and environmental Sociology are deeply contentious, hence the teaching learning for this course necessarily has to be deliberative with an emphasis on debates and discussions. The lecture classes have to be accompanied by movies and documentaries on several contemporary environmental issues. Guest lectures by public servants, activists, NGO workers and various stake holders would be integral to the class. The students would be encouraged to set out into the field and grasp issues concretely. Learning would also involve an attempt at encouraging collaboration with science departments in the college to make it truly interdisciplinary.

Assessment Methods:

Assessment for this paper would be in the form of tests, written assignments, projects reports and Presentations.

Key Words:

Environment, nature, realism, constructionism, ecology, climate change, capitalism, modernization, sustainability, development, economic growth, environmental justice, power, movements, genetically modified crops, clean and green technology.