

This is a graded discussion: 3 points possible due -



Reading Reflection #3

[Ashna Misra](#)

9 Jan at 12:14

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Respond to the following questions in 200-400 words about the assigned reading.

* The reading was on "Climate Change, Human Rights, and Social Justice"

1. Give at least three reasons why low-income and marginalized populations may be more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.
2. Give an example of how policy for climate change mitigation or adaptation may inadvertently hurt low-income populations. (Feel free to draw upon other readings for this)

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⋮

Low-income and marginalized peoples are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change because poor countries are more often exposed to high temperatures, their economies rely heavily on agriculture, natural resource extraction, etc, and air condition, insurance and other risk management measures are less available. The economic growth of poor countries is slowed down more because of climate change than rich countries, where economic growth continues to prosper. The impacts of climate change on countries include increased temperature/heat waves, heavy precipitation events, increased intensity/duration of droughts, increase tropical cyclone activity and sea level rises. Richer countries have more access and are better prepared for much of these effects vs. poor countries. One of the examples in the text was how the Netherlands already have a complex system of barricades that will help them if the sea water level rises, but Bangladesh, an

also flat region, does not have the resources to protect itself in the same manner.

The second part of the questions falls under the Environmentalists Myth from the last reading, where decisions about environmental policy are made for everyone to follow but may not take into the account the different in GHG emissions from the different countries. Countries that have the most power and largest economies aren't necessarily going to think about how their actions affect lower income communities. If they neglect their own people, such as the Indigenous people in Northern Canada and low-income areas in New Orleans, why would they suddenly change their mind because of the impact they're having the on the other side of the world.

← Reply



[Katie Reeder](#)

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I agree with the second part of your argument, but I think question #2 asked us to identify a specific policy, and do a little reflection on how that policy (while well-intentioned) could backfire and hurt low-income populations. Other than that, a 3!

← Reply



[Antonio Rodriguez](#)

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-Sad but true! Even marginalized populations within richer nations are discriminated against.
-Great job relating the policies of mitigation and the Environmentalist's myth. Policies need to take into account these lower-income and marginalized populations.

-Nice :)

3/3

← Reply



[Michael Horner](#)

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1. Give at least three reasons why low-income and marginalized populations may be more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change:

Low income and marginalized populations may be more vulnerable to the impact of climate change because they lack or are at a disadvantage with regards to personal autonomy, physical resilience and strength, and are more likely to be neglected during major crisis relief efforts. For example, women who are responsible for collecting food and water as large portion of their daily routine are more likely to be affected by droughts, heat waves, and the salination of coastal aquifers. In a similar vein, workers who spend a large amount of time outdoors are susceptible to the same effects of climate change. Those engaging in strenuous or dangerous work will be more likely to suffer the effects of reduced air quality. In general, workers who work in low skilled resource harvesting jobs will also be at the risk of having their occupations threatened due to resource depletion or the destabilizing of farming activities by climate change. Lastly, during a major crisis event, marginalized people are less likely to receive aid – as seen during hurricane Katrina. Climate change will increase the frequency of these events, and the same populations will be affected.

2. Give an example of how policy for climate change mitigation or adaptation may inadvertently hurt low-income populations:

One popular approach to addressing a dependence on fossil fuels is the subsidizing the production of biofuels. If land is used to grow “cash crops” or biofuels, local livelihoods and farming habits can be disrupted. The growth of biofuels can have unintended negative effects on the food prices and as a result, reduce access to food to people who spend a large portion of their income on food. In addition, if the demand for biofuels changes, those who rely on growing them for a living can experience economic hardship. This shows that when shaping policy for addressing climate change, one must think beyond carbon emissions savings, and consider human factors which are not immediately obvious.

← Reply



[Jackson Herron](#)

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3/3.

It is an unfortunate truth, as you mentioned, that marginalized people are less likely to receive aid... This points to systemic issues with discrimination in societies, which is interlinked with climate change. An additional factor is that low income populations lack resources to

proactively plan for and adapt to climate change. For example by moving to a less risk prone area or purchasing adequate insurance.

Biofuels are a great example, though newer generations that don't compete with food crops/use the residues of food crops have potential to mitigate negative consequences. I like your emphasis that human factors should be considered beyond just carbon emissions savings.

← [Reply](#)



[Ashna Misra](#)

(<https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/26675/users/94031>)

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(1) - The mention of losing low skilled jobs is super interesting because it's totally true. The intersection between agriculture machines for efficiency but, I assume, their increased carbon footprint compared to employing people is something I never thought about.

(2) - Good answer but it would be interesting if you connected this more to readings or, perhaps, went beyond the paper. For example, looking at second/third generation biofuels. In particular because I think a lot of people realize the issue with first generation (growing cash crops) and it is significantly less popular already.

3/3

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[Alexis Lytle](#)

(<https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/26675/users/38541>)

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Give at least three reasons why low-income and marginalized populations may be more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

Despite producing less carbon emissions than wealthy countries, poor countries experience more negative impacts of climate change. One reason for this is that their economies are heavily dependant upon agriculture, natural resource extraction, and other practices which are susceptible to severe changes in weather and climate. In addition, these countries are usually located in warmer regions with naturally higher temperatures; small scale relief for these extreme temperatures, such as air conditioners, are less accessible to these low-income populations, as is

medical assistance for prevalent health issues such as malaria and malnutrition. Among these populations, marginalized groups such as women suffer more from climate change due. This is due to their social role of gathering food, water, and fuel for their families, which is more difficult when natural resources become scarce. The further a woman has to travel to obtain these goods, the more vulnerable she is to injury or violence.

Give an example of how policy for climate change mitigation or adaptation may inadvertently hurt low-income populations. (Feel free to draw upon other readings for this)

One example of a climate change mitigative measure which has hurt low-income populations is the use of land to grow crops for biofuel. This decreases the land available to grow food, which in turn increases the price and makes it more difficult for low-income populations to purchase. This can have disastrous effects for those who may already spend up to 80% of their income on food (as opposed to an average of 6% in the US). Poor people in urban areas who must buy food instead of growing their own are at even higher risk for rising food prices.

← Reply



[Michael Horner](#)

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3 - Good examples from the article and justifications to accompany them. The impacts of land usage for biofuels definitely needs to consider all affected groups.

← Reply



[Jackson Herron](#)

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3/3

It's definitely true that many poor countries exist where climate impacts may be more severe (e.g. Bangladesh, or Sub-Saharan Africa), and its quite an injustice these countries have collectively emitted fewer emissions than economically developed nations. In addition your, low income populations probably have less of an ability to proactively adapt to climate change and take on risk mitigation. For example, by purchasing insurance or shoring up homes to prevent damage in an extreme weather events.

Biofuels that compete with food crops are definitely an example of potentially negative policy.

Newer generations may be able to mitigate this. I like that you pointed out that this would be way more detrimental to people spending up to 80% of their income on food.

[← Reply](#)



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Question 1:

- As climate change progresses food prices will fluctuate. These fluctuations are driven by changes in crop growth, from drought or increased rain, and a demand to use crops as biofuels. Low income populations are more sensitive to these fluctuations as they have less financial safeguards.
- Women, in developing countries, are likely to experience increasing physical demands. With drought they will be expected to walk farther distances to collect water. Many women, as caregivers, are also expected to care for sick children and as diseases increase they in turn will be more susceptible to illness.
- Low income populations are often forced to live in less desirable locations. In coastal areas, like Jakarta, this means areas prone to flooding. The flooding frequency and severity of these regions has increased due to climate change creating a precarious situation for the people who call it home.

Question 2:

An example of the convoluted nature of environmental policy are additional taxes for fuel. For example the Metro Vancouver tax on gas. Low income families often cannot afford to live in the inflated real-estate of Vancouver and may be pushed to the outer regions of Langely, Abbotsford, or New Westminister. These people may rely on cars as their only way of getting to work and are left paying an additional 10-20 cents per L for gas. The answer could be to get an electric car but at the moment these are not commercially priced for a lot of the population. This ends, ignoring the many people whose needs could be met by transit, in an unfortunate situation of excruciatingly high living costs for people. These living costs create chain reactions where people are unable to save or buy their own property. I'm not presenting a solution because overall I do think carbon taxes are among one of the most useful ways of limiting high emission transport but it does unfairly effect low income populations.

[← Reply](#)



[Taran Bains](#)

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3

The additional taxes for fuel is super interesting because not only are people pushed out of Vancity, but they most likely work in vancity, but work further out and because of the lack of development for our roads and public transport, getting to work can mean sitting in traffic for over an hour also just wasting fuel.

[← Reply](#)



[Katie Reeder](#)

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3! I have no critical comments- only a thought to add. It's not a perfect solution, but carbon rebates (provided that they are well-adjusted to household income) could really help to offset the unfair burden that taxes and levies could place on low-income groups.

[← Reply](#)



[Antonio Rodriguez](#)

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1. More extreme climate conditions, such as drought and heat waves, have increased effects towards low-income and marginalized populations. Things such as extended droughts can affect populations that rely heavily on agriculture to support their way of life. These may also lead to malnutrition due to lack of food or waterborne diseases due to flooding and contamination of water streams.

Also, children and older-people are more prone to illness and negative effects from pollution; especially those in low-income populations who cant afford the medical care required for these problems, or who don't have access to medical treatment for these problems.

Indigenous people are also affected heavily by the effects of climate change. Indigenous people who rely on the land for their way of life will be heavily influenced by events such as increased rain, droughts, landslides, sea level rising and many more; even though they are contributing very

little to the problem in terms of GHG emissions.

2. Policies, such as carbon tax, can have negative effects on low-income and marginalized populations even though they also serve to mitigate climate change. Areas where carbon tax is imposed will cause fuel prices and the cost of living to rise, leading to further marginalization between the income classes. This will also force certain people to resort to cheaper ways of fuel, such as biomass fuels, which can be harmful and also, in agricultural communities, they require land and resources that could be used to grow food.

← Reply



[Olivia Locke](#)

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10 Jan 2019

3/3

Great summary of the article! I think the third point about how indigenous communities are often the most affected while contributing very little to climate change is a very important point. I think what we are seeing right now in BC is very representative of this and even a step beyond this with the government imposing its will on indigenous groups who are actively trying to limit actions that are damaging to the environment.

← Reply



[Melissa Prado](#)

<https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/26675/users/3017>

10 Jan 2019

It was good that you made a reference to some of the marginalized groups that are largely affected by the effects of climate change. The side effect of the carbon tax was very well explained. Maybe including some stats or facts, given in the readings can add a bit more to your reflection.

← Reply



[Katie Reeder](#)

<https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/26675/users/11862>

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The article outlines the ways that climate change threatens human rights and social justice. The authors describe the impacts of climate change such as increased heat waves, extreme weather events, air pollution, and shorter growing seasons. These changes will have an adverse effect on economic activity and human health (mental and physical). As food prices rise due to reduced crop yields, malnutrition, and food insecurity rise. Additionally, reduced food supply and increased heat have the potential to spark social unrest and violence. Survivors and spectators of extreme weather events may experience increased levels of mental illness. Air pollution will raise the rates of respiratory illnesses globally.

The negative impacts of climate change will not be evenly distributed. Developing countries will be exposed to warmer temperatures, and the safety nets that could offset the dangers of heat (such as air conditioning or insurance) may be out of financial reach. Low-income groups will be disproportionately affected is in food security. While wealthy nations and classes have a financial buffer to deal with a spike in food prices, poorer segments of the population will struggle harder to pay for food. If adaptation and mitigation policies are not designed to be equitable, they may deepen existing social and economic inequalities. For example, if policies are designed to promote the use of biofuels over fossil fuels, prices for food will rise, harming the low-income populations least equipped manage higher food costs. Attempts to mitigate climate change through fuel taxes may also harm the working poor, small-scale farmers, and business owners who struggle to afford fuel as-is. Without a rebate scheme that accounts for their low income, a spike in fuel costs could derail their business or introduce challenges in commuting to work (those in rural areas without public transit would be unevenly affected)

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[Antonio Rodriguez](#)

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-Nice job listing several ways lower-income populations are affected. Also will affect marginalized groups like younger/older people, women, and indigenous people.

-Fuel is a huge part of climate change and it will be very hard to decarbonize our fueling system without rising prices. This is a very hard topic with policies to not discriminate against lower income people.

-Great job :)

3/3

[← Reply](#)



[Melissa Prado](#)

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Your reflection makes reference to several different parts of the article, good job at connecting all those ideas together. Good explanation of how policies need to be thought to be equitable. Maybe giving a bit more of details on your reference examples can help to make it even better.

[← Reply](#)



[Jackson Herron](#)

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(1)

1. Low income populations have less of an ability to implement adaptation measures. For example, someone who lives near the coast in a flood prone area may not have the ability to move because they lack the money to do so. Another example would be not having the money to use air-conditioning in an area prone to heat waves.

2. Low income populations are less likely to be able to afford risk-management measures like insurance. With increasing frequency and negative impacts of extreme events due to climate change, the price of insurance will only increase. Low income populations are usually just trying to get by and have less ability to plan for the future/respond to extreme events.

3. The nature of the work that low-income populations have to do may increase their vulnerability to climate change. For example, having to walk long distances to collect water or work outside for long hours in hot weather.

4. Some low income countries are geographically located in areas that are expected to have very negative impacts of climate change, even when these regions contributed very little to the climate changing GHG emissions. For example, Bangladesh and low lying islands that are expected to lose their land area due to sea level rise.

(2)

A simple example of a policy change (for mitigation) inadvertently hurting low income populations would be requiring only newer and more efficient models of cars to be used on the roads. If the newer cars are expensive, there is the possibility that lower income populations could not afford them. This could exacerbate economic disparity if they weren't able to get to and from work.

← Reply



[Ashna Misra](#)

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(1) - I really like the mention of insurance programs because that's totally true. Fun/sad fact when African Americans were forced to live in social ghettos there was this thing called "red lining" by insurance companies where they basically wouldn't give them insurance or would only give ridiculous loans. You went above and beyond! You gave four answers good job.

(2) - Wow great minds think alike and we have the same answer for 2!

3/3

← Reply



[Taran Bains](#)

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Also with forcing newer, more efficient cars, who knows if they are actually better. I mean, Volkswagon got away with their cars for for so many years before they finally discovered that they were lied too, and emitting more GHGs than they said. Going through and fact-checking these companies is also a timely and costly process.

← Reply



[Melissa Prado](#)

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This article made me reflect a lot on how like any other issue, we can not see climate change from one perspective, we can not assume it to be just an environmental problem, but a social and economic problem as well. Sadly, marginalized populations are the ones that are and will be more

affected by the effects of climate change. Women for example in developing countries assume the responsibilities of gathering food, water, and fuel for the household, this also means the consequences of doubts in food and water scarcity will lead for them to have to travel to very distant places, increasing their risk of injury and rape. A number that impressed me a lot was that 88% of the burden of disease that can be attributed to climate change affects children younger than 5 years old. Children are so vulnerable in this early stage of development and therefore susceptible to many vector-borne diseases and severe consequences from malnutrition. Another one that caught my attention was the effect climate change will have on those indigenous populations currently living in mountains and depending on snow packs to get their freshwater.

A lot of time we trust in that policy will be the first step to address the issues around climate change, however, if these policies in place have not been previously well though they can actually end up negatively impacting certain populations. An example of this is the carbon tax, when the price of fuel increases, people in developing countries do not have enough income to be able to afford it at these higher prices and thus need to look for an alternative. Here is where the use of biomass fuel comes into play as a cheaper source of energy. However, biomass fuel produces high concentrations of harmful air pollutants and it has been estimated that 4.3 million people die annually from indoor pollution from ineffective stoves.

[← Reply](#)



[Alexis Lytle](#)

<https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/26675/users/38541>

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Thank you for your thoughtful response. The 88% figure surprised me as well! It is unfortunate that Indigenous peoples have to deal with climate change on top of other issues they may face, especially since their cultural and spiritual connection to the land cannot simply be patched up with new technology. 3/3

[← Reply](#)



[Olivia Locke](#)

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3/3

Really good summary of the article. I like the way you tied it in to the earlier article about looking at climate change from an economic perspective as well. I think it is so important to

acknowledge the way that it will increase economic disparity and the different reasons it will affect marginalized people most directly.

← Reply



<https://> **Olivia Locke**

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1. Give at least three reasons why low-income and marginalized populations may be more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

Marginalized groups already have access to fewer resources. As resources such as food become increasingly scarce this will further increase challenges in meeting ones basic needs. Regionally the areas were climate change is going to have the largest impact are typically less wealthy and less able to adapt to a changing climate. Thirdly, people with weaker immune systems, less access to appropriate health care, and who work in physical industries are the most vulnerable to health effects from heat waves and air pollution.

2. Give an example of how policy for climate change mitigation or adaptation may inadvertently hurt low-income populations. (Feel free to draw upon other readings for this)

Recently London England has introduced an ultra low emission zone. Emmisions in this area are regulated by charging a £12.50 toll for any vehicle which is driven in this area. This should decrease car use in this region and therefore decrease air pollution. However, it also creates a huge financial burden on poor families in this region who may rely on there vehicles if public transit is inadequate for their needs and they are not able to afford to upgrade to a newer electric vehicle. Annually this will cost them an additional £4500.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jan/05/londons-ultra-low-emission-zone-good-or-bad-idea>

← Reply



<http> **Michael Horner**

<https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/26675/users/208938>

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3 - Your first question has 3 examples so it's good. I have been to London and seen these zones and I wondered what they are so thank you for answering this. It is a also an excellent

example.

← Reply



[Alexis Lytle](#)

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Thank you for the interesting article! It leads one to wonder if it would be more effective and fair to start with an incentive-based program rather than a punitive one. 3/3

← Reply



[Alexis Lytle](#)

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Ok I actually read the article now, and I see why they decided such drastic action was necessary. However, maybe incentives can be applied in other cases where pollution is not already at dangerous levels.

← Reply