

Carleton

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES PROGRAM

June 3, 2020

Dear Environmental Studies students,

The murder of George Floyd, the subsequent events that continue to unfold across the country, and our students are all in the forefront of our hearts and minds. Many in our community have been directly impacted by events, especially our African-American students and colleagues. Over the past week, we have been discussing the best way to acknowledge and support the outrage over the overt racism that continues to plague American society. At this time we want to state our unwavering support and solidarity for the many forms of action and involvement that are emerging.

The intersection of race, inter-generational trauma, and police brutality may seem distant to the field of environmental studies, but it isn't. Race and social injustice matter to environmental studies. For instance, environmental justice has a long tradition of illuminating the ways that race, environment, and public well-being interact. Environmental history reveals the ways that visions of nature, resource strategies, and public policies are all socially constructed by race, ethnicity, class, and gender. Environmental anthropology shows how racism is encoded into seemingly innocent acts like eating certain foods, walking in natural areas, and even valuing nature.

As environmental studies faculty, we are committed to emphasizing the undeniable role of race in the study, conservation, and protection of the natural world and human societies, and we are always trying to improve and deepen our engagement with these issues. The senseless murder of George Floyd and the disproportionate burden falling on minority communities from the COVID-19 pandemic tell us that we need to do more – in our teaching, in our faculty-student relationships, and in our public outreach. We want you to know that we are committed to doing that, and that we are talking about devoting both next year's comps projects and the faculty winter workshop to the intersection of race, COVID-19, and the environment. We will have further ideas in the future and we welcome your suggestions. In the meantime, we would like to share with you some resources that you may find helpful in thinking about the many connections linking race and the environment. We have prepared a preliminary list of reading materials that are now posted on the Environmental Studies website at <https://www.carleton.edu/environmental-studies>.

If we can be of help during these challenging times, please don't hesitate to reach out to any of us.

Sincerely yours,

Deborah Gross
Dan Hernandez
Michael Kowalewski
Dan Maxbauer
Tun Myint
Tsegaye Nega
Constanza Ocampo-Raeder
Mary Savina
Kim Smith
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