



Philosophy & the Environment 148

Spring 2017, MWF
1:00-1:50
Sequoia 147

Prof Craig Callender

This course explores contemporary environmental issues from the perspective of philosophy, primarily applied ethics, political philosophy, and philosophy of science.

This quarter we'll cover some of the following topics:

- Ethics, Food and Animals
- Wilderness, Ecology and Ethics: What is Natural?
- The Land Ethic

- Biodiversity, Assisted Migration and Rewilding
- Climate Ethics, Economics and the Future
- Property, Pollution and Justice

In each section, we'll mix theoretical problems in philosophy with practical problems facing conservation today.



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- Reader** Chirag Barai
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- Final Exam** 06/15/2017, Th, 11:30a-2:29p
- Reading** The main reading will be articles available on TED. The only books to purchase are Emma Marris' *The Rambunctious Garden: Saving Nature in a Post-Wild World* and John McPhee's *Encounters with the Archdruid*, each of which can be purchased online for under \$10. We'll also use Lori Gruen's *Ethics and Animals*, although it is available free on UCSD's eLibrary.
- Participation** Every single lecture will contain material not found in the reading. Anything short of regular attendance will severely damage your grade. Attendance will be taken. Your participation grade, however, is more than your attendance; it is also based on how much you contribute to the intellectual life of the class.
- Plagiarism** In your assignments, all sources, including discussions with classmates, must be appropriately acknowledged. All answers given must be in your own wording. Closely paraphrasing or simply copying the work of others (such as authors of books or articles, or classmates, or Wikipedia) is not allowed. Plagiarism, the stealing of an idea or actual text, and other forms of academic dishonesty will be immediately reported to the Academic Integrity Office. Students agree that by taking this course all required papers, quizzes and homework may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site. Students who wish to take a make-up exam or hand in material late must inform me (by phone or email) well ahead of time. In order to qualify for a make-up exam, appropriate evidence of the most severe circumstances must be produced by the student. I will determine, in consultation with the student, what qualifies.
- Electronics** Except when explicitly allowed, use of electronics (laptops, phones, tablets, etc) in the classroom is prohibited.

**Env Challenge**

Living sustainably will probably involve some modification of one's behavior. In this project we try to "walk the talk" by adopting some pro-environment new behavior for a few days and learning about its pros and cons. Examples include: going vegetarian (or vegan for veggies), eating only organic, carrying one's own trash, no single-use products, going plastic-free, and for the truly adventurous, living below the poverty line. During this exercise, you will meet with others in class doing the same thing, discussing challenges regarding policy and philosophy. You'll then write up a report on the project, connecting it to ideas in the course.

Case Study Project

A good way to learn a topic in environmental ethics is to study the fine details of a particular case. Your topic will need to be approved by the professor or TA; otherwise, you are free to write on any topic connected with the course.

The Knoll Project

On May 12 we'll meet at the Scripps Coastal Reserve (aka The Knoll) and learn about it from Dr Heather Henter, Academic Coordinator, Natural Reserve System. A project will be assigned regarding conservation and one of the species found at the Knoll.

Assessment

1. 300-word Reactions — 20%
2. Environmental Challenge Project — 20%
3. Case Study Project — 20%
4. The Knoll Project — 10%
5. Final Exam — 25%
6. Class Participation — 5%

Late Work

Assignments will be posted on TED. Those handed in after the due date and without permission will be docked five percent the first day of the missed deadline. The penalty will then grow at a rate of five percent per day. After ten days no assignment will be accepted except in exceptional circumstances and in consultation with your instructor.

Accommodation

Students requesting accommodations must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) which is located in University Center 202 behind Center Hall. Students are required to present their AFA letters to me and to the OSD Liaison in the department in advance so that accommodations may be arranged. The OSD can be contacted via 858.534.4382 (phone), osd@ucsd.edu (email), disabilities.ucsd.edu (web).



Weeks 1,2

Ethics, Food and Animals. What should you eat? Is it moral to produce and eat the way we do? You will be introduced to some basic ethical concepts and the main rival theories, e.g., utilitarian and deontological theories. To spice things up, we'll apply these theories to questions about what we should eat and the moral status of non-human animals.

- Wallace, *Consider the Lobster*
- Gruen, chapters 1-3
- Norcross, *Puppies, Pigs and People*
- Pollan, *Power Steer* and *When a Crop Becomes King*
- Jacquet, *Silent Water*
- Greenberg, *Why Are We Importing Our Own Fish?* and TED talk

Weeks 3,4

Wilderness and the Land Ethic. Aldo Leopold wrote what many consider to be the finest work in environmental ethics and conservation, *Sand County Almanac*. His thoughts on conservation, ethics, ecology and evolution, expressed in an understated yet beautiful prose, motivate many conservation biologists today. We'll find out why and examine his thought. But we'll also examine the idea of wilderness. The Wilderness Act of 1964 enshrines our nation's desire to preserve wilderness areas. What is a wilderness? How did this idea arise? Does it make sense? Should we seek to preserve or conserve wilderness, and why?

- McPhee, *Encounters with the Archdruid*, selections
- Leopold, *Sand County Almanac*, selections
- Muir, "Hetch Hetchy Valley" (1908; ch. 16)
- Price, "Hats Off to Audubon"
- Philosophy of Land Ethic — tbd
- Optional: Nichols, *Paradise Found* excerpt

Week 5

Biodiversity. Conservation sciences have biodiversity as their goal. What is biodiversity and why is it valuable? We'll look at this question and related ones as they play out in controversies involving invasive species.

- Sober, *Philosophical Problems for Environmentalism*
- Sarkar, *Biodiversity and Conservation*
- Gruen, *Animals in the Wild*, ch 6
- Moriarty & Woods, *Strangers in Strange Lands*
- Film: *Cane Toads: An Unnatural History*
- Optional: Eisenberg, *The Wolf's Tooth: Keystone, Predators, Trophic Cascades and*



Week 6

Conservation and the Anthropocene. Once we acknowledge that human beings have affected more or less everything on the planet, what should the goals of conservation be? How “hands on” should conservation be? Should we “rewild” the world, assist migration, and build novel ecosystems? Or does this turn the world into a “zoo”?

- Marris, *The Rambunctious Garden*
- Donlan, Restoring America’s Big, Wild Animals
- Dowie, Conservation Refugees
- Jackson, *Brave New Ocean* (watch)
- May 12 — The Knoll

Week 7,8

Climate, Ethics and the Future. Do we have duties to future generations? If so, what are they? What would intergenerational justice look like? Should we “discount” future interests in our evaluations of costs and benefits? Is environmental economics value-laden? We’ll ask all of these questions and more in the context of climate change and some of the distinctive challenges it poses.

- Hausman and McPherson, “Beware of Economists Bearing Advice”
- NYT, “A Battle Over the Costs of Global Warming”
- Chaney, “Climate Change and the Future: Discounting for Time, Wealth and Risk”
- Moellendorf, tbd
- Ecosystem Valuation website

Week 9, 10

Property, Pollution and Justice. What are property rights? Where do they come from? What do they allow you to do? Can you morally pollute your own property? When is compensation owed? Are pollution risks distributed fairly?

- Hardin, The Tragedy of the Commons
- Sagoff, “Takings, Just Compensation, and the Environment”
- Railton, “Locke, Stock, and Peril: Natural Property Rights, Pollution, and Risk”
- Ross and Amter, “The Sorcerer’s Apprentices” *The Polluters*
- Pauly, Beyond Duplicity and Ignorance in Global Fisheries.
- Justice TBD
- Optional: Levy, “Catch Shares Management”