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EVST 327.01: Environmental Ethics

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Philosophy/Evst 327

Fall 2003

Professor Deborah Slicer

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O.H.: tpa

Are the moral traditions that were developed to guide human relations also relevant to interspecies relations? If so, to what extent are they relevant? If not, is it because the theories are ultimately anthropocentric, as some critics argue? Or are they problematic for other reasons? If our traditions fail to justify the interspecies obligations we have gut feelings about, then what other moral visions can we appeal to? And, importantly, how is environmental philosophy--all this pin-headish theorizing--relevant to our environmental crisis?

We begin by discussing some of the facts--the state of our water, air, soils, animals, wild places, and the poor who are most directly impacted by environmental pollution. Then we'll talk about what it means for our environmental crisis to be a *moral* crisis. By week three we'll be reading essays by theorists who attempt to extend traditional moral principles to guide our behavior toward nature. We'll also consider criticisms of these attempts. Deep ecologists, ecofeminists, and social ecologists try to articulate radically nontraditional ways of thinking about our moral relations to nature. We focus on that literature during the second half of the term.. The last three days or so of class feature group presentations of local environmental issues. Guidelines are forthcoming. Presentations include the groups' efforts to justify policy recommendations using class materials. This is when we test the theories against the "real world." We will also test theories against reality in field trips and in conversations with several guest speakers from environmental agencies in the community.

Syllabus

9/2 Hello, business, intro. lecture

9/4 Chapters 1 in *Foundations of Environmental Philosophy*

9/9 Guest speaker: Anthony Marr with Tigers Forever

9/11 Chapter 2 in *Foundations*

9/16 Norton, p. 326

9/18 You Decide!, p. 136, # 1 and field trip to the water wise garden with guest speaker Molly Galusha. Meet at the garden behind the Missoulian building at 2:20. ALSO, please sign up for a presentation topic by today.

9/23 You Decide! discussion, p. 136, #1
9/25-30 Chapter 5: p. 141-163
10/2 You Decide!, p. 192, #3
10/7 Chapter 5, continued. Guests debaters on the ethics of hunting.
10/9 Guest speaker: Kate Davis with Raptors of the Rockies
10/14-16 Chapter 6: p. 194-217
10/21 You Decide!, p. 244, #1, Josh Slotnick, PEAS farm director
10/23 film, *The Wilderness Idea*
10/28 No class, group work
10/30-11/6 Chapter 7: p. 246-257, *A Sand County Almanac*, Aldo Leopold
11/11 no class, Veterans Day
11/13 Chapter 10: p. 377-389, 402-416 Naess
11/18-20 Chapter 10: p. 416-431
Environmental Racism, Carl Grossman (x)
11/25 Continue chapter 10. Guest speaker from Women's Voices for the Earth
12/2-9 Group presentations
12/11 Wrap up
12/15 Take-home final exam due at 5 pm in my mailbox, L.A. 101

Requirements

3 papers, 3-5 pages each 40%
group presentation 25% (guidelines on separate sheet)
final exam 30%
attendance and participation 5%

Texts

Foundations of Environmental Philosophy, Frederik A. Kaufman, editor
xeroxed essays (x)
A Sand County Almanac, Aldo Leopold