SOCA3060 - Environment and Society
Course Outline

Course Outline Issued and Correct as at: Week 1, Semester 2 - 2007

CTS Download Date: 16th June 2007
SOCA3060 - Environment and Society
Course Outline

Course Coordinator: Terry Leahy
Semester: Semester 2 - 2007
Unit Weighting: 10

Teaching Methods:
Field Study
Lecture
Tutorial

Brief Course Description
Develops a sociological approach to environmental issues. Deals critically with environmental controversies within social science, within the environmental movement and within society at large. Key areas are environmental problems of present society, ecologically sustainable technologies and strategies for moving to a sustainable society; gender and the environment; indigenous peoples, Aborigines and the environment; deep ecology; socialist and anarchist approaches; the environment in developing countries. The course covers aspects of the Key Learning Area (KLA) of Human Society and Its Environment for primary and high school teachers.

Contact Hours
Lecture for 1 Hour per Week for the Full Term
Tutorial for 1 Hour per Week for the Full Term
Field Study for 8 Hours per Term for the Full Term

Learning Materials/Texts
Students are required to purchase a book of readings from the U Print office - in the printery downstairs below the Godfrey Tanner Bar (approach from the back of the Union building on the Callaghan campus).

The following may be useful for students who have not previously studied sociology or may want to refresh certain aspects relevant to this subject. Either buy or borrow from short loans:


Use the index and read sections on Marx, capitalism, class, feminism, the protestant ethic.

The recommended book for this subject is


Some copies of this have been ordered for the United Campus Bookshop – at the back of the Union Building on the Callaghan campus. This is a generally useful introduction to one kind of environmentalist perspective.

Course Objectives
On successful completion of this course students will be able to demonstrate:
1. An understanding of a sociological approach to environmental issues and controversies.
2. Ability to analyze and deal critically with environmental perspectives as instances of social theory.
3. Ability to consider a range of sociological interpretations of environmental problems.
4. Skills in writing an academic essay, in reading critically and in doing research.
**Course Content**
1. Environmental problems today and the response of major social institutions. How do people, governments and environmentalists respond to environmental problems?
2. Environmental technologies and the social context of implementation - includes two field trips. Are alternative technologies viable in today's economy?
3. Aborigines, indigenous peoples and environmental issues. Were indigenous technologies of the past environmentally sustainable?
4. The social movements associated with environmentalism - eco-feminism; deep ecology; social ecology; socialist environmentalism. What reforms and utopias do these movements propose?
5. The developing world and environmental issues. How does the world economic structure contribute to environmental problems in developing countries?

**Assessment Items**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essays / Written Assignments</th>
<th>Major essay, 2,500 words, Weighting 50% due Week 7.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essays / Written Assignments</td>
<td>Minor Essay, 2,000 words, Weighting 40% due Week 14.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group/tutorial participation and contribution</td>
<td>10% Assessed on the basis of completion of the required readings and seminar tasks.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Assumed Knowledge**
10 units of SOCA 1000 level courses, or HIST1010, or equivalent.

**Callaghan Campus Timetable**

**SOCA3060**

**ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY**

Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science  
Semester 2 - 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture and Seminar</th>
<th>Thursday 10:00 - 11:00 [V10] WITH SOCA6590</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>Thursday 11:00 - 12:00 [V104]</td>
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<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>Thursday 13:00 - 14:00 [V104]</td>
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<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>Thursday 14:00 - 15:00 [W238] SOCA6590 only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plagiarism**

University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one's own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

- copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
- using another's ideas without due acknowledgment;
- working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.

Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs.

Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty.

For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on
Student Academic Integrity at the following link -


The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may -

· Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or

· Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking).

· Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

**Written Assessment Items**

Students may be required to provide written assessment items in electronic form as well as hard copy.

**Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations**

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, as advised in the Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension of time for submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised.

Any student:

1. who is applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or

2. whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment;

must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate officer following the instructions provided in the Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Procedure - Policy 000641.

Note: different procedures apply for minor and major assessment tasks.

Please go to the Policy at [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html) for further information, particularly for information on the options available to you.

Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:

· **Requests for Special Consideration** must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the due date of submission or examination.

· **Requests for Extensions of Time on Assessment Items** must be lodged no later than the due date of the item.

· **Requests for Rescheduling Exams** must be received in the Student Hub no later than ten working days prior the first date of the examination period

Your application may not be accepted if it is received after the deadline. Students who are unable to meet the above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should speak to their Program Officer in the first instance.
Changing your Enrolment

The last dates to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Dates) are:

For semester 1 courses: 31 March 2007
For semester 2 courses: 31 August 2007
For Trimester 1 courses: 16 February 2007
For Trimester 2 courses: 8 June 2007

Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with staff in the Student Hubs.

To change your enrolment online, please refer to

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/changingenrolment.html

Faculty Information

The Student Hubs are a one-stop shop for the delivery of student related services and are the first point of contact for students on campus.

The four Student Hubs are located at:

Callaghan campus
- Shortland Hub: Level 3, Shortland Union Building
- Hunter Hub: Student Services Centre, Hunter side of campus

City Precinct
- City Hub & Information Common: University House, ground floor in combination with an Information Common for the City Precinct

Ourimbah campus
- Ourimbah Hub: Administration Building

Faculty websites

Faculty of Education and Arts
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/

Contact details

Callaghan, City and Port Macquarie
Phone: 02 4921 5000
Email: EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au
Ourimbah
Phone: 02 4348 4030
Email: EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

The Dean of Students
Resolution Precinct
Phone: 02 4921 5806
Fax: 02 4921 7151
Email: resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

Deputy Dean of Students (Ourimbah)
Phone: 02 4348 4123
Fax: 02 4348 4145
Email: resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit:

Alteration of this Course Outline
No change to this course outline will be permitted after the end of the second week of the term except in exceptional circumstances and with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of any approved changes to this outline.

Web Address for Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS
The University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness.

If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies, please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 02 4921 5766, or via email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester.

For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability

Online Tutorial Registration:
Students are required to register in the Seminar or Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system:
Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.
Studentmail and Blackboard: www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/
This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

Hard copy submission:
iece Type your assignments: All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 or double spacing, and include page numbers.
iece Word length: Assignments that fall short of the word length will be required to be resubmitted. Longer assignments will not be penalized but lecturers cannot be expected to read all of a longer document before deciding on the result.
iece Proof read your work because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
iece Staple the pages of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
iece University Assessment Item Coversheet: All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet available at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/hss/studentlinks/studentform.html
iece By arrangement with the relevant lecturer, assignments may be submitted at any Student Hub located at:
  o Level 3, Shortland Union, Callaghan
  o Level 2, Student Services Centre, Callaghan
  o Ground Floor, University House, City
  o Ground Floor, Administration Building, Ourimbah
iece Date-stamping assignments: All students must date-stamp their own assignments using the machine provided at each Student Hub. If mailing an assignment, this should be addressed to:

Terry Leahy
School of Humanities and Social Sciences
University Drive
Callaghan, NSW 2308

Mailed assignments are accepted from the date posted, confirmed by a Post Office date-stamp; they are also date-stamped upon receipt by Schools.
iece Do not fax or email assignments: Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse.
iece Keep a copy of all assignments: It is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in electronic and hard copy formats.

Online copy submission to Turnitin
In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of the following assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Word Count</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Essay</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Week 7, (4th Sept)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Essay</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Week 13, (30th Oct)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

School of Humanities and Social Science
Prior to final submission, all students have the opportunity to submit one draft of their assignment to Turnitin to self-check their referencing. Assignments will not be marked until both hard copy and online versions have been submitted. Marks may be deducted for late submission of either version.

**Penalties for Late Assignments**
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Assignments submitted after the due date might not be included for assessment. No penalty will apply if the student has submitted an Application for an Extension of Time by the due date and the application is approved by the Course Coordinator.

**Special Circumstances**
Students wishing to apply for Special Circumstances or Extension of Time should apply online @ [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html)

**Assignment Re-submission**
Students who have failed an assignment are permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. Only a pass grade can be given for a resubmitted assignment. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

**Re-marks**
Students can request to have their work re-marked by the Course Coordinator or Discipline Convenor (or their delegate); three outcomes are possible: the same grade, a lower grade, or a higher grade being awarded. Students may also appeal against their final result for a course. Please consult the University policy at: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/)

**Return of Assignments**
Students can collect assignments from a nominated Student Hub during office hours. Students will be informed during class which Hub to go to and the earliest date that assignments will be available for collection. Students must present their student identification card to collect their assignment.

**Preferred Referencing Style**
In this course, it is recommended that you use the Harvard in-text referencing system (similar to the APA system) for referencing sources of information used in assignments. Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure.

An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by authors’ last names (or by titles for works without authors). Further information on referencing and general study skills can be obtained from:


**Student Representatives**
Student Representatives are a major channel of communication between students and the School. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on School websites.
Student Communication
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Convenor in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

Essential Online Information for Students
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/currentstudents/index.html

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading guide</th>
<th>Fail (FF)</th>
<th>Pass (P)</th>
<th>Credit (C)</th>
<th>Distinction (D)</th>
<th>High Distinction (HD)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49% or less</td>
<td>An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable to express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation (spelling, grammar etc). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question, shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and adequately referenced.</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought. The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
<td>Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised, clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
<td>All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Week beginning</td>
<td>Lecture Topic &amp; Assessment at a Glance</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>July 16</td>
<td>Introduction to the course – the HSIE syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>July 23</td>
<td>Global Warming</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>July 30</td>
<td>The Oil Crunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>August 6</td>
<td>Energy Alternatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>August 13</td>
<td>Sustainable House Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>August 20</td>
<td>Simplicity Versus Consumerism</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>August 27</td>
<td>Field Trip - Thursday 30th August</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>September 3</td>
<td>Sustainable Food First Essay Due September 3rd</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>September 10</td>
<td>Forests and the Timber Industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>September 17</td>
<td>Indigenous Peoples</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>September 24</td>
<td>Developing Countries</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Mid-Semester Recess: Monday 1 October to Friday 12 October 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Week beginning</th>
<th>Lecture Topic &amp; Assessment at a Glance</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>October 15</td>
<td>Environmental Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>October 22</td>
<td>Women and the Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>October 29</td>
<td>Alternatives to Capitalism Second Essay Due November 2nd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examination period: Monday 5 November to Friday 23 November 2007
Topics for the First Essay:
Choose any one of the following topics.

1. The first part of your essay is to prepare primary level classroom resources for one of the following environmental issues. Present the issue in a way that would be accessible for primary students (include at least one poster). It is permissible to narrow down the problem to a manageable classroom presentation - for example composting and sewerage in the context of sustainable house design.

In the second part of your essay, explain why it will be difficult for society to deal with this issue or implement an environmentally friendly solution - for example the economic or cultural difficulties of dealing with the environmental problem or moving to a sustainable outcome. Also, consider how the lives of a primary school student today might be affected by this issue - for example parents employed in a relevant industry, health effects of the problem, inconvenience or cost of the environmental solutions etc.

global warming
the oil crunch
sustainable house design

On Education and Environment


Public attitudes to Environmental Problems


Global Warming


New Internationalist - 335/ June 2001

New Internationalist - 357/ June 2003


Oil Crunch
Campbell, J. 1997, The Coming Oil Crisis, Multiscience and Petroconsultants, Brentwood, UK.


New Internationalist - 335/ June 2001


Peak Oil − www.peakoil.net

**Sustainable Housing Design**


Wrigley, Derek F 2005, Making your home sustainable : a guide to retrofitting, Scribe, Melbourne.

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2. **Explain the two points of view commonly associated with environmentalist approaches to energy. In one perspective, what we need to do is to move to sustainable energy sources and more efficient use of energy while still maintaining an economy of growth and affluence. In the other perspective what we need is a radical reshaping of society and a drastic reduction of energy use; an environmentalist economy with lower rates of production and fewer consumer goods. Consider this debate.**

**Reforming capitalism**


**Radical restructuring**
3. Many environmentalists think that a good strategy to bring about a sustainable society is for people to start now to live more simple lives. Explain this perspective. On the other hand, other writers think this choice will be unlikely to become popular. They argue that powerful cultural values and deep economic structures make it difficult for people to make this choice today.

**Advocates of voluntary simplicity**


Trainer, F.E. 1985, Abandon Affluence, Zed, London. (relevant for both sides of this debate)

Hamilton, Clive 2003, Growth Fetish, Allen & Unwin, NSW.

**Problems with the voluntary simplicity approach**


Topics for the Second Essay:
Choose any one of the following topics.

1. The first part of your essay is to prepare primary level classroom resources for one of the following environmental problems. Present the problem and environmentally friendly solutions in a way that would be accessible for primary students (include at least one poster). It is permissible to narrow down the problem to a manageable classroom presentation - for example salinity in Australian agriculture.

In the second part of your essay, explain the way this problem comes about as a result of key features of this society either in terms of economic structures or cultural values (e.g. consumerism). Explain why environmentally friendly solutions to this problem may be difficult politically or hard to implement in terms of current cultural values. Consider how your students' lives might be affected by this problem or by the suggested environmental solutions - for example parents employed in a relevant industry, health effects of the problem, inconvenience or cost of the environmental solutions etc.

- environmental problems in agriculture
- environmental problems of the timber industry
- deforestation in developing countries

See question one for references on primary school teaching of environmental issues and on public attitudes to environmental topics.

**Agriculture**


**The timber industry in Australia**


Holmgren, D. 2000, Collected Writings, article 17.


deforestation in developing countries


2. Jules Pretty argues that the barriers to sustainable agriculture are not economic - he claims that sustainable agriculture can be profitable in most situations today. He also claims that sustainable agriculture can be productive - producing good yields of food. Present and consider these arguments.


3. Environmentalists sometimes look to indigenous societies as a model for sustainable use of nature. Is this an accurate picture of how these societies operated in earlier times? Can any aspects of these societies be adopted to help us to develop a sustainable society today?

Callicott, J. B. 1983, “Traditional American Indian and Traditional Western European Attitudes to Nature: An Overview”, in Elliott & Gare (eds), Environmental Philosophy, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia.

Diamond, Jared 2005, Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Survive, Allen Lane, London.

Edwards, W.H. (ed) 1998, Traditional Aboriginal Society, (second edition) Macmillan, South Yarra, esp. 30-89; 239-251; 288-296. (n.b. Most of these articles are also in the 1987 edition but the page numbers are different).


Sceptics


4. You cannot understand the environmental problems of developing countries without looking at the way these countries are tied into the global economy. Discuss these issues and give examples.


Brookfield, Harold & Byron, Yvonne (eds) 1994, South East Asia's Environmental Future: The Search for Sustainability, Oxford U.P.


George, Susan 1988, A Fate Worse than Debt, London.

Deep ecologists argue that what we need is a change in our system of values; a system of values based entirely on the needs of humans is deeply flawed. Instead, they believe that plants and animals should be valued for their own sake. This view seems to imply that attacks on people's property, livelihoods or lives could be justified if nature is in danger. Discuss the deep ecology position.

**Deep ecology statements**


Seed, John, Macy, Joanne et al 1988, Thinking Like a Mountain: Toward a Council of All Beings, New Society, Philadelphia, PA.

**Critiques and discussion**

Dobson, Andrew 1990, Green Political Thought, Unwin Hyman, London.


Actions


Watson, Captain Paul 1994, Ocean Warrior, My battle to end the illegal slaughter on the high seas, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards.

6. Eco-feminists are often divided into two groups – essentialists and constructionists. Examine the debate between these perspectives and consider whether either perspective makes sense.

Biehl, Janet 1987, Rethinking Eco-Feminist Politics, South End Pres, Boston.


Seager, Joni 1993, Earth Follies: feminism, politics and the environment, Earthscan, UK.


7. While many women are more or less hostile to environmental politics, others have been deeply involved in environmental struggles. Can these diverse attitudes be explained in terms of women’s gender identity? How can class and ethnic issues explain some of this variety?


Seager, Joni 1993, Earth Follies: feminism, politics and the environment, Earthscan, UK.


8. Anarchists and socialists are convinced that the problem with the environment is capitalism. Is this a good analysis? What kinds of utopias do they propose as alternatives? Could they work?

more anarchist


Leahy, Terry ‘Sociology and the Environment’ in J. Germov & M. Poole (eds) Public Sociology. pp. 432 - 440

Leahy, Terry 2005, Options for a Sustainable Future http://gifteconomy.octapod.org/

Leahy, Terry 2007, ‘Where have all the sociologists gone?’, review of article for Current Sociology 2008 Book of readings.

Leahy, Terry 2004 Anarchist and Hybrid Strategies http://gifteconomy.octapod.org/


more socialist


more neutral left wing positions - marxist explanations of environmental problems

Dobson, Andrew 1990, Green Political Thought, Unwin Hyman, London.


