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 2014, 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 called the American environmental movement. The course surveys the events, philosophies and historical/cultural processes that marked and continue to drive various competing 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 movements including those that take a more global perspective. Course methods utilized include reading, writing, lectures, videos, discussion and debate. As a course research project, students examine 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 the 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 short 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 (13) & 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" (Tues., 9/11)
"Earth Days: Seeds of a Revolution" (Thurs., 9/30 & Tues., 10/7)
"Laid to Waste" (Thurs., 10/24)
"Cesar Chavez: Pesticides Kill Farmworkers" (Tues., 10/28)
"Kids at Risk" (Tues. 10/28)
"Martin Sheen" (Tues. 10/28)
"In Our Own Back Yard: The First Love Canal" (Thurs., 10/30)
"Gus Speth at the Garrison Institute" (Tues., 11/11)

ASSIGNMENTS
Weekly Reading Notes (due most Tuesdays, as noted below)
Essay #1, "Early American Environmental Movements" (due Tues., 9/23)
Essay #2, "American Environmentalism: The Second Wave" (due Tues., 10/21)
Essay #3, "The Environmental Justice Movement" (due Tues., 11/11)
Research paper (see below)

SEMESTER-LONG RESEARCH PROJECT
Assignment. A detailed assignment will be handed out 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.
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 ~10-12 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., 8/26: 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
Della Porta & Diani. Social Movements: An Introduction, ch 1

Thurs., 8/28: 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
Lester & Lester, Writing Research Papers, ch 2

ADDITIONAL:

Week 2 – The Wilderness Idea

Tues., 9/2: 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
Della Porta & Diani, *Social Movements: An Introduction*, ch 2

ADDITIONAL:

*** Weekly Reading Note #1 due (*Wilderness*, through ch.5) ***

**Thurs., 9/4: American preservationism**

Discussion

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

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

ADDITIONAL:
Available: http://www.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/writings/our_national_parks/

**Week 3 – Conservationism & Preservationism**

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

Lecture

Discussion/ debate groups

REQUIRED:
Nash, *Wilderness*, ch 10

RECOMMENDED:
Merchant, *Problems*, ch's 10-11
Della Porta & Diani, *Social Movements: An Introduction*, ch 3
Lester & Lester, *Writing Research Papers*, ch's 3, 5, 8, 9, Appendix B

ADDITIONAL:

*** Weekly Reading Note #2 due (*Wilderness*, through ch 10) ***

**Thurs., 9/11: 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

ADDITIONAL:

*** Essay #1 – Early Environmental Movements (due Tues., 9/23) ***

**Week 4 – The Irony of Victory**

**Tues., 9/16: The irony of victory**

Lecture
Debate preparation

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

RECOMMENDED:
Merchant, *Problems*, ch 14-15
Della Porta & Diani. *Social Movements: An Introduction*, ch 4

ADDITIONAL:

*** Weekly Reading Note #3 due (Wilderness, through epilogue) ***

**Thurs., 9/18: Debate #1**

Debate #1: "For the Greatest Good?"

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

**Week 5 – 1960s environmentalism**

**Tues., 9/23: 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
- Della Porta & Diani. *Social Movements: An Introduction*, ch 5

ADDITIONAL:

*** Weekly Reading Note #4 due (*Forcing the Spring*, through ch 2) ***

**Thurs., 9/25: NO CLASS**

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

**Tues., 9/30: 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:

*** Weekly Reading Note #5 due (*Forcing the Spring*, ch 3) ***

**Thurs., 10/2: The professionalization of environmentalism**

Mainstreaming environmentalism

Discussion/ debate groups

REQUIRED:
- Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, ch 4

RECOMMENDED:
- Della Porta & Diani. *Social Movements: An Introduction*, ch 6

ADDITIONAL:

**Week 7 – Grassroots Response**

**Tues., 10/7: 1960s environmentalism (cont'd)**
Film: PBS, "Earth Days: The Seeds of a Revolution" (2010) – Part II
Discussion
REQUIRED:
   Gottlieb, Forcing the Spring, ch 5
RECOMMENDED:
   Della Porta & Diani. Social Movements: An Introduction, ch 7
ADDITIONAL:

*** Weekly Reading Note #6 due (Forcing the Spring, ch's 4-5) ***

**Thurs., 10/9: Alternative environmental movements**
From the grassroots
Research paper assignment
Discussion/ debate groups
REQUIRED:
   Gottlieb, Forcing the Spring, ch 6
RECOMMENDED:
   Merchant, Problems, ch's 6, 7, 12, 15
ADDITIONAL:

*** Essay #2 – American Environmentalism: The Second Wave (due Tues., 10/21) ***
Week 8 – Diversity in American Environmentalism

**Tues., 10/14: 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
- Della Porta & Diani. *Social Movements: An Introduction*, ch 8

ADDITIONAL:

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

**Thurs., 10/16: Debate #2**

Debate #2: "Mainstream vs. Grassroots Environmentalism"

REQUIRED:
- Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring* (all)

RECOMMENDED:
- Merchant, *Problems*, ch 12

ADDITIONAL:
PART III: HISTORY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT

Week 9 – Toxic Wastes and Race

Tues., 10/21: Origins of the environmental justice movement
Lecture
Discussion
REQUIRED:
Cole & Foster, From the Ground Up, preface, intro, ch 1 (pp. 1-33)
RECOMMENDED:
Della Porta & Diani. Social Movements: An Introduction, ch 9
ADDITIONAL:

*** Weekly Reading Note #8 due (From the Ground Up, through ch 1) ***

Thurs., 10/23: 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., 10/28) ***

Week 10 – Diversity within the Environmental Justice Movement

Tues., 10/28: 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 #9 due (From the Ground Up, ch's 2-4) ***

**Thurs., 10/30: 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

ADDITIONAL:


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

**Week 11 – Global environmental justice**

**Tues., 11/4: The Indigenous Environmental Network**

Discussion

Debate prep

REQUIRED:

Cole & Foster, From the Ground Up, ch 6

RECOMMENDED:

Della Porta & Diani. Social Movements: An Introduction, ch's 5, 7 (review)

ADDITIONAL:


*** Weekly Reading Note #10 due (From the Ground Up, ch's 5-6) ***
**Thurs., 11/6: Debate #3**

Debate #3: "Is Environmental Inequality Intentional?"

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

**RECOMMENDED:**
- Della Porta & Diani. *Social Movements: An Introduction*, ch's 3, 4 (review)

**ADDITIONAL:**

*** Research Paper Assignment #T-2 (due Thurs., 11/15) ***

**PART IV: FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT**

**Week 12 – Globalization and the Environment**

**Tues., 11/11: System failure?**

Modern capitalism: out of control?
- Video: "Dr. Gus Speth at the Garrison Institute" (2010), 27 min.
- Discussion

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

**RECOMMENDED:**
- Merchant, *Problems*, ch 15

**ADDITIONAL:**

*** Weekly Reading Note #11 due (Bridge, through ch.2) ***

**Thurs., 11/13: Limits of today's environmentalism**

Lecture
- Discussion/ debate groups

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

**RECOMMENDED:**
- Della Porta & Diani. *Social Movements: An Introduction*, ch 8 (review)

**ADDITIONAL:**

**Week 13 – The Great Transformation**

**Tues., 11/18: Market-based environmental transformations**

Lecture
Discussion

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

ADDITIONAL:

*** Weekly Reading Note #12 due (Bridge, through ch.6) ***

**Thurs., 11/20: Beyond today's capitalism?**

Lecture
Discussion/ debate groups

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

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

ADDITIONAL:

**THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**Week 14 – New Environmentalism?**

**Tues., 12/2: New consciousness, new politics**

Lecture
Discussion
Debate preparation

REQUIRED:
Speth, *Bridge at the End of the World* (all)

RECOMMENDED:
Della Porta & Diani. *Social Movements: An Introduction*, ch 9 (review)

ADDITIONAL:
Thurs., 12/4: Debate #4
Debate #4: "Can Today's Capitalism Be Saved?"

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 properly acknowledging 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' original work, please consult writing reference texts, your instructor, or other campus resources.

Personal electronics
This course is intended as an educational experience. To ensure that the classroom learning environment is conducive for all, please follow these guidelines in use of personal electronics: Cell phones should be turned 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 additional consequences.