

## Anthropology and the Environment

ANT241-01  
Union College  
Golub 105  
10:55AM-12:40PM  
Winter 2008  
<http://minerva.union.edu/fayd/08sprgenv/>

Derick A. Fay, Ph.D.  
fayd@union.edu  
388-8747  
36 Union Ave., room 205  
Office Hours: Weds. 1-2 PM  
or by appointment

### Course Description

Humans have transformed their environments for millennia, but in the last fifty years we have altered the global environment in ways that have no precedent in human history or in geological time. With the contemporary environmental crisis as its backdrop, this course examines some classic and contemporary anthropological approaches to the environment and environmentalism: cultural ecology, political ecology, environmental history, science studies, poststructuralist cultural studies, and environmental justice. As we review these approaches and their implications for our understanding of human relations to the environment, we will see how anthropologists and people they study alike are engaging with contemporary environmental issues including biodiversity conservation, deforestation, community-based natural resource management, ecotourism, and climate change.

### Requirements

*Read this syllabus.* Understand the policies stated here. If anything is unclear, contact me for clarification. Always bring your syllabus to class in case changes are announced. *Check it frequently* to be sure you are aware of upcoming assignments and due dates. *Manage your time effectively:* if you start reading for a Tuesday class on Monday night, chances are you won't have time to get through it all, and won't be able to participate effectively in class. The syllabus is *subject to change*. I will announce all changes in class and post an updated version on the course web site.

*Attend class.* Absences will be taken into account in determining the participation component of your grade. If you expect to miss class due to an athletic event or other commitment please let me know at least a week in advance. If you miss class, you are required to submit the reading review for that day (see below) whether it is collected or not.

*Participate in class discussions.* This class is a group effort, and will include much dialogue and discussion. The more members of the class contribute and are actively engaged in our discussions, the better the class will be. Participation also counts towards your grade (see below).

Do the readings listed *prior to class*, preferably in the order listed. For example, you should read the selections listed from Moran, Geertz, Rappaport and Steward prior to class on January 9. The readings be necessary for adequate class participation. You may be called on if you are not an active participant.

*Bring your texts to class.*

*In the classroom.* Please turn off all cel phones, laptops, etc. Drinks are fine – if you want to eat, we'll take a short break midway through the class most days.

If you plan to take the course pass-fail, you must contact the Registrar within the first three weeks of the term.

### **ADA Requirements**

It is Union College policy to make accommodations for individuals with disabilities. If you have any disability or special concern, please let me know what your needs are in order that they may be accommodated. All discussions will remain confidential to the extent permissible by law.

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations must also:

1. *Register* with and provide documentation to the Dean of Students Office.
2. *Bring a letter* to the instructor from the Dean of Students Office indicating you need academic accommodations. This must be done within the first two weeks of the term .

### **Assignments and Grading**

**Leading discussion** (10%) -- for all but four classes, two students will be responsible for initiating and leading discussion on the reading and topics for the day. The two discussion leaders should meet together prior to class to coordinate their plans, etc. I will provide references to discussion leaders for additional optional background reading.

**Participation** (10%) -- This course will mostly be conducted as a seminar. I expect you to come to class prepared to talk . Most class time will be devoted to discussing the issues raised in the readings. A “Socratic method” will be used in class: it requires students to answer and debate questions as a means of learning. This method helps you to learn to think on your feet. Classes will clarify and expand upon the main ideas, issues, and findings in the assigned reading largely through student questions, comments, and responses to the instructor’s questions. It is necessary to have your text and class notes with you for every class. It is essential to the success of this course that you complete all of the assigned reading prior to each class. Seminars only work well when the participants (students and professor) come to class prepared. In seminars the emphasis is not on teaching as something the professor does but on collaborative learning as something we all do actively together. Again, this course requires that you: a) come to class prepared, which means having done the reading prior to each class meeting and written out answers to the assigned questions; and b) that you are willing to verbally express your views and ask questions. This course can be neither educational nor interesting without your active participation.

**Reading reviews** (30% of grade – 6 x 5%). For *each class* you will write a one page response to a question or questions on the assigned reading. At times you will have the option of writing on topics of your choice, as long as they relate to the reading. Either way, you are expected to think about and to write out your answers prior to class. I will collect and grade your answers (on a plus, check, minus scale) on *six dates during the term*. The dates will be *selected at random*. There is no way to predict which dates your work will be collected. Reviews cannot be turned in late; I will collect them at the start of class only. If you can not come to class, you may turn in your questions in advance. The purpose of the written questions is to get you to complete the reading and think about the material before coming to class.

**Short essays** (3-4 pp.; 25% of grade – 2 x 12.5%). Due **April 17** and **June 5**.

**In-class open-book writing** (approx 40 minutes; 25% of grade – 2 x 12.5%). **May 8** and **May 22**.

### **Academic Honesty**

If you cheat in this course, I will refer the case to the Dean for Undergraduate Education and recommend that, at minimum, you receive a failing grade for the course. I expect that you are all familiar with the college statement on plagiarism and academic honesty ( <http://www.union.edu/library/refroom/statement.htm> ) and will abide by the guidelines stated there. If you have any questions on how to cite material, please consult with me.

## Required Texts

Emilio Moran, *People and Nature: An Introduction to Human Ecological Relations*

William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists and the Ecology of New England*

James Igoe, *Conservation and Globalization*

Bruce Braun, *The Intemperate Rainforest: Nature, Culture, and Power on Canada's West Coast*

Piers Vitebsky, *The Reindeer People: Living with Animals and Spirits in Siberia*

## Course Schedule

Tuesday April 1 Introduction

Thursday April 3 **Cultural Ecology**

Moran ch. 1-2

Clifford Geertz, "Starting Points, Theoretical and Factual: the Ecological Approach in Anthropology," pp. 1-11 of *Agricultural Involvement* (1963), Berkeley: University of California Press. (R).

Julian Steward, "The Patrilineal Band," from *The Theory of Culture Change* (1955) Urbana: University of Illinois Press.(R).

Tuesday April 8 **Cultural Diversity and Biodiversity**

Fredrik Barth, "Ecologic Relationships of Ethnic Groups in Swat, North Pakistan" (1956) *American Anthropologist* 58: 1079-1089 (R).

Moore, J. L., *et al.*, The distribution of cultural and biological diversity in Africa (2002) *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London* 269:1645-1653 (www).

G. Nabhan *et al.*, "Safeguarding Species, Languages, and Cultures in the Time of Diversity Loss: From the Colorado Plateau to Global Hotspots" (2002) *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden*, Vol. 89, No. 2. (R)

Thursday April 10 **Anthropogenic Landscapes and Political Ecology**

Moran pp. 57-68

D. A. Posey (1985) "Indigenous management of tropical forest ecosystems: The case of the Kayapo Indians of the Brazilian Amazon" *Agroforestry Systems* 3: 139-158 (R).

Fairhead, J. and Leach, M. (1996), Rethinking the forest-science mosaic. Colonial science and its relics in West Africa. In *The Lie of the Land. Challenging Received Wisdom on the African Environment*, Leach, M. and Mearns, R., eds., pp. 105--121. Oxford: The International African Institute and James Currey.

Tuesday April 15 Cronon ch. 1-4

Moran ch. 4

Hecht, S., 1985. "Environment, Development and Politics: Capital Accumulation and the Livestock Sector in Eastern Amazonia." *World Development* 13:6: 663-684.

Thursday April 17 No class - **Short Essay #1 due by 5 PM**

Tues. April 22 Cronon ch. 5-8

Thurs. April 24 Moran pp. 68-73

J. Scott, *Seeing Like a State* ch. 1 and 8 (www).

## **Communities and Conservation in East Africa and Beyond**

Tues. April 29 Moran ch. 6

Igoe, ch. 1-2

Evans-Pritchard, "Interest in Cattle" (www)

Thurs. May 1 Igoe, ch. 3

Little, P. D., Mahmoud, H., and Coppock, D. L. (2001). When deserts flood: risk management and climatic processes among East African pastoralists. *Climate Research* 19(2):149--159.

Tues. May 6 Igoe, ch. 4

B. Conklin and L. Graham, "The Shifting Middle Ground: Amazonian Indians and Eco-Politics" (1995) *American Anthropologist* 97:4: 695-710 (R).

P. Brosius, "Green Dots, Pink Hearts: Displacing Politics from the Malaysian Rain Forest" (1999) *American Anthropologist* 101:1: 36-57 (R).

Thurs. May 8 Igoe, ch. 5

### **In-class writing #1**

### **Critical Theory and the Environment: Seeing Nature**

Tues. May 13 Braun, ch. 1-2

T. Li, "Marginality, Power and Production: Analysing Upland Transformations," in *Transforming the Indonesian Uplands* (R).

Thurs. May 15 Braun, ch. 3-4

Tues. May 20 Braun, ch. 6-Conclusion

A. Tsing, "Becoming a Tribal Elder, and Other Green Development Fantasies," in *Transforming the Indonesian Uplands* (R).

Thurs. May 22 Vitebsky, Prologue and Part I

### **In-class writing #2**

### **Environment and Worldview**

Tues. May 27 Vitebsky, Part II, Interlude, and ch. 7-8

Moran ch. 7

Thurs. May 29 Vitebsky, ch. 9-12

Roy Rappaport, "Ritual Regulation of Environmental Relations among a New Guinea People" (1966) *Ethnology* 6: 17-30 (R).

Lynn White, Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis." *Science*, New Series, Vol. 155, No. 3767. (Mar. 10, 1967), pp. 1203-1207.

Tues. June 3 Moran, ch. 8

Richard Foltz, "Mormon Values and the Utah Environment." *Worldviews: Environment Culture Religion*; 2000, Vol. 4 Issue 1, p1, 19p.

Emma Tomalin, "The Limitations of Religious Environmentalism for India." *Worldviews: Environment Culture Religion*; 2002, Vol. 6 Issue 1, p12, 19p.

Thurs. June 5 Harden, "The Dirt in the New Machine (www)

Osno, "The hidden cost of your hardwood floor" (www)

Stutchbury, "Did Your Shopping List Kill a Songbird?" (www)

### **Short Essay #2**