

## **European Studies 804, Section 2**

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Spring 2006, Wednesday 11-2 Sterling 2323

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### **The Politics of Green Voters and Consumers**

“Why do some societies make disastrous [environmental] decisions”?

“Has consumerism led to a decline in social capital and civic engagement in Western societies?”

This graduate seminar will entertain broad questions such as these recently posed by Jared Diamond and Dietlind Stolle and Marc Hooghe. Our focus will be comparative transatlantic environmentalism and consumerism from a broadly interdisciplinary perspective. The first portion of the course will be devoted to theoretical works on the intersection between the natural and social sciences, as well as historical works on the social construction of citizens’ relationships to land, water and other resources in Europe and the U.S. We will also study how Europeans and Americans have conceptualized the acts of purchasing and consumption, and the relationships of these acts to civic and cultural identity. Our objective will be to gain an understanding of how these relationships have become politicized, and more importantly, how globalization may be changing this politicization from the individual through supranational levels. We will end the course with discussion of current public policy debates in these realms in the expanding EU and the US. Scholarship will include selections from the disciplines of history, geography, public policy, sociology, political and consumer science, as well as recent US and EU governmental directives.

#### **Course Format and Requirements:**

**A) Oral Participation.** This is a seminar consisting of interactive discussion on a weekly basis. Thirty percent of your final grade will be based upon the nature and extent of your contribution to class discussion.

**B) Written Requirements:** Students will prepare two one-page book or article reviews (each 10% of final grade) for distribution to all class members, and a final paper of 18-20 pages (50% of final grade) on a topic to be arranged in consultation with the instructor. At two or three intervals throughout the semester, we will all go do individual research in our respective disciplines to find documents or works which will add to our group discussion and provide more balanced interdisciplinary treatment of the issues. This will assure that you are working towards effective development of a paper topic basic upon your own personal interests in the respective subject/s. Thus, the readings now envisioned for the last third of the course may be subject to partial or radical revision depending upon our research interests.

**Future Opportunities:** this course is being planned in consultation with the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Bavarian Ministry for the Environment and Consumer Protection (Germany). The future may include participation in a long-term working cohort called the Multi-State Working Group on creating

environmental regulatory reform that is acceptable to both business and citizens. Graduate students are welcome to participate in this initiative and two or more international conferences are expected to result. It is likely that there will be funding for research and/or conference attendance.

**Week One (January 18): Introduction to Course Issues**

Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel*, first 3 pages re: “Yali’s Question.”

**Week Two (January 25): Theoretical Approaches to the Environment and its History**

- 1) Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel*, Chapter 18 and Epilogue. (My UW)
- 2) Jared Diamond, *Collapse*, Chapter 14: “Why Do Some Societies Make Disastrous Decisions?” (My UW). *Note: this book has just become available in paperback and might be purchased.*
- 3) William Cronon, “A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative” *Journal of American History* 78 (March 1992):1437-1376. (Mad Cat)
- 4) Verena Winiwarter, “Major Theme 1c: Natural Sciences and (Environmental) History.” Proceedings of the 20th International Congress of Historical Sciences, Sydney, July 2005. <http://www.cishsydney2005.org/images/MT1cConvenor.doc>.

**Week Three (February 1): The Manipulation of the Environment: Politics and Knowledge Creation**

- 1) Sheila Jasanoff, *Designs on Nature: Science and Democracy in Europe and the United States*. Prologue and Chapter One “Why Compare?” (My UW)
- 2) You will read one of the items marked with an asterisk below and come prepared to discuss it.
  - \*Tiles, M. and Tiles, J., *Introduction to Historical Epistemology. The Authority of Knowledge*. Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993. Chapter 5, “Idols of the Cave: Human science and human history.” (Borrow from Elizabeth)
  - \*McNeill, J. (2003), Observations on the Nature and Culture of Environmental History. *History and Theory* 42: 5-43. (MadCat)
  - \*Winiwarter, Verena (ed.), “Environmental History in Europe from 1994 to 2004: Enthusiasm and Consolidation.” *Environment and History* 10 (2004):501-530. (MadCat)
  - \*McNeill, W. H. (2001), Passing Strange: The Convergence of Evolutionary Science with Scientific History. *History and Theory* 40: 1-15. (MadCat)
  - \*Clark A. Miller, “Framing Environmental Values and Policy: Four Models of Societal Processes.” *Environmental Values* 9 (2000): 211-233.

**Week Four (February 8): Theoretical Approaches to Consumerism**

- 1) Dietlind Stolle and Marc Hooghe, “Inaccurate, Exceptional, One-Sided or Irrelevant? The Debate about the Alleged Decline of Social Capital and Civic Engagement in Western Societies,” *British Journal of Political Science* 2004 35: 149-167 (Mad Cat).
- 2) Martin Daunton and Matthew Hilton, *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America*, pp. 1-18. (My UW)

Week Five: (February 15) **Consumerism, Individual Research**

- 1) Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through 20<sup>th</sup> Century Europe* (Introduction, Chapter 3 "Chain Store" and Chapter 7 "Consumer-Citizen.")
- 2) Individual research in your respective discipline, preferably a historiographical or theoretical book or article. Bring a report to share.

Week Six: (February 22) **How the Nation-State Creates and Modifies the Citizenry and its Relationship to Nature (and Vice Versa)**

- 1) Michael Bess, *The Light-Green Society: Ecology and Technological Modernity in France, 1960-2000* (Chicago: 2003). (On Reserve in College Library, Introduction, Chapters 1 and 3, pp. 122-140)
- 2) Thomas M. Lekan, Chapter 2 "The Militarization of Nature and Heimat, 1914-1922," in *Imagining the Nation in Nature: Landscape Preservation and German Identity, 1885-1945* (Harvard, 2004). (My-UW)

Week Seven: (March 1): **Practical Application: Rivers in Europe**

- 1) Mark Cioc, *the Rhine: an Eco-Biography*. (Introduction and Chapter 5 "Sacrificing a River"). (My UW)
- 2) Sara Pritchard, "Reconstructing the Rhône: the Cultural Politics of Nature and Nation in Contemporary France, 1945-1997." *French Historical Studies* 27.4 (2004): 765-799. (Mad Cat)  
OR Caroline Ford, "Nature, Culture, and Conservation in France and Her Colonies, 1840-1940," *Past and Present* 183 (2004):173-198. (Mad Cat)  
OR Caroline Ford, "Landscape and Environment in French Historical and Geographical Thought," *French Historical Studies* 24 (Winter 2001): 125-234.
- 3) Werner Wahliss, short PowerPoint presentation on the Danube River Project. (distributed by e-mail)

Week Eight: (March 8)

**Practical Application: Mining, the American Case**

- 1) Jared Diamond, Chapter 1 "Under Montana's Big Sky" and Chapter 15, "Big Business and the Environment."
- 2) "A Drier and Tainted Nevada May be Legacy of a Gold Rush," *New York Times*, December 30, 2005. (My UW)
- 3) *The Economist*, "Don't Despair: grounds for hope on global warming." December 10-16, 2005. Selections. (My UW)
- 4) Dan R. Anderson, *Corporate Survival: the Critical Importance of Sustainability Risk Management*. (Chapter 6 "Old Sustainability Risks: Asbestos and Superfund"). (My UW)

(March 15) SPRING BREAK

Week Nine: (March 22) **Environmentalism in Historical Perspective and Today's Markets**

This week is dedicated to book reviews on further elaboration of the topic of environmentalism. Some of the books below are suggested as possibilities, but since they all come from the discipline of history, you may make other choices.

Alison Frank, *Oil Empire* (Harvard 2005); *Heimat Abroad: the Boundaries of Germanness* (O'Donnell, Bridenthal, eds.); Thomas M. Lekan, *Imagining the Nation in Nature: Landscape Preservation and German Identity, 1885-1945*; Maiken Umbach and Bernd Huppauf, *Vernacular Modernism: Heimat, Globalization and the Built Environment*; Bruggemeier, Cioc and Zeller, *How Green Were the Nazis: Nature, Environment and Nation in the Third Reich*; John Sheail, *An Environmental History of Twentieth-Century Britain* (Palgrave, 2002).

### Week Ten (March 29): **How the Nation-State Creates and Modifies the Citizenry and its Relationship to Consumption (and Vice Versa)**

- 1) Stolle, Hooghe and Micheletti, "Politics in the Supermarket: Political Consumerism as a Form of Political Participation," *International Political Science Review* (2005) 26:245-269. (Mad Cat)
- 2) Michele Micheletti and Dietlind Stolle, "The Market as an Arena for Transnational Politics." ([http://ya.ssrc.org/transnational/Micheletti\\_Stolle/](http://ya.ssrc.org/transnational/Micheletti_Stolle/))
- 3) Peter Jackson, "Consumption and Identity: the Cultural Politics of Shopping." *European Planning Studies* 7 (1999). (Mad Cat)

### Week Eleven: (April 5) **Consumerism in Historical Perspective and Today's Markets**

\*Belinda Davis, "Food Scarcity and the Empowerment of the Female Consumer in World War I Berlin," in the *Sex of Things* (Furlough and de Grazia). (My UW)

\*Nancy Reagin, "Comparing Apples and Oranges: Housewives and the Politics of Consumption in Interwar Germany," in *Getting and Spending: European and American Consumer Societies in the Twentieth Century*, Susan Strasser, Charles McGovern and Matthias Judt, editors. (My UW)

\*Hartmut Berghoff, "Enticement and Deprivation: the Regulation of Consumption in Pre-War Nazi Germany," in Daunton and Hilton. (My UW)

\*Choose one reading and then proceed to do individual research. Many other possibilities will be provided.

### Week Twelve (April 12): **Practical Guides and Directives. The European Union and the Environment**

- 1) Zsuzsa Gille, "Cognitive Cartography in a European Wasteland: Multinational Capital and Greens Vie for Village Allegiance." (My UW)
- 2) Regina Axelrod, Norman Vig, et.al. "The European Union as an Environmental Governance System." (My UW)

Read above in preparation for videoconference with officials from the German Ministry for the Environment and Consumer Protection, or German Federal Ministry of Consumer Affairs.

**Week Thirteen (April 19): Practical Guides and Directives. The European Union and Transatlantic Consumerism**

Circulars from the European Consumers' Organization (BEUC) based in Brussels on lighters, genetically-modified crops, air fresheners, and intellectual property rights.

Information from the Transatlantic Consumers Dialogue, 2006.

Sheila Jasanoff, *Designs on Nature: Science and Democracy in Europe and the United States* (Chapters A)

**Week Fourteen (April 26)**

Possible Readings:

"Why More Women? Issues of Gender and Political Consumerism," Michelle Micheletti in *Politics, Products and Markets: Exploring Political Consumerism Past and Present* (2002). Anything in this volume will do.

"Advertisers: Getting Them Young," in Sharon Beder, *Global Spin (revised edition): the Corporate Assault on Environmentalism* (Chelsea Green, 2002).

"Of Frankenfoods and Golden Rice: Risks, Rewards, and Realities of Genetically Modified Foods." Fred Buttel and Robert Goodman (eds.) *Transactions* 89:2001.

Lien, Marianne. "Imagined Cuisines," in *Commercial Cultures: Economies, Practices, Spaces*, Peter Jackson, Michelle Lower, Daniel Miller and Frank Mort (eds) (New York: Berg, 2000).

**Week Fifteen (May 3)**

Videoconference with Jim Murray, Director of the BEUC, Brussels.

**FINAL PAPER DUE DATE:** Thursday, May 11 at Noon.

**Readings Key:**

(Mad Cat)=the materials are available through the U-W electronic library databases. Go to Mad Cat (the UW Libraries home page) and click on Journals. Use the search engine to request the article.

(My UW)=These materials are on the College Library E-Reserve Webpages. You can access this through your account with the University at My UW.