



SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY
ECONOMICS – POLITICAL SCIENCE - SOCIOLOGY

“Explaining Variation in the Level of Opposition to Energy Projects”

by

Hilary Schaffer Boudet
Stanford University

Abstract: To Act or Not to Act: Context, Capacity, and Community Response to Environmental Risk.

The siting of large industrial facilities represents a difficult policy problem. Despite decades of experience and research on siting, many of the same patterns of conflict persist. I focus on factors drawn largely from the study of social movements—risk, political opportunity, civic capacity—to explain variation in the mobilization efforts of project opponents in twenty cases of attempts to site large energy infrastructure projects. Movements emerge in only ten cases allowing for the identification of factors that drive mobilization or non-mobilization. I find that community context shapes perceptions and supplies the motivation to oppose or accept a proposal, suggesting that mobilization or non-mobilization depends on more than traditional measures of project risk. In addition, I examine the role of community mobilization in relation to other factors, such as intergovernmental conflict and market dynamics, in shaping the ultimate fate of a proposal.

Thursday, February 2, 2012
4:30 – 6:00 pm
Cordley Hall 2113