Native Americans and Environmentalism

ES 350, Winter 2011
CRN 26428, 4 credits
TuTh 2:00-3:20
204 Chapman

Professor Brian Klopotek
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Office: 192G Esslinger
Office hours: Wed 9-11 or by appointment

Course Description: The purpose of this class is to acquaint students with critical issues in Native American environmentalism. We will discuss historical foundations of native environmentalism in cultural practice and in resistance to colonialism, review present struggles, ranging from opposition to dams and mining projects to treaty fishing rights, and examine visions and work to make a future for the generations to come. Students should expect to finish this class with a thorough understanding of factors that shape Native environmentalism, including 1) the “external” factors of environmental racism, colonialism, and poverty; 2) the “internal” factors, such as ties of culture to place, the nature of cultural relationships to specific animals and environments, health concerns, and tribal planning ethics; and 3) the political/legal factors that hinge on the concept of aboriginal sovereignty and the utility of treaties in leveraging environmental policies over the last 40 years.

Required texts (available at UO Bookstore):

Winona LaDuke, *All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life*
Winona LaDuke, *Recovering the Sacred: The Power of Naming and Claiming*

Additional readings on blackboard

Grading:
“What would you do?”™ quizzes: 10 points
Midterm, in-class, essay format: 25 points
Problem-solving paper proposal: 5 points
Problem-solving paper (10-12pp): 30 points
Problem-solving presentation (about 3 minutes): 5 points
Final exam, essay format: 25 points

Problem-solving paper will include statement of an indigenous group’s environmental problem and its history, assessment of potential solutions in terms of liabilities and advantages for tribes and surrounding communities, and some initial documents towards your solution, such as grant proposals, needs assessments, fundraising sources,
correspondence with tribal governments or organizations, letters to appropriate individuals, petitions, or whatever strategy you propose.

Course policies:
Late papers will receive a one-grade deduction for every week they are late. Paper proposals will receive no credit if they are turned in late.

Academic honesty is required at all points in your education. Acts of academic dishonesty will result in an F for the class and referral to the office of student conduct. Be particularly careful to avoid plagiarism by properly acknowledging all sources of information, including quotations, paraphrases, and ideas that are not your own. If you are unsure about what needs to be cited, err on the side of caution and/or speak to me about it. See http://www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/ for details.

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon. Please request that the counselor for students with disabilities send a letter verifying your disability.

Attendance is mandatory every day. I’ll be keeping track of attendance via quizzes and knowing who you are (this is a small class).

Schedule:
Tues Jan 4: Introduction: Environmental racism, tribal cultures, and tribal sovereignty

Thurs Jan 6: Patterns in land use and existence before Columbus, changes following colonization, economy, trade in fur and hides, diseases as ecological disaster and colonialist effort.

Tues Jan 11: Pte Oyate: Native relations to animals
Read: LaDuke, All Our Relations, Ch. 2, Ch. 7; LaDuke Recovering the Sacred, 213-236. Blackboard: Fikret Berkes, "Cree Worldview from the Inside," in Sacred Ecology.

Thurs Jan 13: Land loss: Removals, past and present, sovereignty and place, the Indian Claims Commission, the Black Hills land claim.

Tues Jan 18: Video: In the Light of Reverence
Read: LaDuke, Recovering the Sacred, 1-46.
Read: LaDuke, All Our Relations, Ch. 6, blackboard: Melissa Meyer, “We cannot get a living as we used to…,” American Historical Review, April 1991.

Tues Jan 25: Wild rice, Sokaogon Chippewa treaty rights, mining, and water; Western Shoshone land rights, horses, cattle, and gold mines.
Film clips: American Outrage

Thurs Jan 27: Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement, Forestry at Klamath
Read: LaDuke, Recovering the Sacred, 47-63.

Tues Feb 1: James Bay, Akwesasne’s toxic turtles, toxins, PCB’s and the mother’s milk project, the impact of mercury in fish on tribal cultures.
Read: LaDuke, All Our Relations, Ch. 1, Ch. 3.

Thurs Feb 3: midterm exam

Tues Feb 8: Fishing: video clips from Lighting the 7th Fire and Usual and Accustomed Places

Thurs Feb 10: Fishing: Fish-ins, Boldt decision, salmon tribes, tribal cultural and political survival, tribal economy, tribal health, tribal sovereignty, Voigt decision and backlash.
Read: Wilkinson, 49-108.

Topic statements due

Thurs Feb 17: Nuclear bombs and the Western Shoshone, nuclear waste and tribal land, nuclear reactors at Hanford and Prairie Island.
Read: LaDuke, All Our Relations, Ch. 5, Ch. 8; blackboard: David Rich Lewis, "Skull Valley Goshutes and the Politics of Nuclear Waste," in Harkin and Lewis, eds.; Dagmar Thorpe, an interview with Carrie Dann, “We Don’t Hear the Spiritual Little People Anymore” from People of the 7th Fire

Tues Feb 22: Mining Coal: Navajo-Hopi land dispute, Northern Cheyenne, Zuni salt lake.
Film clips: American Outrage
Read: LaDuke, All Our Relations, Ch. 4; blackboard: Fixico, "The Demand for Natural Resources on Reservations," in The Invasion of Indian Country A. Keala Kelley, film review, "American Outrage."

Read: LaDuke, All Our Relations, Ch. 9-10; blackboard: Josh Reid, "Articulating a Traditional Future: Makah Sealers and Whalers, 1880-1999."

Tues Mar 1: Flex/TBA

Mar 3: **Presentations of student research.** Discussions of solutions. **Problem-solving paper due at beginning of class.**

Tues Mar 8: **Presentations of student research.** Discussions of solutions.
Read: LaDuke, Recovering the Sacred, 237-254


**Final Exam:** 1pm Monday March 14