

Humanities 350: Ethics and Ecology Spring 07
3:00-4:15 p.m. MW Library TCC
Dr. James R. Hepworth, Office 309 Spalding Hall
Office Hours: 11:30-12:30 MW 10:30-11:30 TTh and by Appointment
Email: hepworth@lcsc.edu Telephone: 792-2385

Course Prerequisites: Junior standing and satisfactory completion of the skills component of the General Education core.

Required Books (see also list of required readings attached to this syllabus)

Norman Maclean, *A River Runs through It and Other Stories* (1977)
Norman Maclean, *Young Men and Fire* (1992)
Michael Pollan, *Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* (2006)

Course Description and Outcomes

Is water a basic human right for all people or is it a commodity to be bought and sold? How should water be controlled? And who should control it? Corporations? The federal government? State and local governments? Does more water exist on the surface of the earth or below the earth? What impact have science and human cultures and technologies had on the earth's ground and surface water supplies? What impact should they have? Do animals have water rights? How about plants? What *should* we eat for dinner? In this particular class we'll take a literary and cinematic approach to such questions. In other words, we'll examine ethical reasoning in relationship to the environment and the impact of human culture and scientific thought on ecology by reading and discussing three or four best-selling books; a selection of current events, poems, essays, and scientific articles; and by viewing films. We'll familiarize ourselves with some basic history of our "ecological crisis," some important philosophical terms, and some key environmental buzzwords ("the commons," "privatization," etc.) We'll also learn to define "environmental literature" and clarify and re-examine our culture's values. If possible, we will also make fieldtrips and host surprise guest lectures by such luminaries as our college's resident philosopher and our state's official archeologist. And finally, we will take advantage of special events now being planned for the college's second annual artist-in-residence and various other special activities and sudden opportunities.

Most certainly we will each conduct research; write one substantial research paper (6-8 pages worth forty 40) points; attend each class session, take pop quizzes, and participate in class discussions (20 points); make brief presentations (20 points); and write several short, candid, and thoughtful responses to various readings and prompts about films (20 points). By the end of the semester we will come away from our studies better informed about environmental issues and their history as well as some of our obligations to the earth and to each other.

Ethics & Ecology Presentations Class Calendar Spring 07

Week One W January 17
Introduction

Week Two M Jan 22 /W Jan 24
Film: *An Inconvenient Truth*. Aaron Frizzell presentation. Read “Philosophical Ethics and Environmental Public Policy” (handout) and Robert Michael Pyle’s “And Coyotes Will Lift a Leg”

Week Three M Jan 29* /W Jan 31
Quiz and Discussion. Bill Mannshreck presentation. Read Slovic’s “Voices of Environmental Literature” and Snyder’s “Four Changes” (*Last day to drop a class without a W)

Week Four M February 5/ W Feb 7
Discuss Slovic and Snyder. DVD *Exotic Terrane*. Read Genesis, Navajo, and Hopi creation stories. Read Quammen’s “Nasty Habbits” and also Jared Diamond’s “Who Killed Easter Island?”

Week Five M Feb 12/ W Feb 14
DVD *Grizzly Man*. Zeb Fisher presentation. Quiz? Read Deming’s “Wolf, Eagle, Bear: An Alaska Notebook” and White’s “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis”

Week Six: W Feb 21
*No class Monday: President’s Day. Responses to White Due. Read Stegner’s “Wilderness Letter,” Cronen’s “The Trouble with Wilderness” and Charles Mann *Atlantic* essay.

Week Seven M Feb 26 / W Feb 28
Young Men and Fire Book One. Jason Smith presentation.

Week Eight M March 5 / W March 7
Young Men and Fire Book Two. Abbi Watson presentation.

Week Nine M March 12 / W March 14
View *Fire on the Mountain*. Rita Hirst presentation. Read Pollan’s *Omivore’s Dilemma*

Week Ten M March-19 / W March 16
Spring Break. No classes.

Week Eleven M March 26 / W March 28
Pollan Book I. Essodon G. Kouyou presentation. Angela Crawford presentation.

Week Twelve M April 2 / W April 4
Pollan Book II . Michelle Peters presentation. Heidi Jorgensen presentation.

Week Thirteen M April 9 / W April 11
Pollan Book III. Liz Paradis presentation.

Week Fourteen M April 16 / W April 18

Supersize Me. Myra Albor presentation. Read Wendell Berry's "Christianity and the Ruin of Creation"

Week Fifteen M April 23 / W April 25

Trout biology and entymology. Josh Pilon presentation. Read Norman Maclean's "A River Runs through It."

Week Sixteen M April 30 / W May 2

Thirst. Krystal Braun presentation.

Week Seventeen M May 7 W May 9

Field Trip. No Final Exam Week.

Week Eighteen M May 14 W May 16

Final Exams.