

A/S 383: ENVIRONMENTAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Winter, 2009

Class Calendar

E. Brumfiel

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Anthropology has a long-standing interest in the interaction of humans with their environments. Traditionally, ecological anthropologists have focused upon how humans adjusted to their environments through cultural and biological adaptation. However, because of pressing contemporary environmental issues, this course focuses upon how humans have changed the natural environment in the past, how humans are currently changing it, and what can be done to halt environmental deterioration. Topics to be considered include traditional subsistence patterns, population stability and growth, food supplies, consumerism, environmental regulation, and the impact that heightened ecological awareness (deep ecology, ecofeminism, etc.) might have on contemporary human behavior.

How to Contact Me:

My office is 1812 Hinman Ave, Room 203. My office hours are Monday 2-3 and Wednesday 2-3. I'd also be glad to see you at other times by appointment. Or write me on email: ebrumfiel@northwestern.edu.

Learning Disabilities:

Any student in the course who has a disability that may prevent the fullest demonstration of abilities should contact me as soon as possible so that we can discuss accommodations to ensure full participation and educational opportunity.

Course Requirements:

- 1) *environmental success story* (15%)
- 2) *essay on an environmental group that you choose to support* (15%)
- 3) *essay on the environmental policy issue* (30%)
- 4) *class attendance, participation, and reading notes* (40%)--informed contributions to discussions, expressing opinions or raising questions about the articles or material presented by the instructor, reacting to other students comments, and turning in reading notes. Reading notes should identify:
 - (1) the central issue or question raised in the article,
 - (2) the author's position on this issue, and
 - (3) the supporting evidence provided by the author.

Required texts:

Alan Thein Durning, *How Much is Enough?* New York: W.W. Norton. 1992.
Richard Read, *Forest Dwellers, Forest Protectors*. 2nd ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon. 2008.
Course pack, to be purchased from Quartet Copies.

ALL READINGS SHOULD BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE DATES LISTED

- Jan. 6 Introduction: Anthropology and Environmental Issues
- Jan. 8-13 Environmental Use and Impact in Small-Scale Societies**
- Jan. 8 Equilibrium Among Foragers
 reading: Lee, "What Hunters Do for a Living"
 Fowler, "We Live by Them"
- Jan. 13 The Environmental Impact of Non-Industrial Agriculture
 reading: Rappaport, "The Flow of Energy in an Agricultural Society"
 Dazhong and Pimentel, "Seventeenth-Century Organic Agriculture"
- Jan. 15-22 Environmental Use and Impact in Large Scale Societies**
- Jan. 15 Small-Scale Systems vs. Large-Scale Systems
 reading: Dasmann: "Future Primitive"
 Lappé and Collins, "Why Can't People Feed Themselves?"
- Jan. 20 Industrial Agriculture
 reading: Altieri, "Ecological Impacts of Industrial Agriculture"
 Pollan, "Power Steer"
- Jan. 22 Analyzing an Environmental Success: Stakeholders, Coalitions, Funding,
 Discourses
 Video: *Rachel Carson's Silent Spring*.
- Jan. 27 – Feb. 3 Ecological Crisis in the Third World: Population Growth**
- Jan. 27 Population Growth–Malthus and the Demographic Transition
 reading: Erlich, "Too Many People"
 Nag et al., "An Anthropological Approach to the Study of..."
- Jan. 29 Population Planning: What Works and Feminist Concerns
 reading: Helzner and Shepard: "The Feminist Agenda in Population..."
 Hull and Iskandar, "Indonesia"
- Feb. 3 Video: *The Legacy of Malthus*
- Feb. 5 Ecological Crisis in the Third World: Food and Famine**
- Feb. 5 Food and Famine in Africa
 readings: Mellor and Gavian "Famine: Causes, Prevention, and Relief"
 Newbury: "Ecology and the Politics of Genocide"

Feb. 10-24	Ecological Crisis in the Third World: Global Commerce
Feb. 10 reading:	Deforestation in Latin America Reed, <i>Forest Dwellers, Forest Protectors</i>
Feb. 12 DUE:	Commercial Expansion and The Response of Indigenous Peoples Environmental Success Story
Feb. 17 readings:	Multinational Corporations, Environmentalism, and Human Rights Video: <i>Delta Force</i> Johnston and Jorgensen, "Mineral Development..." Ross, "Defending the Forest"
Feb. 22 readings:	Corporate Control of Public Debate and Public Policy Neff, "Greenwash" Gedicks, "The Military, Trade..." Video: <i>Borderline Cases</i> .
Feb. 24 – Mar. 3	Environmental Protection: At the Global, National, or Local Level?
Feb. 24 reading:	International Management Shue, "Avoidable Necessity: Global Warming...." Lindsay, "Global warming heats up" French, "Making Environmental Treaties Work"
Feb. 26	Market Management Murray, "The Domestication of Wood in Haiti" Kammen, "Cookstoves for the Developing World" Lovins, "More Profit with Less Carbon" Owen, "Green Manhattan"
Mar. 3	State Regulation and Management Smith, "Ecology and Politics in the Puebla Basin of Mexico" Gladwell, "Political Heat" Neumann, "Moral and Discursive Geographies...."
Mar. 5 readings:	Neoliberalism and Community Management Wright, "Alleviating Poverty and Conserving Wildlife" Oates, "Conservation at the Close of the Twentieth Century" Agrawal and Ribot, "Accountability in Decentralization" Wallace and Diamente, "Keeping the People in the Parks"

- Mar. 10-12 Cultivating Environmental Consciousness**
- Mar. 10 Deep Ecology, Green Christianity, and Ecofeminism
 readings: Devall, “The Deep Ecology Movement” **and**
 Nash, “Toward the Ecological Reformation of Christianity”
 Merchant, “Ecofeminism”
- Mar. 12 Discussion: Taming Consumerism, What’s Our Next Move?
 reading: Durning, cover-to-cover
- Mar. 12 **DUE: The Environmental Group That You Choose to Support**
- Mar. 17 **Environmental Policy, DUE IN MY OFFICE AT 2:00 P.M.**

Bibliography:

- Lee, Richard B. 1968. What hunters do for a living. In *Man the Hunter*, R.B. Lee and I. DeVore, eds., pp. 30-40. Chicago: Aldine.
- Fowler, Catherine S. 2000. We live by them. In *Biodiversity and Native America*, P.E. Minnis and W.J. Elisens, eds., pp. 99-132. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Rappaport, Roy A. 1971. The flow of energy in an agricultural society. *Scientific American* 225(3):117-132.
- Dazhong, Wen and David Pimentel. 1996. Seventeenth-century organic agriculture in China. In *Case Studies in Human Ecology*, D.G. Bates and S.H. Lees, eds., pp. 311-25. New York: Plenum.
- Dasmann, Raymond. 1976. Future primitive. *CoEvolution Quarterly*, Fall issue, pp. 26-31.
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- Altieri, Miguel A. 1998. Ecological impacts of industrial agriculture. *Monthly Review* 50(3):60-71.
- Pollan, Michael. 2002. Power steer. *New York Times Magazine*, March 31 issue, pp. 44-77.
- Erlich, Paul R. 1968. Too many people. From *The Population Bomb*. New York: Ballantine.
- Nag, Moni, Benjamin N.F. White, and R. Creighton Peet. 1978. An anthropological approach to the study of the economic value of children in Java and Nepal. *Current Anthropology* 19:293-301.
- Hull, Terence H. and Meiwita B. Iskandar. 2000. Indonesia. In *Promoting Reproductive Health*, S. Forman and R. Ghosh, eds., pp. 70-109. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
- Campbell, Martha Madison. 1998. Schools of thought: An analysis of interest groups influential in international population policy. *Population and Environment* 19:487-512.
- Mellor, John W. and Sarah Gavian. 1987. Famine: Causes, prevention, and relief. *Science* 235:539-36.
- Newbury, David. 1999. Ecology and the politics of genocide. *Cultural Survival Quarterly*,

- Winter issue, pp. 32-35.
- Johnston, Barbara Rose and Daniel Jorgensen. 1994. Mineral development, environmental degradation, and human rights: The Ok Tedi mine, Papua New Guinea. In *Who Pays the Price?*, B.R. Johnston, ed., pp. 86-98. Covelo, CA: Island Press.
- Ross, John. 2000. Defending the forest. *Sierra* 85(4):66-88.
- Neff, Gina. 1997. Greenwash. *The Nation*, November 3, pp.50-52.
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- Shue, Henry. 1995. Avoidable necessity: Global warming, international fairness, and alternative energy. *Nomos* 37:239-64.
- Lindsay, James M. 2001. Global warming heats up. *Brookings Review*, Fall, pp.26-29.
- French, Hilary F. 1994. Making environmental treaties work. *Scientific American* 271(6):94-97.
- Murray, Gerald F. 1987. The domestication of wood in Haiti. In *Anthropological Praxis*, R.M. Wulff and S.J. Fiske, eds., pp. 223-40. Boulder: Westview.
- Kammen, Daniel M. 1995. Cookstoves for the developing world. *Scientific American* 273 (1):72-75.
- Lovins, Amory B. 2005. More profit with less carbon. *Scientific American*, Special issue, "Crossroads for Planet Earth," September, pp. 74-83.
- Owen, David. 2004. Green Manhattan. *The New Yorker*, October 18, 2004.
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- Gladwell, Malcolm. 2002. Political heat. *The New Yorker*, August 12, pp. 76-80.
- Neumann, Roderick P. 2004. Moral and Discursive Geographies in the War for Biodiversity in Africa. *Political Geography* 23:813-837.
- Wright, R. Michael. 1995. Alleviating poverty and conserving wildlife in Africa. In *Global Ecosystems: Creating options through anthropological perspectives*, P.J. Puntenney, ed., pp. 19-32 (NAPA Bulletin, no.15). Washington, DC: American Anthropological Association.
- Oates, John F. 1999. Conservation at the close of the twentieth century. From *Myth and Reality in the Rain Forest*, pp. 229-54. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Agrawal, Arun and Jesse Ribot. 2000. Accountability in decentralization: A framework with South Asian and West African cases. *Journal of Developing Areas* 33:473-502.
- Wallace, Tim and Daniela N. Diamente. 2005. Keeping the people in the parks: A case study from Guatemala. *NAPA Bulletin* 23:191-218.
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- Nash, James A. 1996. Toward the ecological reformation of Christianity. *Interpretation*, 50: 5-15.
- Merchant, Carolyn. 1992. Ecofeminism. In *Radical Ecology*, C. Merchant, ed., pp. 183-210. London: Routledge.

Environmental Success Story

The goal of this essay is to learn effective methods of environmental activism by examining one successful example. You must choose one example of an environmental problem that has been successfully dealt with. Examples include: restoring water quality in Lake Erie or the Hudson River, restoring fish to the Great Lakes, closing the hole in the ozone layer, reducing air pollution in Los Angeles, saving porpoises from tuna fishermen, and (maybe) saving the California condor.

Essays should describe the problem and then **focus on the micro-politics** of designing and implementing a solution. The paper should answer the following questions. How was the problem recognized? Who organized the solution, and why were they motivated to work on this problem? How was necessary support for action gained, and did discourse play a key role in gaining support? How was funding obtained? Did existing legislation help solve this problem? If so, when was this legislation passed, and why? Who opposed action on this problem, and what discursive strategies did the opposition employ? How were their concerns addressed? What did you learn from studying this environmental success story?

Papers must be double-spaced and typed. All factual information acquired from other sources, **even if not quoted directly**, must be acknowledged by citations in the text. A list of references cited (not a general bibliography) must also be supplied. The papers should run about 6-10 pages.

Among other sources, you might consult:

Levering, Ralph B. and Miriam L. Levering

1999 *Citizen Action for Global Change*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

Taylor, Bron Raymond, ed.

1995 *Ecological Resistance Movements*. Ithaca: State University of New York Press.

The Environmental Group That You Choose to Support

The goal of this essay is to have you consider philosophies and strategies of various groups within the environmental movement and to develop your own criteria for preferring one philosophy and/or strategy over the others. Your essay should discuss (1) your personal environmentalist philosophy (e.g., whether you prefer deep ecology or reform ecology and why), (2) your personal preference on environmentalist tactics (e.g., whether you think that public education, corporate policing, or legislative action provides a better approach for solving environmental problems and why), and (3) which environmental problem or problems you think are most pressing and why. Your essay should demonstrate how the environmental group that you have chosen conforms to what you regard as an effective environmental philosophy and strategy, and how it has put together a program that actually helps to solve an important environmental problem. You will also want to discuss negative aspects of your chosen group's organizational structure, tactics, etc.

To make your points clear, you might want to contrast your chosen environmental group to another group that you find less effective.

Papers must be double-spaced and typed. All factual information acquired from other sources, **even if not quoted directly**, must be acknowledged by citations in the text. A list of references cited (not a general bibliography) must also be supplied. The essay should run about 6-10 pages.

You can begin your research by consulting newsletters from the following on reserve at the library: For many of these organizations, more information can be found at their web sites.

Audubon Magazine—National Audubon Society (www.audubon.org)

Onearth--Natural Resources Defense Council (www.nrdc.org)

Co-op America Quarterly—Co-op America (www.coopamerica.org)

Cultural Survival Quarterly—Cultural Survival (www.cs.org)

In Brief—Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund (www.earthjustice.org)

Nature Conservancy—The Nature Conservancy (www.tnc.org)

Popline—Population Institute (www.populationinstitute.org)

Sierra—The Sierra Club (www.sierraclub.org)

World Rainforest Report -- Rainforest Action Network (www.ran.org)

The ZPG Reporter—Zero Population Growth (www.zpg.org)

National Green Pages/Co-op America (www.coopamerica.org)

Other environmental groups include:

ACERCA, part of the native forest network (www.nativeforest.org)

Action for Social & Ecological Justice (www.asej.org).

Alliance for the Great Lakes (<http://www.greatlakes.org/>).

American Rivers (www.amrivers.org)

Coral Reef Alliance (www.coral.org)
Environmental Law and Policy Center (Chicago-based) (<http://www.elpc.org/about.htm>)
Friends of the Earth (www.foe.org)
Green Party of the United States (www.greenpartyus.org)
Illinois Environmental Council (<http://www.ilenviro.org/>)
National Parks and Conservation Association (www.npca.org)
The Nature Conservancy—Illinois Chapter
(<http://nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/illinois/>)
Pesticide Action Network, North America (www.panna.org).
Student Conservation Association (www.sca-inc.org)
Target Earth (www.targetearth.org)
The Trust for Public Land (www.tpl.org)
The Wilderness Society (www.wilderness.org)
World Wildlife Fund (www.worldwildlife.org)

Environmental Policy

Newly inaugurated President Barak Obama has appointed you his special environmental policy consultant. In a policy oriented paper, you will address an environmental issue that you care about deeply, where contradictory arguments have been advanced. To argue your own position effectively, you must be able to accurately summarize the position of your “opponents” including the arguments, data, and examples that they have used to support their positions. Then, you must critique their arguments, data, and examples and present your own position, supported by convincing arguments, data, and examples. Remember that, in policy matters, economic efficiency (that is, the cost/benefit ratio) counts heavily. Also, win-win outcomes for stakeholders are preferable to policies that define and punish “bad guys.”

The traditional right/wrong, winner-take-all debate format really isn't the best way to forge public policy--negotiation is better. But you can adhere to the spirit of a point-by-point debate by presenting your “opponents’” objections to your policy issue, and then in your "rebuttal," pointing to the ways that each of these objections can be addressed or mitigated so as to provide a new, improved policy for environmental action. This point-by-point format ensures that each of the possible grounds for objecting gets addressed. Also remember that social justice should be an important principle in public policy. Are the appropriate people paying the costs of your policy?

President Obama appreciates policy recommendations based on comprehensive research, relevant factual evidence, and sound reasoning. Because he is a very busy man, President Obama appreciates well-organized, clearly written arguments. Your policy paper will be graded accordingly.

Debates must be double-spaced and typed. All factual information acquired from other sources, **even if not quoted directly**, must be acknowledged by citations in the text. A list of references cited (not a general bibliography) must also be supplied. The essay should run about 10-12 pages.

Choose one of the topics below. If you want to write on an issue other than those listed below, you must obtain my permission to do so.

1. Should environmentalists work toward creating wilderness areas throughout the globe? Why and why not? Are there viable alternatives to wilderness areas? Provide arguments, data, and examples that support the other side of your argument and provide arguments, data, and examples that counter these arguments.
2. Is large-scale commercial agriculture a good idea? Why and why not? Are there viable alternatives to large-scale commercial agriculture?
3. What are the benefits of human population growth? What are the problems associated with human population growth? What policies have been put forward with respect to human

population growth? What problems do you foresee with these policies? Can you recommend more productive alternatives?

4. What makes anthropologists qualified to deal with environmental problems? What makes anthropologists unqualified to deal with environmental problems? How should the training and/or outlook of anthropologists be modified to make them more effective in dealing with environmental problems?

5. What recommendations have been put forward for saving the world's tropical forests? What problems do you foresee with these proposals? Can you recommend more productive alternatives?

6. What statistics have been used to argue that environmental racism exists on the national and global levels? What counter-arguments have been offered to account for these statistics? What should be done to improve the statistics?

7. Should environmentalists devote a portion of their resources to promoting human rights?

8. Does ecotourism provide a solution to preserving biodiversity?

9. Should environmental problems be managed by market mechanisms (i.e., pricing and profit maximization)?

10. Should environmental problems be managed by international institutions (i.e., treaties and international organizations such as the United Nations)?

11. Are local people effective stewards of the environment?

12. Will industrial peoples accept a fundamental change in their world view and values so that they can achieve a balance with the environment? What programs have attempted to produce this fundamental change? Have they been effective? Can you recommend more productive alternatives?

13. Should the developing world control its consumption in order to mitigate human impact on the environment?

14. Is capitalism compatible with a sustainable world economy?

Environmental Policy Issue

Newly inaugurated President Barak Obama has appointed you his special environmental policy consultant. In a policy oriented paper, you will:

(1) define an environmental policy issue that you consider of utmost importance. You will briefly define this issue and concisely define why it is important to Americans and/or all the world's peoples.

(2) assess the politics of this issue. Who are the stakeholders in this issue? Who is likely to support efforts to address this issue? Who is likely to oppose such efforts?

(3) define a general strategy for addressing this issue. Is this issue best addressed by direct governmental action? By government-funded NGO's? By government-funded public education? Why?

(4) present at least three different plans for addressing this issue. Remember, politics is the art of the possible, so in outlining the three solutions, you should provide President Obama with an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each plan. Which would be the most effective? Which would be the most practical? Rank the solutions in terms of their environmental, economic, and political costs and their environmental, economic, and political benefits. Because the federal deficit is large and likely to grow during the course of the economic recession, devising big-bang-for-the-buck solutions will be highly rewarded. Because President Obama would like to be a two-term president, devising win-win scenarios for the stakeholders involved in this issue will be highly rewarded.

(5) President Obama appreciates policy recommendations based on comprehensive research, relevant factual evidence, and sound reasoning. Because he is a very busy man, President Obama appreciates well-organized, clearly written arguments. Your policy paper will be graded accordingly.