

Politics 214: Thinking Green

Winter Quarter 2004, Thurs., 6-9:30, 217 Stevenson

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This is a graduate seminar in environmental and ecological politics, ethics, and political economy, on Green political thought and practice. It is intended to permit examination of the question: What does it mean to “think Green? In it, we shall examine the origins and content of ecological politics, ethics and political economy, and ask whether they offer a “realistic” alternative to neo-liberalism and other political ideologies. In addition to intensive reading, students will be expected to write weekly 2-3 page synthesis papers on the readings, to organize and make a presentation during one of the class meetings, and to prepare a 5 page synopsis of a longer research paper, to be presented during the final class meeting. Those who might wish to actually write the paper can sign up for an independent study during Spring Quarter.

Readings (All texts are on reserve at McHenry Library, and I will make materials available for copying. * indicates selected chapters)

Robyn Eckersley, *Environmentalism and Political Theory* (SUNY, 1992)

John H. Meyer, *Political Nature* (MIT Press, 2001)

Thom Kuehls, *Beyond Sovereign Territory* (Minnesota, 1996)

*Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* (Routledge, 1991).

*David Harvey, *Justice, Nature & the Geography of Difference* (Blackwell, 1996)

*David Harvey, *Spaces of Hope* (UC Press, 2000)

Timothy Luke, *Capitalism, Democracy, and Ecology* (Illinois, 1999)

*Anna Peterson, *Being Human* (UC Press, 2001).

*Will Wright, *Wild Knowledge* (Minnesota, 1992).

Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (Routledge, 1993)

Syllabus

Week 1 (1/8): What is “Green Thinking?”—an incomplete overview of approaches, controversies, and contradictions.

Eckersley, ch. 1-2; Luke, Introduction & ch. 1; Meyer, ch. 1-2

Additional reading:

R. Bryant and S. Bailey, *Third World Political Ecology* (Routledge, 1997)..

Neil Carter, *The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy* (Cambridge, 2001).

William Cronon (ed), *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature* (Norton, 1996).

Andrew Dobson, *Green Political Thought* (Routledge, 2000, 3rd ed.).

David Goldblatt, *Social Theory and the Environment* (Polity, 1996).

Ramachandra Guha and Juan Martinez-Alier, *Varieties of Environmentalism. Essays North and South* (Earthscan, 1997)..

Mark Sagoff, *The Economy of the Earth* (Cambridge, 1988)..

Week 2 (1/15): Constructing nature and culture—how do we know what is “nature” and what is “culture,” and what about hybrids and metaxa?

Peterson, ch. 1-3; Kuehls, Introduction & ch. 1; Plumwood, ch. 2; Clare Palmer and Francis O’Gorman, “Animals, Power, and Ethics: The Case of Foxhunting,” pp. 281-94, in: Andrew Light and Avner de-Shalit (eds.), *Moral and Political Reasoning in Environmental Practice* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003).

Additional reading:

David Arnold, *The Problem of Nature: Environment, Culture, and European Expansion* (Blackwell, 1996).

Neil Evernden, *The Social Creation of Nature* (Johns Hopkins, 1992).

Barbara Noske, *Humans and Other Animals* (1989, London: Pluto Press).

George Robinson et al, *Future Natural: Nature, Science and Culture* (Routledge, 1996).

I.G. Simmons, *Interpreting Nature* (Routledge, 1993).

Kate Soper, *What is Nature? Culture, Politics and the Non-Human* (Blackwell, 1995)

Week 3 (1/22): Making nature political—where are the politics in green thinking?

Harvey (1996), Part II; Meyer, ch. 4-6; Kuehls, ch. 2-4; Plumwood, ch. 6

Additional reading:

Jane Bennett and William Chaloupka, *In the Nature of Things: Language, Politics and the Environment* (Minnesota, 1993).

Robert Brulle, *Agency, Democracy, and Nature* (MIT Press, 2000).

John Dryzek, *The Politics of the Earth: Environmental Discourses* (Oxford, 1997).

Kerry Whiteside, *Divided Natures—French Contributions to Political Ecology* (MIT Press, 2002)

Week 4 (1/29): Knowing nature—knowledge of nature and the nature of knowledge

Wright, Introduction and ch. 1; Plumwood, ch 3-5; Karen Litfin, *OzoneDiscourses* (Columbia, 1994), ch. 2; Haraway, ch. 9.

Additional reading:

Ulrich Beck, *Ecological Politics in an Age of Risk* (Polity, 1995)..

Ronnie Lipschutz, *Global Civil Society and Global Environmental Governance* (SUNY Press, 1996).

Warren Magnusson and Karena Shaw (eds.), *A Political Space* (Minnesota, 2003).

Michael Redclift and Ted Benton (eds.), *Social Theory and the Global Environment* (Routledge, 1994).

Week 5 (2/5): Deep Ecology—can one “think like a mountain?” And so what?

Eckersley, ch. 3; Jozef Keulartz, *The Struggle for Nature* (Routledge, 1998), ch. 7; Aldo Leopold, “The Land Ethic,” pp. 237-64, in: *A Sand County Almanac* (Ballantine, 1966); Edward Abbey, *The Monkey Wrench Gang* (Avon, 1995)

Additional reading:

Robyn Eckersley, “Beyond Human Racism” [Reply to Lynch and Wells], in *Environmental Values* (1998).

Tony Lynch and David Wells, “Non-Anthropocentrism? A Killing Objection” in *Environmental Values* (1998).

George Sessions (ed.), *Deep Ecology for the 21st Century* (Shambala, 1995).

Mick Smith, *An ethics of place: radical ecology, postmodernity, and social theory* (SUNY Press, 2001).

Week 6 (2/12): Women and nature—varieties

Haraway, ch. 8; Plumwood, ch. 1 & Conclusion; Eckersley, ch. 5

Additional reading:

Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature* (Harper & Row, 1980).

Joni Seager, *Earth Follies* (Routledge, 1993).

Ariel Salleh, *Ecofeminism as Politics* (Zed, 1997)

Catriona Sandilands, *The Good-Natured Feminist* (Minnesota, 1999).

Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies, *Ecofeminism* (Fernwood, 1993).

Karen J. Warren, *Ecofeminist Philosophy : A Western Perspective On What It Is And Why It Matters* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2000).

Week 7 (2/19): Liberalism & green thought—if everything must have a price to be valued, what is anything worth?

Luke, ch 2-3; Meyer, ch. 7; Ernest Callenback, *Ecotopia* (Bantam, 1990).

Additional reading:

Steven Bernstein, *The Compromise of Liberal Environmentalism* (Columbia, 2001).

Avner de-Shalit, *Why Posterity Matters* (Routledge, 1995).

Mark Diesendorf and Clive Hamilton (eds), *Human Ecology, Human Economy* (Allen and Unwin, 1997).

Robyn Eckersley, *The Green State* (MIT Press, 2004).

Week 8 (2/26): Conservatism & green thought—conservatives love nature, too!

Peterson, ch. 7-8; Luke, ch. 4-5; Plumwood, ch. 7

Additional reading:

Terry Anderson and Donald Leal, *Free Market Environmentalism* (Westview, 1991).

William Ophuls and A Stephan Boyan, *An Inquiry into the Human Prospect* (Norton, 1991, 3rd ed.).

Charles Rubin, *The Green Crusade* (Free Press, 1995).

Michael E. Soule and Gary Lease (eds), *Reinventing Nature: Responses to Postmodern Deconstruction* (Island Press, 1995).

Week 9 (3/4): Humanism & green thought—people and nature together, will never be defeated!

Luke, ch. 7-8; Harvey (2000), ch. 10-11; Eckersley, ch. 4, 6-7

Additional reading:

Ted Benton (ed) *The Greening of Marxism* (Guildford, 1996).

Murray Bookchin, *The Ecology of Freedom* (Black Rose Books, 1991).

Andre Gorz, *Ecology as Politics* (Pluto, 1980).

David Pepper, *Ecosocialism* (Routledge, 1993).

James O'Connor, *Natural Causes* (Guilford, 1998).

Week 10 (3/11): Student presentations

