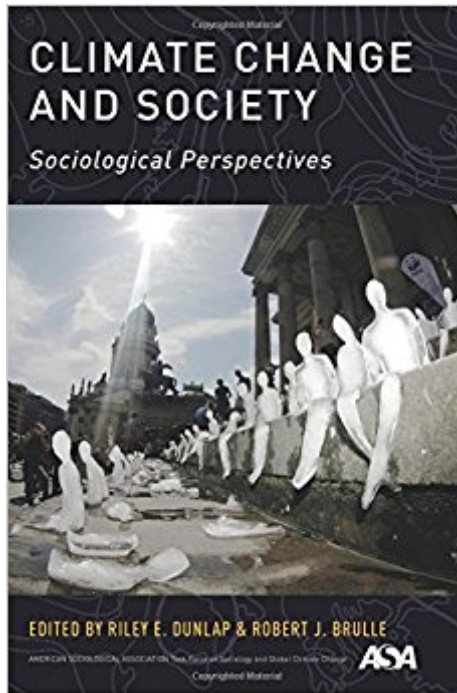




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# Climate Change And Society: Sociological Perspectives



## Synopsis

Climate change is one of the most critical issues of the twenty-first century, presenting a major intellectual challenge to both the natural and social sciences. While there has been significant progress in natural science understanding of climate change, social science analyses have not been as fully developed. *Climate Change and Society* breaks new theoretical and empirical ground by presenting climate change as a thoroughly social phenomenon, embedded in behaviors, institutions, and cultural practices. This collection of essays summarizes existing approaches to understanding the social, economic, political, and cultural dimensions of climate change. From the factors that drive carbon emissions to those which influence societal responses to climate change, the volume provides a comprehensive overview of the social dimensions of climate change. An improved understanding of the complex relationship between climate change and society is essential for modifying ecologically harmful human behaviors and institutional practices, creating just and effective environmental policies, and developing a more sustainable future. *Climate Change and Society* provides a useful tool in efforts to integrate social science research, natural science research, and policymaking regarding climate change and sustainability. Produced by the American Sociological Association's Task Force on Sociology and Global Climate Change, this book presents a challenging shift from the standard climate change discourse, and offers a valuable resource for students, scholars, and professionals involved in climate change research and policy.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Climate Change and Society provides a superb overview of our knowledge of the social causes and consequences of climate change, and of the social obstacles to an effective response. It is essential reading." --Erik Olin Wright, Vilas Distinguished Professor, University of Wisconsin and Past President of the American Sociological Association

"As the evidence for anthropogenic global warming accumulates, social scientists have been largely missing in action when it comes to research on the human activities responsible for climate change. In this welcome volume, Brulle, Dunlap, and their colleagues critically review what we know about the issue, setting a clear agenda for further sociological research on this most pressing of problems." --Doug McAdam, Stanford University

"For a crisis that demands a profound re-thinking of our most fundamental, socially-rooted systems, sociological perspectives are far too seldom part of the climate conversation. I have learned so much from the impressive list of contributors to this book, which is filled with highly useful analyses and startling insights. It is that rare volume that will be an invaluable resource for anyone engaged in the climate fight: scholars, activists, and concerned citizens alike." --Naomi Klein, author of *This Changes Everything* and *The Shock Doctrine*

"Many texts cover the science and economics of climate change, but few discuss the equally important sociological dimensions of the problem. In this must-read edited volume, leading experts Bob Brulle and Riley Dunlap, and more than thirty other leaders in the field review the sociological context so critical for understanding the current societal discourse over climate change and--perhaps most importantly--the reasons for the current impasse when it comes to actually dealing with the problem." --Michael E. Mann, Distinguished Professor, Penn State University, and author of *Dire Predictions: Understanding Climate Change*

"Though more work always remains, the physical sciences have accomplished their core task when it comes to climate change. We know what we need to know about the causes and consequences of our actions. What we don't know is how to stop ourselves, which is why this book--and the social sciences--are so important from here on out." --Bill McKibben, author of *The End of Nature* and Schumann Distinguished Scholar, Middlebury College

"The strengths of this volume lie in its wide coverage, well-weighted and fully referenced analyses, and evidence stemming from a strong global reach. What is clear from reading this important volume is that the science of climate change is shifting to embrace both the social sciences and the humanities. This is a hard-won transition with intellectual blood on the carpet. This is a journey still with its momentum: hence the timeliness and academic/political significance of this book." --Tim O'Riordan, *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*

"Climate Change and Society: Sociological Perspectives compiles a comprehensive synthesis of sociological attention to climate change to date, offering both reason to commend the valuable contributions made and a roadmap

for future research Riley Dunlap and Robert Brulle undertake [an] ambitious [pursuit] by seeking to synthesize the contributions sociology has made to the field of climate change research. A key message offered by the editors: we cannot afford to entertain post-political perspectives. When social forces are key drivers of climate change, addressing them means conflict and politics." \ -- Contemporary Sociology "A significant accomplishment." --Environmental Sociology "There are many recent books on climate change with some social science but very few that address the role of social science in such depth. This book stands out in that regard." --Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences "[T]he volume will be of interest not only to students of sociology and climate change and practitioners but also to climate researchers across disciplines in any endeavour to consider the social aspects of climate change." --Environmental Politics

Riley E. Dunlap is Dresser Professor and Regents Professor of Sociology at Oklahoma State University, Past President of the International Sociological Association's Research Committee on Environment & Society, and Past Chair of the American Sociological Association's Section on Environment & Technology. He is senior editor of the Handbook of Environmental Sociology and Sociological Theory and the Environment, and a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Dr. Robert J. Brulle is Professor of Sociology and Environmental Science at Drexel University, and Past Chair of the American Sociological Association's Section on Environment & Technology. He is author of Agency, Democracy, and Nature: The U.S. Environmental Movement from a Critical Theory Perspective and co-editor of Power, Justice and the Environment. He was a 2012 -2013 Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University.

This anthology of studies covers the important but poorly publicized transition of the traditional "Earth Day" legacy environmental movement into today's climate change movement, which is dominated by coalitions, not stand-alone Big Green organizations. The scholars represented appear to be a vanguard of sociological researchers paying attention to the public policy influence of the emerging climate change movement, but seem surprisingly blind to the old-line coalitions of foundations, such as the Environmental Grantmakers Association (1985), that are the actual forces behind the changes they study. As in most public policy arenas, the power of the purse rules over all environmental groups, which is perhaps too mundane for academicians. The last section of this otherwise credible work unfolds a series of stale deprecations of climate "deniers" lifted almost verbatim from the over-earnest rants of Naomi Oreskes and the let's-imprison-deniers plans of the

Union of Concerned Scientists. The automaton-like repetition of "The Consensus Narrative" of climate alarmists becomes amusing once the shock wears off of seeing tenured professors displaying personal rage against all who disagree with their august wisdoms, such as they are. The only insight the last section has to offer is how spleen is rewarded in the climate crowd, which is evidently just another publication to forestall the Publish Or Perish curse of academe. A fresh idea or two would have improved the dish, like Major Gray's chutney improves an unremarkable curry. Read it for sure. If you're a climate believer or a skeptic, you need to know about the movement transformations so well described in the first half of this mixed bag of sociological perspectives, and if you don't give a hoot about the argument, the last half will make you glad or mad or smile at the little boys fighting over a dead cat. At least it's all well written.

This comprehensive, mostly easy-to-read book offers a great resource for graduate students. I used it in an environmental sociology seminar and found that it helped students from different academic sub-disciplines to quickly get up to speed on trends in sociological research on climate change. Each chapter ends with comments and suggestions for future research directions, which served as an invaluable resource for the students.

another add to my Climate Change library.

book was in great condition

Unhappily, this well intended book just shows how inadequate traditional sociological tools are for meaningful use addressing climate change. Sociologists (and other social scientists, notably political scientists) need to learn how to work with existing climate models (or a sub set of the many now existing) in conjunction with plausible models of FUTURE humans' responses to what those climate models are predicting.. This book fails miserably in that respect.

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