

SIS 352 Environmental Politics of Asia (Wednesdays 2:45-4:50) Spring 2015

Prof. Judith Shapiro SIS 308, phone: x1629(o) or 202 232 8577(h) shapiro@american.edu

Office hours: Tuesday afternoons, Wednesday before class, and by appointment other days. Please tell me if you plan to stop by. Email and phone consultation also welcome and encouraged!

Course introduction: Environmental issues such as climate change, transboundary air and water pollution, biodiversity loss, and conflict and land degradation due to resources competition and extraction are among the most challenging issues that the world faces today. Asia, home to a complex mix of rapidly transforming developed and developing countries, faces all of these issues and is one of the drivers of global change. This course provides an overview of these challenges.

The course draws on several scholarly disciplines and themes. These include: global environmental politics, international environmental law, environmental security, anthropology (religion and ecology), political ecology, environmental justice, environment and development studies, environmental history, and even fiction. Each of these intellectual approaches will be grounded in empirical cases, with many opportunities for students to focus on specific places and problems. Students conduct their own major research projects, on a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor early in the semester. Progress deadlines will be enforced throughout, along with weekly Blackboard blog posts on the readings and occasional group presentations on cases. The course culminates in a final 15-20 page paper and presentations. We will draw throughout the semester on Prof. Shapiro's book *China's Environmental Challenges*, as China's transformation is having a huge impact elsewhere in Asia, and indeed in the world.

Course goals and learning outcomes:

This SIS course is intended to provide you with a thorough grounding in the environmental politics of Asia by using theoretical and empirical materials. By taking this course and participating fully you will be able to:

Fluently discuss the environmental problems Asia faces and their impacts on other parts of the planet
Appreciate the complex ethical dimensions of these problems
Understand the relationship between environmental problems and other international issues
Differentiate among the perspectives and methodological approaches of various scholarly disciplines
Conceptualize and carry out a research project that applies and deepens course themes

Course Requirements:

Class attendance is essential. If you **MUST** miss class, you must send me an email explaining why. Written assignments include weekly **MANDATORY** Blackboard posts about the readings **BEFORE** class (TWO misses permitted), several drafts of the paper, with deadlines, leading to a final research paper (15-20 pages), several informal reports based on research on cases, and a final presentation. Final grades will be based on attendance, in-class projects, and participation (35%), consistency of Blackboard posts (20%), the final paper including deadline-meeting (35%), and final presentation (10%). If you have any difficulty meeting deadlines, please consult me. All students will be held to the highest standards of the Academic Integrity Code. If you have any questions about research ethics, let me know.

All readings are available electronically, with the exception of *China's Environmental Challenges* and the Amitav Ghosh novel, *Hungry Tide*.

Please minimize printing the readings and save a tree! I do need a hard copy of your final paper, however!

NOTE ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site (www.prepared.american.edu) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/college-specific information.

WEEK ONE, Jan 14: Introduction – physical geography of Asia and environmental politics basics

BEFORE CLASS, browse in this Wikipedia entry and take some E-quizzes:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_Asia

<http://www.lizardpoint.com/fun/geoquiz/asiaquiz.html>

<http://www.ilike2learn.com/ilike2learn/asia3.html>

<http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/countries/asia-quiz>

WEEK TWO, Jan 21: Drivers and Trends

Judith Shapiro, *China's Environmental Challenges*, Preface and Chapters One and Two

BROWSE the following three links and see how these organizations understand drivers and trends

World Bank China reports: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/china>. See other Asian countries as you wish.

Wilson Center report “Asia’s Future” at <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/Asias%20Future1.pdf>

UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) environment reports at <http://www.unescap.org/publications/titlebysubject.asp?id=5>

WEEK THREE, Jan 28: Environmental History

Judith Shapiro, Mao’s *War against Nature* (Cambridge) Introduction and Conclusion pp. 1-20 and 195-216 (e-reserves).

Crosby, Alfred W. 1995. "The Past and Present of Environmental History." *American Historical Review* 100, no. 4: 1177-1190 (e-reserves).

Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, Prologue to *This Fissured Land*, pp. 1-10 and “Introduction” to *Ecology and Equity*, pp. 1-33, both in *The Use and Abuse of Nature* (e-reserves).

David Arnold and Ramachandra Guha, “Introduction: Themes and Issues in the Environmental History of South Asia,” From *Nature, Culture and Imperialism* pp. 1-20 (e-reserves).

Group topics for informal in-class presentations: Krakatoa eruption (1883), Yellow River diversion (1938), Minamata poisoning (1956), Aral Sea (1960-present), Bhopal (1984), Chernobyl (1986), Tsunami (2004).

WEEK FOUR, Feb 4: International Environmental Law and Global Environmental Politics

Peter Dauvergne and Jennifer Clapp, *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment*. Cambridge, MIT Press, 2004, pp. 1-44 (e-reserves).

Alliance of Small Island States: <http://www.aosis.org>

Group topics: Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), Basel Convention on Hazardous Waste, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, International Whaling Commission, UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, Montreal Protocol on the Ozone Layer, Convention on Long-range Trans-boundary Air Pollution, Minamata Convention.

Instructions for final paper handed out.... ☺

WEEK FIVE, Feb 11: Government and Governance

Judith Shapiro, *China's Environmental Challenges* Chapter Three: The View from Above

Please familiarize yourself with these two resources:

China Environment Forum. <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/program/china-environment-forum>
China Dialogue <http://www.chinadialogue.net>, especially, for example:
<http://www.chinadialogue.net/article/show/single/en/5339-An-insight-into-the-green-vocabulary-of-the-Chinese-communist-party>

Informal group reports on government/governance of select other Asian nations (how would a similar overview be the same/different?)

Your preliminary paper topic is due, with both “case” and choice of at least two or three analytical lenses.

WEEK SIX, Feb 18: National Identity, Religion and the Environment

Judith Shapiro, *China's Environmental Challenges*: Chapter Four, National Identity

Ole Bruun and Arne Kalland (eds), *Asian Perceptions of Nature: A critical Approach*, Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1995, pp. 1-24.
E-reserves.

Lynn White, Jr., “The Historic Roots of our Ecologic Crisis” (*Science*, Vol. 155, No. 3767, Mar 10, 1967, pp. 1203-1207). E-reserves.

The Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale: <http://fore.research.yale.edu/religion>

Group reports based on the website Tibetan Buddhism, Shinto, Hinduism, Islam, etc.

Your preliminary bibliography, with at least ten peer-reviewed sources, is due!

WEEK SEVEN, Feb 25: Global Civil Society

Judith Shapiro, *China's Environmental Challenges*, Chapter Five, View from Below

SKIM: Mac Chapin, “A Challenge to Conservationists” *Worldwatch Magazine* <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/565>
And rebuttals: <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/1832>

Group topics: Research on specific international environmental NGOs which have projects in Asia, such as the International Rivers Network, the Nature Conservancy, Greenpeace-East Asia, International Fund for Animal Welfare, SKEPHI.

WEEK EIGHT, March 4: Political Ecology and Environmental Justice

Judith Shapiro, *China's Environmental Challenges*, Chapter Six, Environmental Justice

Wolfgang Sachs, “Environment and Human Rights” (Wuppertal, 2003).
<http://www.uibk.ac.at/peacestudies/downloads/peacelibrary/environment.pdf>

Emily Yeh, “Greening Western China: A Critical View,” *Geoforum*.
<http://data2.xjlas.ac.cn:81/UploadFiles/sdz/cnki/%E5%A4%96%E6%96%87/ELSEVIER/ECOLOGICAL%20CONSTRUCTION/3.pdf>

Basel Action Network and Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition. (2002), “Exporting Harm: The High-Tech Trashing of Asia”
<http://www.ban.org/E-waste/technotrashfinalcomp.pdf>

A draft of the “case” you have chosen for your final paper is due! (The narrative: Who, what, when, where but not why/how.)

SPRING BREAK – bring the novel with you!

WEEK NINE, March 18: Environment and Development

Amitav Ghosh, *Hungry Tide* (all)

WEEK TEN, March 25 Visit from filmmaker Gary Marcuse, themes: Dams, and Religion/Ecology

In class: “Searching for Sacred Mountain” and clips from “Waking the Green Tiger”

DAMS:

Brahma Chellaney, *Water: Asia's New Battleground* Chapters One and Five (e-reserves)

[Additional recommended film on the Narmada Dam: "Drowned Out"]

A rough draft of your entire paper is due!!!!

WEEK ELEVEN, April 1: Global Political Economy

Judith Shapiro, China's Environmental Challenges, Conclusion

Charles Duhigg and David Barboza, *New York Times*, January 26, 2012. "In China, Human Costs Are Built Into an iPad" at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/26/business/ieconomy-apples-ipad-and-the-human-costs-for-workers-in-china.html>

Washington Post, "Corruption Stains Timber Trade," <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/31/AR2007033101287.html>

Documentary film excerpts, in class: "Mardi Gras" and/or "Manufactured Landscapes"

Recommended: Forest Trends report on Forest Governance in Asia:

http://www.forest-trends.org/documents/files/doc_3022.pdf

WEEK TWELVE, April 8: Resource Competition/ Mining

SKIM: Michael T. Klare, *Resource Wars*, "Oil Wars in the South China Sea," pp. 109-137. (e-reserves)

Additional on-line research on island conflicts in E. China and South China Seas

Group projects on cases of FDI in mining in or from Asia (eg Chinalco, Shougang, Freeport McMoran, Newmont)

WEEK THIRTEEN, April 15: Environmental Security and Peacemaking; War and the Environment

Adil Najam, "The Human Dimensions of Environmental Insecurity: Some Insights from South Asia" (ECSP 9, 2003). Available on line at: <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/the-human-dimensions-environmental-insecurity-some-insights-south-asia>

Saleem Ali, Ed., *Peace Parks*, Chapters 13, 14, 15: (e-reserves)

--Ke Chung Kim, "Preserving Korea's Demilitarized Corridor for Conservation: A Green Approach to Conflict Resolution

--Jason Lambacher, "Nesting Cranes: Envisioning a Russo-Japanese Peace Park in the Kuril Islands"

--Kent Biringer and Air Marshall K. C. (Nanda) Cariappa. "The Siachen Peace Park Proposal: Reconfiguring the Kashmir Conflict?"

Phillippe Lebillion, "The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts," *Political Geography* 20 (2001), pp. 561-584 (e-reserves).

[Recommended for those interested in the history of this concept:

Jessica Tuchman Mathews, "Redefining Security," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1989, pp. 162-177 (e-reserves).

Robert Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy" <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/foreign/anarchy.htm> (1994)

See also the Environmental Change and Security Project at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars

WEEK FOURTEEN, April 22: Wrap-up and Reports!

Final Paper is due on or before April 29. I will be available during our final exam slot!