

## **C406 Public Advocacy: U.S. Environmental Movements**

Spring 2006 TR 2:30-3:45 PM BH149

Professor Phaedra C. Pezzullo

pezzullo@indiana.edu; <http://www.indiana.edu/~envtrhet>

Office hours TR 1:15-2:15 or by appointment; Mottier 206

This spring, C406 is designed to focus on U.S. public advocacy about the environment. To do so, we will be examining the *past, present, and plausible futures* of grassroots environmental, environmental justice, and anti-environmental movements. As a course grounded in a rhetorical perspective, we also will be developing our skills as *advocates* and *critics* of issues related to environmental advocacy. In other words, our primary goal is to focus on *how people communicate with, about, and in the environment* as rhetorical agents attempting to change public culture or what many call “the public sphere.” Specifically, we will emphasize what have been the constraints—both the limitations and the possibilities—of persuading U.S. publics about environmental concerns, beliefs, and dreams.

Our intensive reading list reflects the vast range of environmental issues that the course objectives entail, from the creation of national parks to the impact of environmental racism on toxically-assaulted communities to the success of environmental backlash today in rolling back environmental protections and infrastructure. In doing so, we also will consider a variety of public advocacy practices, including tourism, slide shows, boycotts, buycotts, civil disobedience, public participation, and media campaigns. In addition to lectures and the course assignments, active and informed engagement with these timely and important topics is expected in the classroom.

### **Required Readings available at Boxcar Books & Community Center, 310A South Washington, 339-8710, <http://www.boxcarbooks.org/>:**

- \* Cox, J. Robert. (2006). *Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN: 0761930507
- \* Nash, Roderick. (2001, fourth edition). *Wilderness and the American Mind*. New Haven: Yale UP. ISBN: 0-300-02910-1
- \* Bullard, Robert D. (2005). *The Quest for Environmental Justice: Human Rights and the Politics of Pollution*. San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club. ISBN: 1578051207
- \* Helvarg, David. (2004, revised edition). *The War Against the Greens: The "Wise-Use" Movement, the New Right, and the Browning of America*. San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club. ISBN: 1555663281

\* *Minimal readings not from required books are available on E-Reserves (password: analysis).*

### **Assignments:**

Midterm Exam:	30%
Final Exam:	30%
One Position Paper:	20%
Group Debate Presentation:	20%

### **Assignment Descriptions:**

### **Exams:**

Each exam will involve fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice, and two essays. You will receive a handout before each exam to guide your studies that will offer multiple essay options; three of those options will appear on the exam and the other two will assist you in preparing for some of the rest of the exam.

### **Group Debate Presentation:**

Our ability to orally communicate what we believe and why is essential to establishing what is implicated not only in our opinions, but also our actions. Therefore, we will have six formal “debates” in class. *In this course, debates are not opportunities to quickly dismiss your peers.* Debates are spaces to explicate what is involved in our judgments, interests, and passions through not only speaking, but also listening.

A sign up sheet for six debates dates and topics will be passed out in class toward the beginning of the semester. Although I will attempt to note everyone’s preferences, I will assign your topic and position. You may present a side that you do not believe. As audience members when you are not presenting, you are expected to offer every courtesy that you would desire for your own presentation. To encourage that all of you attend, listen, and engage each debate, the presentations will be incorporated in your exams. If you are unclear on anything presented, the question and answer period will provide you a forum to clarify the materials presented.

The presentation should follow these general guidelines of building an argument: (1) “Pro” perspective, 15-20 mins.; (2) rebuttal to the opening remarks and the “Con” perspective, 15-20 mins.; (3) “Pro” response to part 2, 5-10 mins.; (4) “Con” conclusion, 5-10 minutes; and (5) open up for class questions, discussion, and a vote. The grade will reflect the performance of your group as a whole; therefore, you will benefit from working together well. Creativity, timeliness, research, and overall organization will be the major criteria for this grade.

### **Position Paper (4-5 pages):**

The paper is due one and a half weeks prior to your group presentation to help insure that all members of the group have something to contribute. Further, this paper hopefully will help you illustrate and improve your ability to construct arguments. With this goal in mind, the format for this paper is very specific: (1) an introduction (which includes a one sentence thesis statement); (2) a brief background description of the issue; (3) the most compelling argument(s) to support your opinion (which requires an explanation of what and of why); (4) the most persuasive argument against your argument (which requires an explanation of what and why); (5) using the arguments you have laid out in parts 2 & 3, an articulation of your own opinion *and why you find this position to be the most persuasive overall*; and (6) a works cited page with at least 10 research sources that were utilized in your paper (do cite properly, even websites).

Again, attending and engaging class discussions is highly recommended.

### **Notes on course requirements...**

- Late papers will be dropped one letter grade per day and one third for handing it in the day it is due past the first 15 minutes of class. Therefore, if you hand your paper in the day it is due past the first fifteen minutes of class an A- will become a B+; if it is handed in the next day, an A- will become a B-; etc. Days that we are not in class (including weekends) count as they do on the calendar, as one day. Technological difficulties are not excusable delays. *Please, note: all late materials should be handed into my mailbox on the ground floor of Mottier Hall with the date and time handed in marked on them.*
- All written assignments are expected to include: your name, a title, numbered pages, a “reasonable” font size (i.e., 11-12 point in a style such as Times New Roman or Palatino), and have some sort of staple/paper clip to bind all the pages together. You should cite all references used in your work other than your own in either Chicago or APA or MLA style.

IF YOU USE WEBSITES, THEY MUST BE CITED PROPERLY. I do count and check citations.

- No matter whether you consider yourself a poor or excellent writer already, if you would like help in any phase of the writing process--from brainstorming to polishing the final draft--call Writing Tutorial Services [WTS, pronounced "wits"] at 855-6738 for an appointment. To be assured of an appointment with the tutor who will know most about your class, please call in advance.

Writing Tutorial Services, in Ballantine 206, is open from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday. WTS also provides walk-in tutorials on the main level of the Undergraduate Library, with hours from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and at the Academic Support Centers in Briscoe, Ashton, and Forest residence halls, open from 7:00 to 11:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday.

The WTS website also offers helpful resources to students, including on-line pamphlets for common writing problems: <http://www.indiana.edu/~cwp/>

- The IU Code of Student Ethics applies and may be found at: <http://campuslife.indiana.edu/Code/index.html>
- If you would like to announce upcoming meetings, rallies, speakers, concerts, etc., please feel free to do so in the first 5 minutes of class. Local events in the public sphere are important for all of us to explore the intersections between theory and practice.
- This upper-level class is an academically rigorous course with lots of reading and a wide range of topics to learn. As such, feel welcome to come to my office hours to discuss challenges or points of interest you encounter. In particular, if you have any special needs (i.e., economic constraints, illnesses, specific learning style requirements), please let me know as soon as possible so that we can try to work out a means to achieving the most optimal learning environment for you.

### **I. BEGINNING WITH THE FOUNDATIONAL FRAMEWORKS**

#### **First Day: Why the Environmental Movement is Not Dead**

Tuesday, January 10

Introduce syllabus, class expectations, & ourselves

[Background Reading: Cox, "Introduction: Speaking for the Environment--for Ourselves"]

#### **Introducing Environmental Communication**

Thursday, January 12

Read: Frank Luntz, "The Environment: A Cleaner, Safer, Healthier America"

George Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant*, pp. 3-34 [E-Reserves]

[In-Class Lecture: Cox, "Chapter 1: The Study of Environmental Communication"; Cox book will arrive at Boxcar Books on 1/14;

<http://www.guerrillanews.com/articles/article.php?id=1010>]

#### **The Relationship between the Environment and Rhetoric**

Tuesday, January 17

Read: Cox, "Chapter 2: Rhetorically Shaping the Environment"

### **Grassroots Campaigns & the Dilemma of Social Change**

Thursday, January 19

Read: Cox, "Chapter 7: Environmental Advocacy Campaigns"

Video: Rainforest Action Network, "Boycott Mitsubishi" (see also:  
<http://www.ran.org/news/newsitem.php?id=202>)

### **Popularizing the "Environment" and Demonizing the Environmental Movement**

Tuesday, January 24

Read: Cox, "Chapter 10: Green Marketing and Corporate Campaigns"  
 [First group's papers due.]

### **Boycotts & Buycotts**

Thursday, January 26

Read: Bullard, "Chapter 12: Alienation and Militancy in the Niger Delta:  
 Petroleum, Politics, and Democracy in Nigeria"

Begin reading Nash for next class.

In class Video: *Delta Force* (Boycott Shell Oil; see also:  
<http://www.essentialaction.org/shell/issues.html>)

For the Citgo Buycott, see also:

<http://www.commondreams.org/views05/0516-25.htm>

## **II. "WILDERNESS" MOVEMENTS**

### **Is "Wilderness" the Original Rorschach Test?**

Tuesday, January 31

Read: Nash, Prologue-Ch. 5

[Second group's papers due.]

### **\*\*\* Group Debate Presentation Topic 1: Should the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Be Opened to Oil Drilling?**

Thursday, February 2

Read: Nash, Chapter 14

### **Wilderness at Risk: The Irony of Victory**

Tuesday, February 7

Read: Nash, Chapters 6-8, 15

[Third group's papers due.]

### **\*\*\* Group Debate Presentation Topic 2: Are Animal Rights an Environmental Issue?**

Thursday, February 9

### **Radical Movements: EarthFirst! And Julia Butterfly Hill**

Tuesday, February 14

Read: Nash, "Chapter 10: Hetch Hetchy"

EarthFirst!'s website: <http://www.earthfirst.org>

Julia Butterfly Hill's website: <http://www.circleoflifefoundation.org>

[Fourth group's papers due.]

**\*\*\* Group Debate Presentation Topic 3: Should Environmentalists Oppose Water Privatization Efforts?**

Thursday, February 16

**Making a Media Plan (& Midterm Discussion)**

Tuesday, February 21

Read: Cox, "Chapter 5: Media and Environmental Journalism"

**\*\*\* Group Pres. Topic 4: Should Indiana University shut down its coal plant?**

Thursday, February 23

[Fifth group's papers due.]

**\*\*\*MIDTERM:** Tuesday, February 28

**IV. TOXIC POLITICS**

**The Beginnings & Effects of *Silent Spring***

Thursday, March 2

Read: Cox, "Chapter 3: Public Participation in Environmental Decisions"

Carson, "A Fable for Tomorrow" [E-Reserves]

Video: *Rachel Carson's Silent Spring*

**The Rise of Anti-Toxics Advocacy: From Love Canal to *Erin Brockovich***

Tuesday, March 7

Read: Cox, "Chapter 6: Risk Communication: Non-Expert Publics and 'Acceptable Risk'"

Video Clips: *A Civil Action*; *Erin Brockovich*

**\*\*\* Group Debate Presentation Topic 5: Should Environmentalists Care if the United States Becoming Hostile to Science?**

Thursday, March 9

Read: Cox, "Chapter 9: Science and Symbolic Legitimacy Boundaries"

**SPRING BREAK (March 12-19)**

**Toxic Politics**

Tuesday, March 21

Read: Cox, "Chapter 4: Conflict Resolution through Collaboration and Consensus" [In-Class Lecture: Reich, *Toxic Politics*, update on TRI, PCBs in Bloomington, Indiana]

Video clip: Ordinary People are Doing Extraordinary Things (Greenpeace/VH-1)

**V. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

### **The Environmental Justice Movement, From the Ground Up**

Thursday, March 23

Read: Cox, “Chapter 8: Environmental Justice: Voices from the Grassroots”  
Video clip: *Defining Motherhood Conference* (Warren County)

### **Environmental Racism and Visions of Justice**

Tuesday, March 28

Read: Bullard, “Part I: A Legacy of Injustice,” esp. Ch. 1, Appendix A: Principles of Environmental Justice, and Appendix B: NGO Language on Environmental Racism  
Video clip: First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit

### **Toxically-Assaulted Sacrifice Zones**

Thursday, March 30

Read: Bullard, “Part II: The Assault on Fence-Line Communities,” esp. Ch 4  
Video clip: Cancer Alley Toxic Tour

### **Struggling over the Land: Colonization and Sustainable Development**

Tuesday, April 4

Read: Bullard, “Part III: Land Rights and Sustainable Development,” esp. Ch 7

### **Globalizing Environmental Justice**

Thursday, April 6

Read: Bullard “Part IV: Human Rights and Global Justice” (except Niger Ch. 12), esp. Ch. 14

## **VI. BACKLASH**

### **Introducing the Backlash**

Tuesday, April 11

Read: Helvarg, Introduction & “Ch. 1: Masters and Possessors of Nature”  
[Sixth group’s papers due.]\*\*

### **The Backlash Today: Democracy in America**

Thursday, April 13

Read: Helvarg, “Ch. 11: Wise Use in the White House 2000-2004”  
Video: *60 Minutes*, “*Clean Air, Clean Water, Dirty Fight*”

### **Violence, SLAPPs, and “Astro-Turf”**

Tuesday, April 18

Read: Helvarg, “Ch. 4 Grass Roots for Sale” and “Ch. 10 Bomb Throwers, 1997”

**Government “Takings” and “Property Rights”**

Thursday, April 20

Read: Helvar, “Ch. 8: Up Against the Law”

Video: *A Question of Rights*

**\*\*\* Group Debate Presentation Topic 6: Should I-69 be built in Indiana on new terrain?**

Tuesday, April 25

**Review/Evaluations**

Thursday, April 27: Last Class. Self and Class Evaluations.

Read: Cox, “Epilogue: Imagining a Different World”

**Final Exam**

Tuesday, May 2 7:15-9:15 PM