THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

Department of Environmental Studies & Planning
Department of Sociology
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This syllabus is for a 3-semester-unit course, taught in a three-hour class once a week for 15 weeks.

Course Description:
The conservation and environmental movements have been important influences on American society across the Twentieth Century. We trace the American conservation movement from the organization of the Sierra Club and the first Audubon Societies in the 1890s through the New Deal, from the first campaigns to establish National Parks through the legislative victories for clean water, clean air, and wilderness protection in the early 1960s. We examine the transformation of the conservation movement into a new environmental movement after 1970. We explore the emergence of new types of activism and legal advocacy, the tension between national organizations and the grassroots, and the development of such new components as the environmental justice movement in communities of color. We also look at the emergence of a global environmental movement in the 1980s. Guided by a framework of social movement analysis, we pay close attention to the roles of organizations, resources, leadership, membership, values, political culture, and counter-movements.

Required Texts:

Stephen Fox, The American Conservation Movement: John Muir and His Legacy (Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1981)

Douglas H. Strong, Dreamers and Defenders: American Conservationists (Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1988)

Robert Gottlieb, Forcing the Spring: The Transformation of the American Environmental Movement (Island Press, 1993)

Class Reader, containing:
  David Walls, The Activist’s Almanac (1993), section on the conservation and environmental movements
**Course Requirements:**

1. Attendance, preparation, and participation are essential. Attendance will be verified each class period. Participation in class discussions will count 15% of your grade. Unexcused absences will lower this score.

2. You will write several short (1-2 pages) reaction papers as assigned, to count 20% of your grade.

3. You will present to the class oral reports on assigned topics, sometimes as part of a collaborative team, and may be asked to serve on a reaction panel to videos, to count 15% of your grade.

4. You will complete a take-home mid-term assignment, to count 25% of your grade.

5. You will write a research paper (at least 10 pages, typed, double-spaced), to count 25% of your grade. The subject can be a local environmental action group, a local chapter or a national environmental organization, or an historical topic related to the conservation or environmental movements. Details on this assignment will be provided later. Plan to consult with the instructor on choice of topic.

**Course Objectives:**

1. You will be able to identify and date the emergence and development of the conservation movement, situate it in its historical period, and identify three or four leading people, organizations, and issues important to development of the movement;

2. You will be able to identify and date the emergence and development of the environmental movement, situate it in its historical period, and identify three or four leading people, organizations and issues important to development of the movement;

3. You will be able to apply a model of strategic analysis to the conservation and environmental movements which helps explain why they emerged when they did, who their constituencies were, and what circumstances allowed them to win victories;

4. You will be able to describe and characterize the backlash to the environmental movement that emerged in the 1980s and continues to date.

5. You will be able to describe the issues and challenges that face the environmental movement at the present.
Course Outline and Readings:

Required reading should be done before class. Recommended resources can be used to develop term paper topics or follow a subject in greater depth.

1st Week: Introduction to Course: From John Muir to Julia Butterfly Hill

Video in class: "Butterfly"

**Recommended resource:**

2nd Week: John Muir: Prophet of Preservation and Founder of the Sierra Club

Video in class: “John Muir: The Man, the Poet, the Legacy”

**Required reading:**
Fox, *ACM*, chs. 1-3
Strong, *Dreamers*, chs. 1 and 4

**Recommended resources:**

3rd Week: Gifford Pinchot: the U.S. Forest Service and the National Parks

Video in class: “The Battle for Wilderness”

**Required reading:**
Fox, *ACM*, chs. 4 and 5
Strong, *Dreamers*, chs. 2 and 3
Reader: O’Brien, pp. 7-13; Walls, *Almanac*, Intro and profiles of Sierra Club and National Audubon Society

**Recommended resources:**
Horace M. Albright, *The Birth of the National Park Service* (Howe Brothers, 1985)
4th Week: The New Deal and Conservation

Video in class: “Hoover Dam”

**Required reading:**
Fox, *ACM*, ch. 6
Strong, *Dreamers*, chs. 5 and 7
Reader: Walls, *Almanac*, profiles of NCPA, IWL, NWF

**Recommended resources:**

5th Week: Aldo Leopold, a Land Ethic, and Wilderness

Student panel on conservation organizations

**Required reading:**
Fox, *ACM*, ch. 7
Strong, *Dreamers*, ch. 6
Reader: Walls, *Almanac*, TWS profile

**Recommended resources:**
Michael Frome, *Battle for the Wilderness* (Praeger, 1974)
6th Week: David Brower and the Post World War II World

Video in class: “For Earth’s Sake: The Life and Times of David Brower” or “Monumental: David Brower’s Fight for Wild America.”

Take-home mid-term assignment handed out

**Required reading:**
Fox, *ACM*, ch. 8
Strong, *Dreamers*, ch. 9
Gottlieb, *Forcing*, ch. 1
Reader, O’Brien, pp. 13-26

**Recommended resources:**
John McPhee, *Encounters with the Archdruid* (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1971)
David Brower, *For Earth’s Sake* (Peregrine Smith, 1990)

7th Week: Rachael Carson and the New Environmentalism

Take-home mid-term assignment due

**Required reading:**
Fox, *ACM*, chs. 9 and 10
Strong, *Dreamers*, ch. 8
Gottlieb, *Forcing*, ch. 2

**Recommended resource:**

8th Week: The 1960s and Earth Day 1970

Video in class: “To Save the Land and People”

**Required reading:**
Gottlieb, *Forcing*, ch. 3
Reader: Walls, *Almanac*, profiles of EA and FoE
9th Week: The New Environmental Movement Organizations

Student panel on the new environmental organizations

**Required reading:**
Gottlieb, *Forcing*, ch. 4

**Recommended resources:**

10th Week: The New Activists

Video in class: “A Question of Power,” on the campaigns against nuclear power in California

**Required reading:**
Gottlieb, *Forcing*, ch. 5
Reader: Walls, *Almanac*, profiles of EF! SEAC, EII, CWA

**Recommended resources:**
Judi Bari, *Timber Wars and Other Writings* (1992)
11th Week: Global Environmental Activism

Video in class: excerpts from Greenpeace video, “Breaking the Silence”

Required reading:
Reader: Walls, *Almanac*, profiles of Greenpeace, WWF

Recommended resources:

12th Week: Gender, Race & Class and the Environmental Movement;

Required reading:
Gottlieb, *Forcing*, chs. 6-8, Conclusion
Strong, *Dreamers*, ch. 10
Reader: Walls, *Almanac*, profile of CCHW, NTCF

Recommended resources:
Robert D. Bullard, ed., *Confronting Environmental Racism* (South End Press, 1993)
13th Week: Backlash: Conservatives and the Wise Use Movement;

Student reports

Recommended resources:
David Helvarg, *The War Against the Greens* (Sierra Club Books, 1994)
Jacqueline Vaughn Switzer, *Green Backlash* (Lynne Reiner, 1997)
William Perry Pendley, *War on the West* (Regnery, 1995)
Terry L. Anderson and Donald R. Leal, *Free Market Environmentalism* (Pacific Research Institute, 1991)

14th Week: Environmental Movement in Sonoma County and the Bay Area

Student Reports

Recommended resources:

Pamphlet: *A Visit to the Atomic Park* (Special Collections)
L. Martin Griffin, M.D., *Saving the Marin-Sonoma Coast* (Sweetwater Springs Press, 2000)

15th Week: Student Reports