

## THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

Department of Environmental Studies & Planning  
Department of Sociology  
Sonoma State University

This syllabus is for a 3-semester-unit course, taught in a three-hour class once a week for 15 weeks.

### Course Description:

The conservation and environmental movements have been important influences on American society across the Twentieth Century. We trace the American conservation movement from the organization of the Sierra Club and the first Audubon Societies in the 1890s through the New Deal, from the first campaigns to establish National Parks through the legislative victories for clean water, clean air, and wilderness protection in the early 1960s. We examine the transformation of the conservation movement into a new environmental movement after 1970. We explore the emergence of new types of activism and legal advocacy, the tension between national organizations and the grassroots, and the development of such new components as the environmental justice movement in communities of color. We also look at the emergence of a global environmental movement in the 1980s. Guided by a framework of social movement analysis, we pay close attention to the roles of organizations, resources, leadership, membership, values, political culture, and counter-movements.

### Required Texts:

Stephen Fox, *The American Conservation Movement: John Muir and His Legacy* (Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1981)

Douglas H. Strong, *Dreamers and Defenders: American Conservationists* (Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1988)

Robert Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring: The Transformation of the American Environmental Movement* (Island Press, 1993)

### Class Reader, containing:

Jim O'Brien, "Environmentalism as a Mass Movement: Historical Notes," from *Radical America*, Vol. 17, Nos. 2-3 (1983), pp. 7-27

David Walls, *The Activist's Almanac* (1993), section on the conservation and environmental movements

### **Course Requirements:**

1. Attendance, preparation, and participation are essential. Attendance will be verified each class period. Participation in class discussions will count 15% of your grade. Unexcused absences will lower this score.
2. You will write several short (1-2 pages) reaction papers as assigned, to count 20% of your grade.
3. You will present to the class oral reports on assigned topics, sometimes as part of a collaborative team, and may be asked to serve on a reaction panel to videos, to count 15% of your grade.
4. You will complete a take-home mid-term assignment, to count 25% of your grade.
5. You will write a research paper (at least 10 pages, typed, double-spaced), to count 25% of your grade. The subject can be a local environmental action group, a local chapter or a national environmental organization, or an historical topic related to the conservation or environmental movements. Details on this assignment will be provided later. Plan to consult with the instructor on choice of topic.

### **Course Objectives:**

1. You will be able to identify and date the emergence and development of the conservation movement, situate it in its historical period, and identify three or four leading people, organizations, and issues important to development of the movement;
2. You will be able to identify and date the emergence and development of the environmental movement, situate it in its historical period, and identify three or four leading people, organizations and issues important to development of the movement;
3. You will be able to apply a model of strategic analysis to the conservation and environmental movements which helps explain why they emerged when they did, who their constituencies were, and what circumstances allowed them to win victories;
4. You will be able to describe and characterize the backlash to the environmental movement that emerged in the 1980s and continues to date.
5. You will be able to describe the issues and challenges that face the environmental movement at the present.

## **Course Outline and Readings:**

Required reading should be done before class. Recommended resources can be used to develop term paper topics or follow a subject in greater depth.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Week: Introduction to Course: From John Muir to Julia Butterfly Hill**

Video in class: "Butterfly"

#### **Recommended resource:**

Julia Butterfly Hill, *The Legacy of Luna* (HarperCollins, 2000)

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Week: John Muir: Prophet of Preservation and Founder of the Sierra Club**

Video in class: "John Muir: The Man, the Poet, the Legacy"

#### **Required reading:**

Fox, *ACM*, chs. 1-3

Strong, *Dreamers*, chs. 1 and 4

#### **Recommended resources:**

Michael P. Cohen, *The History of the Sierra Club, 1892-1970* (Sierra Club Books, 1988)

Tom Turner, *Sierra Club: 100 Years of Protecting Nature* (Abrams, 1991)

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Week: Gifford Pinchot: the U.S. Forest Service and the National Parks**

Video in class: "The Battle for Wilderness"

#### **Required reading:**

Fox, *ACM*, chs. 4 and 5

Strong, *Dreamers*, chs. 2 and 3

Reader: O'Brien, pp. 7-13; Walls, *Almanac*, Intro and profiles of Sierra Club and National Audubon Society

#### **Recommended resources:**

Frank Graham, Jr., *The Audubon Ark: A History of the NAS* (Knopf, 1990)

Horace M. Albright, *The Birth of the National Park Service* (Howe Brothers, 1985)

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Week: The New Deal and Conservation**

Video in class: “Hoover Dam”

**Required reading:**

Fox, *ACM*, ch. 6

Strong, *Dreamers*, chs. 5 and 7

Reader: Walls, *Almanac*, profiles of NCPA, IWL, NWF

**Recommended resources:**

John C. Miles, *Guardian of the Parks: A History of the NPCA* (Taylor & Francis, 1995)

Thomas B. Allen, *Guardian of the Wild: The Story of the NWF: 1936-1986* (Indiana Univ. Press, 1987)

T.H. Watkins, *Righteous Pilgrim: The Life and Times of Harold Ickes* (Holt, 1990)

Frank E. Smith, *The Politics of Conservation* (Pantheon, 1966)

#### **5<sup>th</sup> Week: Aldo Leopold, a Land Ethic, and Wilderness**

Student panel on conservation organizations

**Required reading:**

Fox, *ACM*, ch. 7

Strong, *Dreamers*, ch. 6

Reader: Walls, *Almanac*, TWS profile

**Recommended resources:**

Dyan Zaslowsky and T.H. Watkins, *These American Lands* (Island Press, 1994)

Michael Frome, *Battle for the Wilderness* (Praeger, 1974)

## **6<sup>th</sup> Week: David Brower and the Post World War II World**

Video in class: “For Earth’s Sake: The Life and Times of David Brower” or  
“Monumental: David Brower’s Fight for Wild America.”

Take-home mid-term assignment handed out

### **Required reading:**

Fox, *ACM*, ch. 8

Strong, *Dreamers*, ch. 9

Gottlieb, *Forcing*, ch. 1

Reader, O’Brien, pp. 13-26

### **Recommended resources:**

John McPhee, *Encounters with the Archdruid* (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1971)

David Brower, *For Earth’s Sake* (Peregrine Smith, 1990)

David Brower, *Let the Mountains Talk, Let the Rivers Run* (HarperCollins, 1995)

## **7<sup>th</sup> Week: Rachael Carson and the New Environmentalism**

Take-home mid-term assignment due

### **Required reading:**

Fox, *ACM*, chs. 9 and 10

Strong, *Dreamers*, ch. 8

Gottlieb, *Forcing*, ch. 2

### **Recommended resource:**

Stewart L. Udall, *The Quiet Crisis and the Next Generation* (1963; Peregrine Smith, 1988)

## **8<sup>th</sup> Week: The 1960s and Earth Day 1970**

Video in class: “To Save the Land and People”

### **Required reading:**

Gottlieb, *Forcing*, ch. 3

Reader: Walls, *Almanac*, profiles of EA and FoE

## 9<sup>th</sup> Week: The New Environmental Movement Organizations

Student panel on the new environmental organizations

### **Required reading:**

Gottlieb, *Forcing*, ch. 4

Reader: Walls, *Almanac*, profiles of EDF, NRDC, SCLDF, LCV, TNC

### **Recommended resources:**

Philip Shabecoff, *A Fierce Green Fire: The American Environmental Movement* (Hill and Wang, 1993)

Riley E. Dunlap and Angela G. Mertig, *American Environmentalism: The U.S. Environmental Movement, 1970-1990* (Taylor and Francis, 1992)

Tom Turner, *Wild by Law: The SCLDF and the Places It Has Saved* (Sierra Club Books, 1990)

Tom Turner, *Justice on Earth* (2003)

Noel Grove, *Preserving Eden: The Nature Conservancy* (Abrams, 1992)

## 10<sup>th</sup> Week: The New Activists

Video in class: "A Question of Power," on the campaigns against nuclear power in California

### **Required reading:**

Gottlieb, *Forcing*, ch. 5

Reader: Walls, *Almanac*, profiles of EF! SEAC, EII, CWA

### **Recommended resources:**

Rik Scarce, *Eco-Warriors: Understanding the Radical Environmental Movement* (Noble Press, 1990)

Dave Foreman, *Confessions of an Eco-Warrior* (Harmony Books, 1991)

Susan Zakin, *Coyotes and Town Dogs: Earth First! And the Environmental Movement* (Viking, 1993)

Judi Bari, *Timber Wars and Other Writings* (1992)

## **11<sup>th</sup> Week: Global Environmental Activism**

Video in class: excerpts from Greenpeace video, “Breaking the Silence”

### **Required reading:**

Reader: Walls, *Almanac*, profiles of Greenpeace, WWF

### **Recommended resources:**

Paul Wapner, *Environmental Activism and World Civic Politics* (SUNY Press, 1996)

Robert Hunter, *Warriors of the Rainbow: A Chronicle of the Greenpeace Movement* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979)

Michael Brown and John May, *The Greenpeace Story* (Dorling Kindersley, 1991)

David B. Morris, *Earth Warrior: Overboard with Paul Watson and the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society* (Fulcrum, 1995)

## **12<sup>th</sup> Week: Gender, Race & Class and the Environmental Movement;**

### **Required reading:**

Gottlieb, *Forcing*, chs. 6-8, Conclusion

Strong, *Dreamers*, ch. 10

Reader: Walls, *Almanac*, profile of CCHW, NTCF

### **Recommended resources:**

Lois Marie Gibbs, *Love Canal: My Story* (SUNY Press, 1982)

Robert D. Bullard, ed., *Confronting Environmental Racism* (South End Press, 1993)

### **13<sup>th</sup> Week: Backlash: Conservatives and the Wise Use Movement;**

#### **Student reports**

##### **Recommended resources:**

- David Helvarg, *The War Against the Greens* (Sierra Club Books, 1994)  
Jacqueline Vaughn Switzer, *Green Backlash* (Lynne Reiner, 1997)  
William Tucker, *Progress and Privilege* (Doubleday, 1982)  
Dixy Lee Ray, *Trashing the Planet* (HarperCollins, 1990)  
Ron Arnold, *Ecology Wars* (Free Enterprise Press, 1987)  
Alan Gottlieb, ed., *The Wise Use Agenda* (Free Enterprise Press, 1989)  
Ron Arnold and Alan Gottlieb, *Trashing the Economy* (Free Enterprise Press, 1993)  
William Perry Pendley, *It Takes a Hero* (Free Enterprise Press, 1994)  
William Perry Pendley, *War on the West* (Regnery, 1995)  
Terry L. Anderson and Donald R. Leal, *Free Market Environmentalism* (Pacific Research Institute, 1991)

### **14<sup>th</sup> Week: Environmental Movement in Sonoma County and the Bay Area**

#### **Student Reports**

##### **Recommended resources:**

- Pamphlet: *A Visit to the Atomic Park* (Special Collections)  
L. Martin Griffin, M.D., *Saving the Marin-Sonoma Coast* (Sweetwater Springs Press, 2000)  
Richard Walker, *The Country in the City: The Greening of the San Francisco Bay Area* (Univ. of Washington Press, 2007)

### **15<sup>th</sup> Week: Student Reports**