

Defining Environmental Racism in the Context of Policy

Kyla Sophia Gamaro

THESIS:



Communities primarily populated by people of color with traditionally lower socioeconomic status are disproportionately affected by current economic practices. As the climate crisis's impending deadline creeps closer, the American Government must more strictly define both the concept of "environmental racism" and the multitudes of racially motivated disparities within environmental protection in order to better more justly serve the American people.

INTRODUCTION:



- 1982 - Movement as we know it started in Warren County, NC
- 1992 - Dr. Benjamin Chavis coined the term "environmental racism,"
- 5 Categories: racial discrimination in defining environmental policies, discriminatory enforcement of regulations and laws, deliberate targeting of minority communities as hazardous waste dumping sites, official sanctioning of dangerous pollutants in minority communities, and the exclusion of people of color from environmental leadership positions.

The complicated history of environmental racism

By Victoria Peña-Parr

- Focused mainly on Environmental Racism against Latinx and Indigenous peoples in New Mexico
- Racial Capitalism and the prevalence of white Americans in Fed. Gov't → historically more likely to locate toxic dump sites and waste facilities in neighborhoods where people "do not look like them or fall under the same tax bracket."
- Follow the advice given in the 1986 Toxic Wastes and Race Report (scholarships, diversify the fields, research)

Testing for Environmental Racism: Prejudice Profits, Political Power

By James T. Hamilton

- Analyzed Environmental Racism through an economic lens (capacity planning)
- Pure Discrimination - neighborhoods targeted for hazardous waste facilities have a 25% higher percentage of being targeted
- The Coase theorem - that firms take into account the expected costs of locating in an area (more cost effective to take advantage of lower incomes and education rates)
- Pollution is a Collective Action Problem → minority communities are less likely to unify and therefore oppose it.

Environmental racism: A causal and historical account

By Ariela Tubert

- Analyzed Environmental Racism through a philosophical lens
- "While environmental racism fits better within the parameters of structural racism and is sometimes cited as an example of it, structural racism is most closely associated with social forces that cause or reinforce inequity"
- Important to observe due to cultural/historical ties to homeland being threatened by forced displacement and the magnification of this problem leading to civil unrest.

CONCLUSIONS:

- In order to tackle Environmental Racism at a political level, we must first observe it through other lenses to grasp the staggering scope of the problem.
- The Office of Environmental Justice must narrow its mission statement to make the current disadvantages more evident (comparable to using "Black Lives Matter" phrasing as opposed to "All Lives Matter" phrasing)
- More research and funding must be devoted to research the extent of environmental racism and its long-term affects, as we attempt to tackle the deadly affects of climate change.

Introduction:

- Wind turbines, solar panels, and electric-powered cars were invented in the 19th century, but never reached widespread use.
- In 2019, Representative Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Markey introduced their version of the Green New Deal.



Focus:

- How does the Green New Deal affect job growth?
- I focused on:
 - Green-collar workers
 - Blue-collar workers: those who do manual labor.

DEBATES ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

POLSC 29204 ANNIE GUAN

What is in the Green New Deal?:

- Install solar panels on all existing buildings.
- Work with small farms to provide worldwide access to healthy foods.
- Expand electric car manufacturing.
- Implement a carbon tax.

Opposition from Blue-Collar Workers:

- Solar panels and wind turbines eliminate the need to dig for and transport fossil fuels.
- Some workers do not have training in fields need in green jobs, so transitioning to green jobs will be difficult and the workforce will decrease.
- State governments provide job training programs.

What Does the Carbon Tax Offer?:

- Puts a tax on carbon emissions.
- Child Tax Credit (CTC) and Earned Income Tax Credit can be turned into cash and provide affordable childcare.
- Outweighs Carbon Tax Burden: tax is paid most by low-income families.



Conclusion:

- Representative Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Markey provide a good outline for the Green New Deal, but they need to provide training for unskilled workers.
- The Green New Deal does make more jobs than jobs lost.



How can the world transition to renewable energy?

David Heimowitz

| POLSC 292.04

| Professor: Elise Jaffe

Introduction:

- Climate change and its concomitant effects have necessitated a transition to renewable energy.
- A transition to renewable energy can be accomplished with wind and solar.
- Within the U.S., a transition to renewable energy would require a linking of four distinct energy grids.
- There are barriers to all of the plans to transition to renewable energy.



Plans to Transition:

Wind and Solar:

- Lower price due to higher usage.
- Transitioning the U.S. economy to wind and solar is feasible by 2050.

Macrogrid:

- U.S. Grid is composed of four disparate grids.
- Linking the grids will diminish the operational cost of an electrical grid fueled by 50% renewable energy.
- The fluctuations in energy consumption will allow areas with low-energy consumption to supply energy to high-consuming areas.

Barriers to Transition Plans:

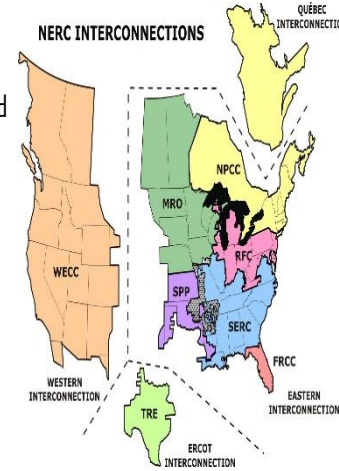
State Supreme Court Justices in the United States are selected in one of three ways:

Wind and Solar:

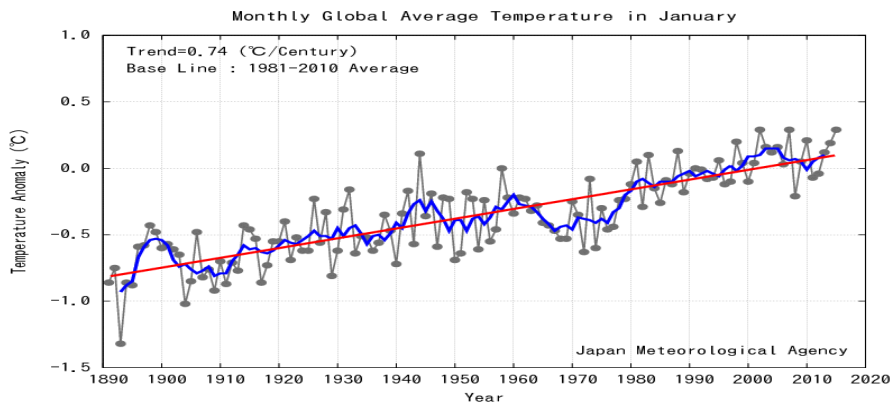
- Each area doesn't receive the same amount of energy from the sun, and the wind doesn't always blow.
- Battery storage is insufficient to harness the energy from one area and relocate it to another area.
- Wind turbines are eyesores for some communities, and they cause bird and bat deaths.

Macrogrid:

- The political will of politicians of oil-producing Texas to link their grids with the other grids in the U.S.
- The operational cost of developing and operating a national grid is \$2.2 trillion.



Rising World Temperatures:

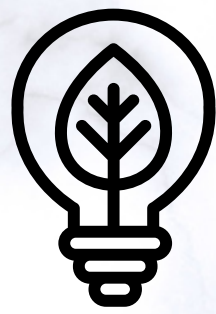


Anomalies are deviation from baseline (1981-2010 Average).
The black thin line indicates surface temperature anomaly of each year.
The blue line indicates their 5-year running mean.
The red line indicates the long-term linear trend.



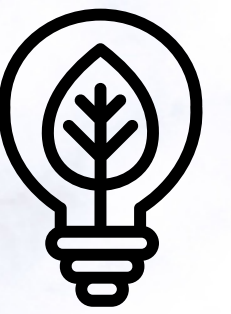
Conclusions:

- (1) The shifting to wind and solar can solely be accomplished if battery storage is further developed.
- (2) A macrogrid is possible, but it will require surmounting entrenched interests.



Renewable Energy Debate: Is it Affordable?

Megan Mazza



Can the United States afford to switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy?

- Will businesses continue to profit if they have to use expenses to switch to renewable energy?
- Is there enough land to build renewable energy farms on and how will they affect the environment?
- How will renewable energy affect the economy?

Renewable Energy & the Economy

- Global GDP will rise by 1% by 2050 in the switch to renewable energy (52 trillion USD)
- 11.6 million direct/indirect jobs created from renewable energy despite 7.4 million lost
- infinite resources (i.e., wind, sun, etc) become less expensive for everyone
- the economy benefits more than it suffers by switching to fossil fuels.

Land Capital

- Renewable energy takes up more land than fossil fuels: energy farms = a lot of space
- structures obscure views + cost a lot to make (material-wise)
- Renewable energy structures should be built on "brownfields" aka destroyed lands
- Future costs of fossil fuels (a finite resource) are more expensive than current renewable costs

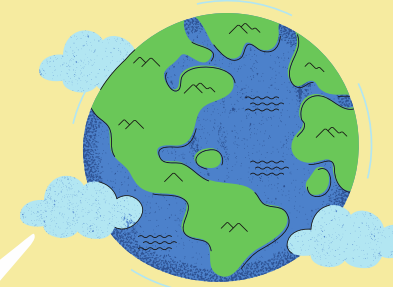
Business

- consumers want to be eco-friendly, so they shop for eco-friendly
- many businesses want to be eco-friendly already
- shifting from fossil fuels is expensive, but an increase in consumerism will help
- 100% of businesses agree: renewable energy is reliable and sufficient

Conclusion

The United States *can* afford to and should switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

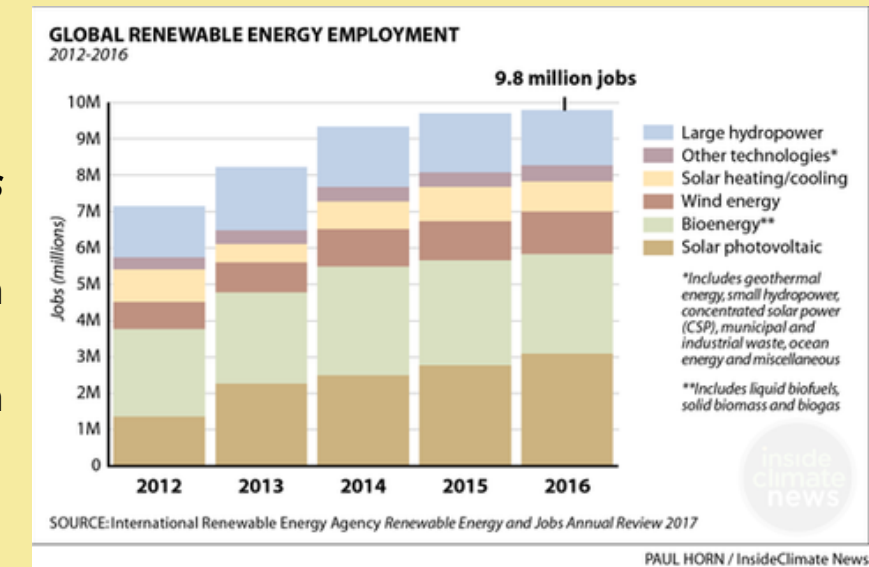
- Businesses will benefit from using renewable energy by attracting more consumers.
- There is enough land capital to build renewable energy farms on (mostly already destroyed land).
- The economy will increase globally/more jobs will be created.



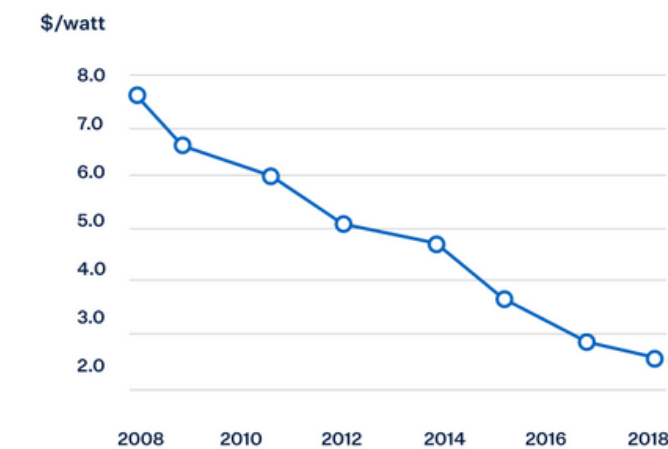
millions of jobs created: more opportunities

2019 statistics

Jobs Lost:
7.4 million
Jobs Created:
11.6 million



Cost of Residential Solar Energy



Cost of solar energy decreasing as time goes on

(SunRun's 2020 impact report)

Sources/References

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