

**48-699 - Environmental racism, injustice, and unfreedom: Lessons for architects and designers**

Ethics Mini 2 Elective

Friday 2.30-4.00pm

Nida Rehman



Torkwase Dyson, Black Compositional Thought | 15 Paintings for the Plantationocene (2020)

Environmental racism refers to the disproportionate concentration of environmental toxicities and harms in low-income communities of color (particularly Black and indigenous communities) through the structural and systematic workings of white privilege and white supremacy. More broadly, environmental injustices also include restrictions to environmental resources and infrastructures, and the unjust placements and displacements of communities of color resulting from uneven development. In this seminar, we will examine the histories and definitions of environmental racism, environmental injustice/justice, and environmental unfreedoms. We will read and discuss literature from a range of fields including Environmental Justice, urban political ecology, critical race studies, Black geography, indigenous studies, and more; explore case studies in the US and beyond through the EPA's EJ data and the EJAtlas project; and have conversations with activists, architects, and scholars invested in spatial justice. Through these we will critically assess architecture's role as a mechanism of environmental inequities and injustices, and learn from social movements for radical and hopeful change.