

## Syllabus

The Human Dimensions of Environmental Change

16:378:501, 16:450:605:03, 16:920:573:01

Fall, 2005

syllabus available at [www.humanecology.rutgers.edu/courses.cfm](http://www.humanecology.rutgers.edu/courses.cfm)

Meeting Place: Cook Office Building, Rm 226, Tuesdays, 9:15 A.M. – 11:55 A.M.  
beginning on September 6th.

Instructor/Convener: Tom Rudel ([rudel@aesop.rutgers.edu](mailto:rudel@aesop.rutgers.edu)). Phone: Cook – 732-932-9169, ext. 317. Office Hours: Cook Office Building, Rm. 214, Tuesdays, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. and by appointment.

Focus: In this course we try to add to students' intellectual toolkit by introducing them to the variety of approaches used by social scientists to understand the human dimensions of environmental change. Effective applied and theoretical work on environmental problems often requires that social scientists work closely with natural scientists. To do so effectively, we must be minimally conversant in the life sciences and able to use an array of social scientific approaches to understand environmental problems. This course tries to contribute to the latter end by introducing students to the variety of intellectual approaches used by social scientists to study environmental issues. Each week we will analyze a particular approach used by a group of social scientists to study a particular environmental issue. Whenever possible, we will have a guest speaker, a member of the Rutgers faculty, whose work exemplifies the approach under discussion. As you will see from the list of topics and readings listed below, the course will introduce you to a diverse set of approaches and apply them in a diverse set of locales. The approaches come from six disciplines and we apply them to the study of environmental problems in poor nations as often as we do to problems in rich nations. Certainly one of the enduring sets of skills that one can take away from graduate study is familiarity with a variety of different theoretical and methodological approaches. If this course provides you with an intelligible introduction to approaches that you later go to use in your own work, then it will have been a success!

Requirements: Students will have to write three analytic memos and a term paper to receive credit for the course.

The analytic memos are page long reactions to a reading or a set of readings. They may begin by outlining an argument in the reading, but they must end with an important question raised by the readings for you. You should bring enough copies of your analytic memo to class for all of the students in the class. We will read the memo in class and later discuss the questions that you raise in your memo. You should sign up to write analytic memos on particular weeks at the end of the first class.

The term paper should employ some new (for you) intellectual approaches to an environmental problem or issue that particularly concerns you. For example, if you have

had a longstanding concern with marine pollution off the shores of New Jersey, you could investigate the ways in which the changing population distribution in the state has affected the problem. Alternatively, if you have had a longstanding interest in the cultural ecology of indigenous peoples in Latin America, you could undertake an analysis of how the emergence of political organizations among indigenous peoples has altered their life chances. The term paper should not exceed 20 pages in length. It will be due on the last day of class in December. If you would like me to look at a draft of the paper before that date, I will do so. In any event you should discuss your topic with me sometime during the first month of classes.

Readings: There are seven books that you should purchase for the course. They are for sale in the Cook-Douglass bookstore. The books are:

- Clarke, Lee, *Mission Improbable: Using Fantasy Documents to Tame Disasters*  
 Cohen, Lisabeth, *A Consumer's Paradise: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America.*  
 Diamond, Jared, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed.*  
 Guha, Ramachandra, *The Unquiet Woods: Ecological Change and Peasant Resistance in the Himalaya*  
 Langston, Nancy, *Forest Dreams, Forest Nightmares: The Paradox of Old Growth Forests in the Inland West.*  
 Markowitz, Gerald and David Rosner, *Deceit and Denial: the Deadly Politics of Industrial Pollution.*  
 O'Rourke, Dara, *Community Driven Regulation: Balancing Development and the Environment in Vietnam.*

Reserve Readings: Only small portions of the books listed below are assigned. All of these readings are on electronic reserve. The hard copies are on reserve in the Chang Science Library.

- Beamish, Thomas, 2002, *Silent Spill: the Organization of an Industrial Crisis.*  
 Brueckner, Jan K., 2000, "Urban Sprawl: Diagnosis and Remedies." *International Regional Science Review.* 23(2): 160-171.  
 Brulle, Robert, 2000, *Agency, Democracy, and Nature.* MIT Press.  
 Fisher, Dana, 2005, *Bringing the Material Back In: Understanding the United States' Position on Climate Change*  
 Gottlieb, Paul, 2000, "Do Economists Have Anything to Contribute to the Debate on Urban Sprawl" *Forum for Social Economics.*  
 Leichenko, Robin and William Solecki, 2005, "Exporting the American Dream: the Globalization of Suburban Consumption Landscapes." *Regional Studies.* 39(2): 241-255.  
 McCarthy, John F., 2000, "Wild Logging: the Rise and Fall of Logging Networks and Biodiversity Conservation Projects on Sumatra's Rainforest Frontier". CIFOR Occasional Paper, #31.  
 McKean, Margaret, 2000, "Common Property: What Is It, What Is It Good For, and What Makes It Work." Pp. 27-55 in C. Gibson, M. McKean, and E. Ostrom

(eds.), *People and Forests: Communities, Institution, and Governance*.  
 Pray, Carl, 2002, Five Years of Bt Cotton in China: the Good News Continues  
 Rival, Laura M., 2002, *Trekking through History: The Huaorani of Amazonian Ecuador*.  
 New York: Columbia University Press.  
 Stokstad, Eric, "Learning to Adapt" *Science*. 29 July 2005.  
 Washington Post series about the Nature Conservancy

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
9/6	Introduction: the Human Drivers of Tropical Deforestation (agricultural economics)	
9/13	The Adaptive Management of Forests (political science)	Rival, Langston, pp. 3-85, 114-156, 296-306 Stokstad
9/20	Industrial Pollution and Politics: Lead and Plastics (political economy)	Markowitz and Rosner, entire
9/27	Ecological Modernization (sociology)	McCarthy; Diamond, pp. 441-485
10/4	Community Based Natural Resource Management (anthropology)	O'Rourke, entire
10/11	no class	
10/18	Common Pool Resources, Common Property Institutions: Biodiversity, Fisheries, and Global Warming (political science)	McKean, Diamond,
pp 79-119		
10/25	Global Warming, Crecive Problems and Politics (sociology, ecology)	Fisher; Beamish, pp. 1-16, 130-144
11/1	Sprawl, Consumption, and the Environment (agricultural economics)	Gottlieb; Brueckner; Leichenko and Solecki

11/1	Environmental Problems and Societal Collapses (geography)	Diamond, pp. 178-276
11/8	Political Ecology (anthropology, geography)	Guha, entire;
11/15	Environmental Injustice (sociology, geography)	Cohen, pp. 5- 15, 193-410
11/22	No class (it is a Wednesday at Rutgers)	
11/29	Technologies and Risk (psychology)	Hallman, TBA; Pray
12/6	Risks, Organizations, and Disasters (sociology, psychology)	Clarke, entire
12/13	Analyzing the Environmental Movement (sociology, communications)	Brulle, pp. 195-235; Pleasant, TBA Washington Post