Cities & a just energy transition
MIT 11.165/477, 11.286J

David Hsu
Associate Professor
MIT DUSP

September 15, 2022
Materials for today

President Theodore Roosevelt

- 26th president of the USA
- soldier, naturalist, writer, politician, reformer, imperialist, Harvard graduate*, Progressive

Pach Bros., Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons
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- soldier, naturalist, writer, politician, reformer, imperialist, Harvard graduate*, Progressive conservationist, associated with the US Nat. Park System*:

  “The national parks are the best idea we ever had. Absolutely American, absolutely democratic, they reflect us at our best rather than our worst.”

  – Wallace Stegner

*Note: The asterisks indicate that these details are from the Progressive era.

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- naturalist, writer, early environmentalist
- strong ideas about human relationships to nature, impact on the earth, wilderness

Library of Congress, Public domain
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- strong ideas about human relationships to nature, impact on the earth, wilderness
- closely associated with the American West, Yosemite Park, the Sierra Club
- troubling racial beliefs also recently noted – are they typical for his time? Do they matter? How do they matter?

Library of Congress, Public domain
Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr.

- journalist, writer, farmer, abolitionist
- landscape architect: Boston Common, Emerald Necklace & the Fens, Prospect Park, Belle Isle Park, Biltmore Estate, U.S. Capitol grounds

John Singer Sargent, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons
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- journalist, writer, farmer, abolitionist
- landscape architect: Boston Common, Emerald Necklace & the Fens, Prospect Park, Belle Isle Park, Biltmore Estate, U.S. Capitol grounds
- Central Park and Seneca Village

John Singer Sargent, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons
“Confronting environmental racism: Voices from the grassroots”, 1993, South End Press.
Race and justice in an environmental context

- environmental and civil rights movements in the 1960s, 1970s
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- United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice
  - *Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States*, 1987
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  - writes *Dumping in Dixie*, 1990, argues for convergence between the civil rights and environmental movements
  - “Racism plays a key factor in environmental planning and decisionmaking . . . It is a fact of life in the United States that the mainstream environmental movement is only beginning to wake up to.”
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  - “distribution and effects of environmental problems and the policies and processes to reduce differences in who bears environmental risks”
- US President Bill Clinton issues executive order 12898 (1994)
  - “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations”
Environmentalists vs. environmental justice

A typical but important headline in 2020 (PRI)

David Hsu
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(Justice, fairness, and equity) x (energy & climate)

Climate justice

- historical responsibility
- intergenerational equity
- disproportionate causes and burdens
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Transformative justice
- practices designed to create change in social systems
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Climate justice
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Transformative justice
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Energy justice
- disproportionate access, harms, burdens
Disproportionate to who?

- Unions & workers
- Fossil fuel dominated communities
  - FF jobs create/support 2-5 other jobs (Marchand & Weber, 2018)
- Frontline/EJ communities
Surrounded by fossil fuels, they fear climate bill leaves them behind

By Sarah Kaplan
August 27, 2022 at 7:00 a.m. EDT

Brandy Smith, left, and Ariel Watson at the Prince Hall apartments in Port Arthur, Tex. (Tamer Kalifa for The Washington Post)

From the Washington Post, 8/27/2022
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The ‘JUST’ framework


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<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>Justice takes the form of 3 forms of justice</td>
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<td>Restorative</td>
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<td>Universal</td>
<td>Universal takes the form of two universal forms of justice</td>
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<td>Recognition</td>
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<td>Cosmopolitanism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>Space brings in location, where are ‘events’ happening? (in principle, at local, national and international levels)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Time brings into transition timelines such 2030, 2050, 2080 etc. and also ‘speed’ of the energy transition (i.e. is it happening fast enough?).</td>
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Figure courtesy of Elsevier, Inc., [https://www.sciencedirect.com](https://www.sciencedirect.com).
Distributional justice: concerns the equitable distribution of burdens and benefits of energy and environmental decisions.
Pai et al, 2018

- **Distributional justice**: concerns the equitable distribution of burdens and benefits of energy and environmental decisions.

- **Procedural justice**: highlights the right to a fair process for different stakeholders to take part equitably in the decision-making process.
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Restorative justice (R1): primarily aims to repair the harm done to individuals, instead of focusing upon punishing the offender.
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Universality:
  - Recognition justice (R2): entails recognizing that parts of the society might suffer as a result of energy and environmental decisions and identifying individuals and groups who might be impacted by such decisions.
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Universality:

- Recognition justice (R2): entails recognizing that parts of the society might suffer as a result of energy and environmental decisions and identifying individuals and groups who might be impacted by such decisions.
- Cosmopolitan justice reinforces all of the above justice forms but states that the above forms of justice must apply universally to all human beings.
Politics

Estimated % of registered voters who are worried about global warming

Select Question: Worried about global warming
Show: National State Congressional District

Democrats

Republicans

% Democrats

% Republicans

Figure from Yale Project on Climate Communication, “Dem. and Rep. views (2018)”

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From the Yale Project on Climate Communication, “Six Americas Study”

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NYT Quiz: If America Had Six Parties, Which Would You Belong To?

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Thursday: We’re going to do a discussion exercise that requires you to argue for different energy policies based on different conceptions of justice!