Course Outline

EST 361

HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

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Dept. of Environmental Studies

SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
Fall 2016, TuTh 2:00-3:20 pm, Baker 148

DESCRIPTION

Overview
This upper-division course examines the historical and cultural origins, and evolution of the complex, multifaceted, social phenomenon known as the American environmental movement. The course surveys the events, philosophies, and historical/ cultural processes that marked and continue to drive a variety of attitudes toward nature in the United States. Course units examine conservationism and preservationism; early urban environmental reform; the 'second wave' of environmental activism in the 1960s and '70s; the environmental justice movement; and contemporary environmental movements including those that take a global perspective. Course methods include reading, writing, lectures, videos, discussion and debate. As a course project, students examine in depth an historical or contemporary American environmental issue, campaign, advocate or organization of their choosing, employing course concepts, frameworks and understandings in writing a final research paper on that topic.

Prerequisite
Sophomore status or consent of instructor

Objectives
By successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

• Demonstrate familiarity with key moments in the history of the American environmental movement, including conservationism, preservationism, early urban reform movements, the 'second wave' of environmental concern, the environmental justice movement, and contemporary movements including transnational environmental advocacy;

• Relate contextual environmental, social, political, economic, and cultural factors with the rise, fall, rebirth, diversification, successes and limitations of the American environmental movement;

• Demonstrate proficiency in applying basic course concepts and analytical frameworks in the analysis of a particular historical or contemporary American environmental issue, campaign, advocate or organization.
Requirements

- Read all required texts & view all in-class films and videos
- Participate in course discussions and debates
- Write a series of Weekly Reading Notes (@ 1 p.) on the required readings
- Complete three formal essay assignments (@ 3-5 pp.)
- Prepare and submit a final research paper (10-12 pp.)

Grading

Essays (3), 33.3%
Research paper, 33.3%
Weekly reading notes (10) & participation, 33.3%

Communication

Office: 211-B Marshall
Hrs.: M Tu 3:30–5:20pm, & by appointment
Tel. 315.470.4931/ 6636, fax 315.470.6915
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TEXTS

Required


Recommended


Bookstore

ESF Virtual Bookstore, available via myESF. For further information see: http://www.esf.edu/students/books.htm
EST361 LIBRARY GUIDE
http://libguides.esf.edu/content.php?pid=339659

FILMS AND VIDEOS
"Wild by Law: The Rise of Environmentalism and the Creation of the Wilderness Act" (Thurs., 9/15)
"Earth Days: Seeds of a Revolution" (Thurs., 9/29 & 10/6)
"Laid to Waste" (Thurs., 10/27)
"Cesar Chavez: Pesticides Kill Farmworkers" (Tues., 11/1)
"Kids at Risk" (Tues. 11/1)
"Martin Sheen" (Tues. 11/1)
"In Our Own Back Yard: The First Love Canal" (Thurs., 11/3)
"This Changes Everything" (Tues., 11/15)

ASSIGMENTS
Weekly reading notes (due most Tuesdays, as noted below)
Essay #1, "Early American Environmental Movements" (due Tues., 9/27)
Essay #3, "The Environmental Justice Movement" (due Tues., 11/15)
Research paper (see below)

RESEARCH PAPER
Assignment. A detailed assignment will be provided during Week 7.
Proposal (T-1). By Week 10, submit a proposal in the form of an abstract (~1 p.) describing the historical or contemporary American environmental issue, campaign, advocate or organization that you would like to examine in your research paper. Your paper may focus on a topic related to the 2016 elections and the environment.
Abstract, outline and bibliography (T-2). By Week 12, submit a revised abstract, outline and preliminary bibliography for your research paper. At least 10 relevant, peer-reviewed, scholarly journal articles on your topic should be included in the bibliography, in proper reference form.
Specifications. Term papers should be at least 10 pp. in length, double-spaced, 11 or 12 pt. Times New Roman, plus coversheet and bibliography.
Deadline (T-3). Due at the beginning of the regularly scheduled Final Exam period for this course.

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW
(See next page)
SCHEDULE DETAIL

PART I: EARLY AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS

Week 1 – Introduction

Tues., 8/30: Course introduction
What is a social movement?
Life-cycles of social movements
Issue-attention life cycle
Why an historical perspective?
Aims of this course
Assumptions
Syllabus review

RECOMMENDED
Johnston, What Is a Social Movement? ch 1

Thurs., 9/1: Before environmentalism
Native Americans and traditional human ecology in North America
Settlers in the New World
Discussion

REQUIRED:
Nash, Wilderness, prologue, ch's 1, 2

RECOMMENDED:
Merchant, Problems, ch's 2-4
Johnston, What Is a Social Movement? ch 2, "The study of social movements"

ADDITIONAL:

Week 2 – The Wilderness Idea

Tues., 9/6: Romantic wilderness
Romantic wilderness
American wilderness
Henry David Thoreau
Discussion/ debate groups (formation)
REQUIRED:
Nash, *Wilderness*, ch's 3-5

RECOMMENDED:
Merchant, *Problems*, ch 6
Johnston, *What Is a Social Movement?* ch 4, "What is a cultural movement?"

ADDITIONAL:

*** Weekly Reading Note #1 due (*Wilderness*, through ch.2) ***

**Thurs., 9/8: American preservationism**

Discussion

REQUIRED:
Nash, *Wilderness*, ch's 6, 7

RECOMMENDED:
Merchant, *Problems*, ch's 8, 9, 11

ADDITIONAL:

**Week 3 – Conservationism & Preservationism**

**Tues., 9/13: Utilitarianism and the multiple-use ethic**
Lecture

Discussion/ debate groups

REQUIRED:
Nash, *Wilderness*, ch 10

RECOMMENDED:
Merchant, *Problems*, ch's 10-11

ADDITIONAL:
Available: [http://tinyurl.com/3n4wv6j](http://tinyurl.com/3n4wv6j).

*** Weekly Reading Note #2 due (*Wilderness*, ch's 3-7) ***

**Thurs., 9/15: Toward a philosophy of wilderness**
Film: PBS, "Wild by Law: The Rise of Environmentalism and the Creation of the Wilderness Act" (2008), 58 min.

Discussion

REQUIRED:
Nash, *Wilderness*, ch's 11-13
RECOMMENDED:
- Merchant, *Problems*, ch 13
- Johnston, *What Is a Social Movement?* ch 3, "What is a political movement?"

ADDITIONAL:

**Week 4 – Analyzing Preservationism as a Social Movement**

**Tues., 9/20: What Do Social Movements Do?**

Lecture
Debate preparation

REQUIRED:
- Nash, *Wilderness*, ch's 14-16, epilogue

RECOMMENDED:
- Johnston, *What Is a Social Movement?* ch 5, "What do social movements do?"

ADDITIONAL:

*** Weekly Reading Note #3 due (*Wilderness*, ch's 8-13) ***

*** Essay #1 – Early Environmental Movements (due Tues., 9/27) ***

**Thurs., 9/22: Debate #1**

Debate #1: "For the Greatest Good?"

**PART II: THE SECOND WAVE OF AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTALISM**

**Week 5 – 1960s Environmentalism**

**Tues., 9/27: Urbanization, health and the environment**

Urban and industrial roots of American environmentalism
Discussion

REQUIRED:
- Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, intro, ch's 1, 2 (pp. xiii-120)

RECOMMENDED:
- Merchant, *Problems*, ch's 5, 12
ADDITIONAL:

**Thurs., 9/29: Earth Day**
Film: PBS, "Earth Days: The Seeds of a Revolution" (2010), 100 min. – Part I
Discussion
REQUIRED:
Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, ch 3
RECOMMENDED:
Merchant, *Problems*, ch's 13-14
ADDITIONAL:

**Week 6 – American Environmentalism in the 1960s, ’70s, and ’80s**

**Tues., 10/4: Professionalization of environmentalism**
Mainstreaming environmentalism

Discussion/ debate groups
REQUIRED:
Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, ch 4
ADDITIONAL:

*** Weekly Reading Note #4 due (*Forcing the Spring*, through ch.3) ***
**Thurs., 10/6: 1960s environmentalism (cont’d)**

Film: PBS, "Earth Days: The Seeds of a Revolution" (2010) , 100 min. – Part II

Discussion

**ADDITIONAL:**


**Week 7 – Grassroots Response**

**Tues., 10/11: Alternative environmental movements**

From the grassroots

Research paper assignment

Discussion/ debate groups

**REQUIRED:**

Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, ch 5

**RECOMMENDED:**

Merchant, *Problems*, ch's 6, 7, 12, 15

Johnston, *What Is a Social Movement?*, ch 6, "Researching social movements"

Lester & Lester, *Writing Research Papers*, ch 2, "Finding a Topic"

*** Weekly Reading Note #5 due (*Forcing the Spring*, ch 4) ***

**Thurs., 10/13: Race, ethnicity and environmental issues**

Lecture

Discussion

Debate preparation

**REQUIRED:**

Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, ch 7

**RECOMMENDED:**

Merchant, *Problems*, ch's 4, 6, 7, 15

**ADDITIONAL:**


Week 8 – Diversity in American Environmentalism

Tues., 10/18: Gender, class and the environment
Lecture
Discussion/ debate groups
REQUIRED:
  Gottlieb, Forcing the Spring, ch's 6, 8
RECOMMENDED:
  Merchant, Problems, ch 12
ADDITIONAL:

*** Weekly Reading Note #6 due (Forcing the Spring, ch's 5, 7) ***


Thurs., 10/20: Debate #2
Debate #2: "Mainstream vs. Grassroots Environmentalism"
REQUIRED:
  Gottlieb, Forcing the Spring (all)

PART III: THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT

Week 9 – Toxic Wastes and Race

Tues., 10/25: Origins of the environmental justice movement
Lecture
Discussion
REQUIRED:
  Cole & Foster, From the Ground Up, preface, intro, ch 1 (pp. 1-33)
ADDITIONAL:


**Thurs., 10/27: Environmental racism and inequality**

Film: Robert Bahar & George McCollough, "Laid to Waste" (1997), 52 min.

The political economy of environmental racism

Discussion/ debate prep

REQUIRED:

Cole & Foster, *From the Ground Up*, ch's 2-3

ADDITIONAL:


*** Research Paper Assignment #T-1 (due Tues., 11/3) ***

**Week 10 – Varieties of Environmental Justice Advocacy**

**Tues., 11/1: Circle of poison: from fields to plate**

Videos: "Cesar Chavez: Pesticides Kill Farm Workers" (1990), 11 min.; Earth Justice, "Kids at Risk" (2009), 4 min.; Food, Inc., "Martin Sheen Stands Up for Farm Workers" (2009), 1 min.

Pesticides, food safety, and farmworker health

Discussion/ debate prep

REQUIRED:

Cole & Foster, *From the Ground Up*, ch 4

ADDITIONAL:


*** Weekly Reading Note #7 due (From the Ground Up, through ch.3) ***
**Thurs., 11/3: The structure of environmental decision making**

Film: Lynn Corcoran, "In Our Own Backyard: The First Love Canal" (1982), 59 min.

Discussion

REQUIRED:
Cole & Foster, *From the Ground Up*, ch 5

RECOMMENDED:
Lester & Lester, *Writing Research Papers*, ch's 3, 5, 8, 9, Appendix

ADDITIONAL:

**Week 11 – Global Environmental Justice**

**Tues., 11/8: Indigenous Environmental Network**

Discussion

Debate prep

REQUIRED:
Cole & Foster, *From the Ground Up*, ch 6

ADDITIONAL:


*** Weekly Reading Note #8 due (*From the Ground Up*, ch's 4-5) ***

*** Essay #3 – The Environmental Justice Movement (due Tues., 11/15) ***

*** ELECTION DAY ***

**Thurs., 11/10: Debate #3**

Debate #3: "Is Environmental Inequality Intentional?"

REQUIRED:
Cole & Foster, *From the Ground Up*, ch 7

ADDITIONAL:

*** Research Paper Assignment #T-2 (due Thurs., 11/17) ***
PART IV: FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

Week 12 – Globalization and the Environment

Tues., 11/15: This Changes Everything?
Film: Naomi Klein, "This Changes Everything" (2015), 90 min.

REQUIRED:
- Speth, Bridge at the End of the World, preface, introduction, ch's 1-2

RECOMMENDED:
- Klein, This Changes Everything
- Merchant, Problems, ch 15

ADDITIONAL:

Thurs., 11/17: System Failure?
Modern capitalism: out of control?
Discussion/ debate groups

REQUIRED:
- Speth, Bridge at the End of the World, ch 3

ADDITIONAL:

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 13 – The Great Transformation

Tues., 11/29: Market-based environmental transformations
Lecture
Discussion

REQUIRED:
- Speth, Bridge at the End of the World, ch's 4-6

RECOMMENDED:
- Lester & Lester, Writing Research Papers, ch's 7, 10, 12, 13, 15

ADDITIONAL:

*** Weekly Reading Note #9 due (Bridge, through ch.6) ***

**Thurs., 12/1: Beyond today’s capitalism?**

Lecture  
Discussion/ debate groups  

REQUIRED:  
Speth, *Bridge at the End of the World*, ch's 7-9

ADDITIONAL:  

**Week 14 – New Environmentalism?**

**Tues., 12/6: New consciousness, new politics**

Lecture  
Discussion  
Debate preparation  

REQUIRED:  
Speth, *Bridge at the End of the World* (all)  
Litfin, *Ecovillages*  
Johnston, *What Is a Social Movement?* ch 7, "Where are social movements headed?"

ADDITIONAL:  

*** Weekly Reading Note #10 due (Bridge, ch's 7-9) ***

**Thurs., 12/8: Debate #4**

Debate #4: "Future of the American Environmental Movement"

**Final Exam Week**

*** Research Paper Assignment #T-3 due ***
NOTICES

Accommodations

SUNY-ESF works closely with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at Syracuse University in assisting students with learning and physical disabilities. If you think you may need accommodations in this course related to a disability, you may contact the ESF Office of Student Affairs, 110 Bray Hall, tel. 315.470.6660, for assistance with the process. You may also contact ODS directly, Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, 315.443.4498, to schedule an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented Disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible. To learn more about ODS, visit http://disabilityservices.syr.edu.

Academic integrity

Plagiarism is presenting others' work as your own without acknowledgment of its source(s). Plagiarism includes verbatim and close paraphrasing of material from course texts and other published materials, cutting and pasting from electronic sources, and unattributed paraphrasing. Acts of academic dishonesty are defined in the ESF Academic Integrity Handbook and violate the College's Code of Student Conduct. Students are accountable for such acts. If you have any questions about how to properly use & cite others' work, please consult writing reference texts, your instructor, or other campus resources.

Personal electronics

This course is intended to be an educational experience for all. To ensure that the classroom environment is conducive for learning, please follow these guidelines in use of personal electronics: Cell phones should be off while class is in session. (If, due to a personal emergency, you need to maintain your phone on silent mode, please notify the instructor in advance.) Laptops, tablets, e-readers, etc. may be used for reading, note-taking, and course-related research activities. Text messaging, social media viewing, updating, etc., during class is disruptive and not permitted. Use of earphones or 'buds' during class is unconducive to participation and is not permitted. Disruptive behavior, including through inappropriate use of personal electronics in the classroom, is a violation of ESF’s Code of Student Conduct. Students who are disruptive may be asked to leave the classroom; persistent disruptions will have further consequences.