

Environmental Ethics

Course Schedule

Note: All readings are to be completed *before* the class date/week under which they are listed. This schedule is subject to change so rather than printing it, I recommend bookmarking it and consulting it regularly.

(Week 1) 8 January

What is Environmental Philosophy/Ethics?

On John Rawls and the necessity of ‘basic facts’ in ethical reasoning.

Introduction to the State of the Planet Report (Part One ~ On Growth and its Limits)

Readings (required)

DesJardines, Chapter 1, “Science, Ethics & the Environment,” 1-15.

“Limits to Growth” summary, [Limits to Growth \(summary\)](#); directly at

<http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/courses/pdf/LimitsToGrowth.pdf>

“[Ethical Implications of Carrying Capacity](#)” by Garrett Hardin (1977) [skim]

Readings & Websites (recommended)

[Club of Rome history](#)

[Limits to Growth](#) (class powerpoint lecture, week 1), directly at:

[http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/pp/EE1\(s09\)Intro+Limits2Growth.ppt](http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/pp/EE1(s09)Intro+Limits2Growth.ppt)

(Week 2) 13 & 15 January

The State of the World Report

Types of Environmental Ethics (Part One), focus on rights and utilitarian theories.

Readings (required)

DesJardines, Chapter 2, “Ethical Theory & The Environment,” 17-39, and Chapter 5,

“Responsibilities to the Natural World,” 94-118.

Website to review

[Ecological footprint Network](#) (Peruse the site and familiarize yourself with it. Then go to the “personal footprint” link and do the analysis there – be ready to provide (confidentially) your footprint (“how many planets needed”) in class on Thursday. Direct url at <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/>

[State of the Planet-limits+biodiversity](#) (class powerpoint lecture, week 2), directly at:

[http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/pp/EE2\(s09\)StateOfPlanet.ppt](http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/pp/EE2(s09)StateOfPlanet.ppt)

Readings (recommended)

Peter Singer, [The Animal Liberation Movement](#)

Tom Regan, [The Case for Animal Rights](#)

(Week 3) 20 & 22 January

The State of the World Report (Part Two)

Types of Environmental Ethics (Part Two), Aesthetics, holism and environmental ethics.

Readings (required)

DesJardines, Chapter 6, “Biocentric ethics,” 125-145, Chapter 7, “Wilderness, Ecology & Ethics,” 148-72. Garrett Hardin, “[Carrying Capacity as an Ethical Concept](#)” (2001)

Reports to peruse (required)

[United Nations Environmental Program, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#). Co-recipient with Al Gore of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. See especially the “Summary for Policymakers of the Synthesis Report”, which is downloadable at <http://www.ipcc.ch/press/index.htm> (scroll down), or directly at http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/syr/ar4_syr_spm.pdf.

Reports to peruse (recommended)

The IPCC “about” page, ‘[presentations](#)’, and the [2007 powerpoint reports](#). One of these that is also especially accessible is “Assessing the Physical Science of Climate Change: IPCC Working Group 1 (2007)”, which is downloadable from this page: <http://ipcc-wg1.ucar.edu/>

Living Planet Report (2008),

http://www.panda.org/news_facts/publications/living_planet_report/index.cfm; directly at http://assets.panda.org/downloads/living_planet_report_2008.pdf

Readings (recommended)

Garrett Hardin, “[Cultural Carrying Capacity](#)” (1986)

Websites & Video (recommended):

[State of the Planet-toxics+biosphere](#) (class powerpoint lecture, week 3), directly at: [http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/pp/EE3\(s09\)StateOfPlanet.ppt](http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/pp/EE3(s09)StateOfPlanet.ppt)

An Inconvenient Truth (Al Gore), UF Library or Video Store

[Documentation of Climate Change](#) (link to many sites)

(Week 4) 27 & 29 January

Ethics presentations: “The Discipline of Ethics” and “Principles of Ethics: Rights, Justice, and Beneficence” (power point presentations)

Discussion: Individualism v. holism: Who is morally considerable? Does individualism provide a basis for “hard cases” in environmental ethics? What are the weaknesses and strengths of holistic environmental ethics?

Readings (required)

DesJardines, Chapter 8, “The Land Ethic,” 176-199.

[Leopold, Aldo](#), (biography)

Aldo Leopold, from *A Sand County Almanac* “[Forward](#),” “[Arizona and New Mexico](#)” (especially sub-section, “Thinking like a Mountain”), “The Round River,” “Goose Music,” and “[The Land Ethic](#).” (Note: The Oxford University Press edition (1949/1968) does not have “Part III”, which includes the Thinking like a Mountain, [Round River](#), and [Goose Music](#) essays. For these, see the Ballentine Books (1970) paperback edition. Also *strongly recommended* from the Ballentine paperback edition,

read widely, esp. “A Sand County Almanac” and “Wilderness” and “Conservation Esthetic.”

Additional Resources:

[Ethics Analysis Chart](http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/courses/pdf/EthicsAnalysisChart.pdf); at [http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/pp/EE4\(s09\)DisciplineOfEthics.ppt](http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/pp/EE4(s09)DisciplineOfEthics.ppt)

(Week 5) 3 & 5 February

“Key conundrums in Environmental Ethics” and “fallacies of moral reasoning” (pp presentations)

Pioneer-elders in environmental ethics

Readings (required) [This week write one analysis of each figure: Thoreau, Muir, and Carson, based on the three sets of sources, following the guidelines in the syllabus]

[Thoreau, Henry David](#) (biography)

Thoreau readings, <http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/dgr/Taylor--DGR11-ThoreauAppendix.pdf>

[Muir, John](#) (biography)

John Muir. Read “[Cedar Keys](#),” and “[Wild Wool](#),” from *Nature Writings*. Edited by William Cronon. New York: Library of America, 1997.

[Carson, Rachel](#) (biography)

Rachel Carson, [Nature Religion Selections](#). and [selections and commentary](#) on *Silent Spring*. Also *strongly recommended*, peruse *Under the Sea Wind*, about which she ruminated in the hyperlinked selections, or read “[Preface](#)” and “[The Marginal World](#)” (pp. 1-7), and “[The Enduring Sea](#)” (pp. 249-50), in *The Edge of the Sea* (1955), or read widely from *The Sea Around Us* or *Silent Spring* (in this, her most famous book, see especially the introductory “[Fable for Tomorrow](#)” (pp. 1-3), and the concluding section, “[The Other Road](#),” pp. 177-97, esp. its concluding two pages).

Additional Resources:

[http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/pp/EE5\(s09\)EnvironmentalEthics.ppt](http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/pp/EE5(s09)EnvironmentalEthics.ppt)

(Week 6) 10 & 12 February

Anti-Hierarchical Environmental Ethics: Anarchism, Social Ecology, and Ecofeminism

Readings (required)

DesJardines, Chapter 10, “Social Justice & Social Ecology,” 224-240, Chapter 11, “Ecofeminism,” 243-258.

“[Anarchism](#)” and “[Social Ecology](#)” by John Clark in the *ERN*

“[Ecofeminism](#)” by Laura Hobgood-Oster in the *ERN*

Readings (recommended)

“[What is Social Ecology](#)” (originally 1993) and “[Social versus Deep Ecology](#)” (orig. 1987) by Murray Bookchin

Video: Wild By Law (DVD on reserve)

(Week 7) 17 & 19 February

Mid Term Exam – In Class – TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY: short answer, matching, & multiple choice exam; with short essay bonus. The exam is open note and open book (DesJardines). No computers.

Readings (required)

ERN: ‘Religion and Environmental Ethics’ at

<http://www.religionandnature.com/ern/sample/Taylor--EnvironmentalEthics.pdf>

(Week 8) 24 & 26 February

Deep Ecology and Radical Environmentalism

Readings (required) [This week write one analysis of all three ERN entries.]

DesJardines, Chapter 9, “Deep Ecology,” 202-221.

ERN: [Deep Ecology](#); [Radical Environmentalism](#); [Earth First! and the Earth Liberation Front](#).

Michael Martin, “[Ecosabotage and Civil Disobedience](#)” from *Environmental Ethics* 12 (Winter 1990), pp. 291-310/

Dave Foreman with Edward Abbey and T.O. Hellenbach, [Why Monkeywrench?](#) Selections from *Ecodefense*, 7-23.

Readings (recommended)

Bron Taylor and Joel Geffen, “[Battling Religions in Parks and Forest Reserves](#): Facing Religion in Conflicts Over Protected Places,” directly at: <http://www.georgewright.org/212taylor.pdf>, first published in *Full Value of Parks and Protected Areas: From Economics to the Intangible*, eds. D. Harmon & Allen Putney (Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 281-94; and subsequently in: *The George Wright Forum* 21(2): 56-68, June 2004.

The best single book for understanding deep ecology, and for seeing its connections to radical environmentalism, is Fred Bender’s *The culture of extinction: toward a philosophy of deep ecology* (NY: Humanity/Prometheus Books, 2003).

(Week 9) 3 & 5 March

Readings (required)

Daniel Quinn, *Ishmael* (complete by end of Spring Break, and note: essay due 19 March).

Resources for Critical Essays: [Critical Essay Guidelines](#), and [Critical Essay Topics](#); and [Fallacies of Moral Reasoning](#).

11 & 13 March (Spring break ~ no class)

Readings (required)

Daniel Quinn, *Ishmael* (finish novel if necessary and prepare essay due 19 March)

(Week 10) 17 & 19 March

19 March: Essay on *Ishmael* due; Last date to provide title, abstract, and sources for Critical Essays (see critical essay guidelines under week 9).

Pragmatism and Public Lands Management

Readings (required)

DesJardines, Chapter 3, "Ethics and Economics: Managing Public Lands," 45-66, and Chapter 12, "Pluralism, Pragmatism, and Sustainability," 258-269.

"[Battling Religions in Parks and Forest Reserves](#): Facing Religion in Conflicts Over Protected Places" (with Joel Geffen), in *Full Value of Parks and Protected Areas: From Economics to the Intangible*, eds. D. Harmon & Allen Putney (Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 281-94, this version in the George Wright Forum, 56-67.

Video:

The Wildlands Project or *In the Light of Reverence*

(Week 11) 24 & 26 March

Carrying Capacity and the ethics of procreation and consumption [This week in addition to the study guide write an analysis of Hardin's and Irvine's articles following the guidelines in the syllabus]

Readings (required)

DesJardines, Chapter 4, "Responsibilities to Future Generations: Sustainable Development," 70-90

Garrett Hardin, "[Lifeboat ethics](#)," *Psychology Today* (1974).

Sandy Irvine, "[The Cornucopia Scam](#): Contradictions of Sustainable Development" in *Wild Earth* 4 (4):72-82, Winter 94/95.

Sources to peruse (required)

Worldwatch report, 2008, pp. 7-23, 34-47 (and the rest recommended) at

[www.religionandnature.com/bron/courses/ee/Worldwatch--Population\(2008\).pdf](http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/courses/ee/Worldwatch--Population(2008).pdf)

Ecofuture reports on [Overpopulation and Sustainability](#), at This includes UC professor Al Bartlett's article, '[Is there a population problem?](#)' originally in *Wild Earth*/

***Ishmael* essays returned 26 March**

(Week 12) 31 March & 2 April

Bioregionalism

Readings (required) [This week write an analysis of Taylor's Bioregionalism article following the guidelines in the syllabus]

Bron Taylor, "[Bioregionalism: An Ethics of Loyalty to Place](#)," *Landscape Journal* 19(1&2): 50-72, 2000.

Video: Thinking Like a Watershed (or next week)

Readings (recommended)

Wendell Berry, "[Two Economies](#)"

2 April: Mandatory summary of articles due for critical essay. Last chance to submit critical essay draft (optional). (See critical essay guidelines under week 9).

(Week 13) 7 & 9 April

Global Issues: Triage Ethics and the Tragedy and Battle for the Commons; and Grassroots Ecological Resistance Movements

Readings (required) [This week write analyses of Hardin's views from this week's readings, another one contrast them with those expressed by Feeney et. al., and a third and fourth from Gedick's and Akula's articles, following the guidelines in the syllabus]

Garrett Hardin, "[Tragedy of the Commons](#)" from *Science* (1968). Also available in html at <http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/162/3859/1243>.

Feeney et al., "[The Tragedy of the Commons: Twenty-Two Years Later](#)" in *Green Planet Blues*, 53-62

Garrett Hardin responds, "[The Global Pillage: Consequences of Unmanaged Commons](#)" ch 21 from *Living Within Limits*

"[The \(tuna\) Tragedy of the Commons](#)", New York Times, 26 November 2008.

ERN: "[Environmental Justice and Environmental Racism](#)" by Robert Figueroa in the *ERN*.

Ecological Resistance Movements, Al Gedicks, on [Indigenous Environmentalism](#), 89-107.

Ecological Resistance Movements, on [Environmentalism in India](#), Vikram Akula, 127-144

Readings (recommended)

The Ecologist, [Whose Common Future?: Reclaiming the Commons](#) (Philadelphia: New Society, 1994), ch 1-2 & 6

Many other articles by Hardin or related to his views are at the [Garrett Hardin Society website](#).

Podcast (recommended): Canadian Broadcasting System "Climate Wars" (mp3s), [Part1](#), [Part2](#), [Part3](#). Series based on Gwynne Dyer's *Climate Wars* (2008).

Video: Lacandona: The Zapatistas and the rainforest of Chiapas, Mexico (26m/bt)

(Week 14) 14 & 16 April

Critical Essay Due 16 April (See critical essay guidelines under week 9 and do not forget to include the title, abstract, and sources assignments, that were due earlier and returned to you).

Social Philosophy and the Sustainability Revolution: How to structure livelihoods, communities, nations, and international relations

Readings (required) [This week write an analysis of Kaczynski's views, following the guidelines in the syllabus]

“Theodore Kaczynski, “Industrial Society and Its Future,”

http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Industrial_Society_and_Its_Future.

“[Deep Ecology and its Social Philosophy: A Critique](#),” in *Beneath the Surface: Critical Essays on Deep Ecology*. Eds. E. Katz, A. Light, D. Rothenberg (Boston: MIT Press, 2000), 269-299.

Readings (recommended)

Robert Paelke's *Environmentalism and the Future of Progressive Politics* (Yale U.P., 1989), 273-283 (on reserve)

Martin Lewis, *Green Delusions* (Duke U.P., 1992), p. 150-90 & 242-51.

Critical Essays Returned 21 April

(Week 15) 21 April (last scheduled class)

Is religion the solution or one of the problems?

Readings (required) [This week be prepared to discuss and write an essay in your final exam contrasting Taylor's “Green Future” article with other perspectives in the class]

Bron Taylor, “[A Green Future for Religion?](#)” *Futures Journal* 36:991-1008, 2004

THE FINAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAM WILL BE ON THURSDAY, 30 APRIL, FROM 3-5 P.M., IN CSE E121.