

## Soc 433 – Advanced Problems in Environment and Society

**Course Description:** The course allows students to pursue issues raised in SOCI 247 and 248 in greater depth. It also exposes them to new developments in social theory. Each year will have a different thematic focus which could include: the ways in which social conceptions of “natural” and “unnatural” have changed over time; the social implications of new biotechnologies; the global environmental movement; or ideals of an ecological future. This year we will be considering how to conceptualize nature and its future in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Prerequisite: SOCI 247, 248 or PSCI 247, 248. Three credits.

**TIME:** Monday 3:45 to 5:00 PM and Wednesday 3:45 to 5:00 PM (HJ/JH Block).  
Winter term, 2015

**PLACE:** Annex 124, St Francis Xavier campus, Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

**Evaluation:** The course is structured more as a reading group than a seminar. In other words, all of us have committed to come to each meeting prepared to speak about the reading: to offer critical comments, to raise questions for discussion. Evaluation will be based partly on preparedness for and contributions to these discussions. There will also be major research project.

- Participation: 50%
- Research Project 50%

## Outline Soc 433 Advanced Problems in Environmental Sociology, 2014

### Week 1 – Harmony with Nature

Cronon, William. 1983. "Seasons of Want and Plenty." Pp. 34-53 in *Changes in the Land*. New York: Hill and Wang.

### Week 2 – The Balance of Nature

Egerton, Frank N. 1973. "Changing Concepts of the Balance of Nature." *The Quarterly Review of Biology* 48:322-47.

### Week 3 – Pastoralism, Modernism and the Sublime

Wilson, Alexander. 1992. "Nature at Home: A social ecology of postwar landscape design." in *The Culture of Nature*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

### Week 4 – Wilderness Nature

Turner, James Morton. 2002. "From Woodcraft to 'Leave No Trace': Wilderness, Consumerism, and Environmentalism in Twentieth-Century America." *Environmental History* 7(3):462-84.  
Halusa-Delay, Randolph. 2001. "Nothing Here to Care About: Participant Constructions of "Nature" Following a 12-day Wilderness Program." *The Journal of Environmental Education* 32(4):43-48.

### Week 5 – Anthropocene: Nature as a Human Artefact

McKibben, Bill. 1990. "The end of nature." in *The End of Nature*. New York: Anchor Books.

Damian, Carrington. 2014. "Humanity's terrifying impact on Earth justifies new Anthropocene epoch." in *The Guardian*. <http://www.theguardian.com/science/2014/oct/16/humanitys-terrifying-impact-on-earth-justifies-new-anthropocene-epoch>

Sample, Ian 2014. "Anthropocene: is this the new epoch of humans?" *The Guardian*. <http://www.theguardian.com/science/2014/oct/16/-sp-scientists-gather-talks-rename-human-age-anthropocene-holocene>

#### Week 6 – Thinking the Temporal Scale of the Anthropocene

Weik von Mossner, Alexa 2014. "Science Fiction and the Risks of the Anthropocene: Anticipated Transformations in Dale Pendell's *The Great Bay*." *Environmental Humanities* 5:203-16.

#### Week 7 – Posthuman Human-Nature Relationships

Pepperell, Robert. 2003. "Introduction," "What is Posthumanism?" in *The Posthuman Condition: Consciousness beyond the Brain*. Portland, OR: Intellect.

Gates, Kelly 2013. "Key Questions for Communication and Critical-Cultural Studies: Posthumanism, Network Infrastructures, and Sustainability." *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 10(2-3):242-47.

#### Week 8 – Posthumanist Ecology

Aretoulakis, Emmanouil 2014. "Towards a PostHumanist Ecology." *European Journal of English Studies* 18(2):172-90.

#### Week 9 – Imagining the Anthropocene

Porritt, Jonathon. 2013. *The World We Made: Alex McKay's story from 2050*. London: Phaidon.

#### Week 10 – Imagining the Anthropocene

Porritt, Jonathon. 2013. *The World We Made: Alex McKay's story from 2050*. London: Phaidon.

#### Week 11 – Imagining the Anthropocene

Oreskes, Naomi, and Erik M. Conway. 2014. *The Collapse of Western Civilization A View from the Future*. New York: Columbia University Press.

#### Week 12 – Imagining the Anthropocene

Oreskes, Naomi, and Erik M. Conway. 2014. *The Collapse of Western Civilization A View from the Future*. New York: Columbia University Press.