



Notes toward an anticolonial environmental sociology of race

Michael Warren Murphy

To cite this article: Michael Warren Murphy (2020): Notes toward an anticolonial environmental sociology of race, Environmental Sociology, DOI: [10.1080/23251042.2020.1862979](https://doi.org/10.1080/23251042.2020.1862979)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23251042.2020.1862979>



Published online: 24 Dec 2020.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 10



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

Notes toward an anticolonial environmental sociology of race

Michael Warren Murphy

Department of Sociology, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, USA

ABSTRACT

This essay contributes to an ever-growing chorus of scholars calling for renewed attention to the dynamics of race and environment by introducing the need for and basic features of an anticolonial environmental sociology. I argue that when it comes to matters of race, environmental sociologists often inherit ontological assumptions that obfuscate the entanglement of racialization and colonial domination, thereby limiting the preoccupations of the field. In contrast, in this essay, I gesture toward an anticolonial environmental sociology that situates considerations of race and environment within the broader context of European conquest, whereby the socio-ecological significance of whiteness is better apprehended by engaging with the experiences and perspectives of Black and Indigenous people in the North American context.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 11 June 2019
Accepted 7 December 2020

KEYWORDS

race; colonialism; violence;
anticolonialism;
environment

Introduction

Nearly forty years ago, in Warren County, North Carolina, six Black men and women lay motionless in the road as several trucks approached carrying polychlorinated biphenyl-contaminated soil. A few years prior (between 1978 and 1979), Ward Transformers Company had illegally dumped 31,000 gallons of transformer oil laden with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), a known toxicant, on the shoulders of 14 roadways in North Carolina. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency had declared the roadsides a public hazard, and along with the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, devised a plan to have the 50,000 tons of contaminated soil relocated to a landfill. The state chose a site near the small, rural town of Afton (in Warren County) whose residents were mostly poor and Black. Residents expressed concerns that the landfill would leak and contaminate their water, but the state insisted on its safety. Carrying forth a long tradition of Black resistance, these activists placed their bodies on the line to combat the deliberate toxic pollution of the immediate environment in which they lived. Though they were unable to halt the construction of the PCB landfill, their efforts contributed to the birth of the national Environmental Justice Movement (Bullard et al. 2008), which also led to the first national study that found race to be ‘the most significant among variables tested in association with the location of commercial hazardous waste facilities’ (Commission for Racial Justice 1987).

For decades since, scholars and activists have documented, analyzed, and organized against the profusion of environmental risks and hazards that tenaciously afflict Black, Indigenous, and other people of color in

the United States. Whether under the banner of environmental justice studies or research on environmental inequality, scholars have consistently demonstrated that environmental burdens, such as air pollution, urban heat island effects, and exposure to industrial toxicants are distributed unequally across the (global) color line (Pellow 2002; Morello-Frosch and Jesdale 2006; Pellow 2007; Jesdale, Morello-Frosch, and Cushing 2013; Taylor 2014; Liévanos 2019b), and that both non-white and low-income populations are most vulnerable when it comes to dealing with natural disasters (Fothergill and Peek 2004; Bullard and Wright 2009; Howell and Elliott 2019). At the same time, these communities often disproportionately lack adequate access to environmental amenities and necessities like tree canopy cover, green space (Heynen, Perkins, and Roy 2006; Park and Pellow 2011; Schwarz et al. 2015), and clean, safe water (Mascarenhas 2012; Roller et al. 2019). Together, these divergent strands of research and lived experiences continue to illuminate the importance of race in determining the quality of environments in which human life unfolds.

In this essay, however, I stress the need for an anticolonial environmental sociology capable of reinterpreting the dynamics between race and environment in ways that do not further colonial unknowing. For what happened to Black people in Warren County – and what continues to happen to Black, Indigenous, and other people of color elsewhere in the U.S. and beyond – was never simply a matter of racism (i.e. racial discrimination, exploitation, and/or exclusion). To reduce the ecological significance of race to racial discrimination is to ignore how Black people are subjected to gratuitous and structural violence in the

afterlife of slavery (Hartman 2007; Vargas and Costa 2018). Stated differently, I maintain that when it comes to matters of race, environmental sociologists often inherit ontological assumptions that obfuscate the entanglement of racialization and colonial domination, thereby limiting the preoccupations of the field. In contrast, in this essay, I gesture toward an anticolonial environmental sociology that situates considerations of race and environment within the context of what King (2019) calls the ‘bloody relations of conquest’ (45), whereby the socioecological significance of whiteness is better apprehended.

I will proceed by first considering how colonial unknowing manifests within environmental sociology and its typical approach to matters of race and environment. Next, I discuss the basic features of an anticolonial environmental sociology. Finally, as an exercise in the anticolonial environmental sociology of race, I turn to a brief theoretical reflection on whiteness in the web of life that draws upon Black and Indigenous experiences and perspectives to rethink race and environment in the North American context.

On colonial unknowing, environmental sociology, and race

Sociological research on race and environment is often limited by ‘ontological myopias,’ or the taken-for-granted ontological inheritances that place restrictive parameters on a given object of study (Rodríguez-Muñiz 2015, 95). For example, in most research, the causal significance of race is often reduced to discrimination, whereby racially discriminatory practices and policies – for instance, at the time of waste facility siting or in the broader housing market – produce the environmental injustices that plague communities of color in the United States (e.g. Mohai and Saha 2015). Here, the unquestioned ontological assumption is that race is only environmentally relevant because it signifies which human populations are vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion and thus come to live in compromising ecological situations. Research that questions whether Black, Indigenous, or other people of color are forced to move into polluted neighborhoods or if their communities are targeted for pollution is certainly myopic when we consider that people calling themselves white have for centuries transformed terrestrial environments through relations of domination that reconstitute socioecological configurations in ways that are conducive to their own ends. Stated otherwise, the field’s ontological assumptions about the environmental significance of race often deflect attention away from matters of conquest, thereby contributing to colonial unknowing.

Colonial unknowing is an epistemological orientation that ‘renders unintelligible the entanglements of racialization and colonization, occluding the mutable historicity of colonial structures and attributing finality to events of

conquest and dispossession’ (Vimalassery, Pegues, and Goldstein 2016, para. 1). Within the discipline of sociology, colonial unknowing shows up in the paucity of attention given to colonialism and imperialism beyond the subfield of historical-comparative sociology (Steinmetz 2014). For instance, although sociology has a strong tradition of analyzing the significance that race/racism plays in the modern world (Bonilla-Silva 1997; Feagin 2001, 2006; Treitler 2013; Omi and Winant 2014; Golash-Boza 2016), colonialism and imperialism are given a minor role, if given one at all, within predominant sociological theories of race (Magubane 2013; Go 2018). The same is generally true for environmental sociology, a field that has attended to the environmental significance of race for decades without the multiscalar (spatial and temporal) acuity needed to see how each contemporary iteration of environmental inequality/racism/injustice/privilege is linked to the ongoing socioecological violence of conquest and dispossession (Pellow 2018). However, environmental sociologists have increasingly countered colonial unknowing by turning to the ecological dynamics of imperialism and colonialism, particularly with regard to North American Indigenous peoples and their experiences with environmental injustice and inequality (Hooks and Smith 2004; Cantzler and Huynh 2016; Holleman 2017; Hoover 2018; Norgaard, Reed, and Bacon 2018; Norgaard 2019; Bacon 2019; Liévanos 2019a).

Consider, for a moment, *Salmon & Acorns Feed Our People*, a text that serves as an important model for how non-Natives can work extensively and collaboratively with Indigenous peoples in a way that is not colonially extractive (Norgaard 2019). With chapters ranging in focus – from the mutual construction of race and nature to the emotional dimension of environmental decline – Norgaard (2019) draws upon decades of work with the Karuk Tribe to demonstrate how focusing on the ecological dynamics of settler colonialism is critical for thinking about social power more broadly, but race and gender specifically. The book counteracts colonial unknowing by intentionally theorizing ‘the mutual structures of racism, colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy, and the natural environment’ (27). To this end, Norgaard (2019) maintains that ‘colonialism is the context and *raison d’etat* for racial formation processes in North America’ and that ‘[c]olonialism and racialization continue to operate together in a variety of ways’ (Ibid). And yet, as an exemplar of the genre of environmental sociology advocated for in this essay, it is important to discuss the conceptual limitations that arise from the text’s deployment of racial formation theory (Omi and Winant 2014) and settler colonial theory (Veracini 2010; Wolfe 2006).

Racial formation theory is limited by a conceptual arsenal that is mainly concerned with ‘the sociohistorical process by which racial identities are created, lived out, transformed, and destroyed’ (Omi and Winant 2014, 109). In this framework, conquest (i.e. imperialism, colonization, and slavery) is recognized as the first

racial formation project, an attempt to shape how human identities and social structures are racially signified, that inaugurates racialization on a world-historical scale (113–115). However, beyond the acknowledgment of the historical social structural significance of conquest, racial formation theory is ill-equipped to contend with the mutually imbricated and ongoing processes of colonialism, imperialism, and racialization. While scholars have critiqued racial formation theory for various reasons (da Silva 2007; Feagin and Elias 2013; Saucier and Woods 2016), the main issue that I would raise is that it can unwittingly perpetuate colonial unknowing.

Norgaard (2019) clearly recognizes this flaw in racial formation theory's theoretical armament and modifies its central concept to reflect the persistent significance of colonialism by adopting 'racial-colonial formation' instead. Nevertheless, this maneuver carries forth the preoccupation with the creation, inhabitation, transformation, and destruction of racial categories, but augments it by pointing to the importance of the 'natural' environment to the process of racial-colonial formation. Hence, Norgaard (2019) argues that 'racialization is not only about "the elaboration of racial meanings to particular relationships, social practices or groups" (Omi and Winant 1994, 91) but also particular environmental practices and places in the landscape' (46). To illustrate the utility of this theoretical innovation, Norgaard (2019) draws upon a case study of racial formation in the Klamath River basin (39–67) that demonstrates how "[p]hysical changes in the land have supported and legitimized the emergence of racial categories of white and Native (73). Ultimately, however, Norgaard (2019) argues that 'the formulations of power taking place through these processes [of environmental transformations] cannot be wholly conceptualized within the framework of race' (73), and instead turns to settler colonial theory because it emphasizes 'the notion that North American colonialism is an ongoing structure rather than a past event, the centrality of land to the operation of both Indigenous and state power, and the structuring of relationships with Indigenous peoples in terms of elimination and replacement' (77).

While I certainly agree that the dynamics of colonial settlement demand sustained attention, especially in places like the United States whose existence as an empire-state is dependent upon the ongoing occupation of Indigenous lands in North America and beyond, I also think it is important to consider how settler colonial theory can inadvertently contribute to colonial unknowing.¹ When settler colonialism is treated as a singular, self-contained form of colonialism, dissociated from imperial formations and colonial racializations, as Vimalassery, Pegues, and Goldstein (2016) further explain, we risk missing 'the ways in which the abduction and enslavement of Africans and their descendants were a colonial practice that, while changing

in its intensities and modes of reorganization over time, was co-constitutive of colonialism as a project of settlement rather than a supplement that demonstrates the taking of land and labor as distinct endeavors' (para. 11). In other words, settler-colonial theory suffers from what King (2020) calls an 'acute form of unknowing in relation to Blackness and slavery' (82), given how it defines the colonial situation in North America as *primarily* structured around contestations over land and the antagonism between settlers and Natives. Not only does the framework largely ignore settler colonization in other regions beyond North America and Australia, like on the African continent where the logic was not *solely* elimination but also proletarianization (Kelley 2017), it prioritizes the colonization/commodification of land over the commodification/colonization of bodies.²

Salmon & Acorns Feed Our People is an incredibly important book that advances environmental sociology on numerous fronts by bringing the field into productive conversation with Native Studies, Food Studies, and Environmental Justice and Health, while also modeling research that conspires with Indigenous people to advance their self-defined causes. Nevertheless, in theorizing race, colonialism, and environment with racial formation and settler colonial theory, the text overcomes certain conceptual hindrances, while sustaining others. With the strengths and limitations of existing approaches in mind, in the next section, I gesture toward an anticolonial environmental sociology as a critical modality for rethinking race and environment in ways that I hope can further counter colonial unknowing.

Notes toward an anticolonial environmental sociology

In response to how colonial unknowing manifests within sociology, various scholars have articulated the need for postcolonial or decolonial approaches to sociological inquiry that counter the imperial episteme and the coloniality of social knowledge (Connell 2007, 2018; Bhabra 2007, 2014; Go 2013a, 2016; Magubane 2013; Weiner 2018). For instance, postcolonial sociology emerges from an encounter with postcolonial thought and the challenges it presents to a conventional inquiry. As an epistemic movement, postcolonial sociology represents but one avenue for contending with the material and ideological legacies of colonialism. In fact, Norgaard (2019) adopts the theoretical framework of settler colonialism because she finds limitations with the postcolonial approach. She argues that by failing to engage with the 'ongoing presence and critical perspectives of Indigenous people [in North America]' this approach has the potential to perform the same acts of colonial erasure that it aims to address (Norgaard 2019, 82). As Norgaard (2019) points out, Go (2016) himself writes, 'Colonialism has ended, but the power relations, systems of meaning, and socioeconomic inequalities

that it birthed stubbornly endure' (185). The irony is that in drawing attention to the global legacies of colonialism and empire, Go (2016) momentarily loses sight of ongoing colonial occupation in places like the United States, Canada, and elsewhere.

Nevertheless, I believe Go's (2016) intervention offers two key analytic moves that are pliant enough to overcome this potential danger and still have relevance beyond the settler-colonial situation. Go's postcolonial sociology rests upon what he calls 'postcolonial relationism' and 'perspectival realism.' If social theory has the problem of analytic bifurcation, which obscures the way in which colonizer/colonized, metropole/colony, settler/native are mutually constituted, then we need to replace 'the imperial episteme's law of division with a methodological law of connection: sustained examinations of mutual connection across expansive social space [and time]' (114). Whereas postcolonial relationism overcomes the analytic bifurcations of the imperial episteme, perspectival realism, and the subaltern standpoint counter sociology's Eurocentrism and false universalism by insisting that 'there is a real world with observable and knowable features (realism) but that what we see in that world, how we describe it, and what we think about it partially depends upon the observer and his or her means of observation (constructivism)' (163). Recognizing the constraints of a sociology that is unaware of its own limitations, due to its imperial/colonial unconscious (Go 2013b), a postcolonial sociology is rooted in an engagement with subaltern standpoints that starts with the concerns and experiences, categories and discourses, perceptions, and problems of colonized peoples worldwide.

Together, postcolonial relationism and perspectival realism have the potential to yield important innovations in environmental sociology by providing different theoretical and empirical concerns. As the basis for an anticolonial environmental sociology, neither analytic maneuver precludes critical interrogations of ongoing colonial settlement as a central concern to subaltern subjects in the various global regions that have yet to realize decolonization. Moreover, I must note that scholars trace the tradition of postcolonial theory to a longer tradition of anticolonial thought in writers (and revolutionaries) like Frantz Fanon, Amílcar Cabral, C.L.R. James, Aimé Césaire, Kwame Nkrumah, W.E.B. Du Bois, among many others (Go 2016; Weiner 2018). For this reason, I carry forth the underlying disposition of postcolonial, decolonial, and settler colonial theoretical approaches under the banner of anticolonialism precisely because these divergent approaches share a common commitment to subverting social knowledge and existence forged through relations of domination and conquest. It is precisely this normative and analytical commitment that informs my vision for an anticolonial environmental sociology.

An anticolonial environmental sociology would register the violence that the Black residents of Warren County faced as coextensive with the violence of conquest, and

thus not merely as a matter of racial prejudice or discrimination. It would notice that for nearly a century and a half before Warren County became a key site in the evolution of the environmental justice movement and research on environmental inequality, it was home to many large plantations and some of the wealthiest towns in North Carolina (Wellman 2002). Henry Bobbitt was born in 1850 in Warrenton (in Warren County) on the estate of Richard Bobbitt where he and fifty other enslaved Black people worked 400 acres of land, seven days a week, from sunup to sundown on most, cultivating tobacco, cotton, corn, wheat, and potatoes, in addition to tending horses and other livestock. When asked about his life on the plantation, in 1937, Henry recalled:

The patrollers would get you if you went off the premises without a pass, and they said that they would beat you scandalous. I seen a fella that day beat once and he had scars as big as my fingers all over his body ... We lived in log houses with sand floors and stick and dirt chimneys and we weren't allowed to have no garden, chickens, nor pigs ... We had to steal what rabbits we ate from somebody else's boxes on some other plantation, because the master wouldn't let us have none of our own, and we ain't had no time to hunt nor fish.³

From his first-hand account of Black life as white property, it is clear that race, as a colonially situated activity, has a much longer history of structuring human relations to nonhuman nature and environments in Warren County. Henry and other enslaved persons lived with conditions of racialized socioecological relations in an environment made hostile by white people. Their restricted presence on that land was solely for the uses of a white populace and its accumulation of wealth through the possession of stolen African life and the coerced production of colonial commodities. Moreover, before North Carolina was a state, it was one of the 13 American colonies of British empire. Founded in 1653 by settlers from the Virginia colony, North Carolina received its charter from King Charles II in 1663, which stated:

And because that in so remote a country, and [situated] among so many barbarous nations, and the invasions as well of salvages [sic] ... may probably be feared; therefore we ... do give power ... to levy, muster and train all sorts of men ... to make war and pursue the enemies aforesaid, as well by sea as by land ... and by God's assistance to vanquish and take them, and being taken to put them to death by the law of war, or to save them at their pleasure.⁴

Less than twenty years later, in 1677, settlers of North Carolina had defeated the Chowanoac people in war and had them relegated to a reservation of land, which only lasted until 1821 (La Vere 2013).⁵ As settlers with slaves turned land and life into white property, they necessarily reconfigured a diverse array of Indigenous societies' relations with land in ways that better suited the life of colonists and their imperial counterparts in Europe.

In other words, an anticolonial environmental sociology would situate contemporary manifestations of racialized environmental inequality within the broader historical context of Europe's project of global conquest, whereby the colonial settlement, 'Indian' reservation, and the plantation estate come into view as important sites for inquiry. An anticolonial environmental sociology would draw attention to the ways that each of these socioecological formations evince how differentially racialized and colonially subjugated peoples' lives and relations with the rest of earthly existence were coopted by people calling themselves white, civilized, Christian, and therefore superior. Thus, the ecologically transformative capacities of whiteness become an important preoccupation for an anticolonial environmental sociology concerned with questions of race and environment in the Western Hemisphere, and, of course, to an extent globally.

Given the global-historical scale of European conquest – and associated forms of empire, colonialism, and differential racialization, I would never try to preemptively delimit the range of socioecological analyses that might arise from an engagement with the perspectives of the heterogeneous human populations that have been affected by colonial imperialism. To do so would 'risk allowing the debates of Europe and North America to be treated as essential points of reference for those seeking to understand the transformations of Asia, Africa, Oceania, and South America while the reverse will seldom be true' (Lockie 2015, 140). Therefore, in this brief essay, I outline the basic defining features of an anticolonial environmental sociology that approaches racial matters by:

- a) situating human social activity within the manifold of associations that constitute the broader biophysical world.
- b) engaging with the perspectives and experiences of subaltern people to understand socioecological dynamics from their often overlapping, but sometimes conflicting standpoints.
- c) excavating the colonial and imperialist foundations and ongoing entanglements of contemporary socioecological situations.

The principle aim of such an approach is to open new horizons of socioecological thought, analysis, and action that challenge colonial unknowing by foregrounding the concerns, experiences, categories, discourses, perceptions, and problems of the peoples visited by modern modes of conquest.

Theorizing whiteness in the web of life

With the basic features of an anticolonial environmental sociology now elaborated, I turn to a brief theoretical meditation on whiteness in the web of life, which

ventures to rethink race and environment in the United States by situating both within the historical context of European conquest.

In *Capitalism in the Web of Life*, Moore (2015) argues that capitalism is neither an economic system nor a social system; 'it is a way of organizing nature' (2). Moving away from prevailing discourse in environmental thought that binarizes Nature/Society, Moore (2015) is interested in thinking about 'how capitalism has worked through, rather than upon nature' (30). In contrast to thinking about 'the environment' as a spatial container for human relations with the rest of nature, Moore (2015) insists that 'species and environments are at once making and unmaking each other, always and at every turn' (45). Similarly, when I refer to whiteness in the web of life, I mean to focus attention on the ways that racialization, as an innately violent practice that aims to maintain population-specific modes of colonial domination through time (Wolfe 2016), (re)constitutes socioecological dynamics and produces environments.

In *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay Toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept*, W.E.B. Du Bois writes about the multitudinous ways that race has shaped his own life, and thus the lived experience of Blackness more generally. Du Bois writes, '[People] are conditioned and their actions forced not simply by their physical environment, powerful as mountains and rain, heat and cold, forest and desert always have been and will be' (Du Bois 2007b, 68). Here, he acknowledges something that environmental sociologists would come to argue many years later: human activity takes place within, and is constrained by, biophysical conditions (e.g. Catton and Dunlap 1978). Perhaps more importantly though, he further contends that when 'we modify the effects of this environment by what we call the social environment, we have conceived a great and important truth ... A [person (of color)] lives today not only in [their] physical environment and the social environment of ideas and customs, laws and ideals; but that total environment is subjected to a new socio-physical environment of other groups, whose social environment [they share] but in part' (Du Bois [1940] 2007c, 68). In a later passage, Du Bois further elaborates on this experience of being subjected to the socio-physical environment of whiteness:

I was by long education and continual compulsion and daily reminder, *a colored man in a white world*; and that white world often existed primarily, so far as I was concerned, to see with sleepless vigilance that *I was kept within bounds*. All this made me limited in physical movement and provincial in thought and dream. I could not stir, I could not act, I could not live, without taking into careful daily account the reaction of *my white enviroing world*.⁶ (69)

I return to these passages because they assert a different ontology of race that enables us to perceive

the ecomaterial significance of race and not merely in terms of social discrimination, exclusion and/or exploitation. Here, Du Bois expresses how whiteness is experienced by the racially-colonially subjugated as a socioecological, or 'sociophysical,' phenomenon. And although Du Bois is speaking specifically about his own experience as a Black person, it is obvious that this is an experience that is held in common with other racially-colonially subjugated peoples, but especially Native North America. To understand this, we must recognize that 'Europe's conquest of the American continent has been first and foremost a spatial, that is, a global event – the dislocation of Europeans to the Americas and other parts of the planet and the engulfment of natives, their lands, and the resources of those lands' (da Silva 2007, 2).

Speaking to a crowd of graduates and other observers at the U.S. Naval Academy commencement in 2018, President Donald J. Trump declaimed, 'They have forgotten our ancestors trounced an empire, [and] tamed a continent' (Felton 2018). This was not the first time that Trump referenced his nation's origins. A few months prior, on National Agriculture Day, he tweeted, 'Our Nation was founded by farmers. Our independence was won by farmers. And our continent was tamed by farmers' (Trump 2018). But what exactly did it mean to 'tame' a continent? Taming a continent meant making white (individual and collective) property of land, nonhuman, and human life. In the process of taming a continent, the white founders/farmers/settlers/colonists initiated a mode of life that fundamentally reconfigured socioecological dynamics in the Americas by engulfing earth's varied human, nonhuman, and inhuman elements into relations of domination.

Francis Bacon, English philosopher and statesman, wrote about English plantations, in 1625, arguing that 'Planting of Countries, is like Planting of Woods; For you must make account, to lease almost Twenty years Profit, and expect your Recompence, in the end' (Bacon 1899, 139).⁷ Bacon's European contemporaries understood that it would take time for their plantations to mature into something worth 'planting' in the first place. Bacon goes on to list the sort of people that should be 'planted,' such as 'Gardners, Plough-men, Labourers, Smiths, Carpenters, [J]oyners, Fisher-men, Fowlers,' and then describes how the planted should see 'what kind of Victual, the Country yields of it self' whether fruits, vegetables, grains, or game (140). 'Consider likewise, what Commodities the Soil, where the Plantation is, doth naturally yield, that they may some way help to defray the Charge of the Plantation,' which might include timber, iron ore, and bay salt, among other items (141). 'And above all,' Bacon writes, 'let Men make a Profit of being in the Wildernesse' (Ibid). There were, of course, people already living in and making use of the spaces designated as

'wilderness' that were planted. Bacon advises, 'If you Plant, where Savages are, doe not only entertain them with Trifles, and Gingles; But use them [j]ustly, and graciously, with sufficient Guard nevertheless ... And send oft of them, over to the Country, that Plants, that they may see a better Condition than their own' (142).

Despite the widespread 'settler-colonial myth of the wandering Neolithic hunter,' Dunbar-Ortiz (2014) argues that '[b]y the time of European invasions, Indigenous peoples had occupied and shaped every part of the Americas, established extensive trade networks and roads, and were sustaining their populations by adapting to specific natural environments, but they also adapted nature to suit human ends' (27). When European settlers found vast 'wildernesses' teeming with plant and animal life, they did not realize that these spaces were produced by the practices of the people who inhabited them. 'Only in the American continents was the parallel domestication of animals eschewed in favor of game management, a kind of animal husbandry different from that developed in Africa and Asia,' as Dunbar-Ortiz asserts (15). Further countering colonial mythology, she contends, 'Native Americans created the world's largest gardens and grazing lands – and thrived' (28). In other words, during thousands of years of socioecological existence in the Americas prior to European exploration and colonization, countless Indigenous peoples expressed their ways of life in complex, interweaving relations with myriad forms of nonhuman nature that inevitably transformed, in varying degrees, the environments in which their collective life took place.

V.F. Cordova, a Jicarilla Apache philosopher, suggests that the Indigenous peoples of North America did not think of their homelands as *something that they owned* but instead as *something that they belonged to* (Cordova 2007). Reflecting upon the meaning of 'land' to the Dené, Coulthard (2014) writes, "'land" (or dè) is translated in relational terms as that which encompasses not only land (understood here as material), but also people and animals, rocks and trees, lakes and rivers, and so on. Seen in this light, we are as much a part of the land as any other element' (61). Therefore, land was not simply a spatial unit for parsing the earth's surface; it was an extension of themselves as distinct peoples belonging to distinct environments (Cordova 2007; LaDuke 2015). Likewise, the relations they cultivated with/in the land are/were an expression of their unique modes of life (Coulthard 2014).

To European minds, and in their socioecological practice of domination, the people already living with/in the 'wildernesses' they planted, or settled, were to be made use of along with the other 'commodities of the soil.' Plantations, as (settler) colonial formations, were simultaneously racially hierarchical and colonially extractive enterprises that imposed

a particular mode of life based upon individualized and racialized property ownership. This plantation imposed mode of life was dependent upon taking possession of the land and life of Europe's others (da Silva 2007; Moreton-Robinson 2015), and in the process, whiteness entered the web of life to reconstitute the land – a heterogeneous constellation of earth's varied human and nonhuman elements. For as Tuck and Wayne Yang (2012) observe, 'The [white] settler, if known by his actions and how he justifies them, sees himself as holding dominion over the earth and its flora and fauna, as the anthropocentric normal, and as more developed, more human, more deserving than other groups or species' (6). The peoples indigenous to the 'Americas' have recognized and articulated this fact for centuries. Speaking to an Indian Council in 1875, for example, Tatanka-lyotanka⁸ (also known as Sitting Bull) professed:

Behold, my friends, the spring is come; the earth has gladly received the embraces of the sun, and we shall soon see the results of their love! Every seed is awakened, and all animal life. It is through this mysterious power that we too have our being, and we therefore yield to our neighbors, even to our animal neighbors, the same right as ourselves to inhabit this vast land. Yet hear me, friends! [W]e have now to deal with another people, small and feeble when our forefathers first met with them, but now great and overbearing. Strangely enough, they have a mind to till the soil, and the love of possessions is a disease in them ... They claim this mother of ours, the Earth, for their own use, and fence their neighbors away from her, and deface her with their buildings and their refuse. (Eastman 1939, 119–120)

W.E.B. Du Bois would later echo Tatanka-lyotanka, proclaiming, "But what on earth is whiteness that one should so desire it?" Then always, somehow, someway, I am given to understand that *whiteness is the ownership of the earth, forever and ever* (Du Bois 2007a, 30).⁹

White ownership of the earth did not stop with the land nor its nonhuman elements. In actuality, European conquest of Indigenous peoples and their lands in the Americas beginning in 1492 would not have been possible without the inauguration of the enslavement of Africans for European purposes as early as 1441 (Du Bois 2007c; King 2019). Hence, although the settlers of North America initially relied on the labor of enslaved people indigenous to the Americas and European indentured servants, the symbolic architecture linking Blackness to slaveness was already well established by the time Europeans turned their sights to the New World, as captive Africans were already toiling on Portuguese plantations within the Old World sugar complex beginning in 1452 (Wynter 1995; Garba and Sorentino 2020). With the rise of the New World plantation complex, captive Africans and their descendants were physically coerced into relationship with the land in the so-called 'New World' in

environments being reconstituted by the white masters of the world. The enslaved were forced to plant and harvest cotton, tobacco, coffee and sugarcane, butcher and cure meats, produce dairy products, in addition to tasks related to carpentry, laundry, cleaning, cooking, and other domestic labors (Stewart 2005). Stripped from their own indigenous social and ecological settings, Africans were brought to the Americas to labor on lands expropriated from Native peoples in the Americas.

More than that, though, as chattels, Black people were an object of settler-capitalist accumulation (King 2016), which disfigured Black maternity by turning 'the womb into a factory,' that reproduces Blackness as abjection and fungibility (Sharpe 2014, 63). Put differently, Blackness also forces those occupying that social location to contend with the conditions of interchangeability and replaceability endemic to the commodity (Hartman 1997). Or, as Wilderson (2010) argues, 'Africans went into the ships and came out as Blacks ... This violence which turns a body into flesh, ripped apart literally and imaginatively ... positions the Black in an infinite and horrifying and open vulnerability, an object made available for any subject' (38). As fungible commodities, Black life was bred, bought and sold, maimed and killed, all justifiable by their racialization as such. This 'thingification' of African life, transmuted through racialization and the Middle Passage into Blackness, expunges Black people of their histories and relations (Césaire 2000; Du Bois [1947] 2007; Patterson 1982). Their ties to the region of earth that bore them is severed, physically and to an extent psychically, along with their ways of being in the world before becoming fungible property. Thus, Black people were not only stripped from their homes to *labor* in distant lands, they were displaced as property to be accumulated by white masters and disposed of as desired.

Furthermore, as Gosset (2015) argues, the 'colonial racialization of blackness has figured and functioned as the animalization and bestialization of blackness,' which thereby places Black people outside of humanity (Gosset 2015, para 6; see also Fanon 2008). Gosset (2015) reminds us that Frederick Douglass, a formerly enslaved person and abolitionist, recognized the similarity between his own thingified human experience and that of the nonhuman animals he was forced to work with on the plantation. Douglass writes, 'They were property, so was I; they were to be broken, so was I. Covey was to break me, I was to break them; break and be broken – such is life' (Douglass 2007, 188). These points of similarity emerge from relations forged through the thingification of life, human and more-than-human, that orients the life of both to the will of white owners. Thus, the subjugation of the racially dominated is deeply interwoven with the domination of white humanity over the rest of earthly existence, whereby colonial racialization institutes what Pellow (2014) calls 'socioecological inequality' to index the 'ways in which humans, nonhumans, and ecosystems

intersect to produce hierarchies – privileges and disadvantages – within and across species and space’ (7). In this extended socioecological hierarchy, those claiming whiteness would wield their power as the enviroing group for centuries to come, and in doing so would overdetermine the quality of environments in which human and more-than-human life unfolds.

As humankind is increasingly recognized as a geological force, we ought not forget the role that race, empire, and colonialism have played in transforming this planet. Instead of implicating the whole of humanity in the drastic changes to the earth’s integrated systems (geosphere, atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, etc.) like the concept of the ‘Anthropocene’ does, scholars have suggested other designations, such as the Capitalocene (Moore 2015; Malm 2016). Here, however, we run into the problem of centering capital(ism), while ignoring race and colonialism (Robinson 2000). A more appropriate naming of the present geological age, the origins of which Lewis and Maslin (2018) identify with the 1610 Orbis Spike in the stratigraphic record, might be the ‘Plantationocene’ as it would implicate not just capitalism but also racialization, imperialism, and colonialism (i.e. conquest) in the earth’s transformation over the last five centuries (Haraway et al. 2016; Haraway 2015; Davis et al. 2019; Murphy and Schroering 2020). For as Denise Ferreira da Silva argues, ‘what has been and is extracted through colonial juridic mechanisms and racial symbolic tools – the “means of production” or the “raw materials” it uses for accumulation (the internal energy of African slaves and Indigenous lands) – now exists as the *form* of global capital’ (da Silva 2018, para 6). Thus, we might imagine, as da Silva (2018) does when focusing on a single dimension of transformation to the earth system, ‘The accumulation of atmospheric gases expresses ([or] is equivalent to) the extent of expropriation and the intensity of the concentration of expropriated internal (kinetic) energy of lands and labor facilitated by coloniality and raciality’ (Ibid). It is this sort of radical reimagining that an anticolonial environmental sociology of race is ultimately striving for.

Conclusion

This essay contributes to an ever-growing chorus of scholars drawing renewed attention to the complex entanglements of race and environment (Dillon 2014; Taylor 2016; Brown et al. 2016; Pellow 2016, 2018; Ducre 2018; Clark, Auerbach, and Zhang 2018; Richter 2018; Liévanos 2019a, 2019b; Norgaard 2019). More specifically, I have argued for the need to challenge colonial unknowing in environmental sociology and the limitations that it poses for understanding the dynamics between race and environment. To counter colonial unknowing, I have gestured toward a different modality of environmental-sociological inquiry. By beginning with the subaltern perspectives of Black

and Native peoples, in addition to foregrounding the socioecological dynamics of conquest itself, I have sought to reorient the environmental sociology of race along more explicitly anticolonial lines. In doing so, I have emphasized the importance of critically attending to whiteness and the ways in which its wielders reconfigure socioecological dynamics by taking possession of the lands and life of the colonized.

In the end, I have sought to make it more apparent that beneath the liberal-democratic facade of multi-racial inclusion of the United States, in civil, economic, and political spheres, is a deeper and innately violent socioecological history of white racial-colonial domination originating with the plantation and the logics by which it organized people in relation to the rest of earthly existence – the flora and fauna, the land and sea. Although the plantation no longer exists in its formal capacity as an institution of white, European conquest, the plantation logics that rendered non-white beings (human or otherwise) *displaceable, containable, consumable, and expendable* persist as a disproportionately Black and Latinx incarcerated population produces a wide range of commodities at extremely low costs (Smith and Hattery 2008), while also serving as the raw material of the prison-industrial complex (Davis 2011), a generation of Black children is poisoned by lead in their water (Ranganathan 2016; Pulido 2016), and risky oil pipelines are built on or near Indigenous peoples’ ever-vulnerable territories (Bosworth 2018; LeQuesne 2019). These plantation logics persist precisely because they have never been adequately addressed, for doing so would entail a radical reconfiguring of our collective mode of being together on earth, and not as individuals maximizing our relations for private gain and property accumulation. But how do we even begin to unravel this vast web of violence without confronting whiteness, its historical and ongoing relationship to conquest, and the racialized socioecological configurations emergent from the integrated processes of colonization, enslavement, genocide, occupation, and settlement?

Notes

1. I have also relied upon settler colonial theory to think about the dispossession of Indigenous land in my own work (Murphy 2018). Nevertheless, my encounter with the critical engagements in Black studies and American studies have changed how I think about and situate settler-colonial endeavors.
2. Kelley (2017) points to how Wolfe’s (2016) conceptualization settler colonialism as defined by a logic of elimination would not work without the exclusion of Africa. He argues that this occlusion ‘not only obscures its global and transnational character but also eliminates the settler from African history’ (269). Kelley (2017) further contends that in South Africa, for example, ‘the complete elimination of the native was hardly the objective. Yes, the expropriation of the native from the land was a fundamental objective, but so was

proletarianization. They wanted the land *and* the labor, but not the *people* – that is to say, they sought to eliminate stable communities and their cultures of resistance' (Ibid).

3. Henry Bobbit, Federal Writers' Project: Slave Narrative Project, Vol. 11, North Carolina, Part 1, Adams-Hunter, Manuscript/Mixed Material, 1936, <https://www.loc.gov/item/mesn111/>. Note that I have slightly modified the orthography and syntax of this passage for clarity and ease of reading.
4. 'Charter of Carolina' (The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy, 24 March 1663), http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/nc01.asp.
5. Other Indigenous polities that called the region home include: the Lumbee, Haliwa, Sappony, Tuscarora, Croatoan, Meherrin, Coharie, Eastern Band of the Cherokee, Occaneechi, and Waccamaw. Today, the State of North Carolina officially recognizes eight of these Native Nations, while the United States of America only recognizes one.
6. Emphasis is my own.
7. Note that I have slightly modified the orthography of these passages for ease of reading.
8. Tatanka-lyotanka was Hunkpapa Lakota.
9. Emphasis is my own.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the organizers and participants of (1) the "Bridging the Gap: A Race and Environment Mini-Conference," held on August 10, 2018, in Philadelphia and (2) the "Decolonizing the Social Workshop," held on May 5, 2017, in Boston, for engaging prior iterations of the ideas presented in this manuscript. I would also like to thank Jose Itzigsohn, Scott Frickel, David N. Pellow, and J. Timmons Roberts for their thoughtful feedback on the broader project of which this is a part. I am grateful to Daina Sanchez and Amy Chin for engaging with drafts of this manuscript. Finally, I want to acknowledge the anonymous reviewers of this manuscript and the guest editorial team for their thoughtful and deeply generative feedback.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Notes on contributor

Michael Warren Murphy is an Assistant Professor of Sociology, with a secondary appointment in the Department of Africana Studies, at the University of Pittsburgh.

References

- Anon. 1663. "Charter of Carolina." *The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy*. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/nc01.asp
- Bacon, F. 1899. *Bacon's Essays and Good and Evil with Notes and Glossarial Index*. edited by W. A. Wright. London: Macmillan and Company.
- Bacon, J. M. 2019. "Settler Colonialism as Eco-Social Structure and the Production of Colonial Ecological Violence." *Environmental Sociology* 5 (1): 59–69. doi:10.1080/23251042.2018.1474725.
- Bhambra, G. K. 2007. *Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Bhambra, G. K. 2014. "Postcolonial and Decolonial Dialogues." *Postcolonial Studies* 17 (2): 115–121. doi:10.1080/13688790.2014.966414.
- Bobbit, H. 1936. "Federal Writers' Project: Slave Narrative Project, Vol. 11, North Carolina, Part 1, Adams-Hunter."
- Bonilla-Silva, E. 1997. "Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation." *American Sociological Review* 62 (3): 465. doi:10.2307/2657316.
- Bosworth, K. 2018. "'They're Treating Us like Indians!': Political Ecologies of Property and Race in North American Pipeline Populism." *Antipode*.
- Brown, K. L., M. W. Murphy, and A. M. Porcelli. 2016. "Ruin's Progeny: Race, Environment, and Appalachia's Coal Camp Blacks." *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* 13 (2): 327–344.
- Bullard, R. D., and B. Wright, eds. 2009. *Race, Place, and Environmental Justice after Hurricane Katrina: Struggles to Reclaim, Rebuild, and Revitalize New Orleans and the Gulf Coast*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Bullard, R. D., P. Mohai, R. Saha, and B. Wright. 2008. "Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty: Why Race Still Matters after All of These Years." *Environmental Law* 38: 371.
- Cantler, J. M., and M. Huynh. 2016. "Native American Environmental Justice as Decolonization." *American Behavioral Scientist* 60 (2): 203–223. doi:10.1177/0002764215607578.
- Catton, W. R., and R. E. Dunlap. 1978. "Environmental Sociology: A New Paradigm." *The American Sociologist* 13: (February):41–49.
- Césaire, A. 2000. *Discourse on Colonialism*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Clark, B., D. Auerbach, and K. X. Zhang. 2018. "The Du Bois Nexus: Intersectionality, Political Economy, and Environmental Injustice in the Peruvian Guano Trade in the 1800s." *Environmental Sociology* 4 (1): 54–66. doi:10.1080/23251042.2017.1381899.
- Connell, R. 2007. *Southern Theory: The Global Dynamics of Knowledge in Social Science*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Connell, R. 2018. "Decolonizing Sociology." *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews* 47 (4): 399–407. doi:10.1177/0094306118779811.
- Cordova, V. F. 2007. *How It Is: The Native American Philosophy of V.F. Cordova*. edited by K. D. Moore. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
- Coulthard, G. S. 2014. *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- da Silva, D. F. 2007. *Toward a Global Idea of Race*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- da Silva, D. F. 2018. "On Heat." *Canadian Art*.
- Davis, A. Y. 2011. *Are Prisons Obsolete?* New York, NY: Seven Stories Press.
- Davis, J., A. A. Moulton, L. Van Sant, and B. Williams. 2019. "Anthropocene, Capitalocene, ... Plantationocene?: A Manifesto for Ecological Justice in an Age of Global Crises." *Geography Compass* 13 (5): e12438. doi:10.1111/gec3.12438.
- Dillon, L. 2014. "Race, Waste, and Space: Brownfield Redevelopment and Environmental Justice at the Hunters Point Shipyard: Waste, Race and Space." *Antipode* 46 (5): 1205–1221. doi:10.1111/anti.12009.
- Douglass, F. 2007. *My Bondage and My Freedom*. edited by J. Stauffer. New York: Modern Library.

- Du Bois, W. E. B. 2007a. *Darkwater: Voices from within the Veil*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. 2007b. *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. 2007c. *The World and Africa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ducre, K. A. 2018. "The Black Feminist Spatial Imagination and an Intersectional Environmental Justice." *Environmental Sociology* 4 (1): 22–35. doi:10.1080/23251042.2018.1426089.
- Dunbar-Ortiz, R. 2014. *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Eastman, C. A. 1939. *Indian Heroes and Great Chieftains*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company.
- Fanon, F. 2008. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York, NY: Grove press.
- Feagin, J., and S. Elias. 2013. "Rethinking Racial Formation Theory: A Systemic Racism Critique." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36 (6): 931–960. doi:10.1080/01419870.2012.669839.
- Feagin, J. R. 2001. *Racist America: Roots, Current Realities, and Future Reparations*. 1st paperback ed. New York: Routledge.
- Feagin, J. R. 2006. *Systemic Racism: A Theory of Oppression*. New York: Routledge.
- Felton, L. 2018. "Read Trump's U.S. Naval Academy Commencement Address - The Atlantic." *The Atlantic*. Accessed 29 August 2018. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/05/read-president-trumps-us-naval-academy-commencement-address/561206/>
- Fothergill, A., and L. A. Peek. 2004. "Poverty and Disasters in the United States: A Review of Recent Sociological Findings." *Natural Hazards* 32: 89–110. doi:10.1023/B:NHAZ.0000026792.76181.d9.
- Garba, T., and S. Sorentino. 2020. "Slavery Is A Metaphor: A Critical Commentary on Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang's 'Decolonization Is Not A Metaphor.'" *Antipode* 52 (3): 764–782. doi:10.1111/anti.12615.
- Go, J. 2013a. "For a Postcolonial Sociology." *Theory and Society* 42 (1): 25–55. doi:10.1007/s11186-012-9184-6.
- Go, J. 2013b. "Sociology's Imperial Unconscious: The Emergence of American Sociology in the Context of Empire." In *Sociology and Empire*, edited by Steinmetz, and G. Durham, 83–105. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Go, J. 2016. *Postcolonial Thought and Social Theory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Go, J. 2018. "Postcolonial Possibilities for the Sociology of Race." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 4 (4): 439–451. doi:10.1177/2332649218793982.
- Golash-Boza, T. 2016. "A Critical and Comprehensive Sociological Theory of Race and Racism." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 2 (2): 129–141. doi:10.1177/2332649216632242.
- Gosset, C. 2015. "Blackness, Animality, and the Unsovereign." *Versobooks.Com*. Accessed 29 August 2018. <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2228-che-gossett-blackness-animality-and-the-unsovereign>
- Haraway, D. 2015. "Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin." *Environmental Humanities* 6 (1): 159–165.
- Haraway, D., N. Ishikawa, S. F. Gilbert, K. Olwig, A. L. Tsing, and N. Bubandt. 2016. "Anthropologists Are Talking – About the Anthropocene." *Ethnos* 81 (3): 535–564. doi:10.1080/00141844.2015.1105838
- Hartman, S. V. 1997. *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hartman, S. V. 2007. *Lose Your Mother: A Journey along the Atlantic Slave Route*. 1st ed. New York: Farrar: Straus and Giroux.
- Heynen, N., H. A. Perkins, and P. Roy. 2006. "The Political Ecology of Uneven Urban Green Space: The Impact of Political Economy on Race and Ethnicity in Producing Environmental Inequality in Milwaukee." *Urban Affairs Review* 42 (1): 3–25. doi:10.1177/1078087406290729.
- Holleman, H. 2017. "De-Naturalizing Ecological Disaster: Colonialism, Racism and the Global Dust Bowl of the 1930s." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 44 (1): 234–260. doi:10.1080/03066150.2016.1195375.
- Hooks, G., and C. L. Smith. 2004. "The Treadmill of Destruction: National Sacrifice Areas and Native Americans." *American Sociological Review* 69 (4): 558–575. doi:10.1177/000312240406900405.
- Hoover, E. 2018. "Environmental Reproductive Justice: Intersections in an American Indian Community Impacted by Environmental Contamination." *Environmental Sociology* 4 (1): 8–21. doi:10.1080/23251042.2017.1381898.
- Howell, J., and J. R. Elliott. 2019. "Damages Done: The Longitudinal Impacts of Natural Hazards on Wealth Inequality in the United States." *Social Problems* 66 (3): 448–467. doi:10.1093/socpro/spy016.
- Jesdale, B. M., R. Morello-Frosch, and L. Cushing. 2013. "The Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Heat Risk-Related Land Cover in Relation to Residential Segregation." *Environmental Health Perspectives* 121 (7): 811–817. doi:10.1289/ehp.1205919.
- Kelley, R. D. G. 2017. "The Rest of Us: Rethinking Settler and Native." *American Quarterly* 69 (2): 267–276. doi:10.1353/aq.2017.0020.
- King, T. L. 2016. "The Labor of (Re)reading Plantation Landscapes Fungible(Ly): Fungibility." *Antipode* 48 (4): 1022–1039. doi:10.1111/anti.12227.
- King, T. L. 2019. *The Black Shoals: Offshore Formations of Black and Native Studies*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- King, T. L. 2020. "New World Grammars: The 'Unthought' Black Discourses of Conquest." In *Otherwise Worlds: Against Settler Colonialism and anti-Blackness, Black Outdoors*, edited by T. L. King, J. Navarro, and A. Smith, 77–93. Durham: Duke University Press.
- La Vere, D. 2013. *The Tuscarora War: Indians, Settlers, and the Fight for the Carolina Colonies*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- LaDuke, W. 2015. *All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life*. Chicago, Illinois: Haymarket Books.
- LeQueune, T. 2019. "Petro-Hegemony and the Matrix of Resistance: What Can Standing Rock's Water Protectors Teach Us about Organizing for Climate Justice in the United States?" *Environmental Sociology* 5 (2): 188–206. doi:10.1080/23251042.2018.1541953.
- Lewis, S. L., and M. A. Maslin. 2018. *Human Planet: How We Created the Anthropocene*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Liévanos, R. S. 2019a. "Air-Toxic Clusters Revisited: Intersectional Environmental Inequalities and Indigenous Deprivation in the US Environmental Protection Agency Regions." *Race and Social Problems* 11 (2): 161–184. doi:10.1007/s12552-019-09260-5.
- Liévanos, R. S. 2019b. "Racialized Structural Vulnerability: Neighborhood Racial Composition, Concentrated Disadvantage, and Fine Particulate Matter in California." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 16 (17): 3196. doi:10.3390/ijerph16173196.
- Lockie, S. 2015. "What Is Environmental Sociology?" *Environmental Sociology* 1 (3): 139–142.

- Magubane, Z. 2013. "Common Skies and Divided Horizons? Sociology, Race, and Postcolonial Studies." *Political Power and Social Theory* 24: 81–116.
- Malm, A. 2016. *Fossil Capital: The Rise of Steam Power and the Roots of Global Warming*. London New York: Verso.
- Mascarenhas, M. 2012. *Where the Waters Divide: Neoliberalism, White Privilege, and Environmental Racism in Canada*. Maryland: Lexington Books.
- Mohai, P., and R. Saha. 2015. "Which Came First, People or Pollution? Assessing the Disparate Siting and Post-Siting Demographic Change Hypotheses of Environmental Injustice." *Environmental Research Letters* 10: 11. doi:10.1088/1748-9326/10/11/115008.
- Moore, J. W. 2015. *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital*. 1st ed. New York: Verso.
- Morello-Frosch, R., and B. M. Jesdale. 2006. "Separate and Unequal: Residential Segregation and Estimated Cancer Risks Associated with Ambient Air Toxics in US Metropolitan Areas." *Environmental Health Perspectives* 114 (3): 386–393.
- Moreton-Robinson, A. 2015. *The White Possessive: Property, Power, and Indigenous Sovereignty*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Murphy, M. W. 2018. "No Beggars Amongst Them' Primitive Accumulation, Settler Colonialism, and the Dispossession of Narragansett Indian Land." *Humanity & Society* 42 (1): 45–67. doi:10.1177/0160597616664168.
- Murphy, M. W., and C. Schroering. 2020. "Refiguring the Plantationocene: Racial Capitalism, World-Systems Analysis, and Global Socioecological Transformation." *Journal of World-Systems Research* 26 (2): 400–415. doi:10.5195/jwsr.2020.983.
- Norgaard, K. M. 2019. *Salmon and Acorns Feed Our People: Colonialism, Nature, and Social Action*. New Jersey, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Norgaard, K. M., R. Reed, and J. M. Bacon. 2018. "How Environmental Decline Restructures Indigenous Gender Practices: What Happens to Karuk Masculinity When There are No Fish?" *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 4 (1): 98–113. doi:10.1177/2332649217706518.
- Omi, M., and H. Winant. 1994. *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to 1990s*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Omi, M., and H. Winant. 2014. *Racial Formation in the United States*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge.
- Park, L. S.-H., and D. N. Pellow. 2011. *The Slums of Aspen: Immigrants Vs. The Environment in America's Eden*. New York: New York University Press.
- Patterson, O. 1982. *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Pellow, D. N. 2002. *Garbage Wars: The Struggle for Environmental Justice in Chicago*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Pellow, D. N. 2007. *Resisting Global Toxics: Transnational Movements for Environmental Justice*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Pellow, D. N. 2014. *Total Liberation: The Power and Promise of Animal Rights and the Radical Earth Movement*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Pellow, D. N. 2016. "Toward a Critical Environmental Justice Studies: Black Lives Matter as an Environmental Justice Challenge." *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* 13 (2): 221–236. doi:10.1017/S1742058X1600014X.
- Pellow, D. N. 2018. *What Is Critical Environmental Justice?* Cambridge, UK; Medford, MA: Polity Press.
- Pulido, L. 2016. "Flint, Environmental Racism, and Racial Capitalism." *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 27 (3): 1–16. doi:10.1080/10455752.2016.1213013.
- Ranganathan, M. 2016. "Thinking with Flint: Racial Liberalism and the Roots of an American Water Tragedy." *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 27 (3): 17–33. doi:10.1080/10455752.2016.1206583.
- Richter, L. 2018. "Constructing Insignificance: Critical Race Perspectives on Institutional Failure in Environmental Justice Communities." *Environmental Sociology* 4 (1): 107–121. doi:10.1080/23251042.2017.1410988.
- Robinson, C. J. 2000. *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Rodríguez-Muñiz, M. 2015. "Intellectual Inheritances: Cultural Diagnostics and the State of Poverty Knowledge." *American Journal of Cultural Sociology* 3 (1): 89–122. doi:10.1057/ajcs.2014.16.
- Roller, Z., S. Gasteyer, N. Nelson, W. Lai, and M. C. Shingne. 2019. *Closing the Water Access Gap in the United States: A National Action Plan. Dig Deep and US. Water Alliance*.
- Saucier, P. K., and T. P. Woods, eds. 2016. *Conceptual Aphasia in Black: Displacing Racial Formation*. Lanham: Lexington Books.
- Schwarz, K., C. G. Michail Fragkias, W. Z. Boone, J. Melissa McHale, M. Grove, J. P. Jarlath O'Neil-Dunne, G. L. McFadden, et al. 2015. "Trees Grow on Money: Urban Tree Canopy Cover and Environmental Justice." *Plos One* 10 (4): e0122051. edited by S. A. Loisel. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0122051.
- Sharpe, C. 2014. "Black Studies: In the Wake." *The Black Scholar* 44 (2): 59–69. doi:10.1080/00064246.2014.11413688.
- Smith, E., and A. J. Hattery. 2008. "Incarceration: A Tool for Racial Segregation and Labor Exploitation." *Race, Gender & Class* 15 (1/2): 79–97.
- Steinmetz, G. 2014. "The Sociology of Empires, Colonies, and Postcolonialism." *Annual Review of Sociology* 40 (1): 77–103. doi:10.1146/annurev-soc-071913-043131.
- Stewart, M. A. 2005. "Slavery and the Origins of African American Environmentalism." In *To Love the Wind and Rain: African Americans and Environmental History*, edited by D. Glave and M. Stoll, 9–20. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Taylor, D. E. 2014. *Toxic Communities: Environmental Racism, Industrial Pollution, and Residential Mobility*. New York: New York University Press.
- Taylor, D. E. 2016. *The Rise of the American Conservation Movement: Power, Privilege, and Environmental Protection*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Treitler, V. B. 2013. *The Ethnic Project: Transforming Racial Fiction into Ethnic Factions*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Trump, D. J. 2018. "Our Nation Was Founded by Farmers. Our Independence Was Won by Farmers. And Our Continent Was Tamed by Farmers. Our Farmers Always Lead the Way – We are PROUD of Them, and We are DELIVERING for Them! #nationalagricultureday." @realdonaldtrump. <https://twitter.com/realdonaldtrump/status/976120272435793920?lang=en>
- Tuck, E., and K. Wayne Yang. 2012. "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1 (1): 1–40.
- United Church of Christ. 1987. *Toxic Wastes and Race: A National Report on the Racial and Socio-Economic Characteristics of Communities with Hazardous Waste Sites*. New York: United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice.
- Vargas, J., and H. Costa. 2018. *The Denial of Antiracism: Multiracial Redemption and Black Suffering*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Veracini, L. 2010. *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Vimalassery, M., J. H. Pegues, and A. Goldstein. 2016. "Introduction: On Colonial Unknowing." *Theory & Event* 19: 4.
- Weiner, M. F. 2018. "Decolonial Sociology: W.E.B. Du Bois's Foundational Theoretical and Methodological Contributions." *Sociology Compass* 12 (8): e12601. doi:10.1111/soc4.12601.
- Wellman, M. W. 2002. *The County of Warren, North Carolina, 1586–1917*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Wilderson, F. B. 2010. *Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Wolfe, P. 2006. "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8 (4): 387–409. doi:10.1080/14623520601056240.
- Wolfe, P. 2016. *Traces of History: Elementary Structures of Race*. London. New York: Verso.
- Wynter, S. 1995. "1492: A New World View." In *Race Discourse and the Origin of the Americas: A New World View Edited by Vera Lawrence Hyatt and Rex Nettleford*. 5 vols. edited by V. L. Hyatt and R. Nettleford, 57. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution.