

ENST 22502 / PHIL 20108 / HIPS 29510: *Environmental Philosophy*

Instructor: Trevor Pearce [trpearce@uchicago.edu]

Winter 2008 – Wednesdays, 3:00pm-5:50pm

This course is designed to encourage critical reflection on the relationship between humans and the natural world through a historical survey of (mainly American) philosophical perspectives on the environment. We begin by exploring the writings of Emerson, Thoreau, and the American pragmatists. We then focus on the origins and development of modern environmental ethics. Throughout, we discuss the frequent conflicts between scientific results, philosophical positions, and social policies.

Requirements

- 10% Participation: Each week, and for each assigned text, a student (selected the previous week) will arrive with several questions to open discussion. The 10% also includes general participation and mandatory attendance.
- 10% Abstract: On Wednesday, **February 3 at 3pm** in Week 5, students must hand in an abstract (~250 words) of their proposed paper topic. I will have individual meetings in Week 6 with each student to discuss these abstracts, offer suggestions, etc. At the beginning of the course, I will provide an outline of the kinds of arguments such papers could make, although I will not provide a conventional list of topics.
- 80% Final Paper: The final paper, which should be 3500-4000 words (~15 pages), will be due on Wednesday, **March 25 at 12pm** during exam week. Students are welcome to meet with me at any time during the quarter to discuss their paper.

Schedule (all readings in course packet)

Week 2: Transcendentalism

Emerson, Ralph W. 1836. *Nature*. In *The Essential Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Brooks Atkinson, 1-39. New York: Modern Library, 2000.

Thoreau, Henry D. 1862. "Walking." *Atlantic Monthly* 9 (June): 657-674.

Week 3: Pragmatism and 'Environment'

Spencer, Herbert. 1855. "The Correspondence between Life and its Circumstances." In *Principles of Psychology*, 366-375. London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans.

James, William. 1880. "Great Men, Great Thoughts, and the Environment." *Atlantic Monthly* 46 (October): 441-459.

Dewey, John. 1898. "Evolution and Ethics." *The Monist* 8 (April): 321-341.

Week 4: Roots of a Crisis

Leopold, Aldo. 1949. "The Land Ethic." In *The Sand County Almanac, and Sketches Here and There*, 201-226. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

White, Lynn. 1967. "The Historical Roots of our Ecologic Crisis." *Science* 155 (10 March): 1203-1207.

Hardin, Garrett. 1968. "The Tragedy of the Commons." *Science* 162 (13 December): 1243-1248.

Grove, Richard. 1990. "The Origins of Environmentalism." *Nature* 345 (3 May): 11-14.

Week 5: Early Environmental Ethics

Routley, Richard. 1973. "Is There a Need for a New, an Environmental Ethic?" *Proceedings of the 15th World Congress of Philosophy*, vol. 1, 205-210. Sofia: Sofia Press.

Feinberg, Joel. 1974. "The Rights of Animals and Unborn Generations." In *Philosophy & Environmental Crisis*, ed. William T. Blackstone, 43-68. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Passmore, John. 1974. "Removing the Rubbish." In *Man's Responsibility for Nature: Ecological Problems and Western Traditions*, 173-195. New York: Scribner.

Rolston, Holmes. 1975. "Is There an Ecological Ethic?" *Ethics* 85 (January): 93-109.

Week 6: Deep Ecology and its Critics

Naess, Arne. 1973. "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement." *Inquiry* 16: 95-100.

Devall, Bill and George Sessions. 1985. "The Reformist Response." In *Deep Ecology*, 51-61. Layton, UT: Gibbs Smith.

Devall, Bill and George Sessions. 1985. "Deep Ecology." In *Deep Ecology*, 63-77. Layton, UT: Gibbs Smith.

Bookchin, Murray. 1987. "Social Ecology versus 'Deep Ecology': A Challenge for the Ecology Movement." *Green Perspectives* 4-5 (Summer): 1-23.

Guha, Ramachandra. 1989. "Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique." *Environmental Ethics* 11: 71-83.

Week 7: Animals

Singer, Peter. 1973. "All Animals are Equal..." In *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals*, 1-27. New York: New York Review.

Regan, Tom. 1983. "The Rights View." In *The Case for Animal Rights*, 266-329. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Diamond, Cora. 1978. "Eating Meat and Eating People." *Philosophy* 53 (October): 465-479.

Week 8: Intrinsic Value

Taylor, Paul. 1981. "The Ethics of Respect for Nature." *Environmental Ethics* 3: 197-218.

Attfield, Robin. 1987. "Essential Capacities and Value." In *A Theory of Value and Obligation*, 40-53. New York: Croom Helm.

Attfield, Robin. 1987. "Priorities Among Values." In *A Theory of Value and Obligation*, 72-91. New York: Croom Helm.

Williams, Bernard. 1992. "Must a Concern for the Environment be Centred on Human Beings?" In *Ethics and the Environment*, ed. C.C.W. Taylor.

Week 9: Sustainability

Holland, Alan. 1997. "Substitutability: Or, Why Strong Sustainability is Weak and Absurdly Strong Sustainability is Not Absurd." In *Valuing Nature? Economics, Ethics and Environment*, ed. John Foster, 119-134. New York: Routledge.

Jamieson, Dale. 1998. "Sustainability and Beyond." *Ecological Economics* 24: 183-192.

Norton, Bryan. 1999. "Ecology and Opportunity: Intergenerational Equity and Sustainable Options." In *Fairness and Futurity: Essays on Environmental Sustainability and Social Justice*, ed. Andrew Dobson, 118-150. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Week 10: The Built Environment

Cronon, William. 1996. "The Trouble with Wilderness: Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." *Environmental History* 1 (January): 7-28.

King, Roger. 2000. "Environmental Ethics and the Built Environment." *Environmental Ethics* 22: 115-131.

Fox, Warwick. 2000. "Toward an Ethics (or at Least a Value Theory) of the Built Environment." In *Ethics and the Built Environment*, ed. Warwick Fox, 207-221. New York: Routledge.