

Sociology 125: Nature and Society

Fall, 2014

Instructor: Tracy Perkins
teperkin@ucsc.edu

Class: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-1:45, Engineering 2 room 194

Office hours: Thursdays 2-4
College 8, 3rd floor, room 332

Mailbox: College 8 Faculty Services, 2nd floor, room 235

“The challenge of modernity is to live without illusions and without becoming disillusioned.”

- Antonio Gramsci

The aims of this course are to:

- Explore diverse relationships to the environment.
- Draw on key debates in the field to analyze the causes of and potential solutions to contemporary environmental problems.
- Situate contemporary environmental activism within the history of US environmentalism.
- Show how environmentalism intersects with race, class, gender and other social categories.
- Improve reading, analysis, and discussion skills.
- Improve writing and presentation skills.
- Create a productive, respectful and creative learning environment and intellectual community in class.

Required Readings

- Course readings available on e-commons.
- Please do the readings in the order they are listed on the syllabus. The sequencing of the readings often reflects debates in the field as they develop over time.
- Please bring the day’s readings to class every day.

Class Time

Our class time will take on a variety of formats, including lecture, large group discussion, small group discussion, film, class activities, and time for individual written reflection. I encourage you to ask questions during lectures.

Grading

	Due date	% of course grade
Participation		15%
Reading Responses	11:55 pm the night before class	30%
Take-home Midterm	Nov. 6 th , in class	15%
Research-based Essay		
- Proposal	Nov. 13 th , in class	5%
- Draft Essay	Dec. 2 nd , in class	5 %
- Poster & Participation in Student Conference	Dec. 17, in class	10%
- Final Essay	Dec. 17	20%
Extra Credit Opportunity	According to sign-up sheet	2%

Participation

Your class participation will be graded based upon:

- Attendance
- Completion of the class activities
- Your attentiveness
- Active participation in discussion
- Respectful interaction with other students

Reading Responses

You are responsible for writing one reading response for the readings covered for each class session. The response should cover all of the readings assigned for that day. These will be uploaded into the “assignments” section of our class website on e-commons. Please boldface the authors’ names to make it easy for me to see where you are discussing each reading. Please cut

and paste your text into the space available, do not upload or attach separate documents. Each reading response should be 300-400 words long, and should include

- 1) a brief description of the key points made in that day's readings
- 2) your analysis of the readings, and
- 3) any questions you may have

Over the course of the quarter you will write 15 reading responses for the 18 class sessions between, and including, Oct. 7 – Dec. 11. You may upload your responses until 11:55pm the night before the class session for which the readings are due, when e-commons will close the assignment. Late responses will not be accepted. Each response is worth 2 percentage points of your final grade.

Take-home Midterm

You will have two days to complete a take-home midterm exam. It will be made up of short-answer responses to questions based on the readings and themes covered in class.

Research-based essay, poster and student conference

This assignment will allow you to further explore a topic related to our course that you find particularly intriguing. You will submit a paper proposal, draft paper, final paper, and research poster. You will submit your final paper at the time of our scheduled final, which is also when we will hold our student conference. The conference will be structured like an academic poster session. You will have a scheduled time to stand by your poster and present your research and answer questions about it. During the rest of the time, you may visit other students to look at their posters and ask them about their research. Attendance at the entire conference is mandatory.

I encourage you to work in groups on your final project, although this is not a requirement. If you work in a group, you will present your final poster together, but will write the accompanying papers individually. I will hand out detailed instructions for this assignment later in the term.

Extra Credit Opportunity

There is one opportunity to get extra credit in this class. Successful completion of the assignment is worth 2 percentage points of extra credit toward your final grade.

Choose one current event that relates to the key themes of the class. Write a 300-400-word mini-essay that includes a link to the news source and connects the item to class material. You will turn in your mini-essay on Sunday evening, and your current event will reflect class content for the week that follows. I will choose from all the submissions one or more current event to feature at the beginning of each class period, and may call on you to explain your choice to the rest of the class. You will sign up for a specific week to turn in your news item during the first week of class.

This 300-400 word mini-essays will be turned in through the assignment tool on our class website on e-commons. You will need to cut-and paste your work into the box available.

Submissions will be accepted until 11:55 pm on the Sunday before the week for which you have signed up. At that point e-commons will close the assignment. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Late Policy

Late essay assignments can be turned in to me anytime between the end of the class in which they are due and 48 hours after the end of class for reduced credit. You do not need to ask my permission to take advantage of this opportunity. Late reading responses and extra credit assignments will not be accepted.

Class Attendance

- Class attendance is mandatory. Failing to come to class or arriving to class late will hurt your overall grade for this course.
- Your attendance will be a significant part of your class grade. All absences, regardless of cause, are marked as an absence. Since there are no excused/unexcused absences in class, you do not need to ask my permission to miss class nor explain your reasons to me after an absence unless you want to. Although it won't change your grade, I am always happy to listen if you need someone to talk to about problems happening in your personal life.
- If you come to class after attendance has already begun or been completed, it is your responsibility to speak with me after class to make sure I mark you as present.

Communications

- The less time I spend responding to individual e-mails, the more time I have to prepare for leading a high-quality class. To that end, before you send me a question via e-mail, first check my syllabus to see if the information you want is listed there. Also, I will not respond to questions about the *concepts* covered in class via e-mail. These are best asked in class or office hours.
- I will use your UCSC e-mail account for any outside of class communication with you. You are responsible for checking this account regularly. If you do not check it daily, I suggest you set your UCSC account to forward to the account that you do check daily

Plagiarism

- Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating or plagiarizing on exams, is a serious violation of the University's norms of conduct. Students who plagiarize or cheat on assignments or exams receive an F in the course and will be reported to their College Provost for further sanctions. Read the Student Guide to Academic Integrity for more information: http://undergraduate.ucsc.edu/acd_integrity/student.html

Disability

- If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit your Accommodation Authorization from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me during my office hours in a timely manner, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter or at least two week prior to an exam. Contact DRC at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu.

Resources

- Other writing support and general tutoring:
http://www2.ucsc.edu/lss/tutorial_services.shtml
- Forwarding your UCSC e-mail: <https://www2.ucsc.edu/its/cgi-bin/chpobox>
- How to get tested for a learning disability:
http://drc.ucsc.edu/current_students/doc_guidelines_ld2.shtml
- Counseling and psychological services: <http://www2.ucsc.edu/counsel/>

Class schedule

INTRODUCTION

Oct. 2 **What does the environment have to do with sociology?**

- Pellow, David N., and Hollie Nyseth Brehm. 2013. "An Environmental Sociology for the Twenty-First Century." *Annual Review of Sociology* 39:229-50.

Oct. 7 **Nature and society on campus**

Campus hike with Alex Jones, Campus Natural Reserve Steward

- Angelo, Hillary and Colin Jerolmack. 2014. "Nature's Looking Glass." Pp. 27-34 in *Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action*. Edited by L. King and D. M. Auriffeille. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Natural History of the UCSC Campus - <http://mnhc.ucsc.edu/ucscnh/>

UNIT 1: CORE DEBATES

Oct. 9 **Wilderness as natural, wilderness as social**

- Cronon, William. 1995. "The Trouble with Wilderness: Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." Pp. 69-90 in *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature* edited by C. Cronon. New York: WW Norton & Company.
- Worster, Donald. 1997. "The Wilderness of History," *Wild Earth*, fall, pp. 9-13.

Oct. 14 **(Over)population?**

- Ehrlich, Paul R. & Anne H. Ehrlich. 2009. "The Population Bomb Revisited." *The Electronic Journal of Sustainable Development*. 1(3):5-13.
- Sasser, Jade. 2013. "From Darkness Into Light: Race, Population and Environmental Advocacy." *Antipode* 46(5):1240-1257.

Oct. 16 **Immigration and the environment**

- Park, Lisa Sun-Hee and David Naguib Pellow. 2011. *The Slums of Aspen: Immigrants vs. the Environment in America's Eden*. New York: New York University Press.
 - Introduction: Environmental Privilege in the Rocky Mountains
 - Ch. 4: Nativism and the Environmental Movement

Oct. 21 Can technology save us?

- McDonough, William and Michael Braungart. 2002. *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*. New York: North Point Press.
 - Introduction: This Book is Not a Tree
 - Ch. 1: A Question of Design
- Packer, George. 2013. “Change the World: Silicon Valley Transfers its Money – and its Slogans – to Politics.” *The New Yorker*, May 27, pp. 44-55.

Oct. 23 Is capitalism the problem?

- Foster, John Bellamy, Brett Clark and Richard York. 2010. *The Ecological Rift: Capitalism’s War on the Earth*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
 - Introduction: A Rift in Earth and Time
- Means, Russell. 1980. “Fighting words on the future of the earth.” *Mother Jones*, December.

UNIT 2: IDENTITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Oct. 28 Race and the environment

- Finney, Carolyn. 2014. *Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.
 - Ch. 3: Forty Acres and a Mule
 - Ch. 5: It’s Not Easy Being Green
- Kosek, Jake. 2006. *Understories: The Political Life of Forests in Northern New Mexico*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
 - Ch. 5: “Smokey Bear is a White Racist Pig”

Oct. 30 Class and the environment

- Rose, Fred. 2000. *Coalitions Across the Class Divide*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
 - Ch. 3: Battles over Old Growth: The Problem of Multiple Interests
 - Ch. 4: When Classes Meet: Class-Cultural Lenses

Nov. 4 Gender and the environment

Take-home midterm distributed

- Unger, Nancy. 2012. *Beyond Nature's Housekeepers: American Women in Environmental History*. New York: Oxford University Press.
 - Ch. 4: Nature's Housekeepers: Progressive Era Women as Midwives to the Conservation Movement and Environmental Consciousness
- Perkins, Tracy. 2012. "Women's Pathways Into Activism: Rethinking the Women's Environmental Justice Narrative in California's San Joaquin Valley." *Organization & Environment*, 25(1):76-94.

Nov. 6 Indigeneity and the environment

Take-home midterm due in class

- Krech III, Shepard. 1999. *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
 - Introduction
- Hames, Raymond. 2007. "The Ecologically Noble Savage Debate." *Annual Review of Anthropology* (36):177-90.

Nov. 11 Veteran's Day, no class

Nov. 13 Religion and the environment

- Johnston, Lucas F. 2012. *Religion and Sustainability: Social Movements and the Politics of the Environment*. Sheffield, UK: Equinox Publishing.
 - Ch. 7. Walking Together Separately: Evangelical Creation Care
- Zaleha, Bernard Daley and Andrew Szasz. 2014. "Keep Christianity Brown! Climate Denial on the Christian Right in the United States." Pp. 209-228 in *How the World's Religion's are Responding to Climate Change*, edited by R. G. Veldman, A. Szasz and R. Haluza-Delay.

UNIT 3: U.S. ENVIRONMENTALISM & ITS DISCONTENTS

Nov. 18 Urban reform and second wave environmentalism

- Gottlieb, Robert. 1993. *Forcing the Spring: The Transformation of the American Environmental Movement*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press.
 - Ch. 2 Urban and Industrial Roots: Seeking to Reform the System
 - Ch. 3: The Sixties Rebellion: The Search for a New Politics

Nov. 20 Regulatory pushback: The Sagebrush Rebellion & neoliberalism

Guest lecture: Bernie Zaleha, UC Santa Cruz

- Cawley, R. McGregor. 1993. *Federal Land, Western Anger: The Sagebrush Rebellion and Environmental Politics*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.
 - Introduction
- Gareau, Brian J. 2013. *From Precaution to Profit: Contemporary Challenges to Environmental Protection in the Montreal Protocol*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
 - Ch. 2: From Public to Private Global Environmental Governance: A Brief History

Nov. 25 Third wave environmentalism

- Krupp, Fred. 1994. "EDF and the Third Wave of Environmentalism." *Pulp and Paper*, July, p. 132.
- Dowie, Mark. 1995. *Losing Ground: American Environmentalism at the Close of the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
 - Ch. 5: The Third Wave

Nov. 26 Thanksgiving, no class

Dec. 2 Radical environmentalism

- Abbey, Edward. 1978. *One Life at a Time, Please*. New York: Henry Holt and Co.
 - Theory of Anarchy
- Taylor, Bron. 2008. "The Tributaries of Radical Environmentalism." *Journal for the Study of Radicalism*. 2(1):27-61.

Dec. 4 Environmental justice activism

- Cole, Luke and Sheila Foster. 2001. *From the Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement*. New York: New York University Press.
 - Preface: We Speak for Ourselves: The Struggle of Kettleman City
 - Ch. 1: A History of the Environmental Justice Movement

Dec. 9 Environmental consumerism

Guest lecture: Alison Alkon, University of the Pacific

- Szasz, Andrew. 2007. *Shopping our Way to Safety: How We Changed from Protecting the Environment to Protecting Ourselves*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
 - Ch. 6: Imaginary Refuge
 - Ch. 7: Political Anesthesia

- Conclusion: The Future of an Illusion

CONCLUSION

Dec. 11 **Denial and hope**

- Norgaard, Kari Marie. 2014. "People Want to Protect Themselves a Little Bit: Emotions, Denial and Social Movement Nonparticipation." Pp. 169–185 in *Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action*. Edited by L. King and D. M. Auriffeille. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Solnit, Rebecca. 2000. *Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities*. New York: Verso.
 - Ch. 1: Looking into Darkness
 - Ch. 10: Changing the Imagination of Change
 - Ch. 12: The Angel of Alternate History
 - Ch. 14: Getting the Hell Out of Paradise

Dec. 17, 12-3 Student conference - Location TBA