

PEOPLE AND RESOURCES
GEOG 139/ENVIR ST 139
Spring 2012, Tuesday & Thursday
2:30-3:45
Humanities 1101



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From scholars, the media, and environmental activists, it is now common to hear that we are living in a recently distinguished geological epoch known as the “Anthropocene.” The term suggests that the Earth’s geologic, atmospheric, and biologic features are no longer governed by “natural” processes, but are heavily influenced by human society. Nearly all such accounts present this as a problem. Indeed, in recent months and years, news headlines have enumerate the negative effects of human-induced environmental change: a global population of seven billion, the Fukushima nuclear meltdown, global “weirding,” water scarcity, deforestation in the tropics, and the adverse effects of fracking, pesticide use and genetic modification constitute only a short list of complicated “environmental” issues. These are complex problems that emerge at the intersection of human civilization and its “environment.” But how do we locate and conceptualize these issues? How do we identify the causal mechanisms that produce them? How do we understand the threats that they present to our immediate local environments as well as to our distant and global future? Finally, if human factors are at the center of environmental change, how do we begin to conceptualize methods for ameliorating environmental degradation and producing environmental conditions conducive to (good) life on earth?

This course offers an introductory response to these questions by exploring various theories of environmental change and the characteristics that define nature-society relations. Throughout the term, we will explore physical environments in terms of the social, political, economic and legal practices that shape their material form. At the same time, we will look at the biophysical and material processes that produce and sustain human environments. We will also discuss how and why environmental change occurs and—just as importantly—how those changes are understood, managed, and politicized. As we do so, we will pay particular attention to environmental issues and power relations, exploring why some groups are more exposed to environmental threats than others. The textbook for the course will introduce you to a number of perspectives on environmental change and environmental management, providing you with a better vocabulary for

understanding, discussing, and dealing with environmental issues. The objective of the course is not only to conceptualize human-environment relations but also to consider strategies for ecological and natural resource management challenges and to approach them with a critical eye.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- ⊕ Understand and articulate how society and environment are intertwined through a number of different theoretical lenses.
- ⊕ Be able to critically assess a number of different perspectives on the causes of environmental change as well as methods for producing environmental sustainability.
- ⊕ Be able to critically assess the causal factors that contribute to a number of different environmental issues.
- ⊕ Be able to situate themselves as “environmental citizens” in an increasingly interconnected world.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Robbins, Paul, John Hintz, and Sarah A. Moore. 2010. *Environment and Society: A Critical Introduction*. Wiley-Blackwell.

The text is available at Rainbow Books. E-Books can also be purchased on-line for a reduced cost.

Other required texts will be posted on the course Learn@UW page. Check the website regularly for updates and to download the readings.

REQUIREMENTS & EXPECTATIONS

In this course you will be expected to do the following:

- ⊕ Read all of the assigned texts.
- ⊕ Attend lectures regularly. Course lectures will touch on and develop key concepts from our text, but they will also go beyond them to critically explore a diverse array of environmental issues. You should expect the course to be somewhat interactive. I will routinely ask questions of you, but I will also expect you to ask questions of me.
- ⊕ Attend discussion sections regularly and participate thoughtfully and courteously in discussions. Discussion sections provide you with an opportunity to clarify and engage more deeply with the concepts and issues presented in the course. They also provide you with a chance to engage with each other’s ideas. To make the most of discussion sections you will need to critically evaluate the ideas presented in lecture, course readings, and those brought forward by your classmates; you will need to question them, dispute them, or make them your own. The objective is for you to learn to develop defensible positions – not just ‘opinions’ – on what is happening in the complex socio-ecological worlds you inhabit, and what might constitute a coherent ethical/political response. Topics of discussion will emerge from material in lectures as well as the assigned readings.
- ⊕ Complete all written and oral assignments by the due dates provided in this syllabus and determined by your TA (more below).
- ⊕ Complete short, biweekly quizzes (unannounced).
- ⊕ Complete a midterm and final exam.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

In lectures and discussion sections, it is our collective responsibility to foster a positive learning environment. I therefore expect you to actively demonstrate respect for your classmates. This includes (but is not limited to):

- ⊕ Arriving in class on time and staying until the end. Space in the lecture hall is limited. If you must come in late or leave early, please sit near an exit and avoid distracting other students or disrupting the class.
- ⊕ Respecting your instructors and your fellow students when we are speaking by not engaging in side conversations with your classmates or using class time for pleasure reading, crossword puzzles, social networking, etc.
- ⊕ Turning off your cell phone when you come to class. If you must leave it on for some reason (in case of family emergency), please set it to “silent.”
- ⊕ Laptop policy: TBD

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

- ⊕ Attendance and Participation in discussion sections: 15%
Your discussion grade depends on both participation and attendance. Some section activities will require group or individual preparation outside of class. Your preparation will therefore also constitute part of your discussion grade. Be forewarned that failure to attend three or more discussion sections will result in the reduction of your final *course* grade by one letter for each section missed. (E.g. if you miss three sections, an A would become an AB; if you miss four sections, an A would become a B, and so on).
- ⊕ Debate: 10%
Toward the end of the term, students in each discussion section will divide into groups and have a debate about the state of agriculture and the economy. Each group will be assigned a position on agricultural intensification, the “gene” revolution, and the environment. Together, students will develop an argument in support of their position and a presentation in support of their case. Debates will take place the week of May 8th and draw on material from earlier in the course. Details will be forthcoming.
- ⊕ Bi-weekly quizzes in lecture: 10%
Every two weeks, I will administer an unannounced quiz during lecture consisting of multiple choice or short answer questions.
- ⊕ Writing Assignments: 20%.
All students will write THREE short essays of no more than 700 words each on course topics, to be discussed during class. These essays are meant to critically engage with the course material. These assignments are due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, February 13th, Tuesday, March 13th, and Thursday, April 26. Chicago style in-text referencing should be used (do not use footnotes or endnotes).
- ⊕ Midterm Exam: 20%.
The midterm will take place on March 22nd during regular class time. The exam will require students to demonstrate an understanding of both the lecture material and course readings. The exam will consist primarily of multiple-choice questions, with some short answers.

⊕ Final exam: 25%.

The final exam will take place during the exam period, on May 18th, 2012, from 5:05-7:05pm, room TBD. It will cover material from all of the lecture and course readings, with an emphasis on the course content after the mid-term. Like the midterm, the final will be largely multiple-choice with some short answer questions.

WORKLOAD

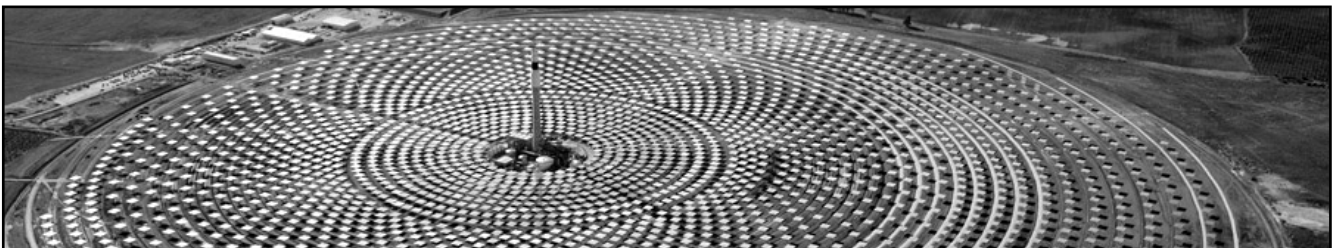
This is a four-credit course. You should expect to spend twelve hours per week on this course: three hours and 30 minutes in lecture; one hour for discussion section; and roughly seven hours and 30 minutes outside the classroom (this will vary from week to week, depending on whether there is a paper due or an exam). This includes all lectures, discussions, readings, and writing assignments.

GRADING STANDARDS

- A :: 95-100% :: Achievement is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- AB :: 90-95% :: Achievement is excellent relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- B :: 85-90% :: Achievement is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- BC :: 80-85% :: Achievement is slightly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- C :: 70-80% :: Achievement meets the course requirements in every respect.
- D :: 60-70% :: Achievement is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
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- F :: < 60% :: Achievement is inadequate and no credit will be given for the course.
- Incomplete :: I will give incompletes only in the event of remarkable circumstances that are discussed with me well in advance of the end of the term.

OFFICE AND CAFÉ HOURS

I will hold regular office hours for one hour each week. I recognize, though, that instructors' offices can be intimidating. For that reason, each Thursday, between 1:30-2:30 you may find me (and perhaps your classmates) at the Steep and Brew on State Street for coffee and conversation. This is an opportunity for students to engage with me and with one another over course materials, conversations from lecture, or to step back from them and discuss other topics in a casual atmosphere. I will also be available to meet for private consultation on more focused issues by appointment.



CLASS SCHEDULE

January 24:	Introduction Course overview & expectations
THEME I:	PERSPECTIVES ON THE ENVIRONMENT
January 26:	Introduction to the Environmental Issues: Perspectives on a Global Environment Chapter I of Robbins, et al. "The View from Clifton Bridge."
January 31:	Producing "Natures" Chapter 8 of Robbins, <i>et al.</i> "Social Construction of Nature." Castree, Noel. 2000. "Nature." In R.J. Johnson, Derek Gregory, Geraldine Pratt, and Michael Watts, eds., <i>Dictionary of Human Geography</i> .
February 2:	Producing "Natures" (cont.) Whatmore, Sarah and Lorraine Thorne. 1998. "Wild(er)ness: reconfiguring the geographies of wildlife." <i>Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers</i> , 23: 435-454.
February 7:	Ethics and Ideology Chapter 5 of Robbins, <i>et al.</i> "Environmental Ethics." "Environmental Ethics." 2008. <i>Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> , http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-environmental/ RECOMMENDED: Bell, Michael. 2009. "Ideology of Environmental Domination." In Michael Bell, <i>An Invitation to Environmental Sociology</i> . Los Angeles: Pine Forge Press.
February 9:	Ethics and Ideology (cont.) Leopold, Aldo. 1986 [1943]. "The Land Ethic." In Aldo Leopold, <i>A Sand County Almanac</i> . New York: Ballentine Books.

THEME II:	ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE: CONCEPTUALIZING PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS
February 14:	<p>Limited Resources at Seven Billion ***Essay 1 Due***</p> <p>Chapter 2 of Robbins, <i>et al.</i> "Population and Scarcity."</p> <p>Mathus, Thomas. 1798. Selections from "An Essay on the Principle of Population."</p>
February 16:	<p>Limited Resources at Seven Billion (cont.)</p> <p>Kaplan, Robert. 1994. "The Coming Anarchy." <i>The Atlantic Monthly</i>, 232 (2).</p> <p>Dalby, S. 1998. "Reading Robert Kaplan's Coming Anarchy." In G. Ó Tuathail, S. Dalby and P. Routledge (eds.), <i>The Geopolitics Reader</i>, London: Routledge: 197-203.</p>
February 21:	<p>Managing the Commons</p> <p>Chapter 4 of Robbins, <i>et al.</i> "Institutions and the Commons"</p> <p>Guest Lecture: Professor Ian Baird, "Rubber, Land, and the Commons in Laos"</p>
February 23:	<p>Managing the Commons (cont.)</p> <p>St. Martin, K. 2001. "Making space for community resource management in fisheries." <i>Annals of the Association of American Geographers</i> 91(1): 122-42.</p>
February 28:	<p>Managing the Commons (cont.)</p> <p>Guest Lecture: Cathy Day, "Interrogating the 'Commons': Perspectives from West Africa."</p>
March 1:	<p>Enclosure, Natural Capitalism, Greening the Market</p> <p>Chapter 3 of Robbins, <i>et al.</i> "Markets and Commodities"</p>
March 6:	<p>Enclosure, Natural Capitalism, Greening the Market (cont.)</p> <p>Hawkins, Paul, Amory Lovins, and Hunter Lovins. 1999. "Reinventing the Wheels: Hyper Cars and Neighborhoods," in <i>Natural Capitalism</i>, Boston: Little, Brown and Company.</p>

March 8:	<p>Capitalism and Environment: Compatible or Contradictory?</p> <p>Chapter 7 of Robbins, <i>et al.</i> "Political Economy"</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: Watch Baichwa, Jennifer. 2006. <i>Manufactured Landscapes</i>, Toronto: Foundry Films. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZnZOe_tKCs</p>
March 13:	<p>Capitalism and Environment: Compatible or Contradictory? (cont.) ***Essay 2 Due***</p> <p>Swingadow, Eric. 2005. "Dispossessing H₂O: the contested terrain of water privatization." <i>Capitalism, Nature, Socialism</i>, 16(1): 81-98.</p>
March 15:	<p>Threatening Environments: Risks and Hazards</p> <p>Chapter 6 of Robbins, <i>et al.</i> "Risks and Hazards"</p> <p>Bell, Michael. 2009. "The Rationality of Risk." In Michael Bell, <i>An Invitation to Environmental Sociology</i>. Los Angeles: Pine Forge Press.</p>
March 20	<p>Threatening Environments: Hurricane Katrina and Risk</p> <p>Lakoff, Andrew. 2006. "From Disaster to Catastrophe: The Limits of Preparedness." SSRC Webforum, <i>Understanding Katrina</i>, http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/Lakoff/.</p> <p>Smith, Neil. 2006. "There's No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster." SSRC Webforum, <i>Understanding Katrina</i>, http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/Smith/.</p>
March 22:	MIDTERM EXAM
THEME III:	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES & DEBATES
March 27:	<p>The Proper Place of "Wild" Animals?</p> <p>Chapter 11 of Robbins, <i>et al.</i> "Wolves"</p> <p>Guest Lecture: Professor Lisa Naughton, "Living with Wolves in Wisconsin"</p> <p>Wydeven, Adrien. 2011. "The History of Wolves in Wisconsin." Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.</p>
March 29:	<p>The Future of Forests</p> <p>Chapter 10 of Robbins, <i>et al.</i> "Trees"</p>
April 3, 5:	Spring Break – No Class

<p>April 10:</p>	<p>Chicken of the Sea</p> <p>Chapter 12 of Robbins, <i>et al.</i> "Tuna"</p> <p>Baird, Ian.G. and Noah Quastel 2011. Dolphin-safe tuna from California to Thailand: Localisms in environmental certification of global commodity networks. <i>Annals of the Association of American Geographers</i>: 101(2): 337-</p>
<p>April 12:</p>	<p>Bottled Water</p> <p>Chapter 13 of Robbins, <i>et al.</i> "Bottled Water"</p> <p>Film: <i>Flow: For Love of Water</i>, 2008.</p>
<p>April 17:</p>	<p>Atmosphere at Risk ***Essay 3 Due***</p> <p>Chapter 9 of Robbins, <i>et al.</i> "Carbon Dioxide"</p>
<p>April 19:</p>	<p>Atmosphere at Risk (cont.)</p> <p>Bumpus, Adam. 2011. "The Matter of Carbon: Understanding the Materiality of CO₂ in Carbon Offsets." <i>Antipode</i>, 43 (3): 612-638.</p>
<p>April 24:</p>	<p>Energy and the Environment</p> <p>Standlee. 2006. "Ch. 1, Globalism, oil, and the power elites." <i>Oil, Globalization, And the War for the Arctic Refuge</i>, Albany: SUNY University Press.</p> <p>Watts, M. 2006. "Empire of Oil: capitalist Dispossession and the Scramble for Africa." <i>Monthly Review</i>, 54 (4).</p>
<p>April 26:</p>	<p>Eating and the Environment: Introduction</p> <p>Chapter 14 of Robbins, <i>et al.</i> " French Fries."</p>
<p>May 1:</p>	<p>Eating and the Environment: Agricultural Intensification & Supply</p> <p>Avery, Dennis. 1998. "A Promise of High-Yield Agriculture." <i>Forum for Applied Research and Policy</i>, 13 (2): 70-76.</p> <p>Clay, Jason. 2011. "Freeze the footprint of food." <i>Nature</i>, 475: 287-289.</p> <p>"The Growing Problem." 2010. <i>Nature</i>, 466 (29): 546-547.</p>

May 3:	<p>Eating and the Environment: Intensifying What?</p> <p>Schapiro, Mark. 2002. "Sowing Disaster?" <i>The Nation</i>, October 28, 2002:11-19.</p> <p>Patel, Raj. 2007. "Introduction." <i>Stuffed and Starved</i>, New York: Melville House</p> <p>Watch: Bittman, Mark. 2007. "What's Wrong with What We Eat?" <i>TED Talks</i>, http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/en/mark_bittman_on_what_s_wrong_with_what_we_eat.html.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: Watch <i>Food, Inc.</i></p>
May 8:	<p>Eating and the Environment (cont.): Labor, Environment, and Difference</p> <p>Duffy, Charlie. 2000. "At the Slaughterhouse, Some Things Never Die." <i>New York Times</i>, June 16, 2000.</p> <p>Schlosser, Eric. 1995. "In the Strawberry Fields." <i>The Atlantic Magazine</i>, November, 1995.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: Sinclair, Upton. 1906. <i>The Jungle</i>. Published by Upton Sinclair.</p>
May 10:	<p>Final Class Wrap-up and Conclusions</p>
May 18:	<p>FINAL EXAM 5:05-7:05pm Room TBD</p>

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work for a course is grounds for awarding a grade of F or N for the entire course. All work you submit must be your own. Students are responsible for educating themselves on what constitutes plagiarism.

LIFE INTERRUPTIONS

Students are expected to submit work at the times scheduled in the syllabus. Possible exceptions include serious illness, family emergency, or other legitimate conflict. If these apply, you must contact me and Cathy directly to request an extension or makeup. Make these arrangements as soon as you know of the conflict--**BEFORE** the due date if possible. Students who miss the final exam cannot make it up unless their failure to take the exam was caused by a serious health problem or other fully documented and verifiable emergency. All make-up exams will be essay exams.

SPECIAL NEEDS

It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me and the McBurney Resource Center located at 702 W. Johnson Street, Suite 2104 <http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu> , 608-263-2741 to discuss individual needs for accommodations.