Philosophy 375

Environmental Ethics

Instructor: Paul Semm

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Texts:

VanDeVeer, Donald. The Envrionmental Ethics and Policy Book.

Films/Documentaries:

*The Ad and the Ego Never Cry Wolf*

*Cadillac Desert Paha Sapa*

*Earth on Edge* *Walkabout*

Course Description:

Ethics is a branch of philosophy along with metaphysics, epistemology, and logic. Traditionally ethics has been concerned with morality, questions of value, right and wrong, and good and bad. Ethical theories have attempted to answer these questions on two levels: the personal, how ought a human being act towards other human beings, and the societal, how ought society be organized so that it reflects the deep moral commitments of its members.

The environmental crisis that we now face-- massive species extinction, the 'Greenhouse effect,' ozone depletion, air and water pollution, increasing toxic and hazardous waste, massive factory farming, and animal experimentation -- has raised a new set of moral questions about the relationship between human beings and the natural world. The discipline that has emerged is called environmental ethics. And it sees its task as articulating an ethical theory that explains our moral obligations and responsibilities to the natural world.

Course Goals:

1. By the end of the course, the student should have an understanding of the discipline of environmental ethics, its theoretical sources and arguments.

2. The student should also have a broader understanding of western society and its relationship to and impact on the natural world.

3. The student should also have an understanding of the discipline of philosophy and its function in shaping world views.

Course Evaluation:

There will be a total of two hundred (200) points in this class. Two exams with be worth sixty (60) points each. There will be a journal that will be worth sixty (60) points. The journal will include personal reflections on the ethical issues raised in the readings, lectures, and discussions. There should be a reflection on one of the assigned readings for each class session. Also I will give other assignments during the course for the journal. When the journal is submitted at the final class session, it should be typwritten, double-spaced, and a minimum of ten pages in length**.** The final twenty (20) points will be based on class participation, relevant questions and comments. Students will be required to share selections from their journal reflections on the last Thursday of class.

Course Schedule:

Date Topic Assignment

3/5 Tu Introduction: Ethics and the Prologue,

Environment in Western Thought II. Preview, White,Jr

View: *Cadillac Desert I* Vc. Rio Declaration

3/7 Th Environmental Crisis VIa. Preview, Wilson

View: *Earth on Edge* b.Myers d.Carson, Flavin

3/12 Tu Extensionism: Animal Rights III. Preview, Singer,

View: *Never Cry Wolf* Regan, Wilson

3/14 Th The Land Ethic IVa Leopold, Callicot

View: *Cadillac Desert IV*

3/16 Sa Other Cultures: Taoism and Dine

View: *Paha Sapa*

**Exam #1**

3/19 Tu Deep Ecology IVb Preview, Naess

View: *Walkabout*  Duvall and Sessions

3/21 Th Environmental Racism IVc. Preview, Shiva

View: *Trading Democracy* Plumwood VIc. Grossman

3/26 Tu Capitalism and the Environment VIc Daly, Camacho

View: *Ad and the Ego* Vb. Kelman, c. Sagoff

3/28 Th Resistance VII. Foreman, Scarce

View: *Showdown in Seattle* Claxton

\*Journal Reflections

3/30 **Journal due and Exam #2**

\*On the last Thursday of class, we will share our journal reflections.

Environmental Ethics Exam #1

1. (t/f) Scientific opinion is equally divided over the question of the greenhouse effect and human induced climate change. An example of this equally divided opinion among scientists is the IPCC versus the Leipzig

Declaration.

2.-9. Worldwatch Institute claims the environment is undergoing profound and catastrophic changes. List four of these megaphenomena and give a concrete example of each.

a.

b.

c.

d.

10.-15. Identify and explain three of the reasons the Worldwatch Institute says that we are not astonished at the environmental crisis.

a.

b.

c.

16.( m/c) The public relations industry acting as clients for oil, coal, and natural gas companies use which of the following methods to confuse people about the extent of the environmental crisis.

a. phony grassroots organizations c. a and b only

b. think tanks with "independent experts" d. front goups

e. phony petitions f. all of the above

17. Much of irrigation for agriculture depends on water pumped from underground \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

18. According to the documenary *Earth on Edge*, the "dustbowl" of the 1930s was a human induced environmental catastrophe.

19.-20.The documentary *Earth on Edge* claims that pollution runoff, pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer has made drinking water in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

undrinkable and has created a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the Gulf of Mexico.

21.-22. According to the documentary *Earth on Edge*, the federal government subsidizes anti-environmental practices. Explain.

23.-25. According to the documentary *Earth on Edge*, human activity and/or social change have caused a crisis for two ecosystems the grasslands in Mongolia and coral reefs. Choose one and explain

26. According to the documentary, *Cadillac Desert: Mulhollands Dream*, the theft of the water from the Owens River and the Owens Lake was justified by what moral principle \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

27. According to the documentary, *Cadillac Desert: Mulhollands Dream*, after Owens Lake was sucked dry the aqueduct was extended to another lake which was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

28.-33. Lynn White, Jr. and your professor argue that there are historical causes to the environmental crisis, specifically the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Identify and explain three reasons.

a.

b.

c.

34.(m/c) The Puritans saw themselves as the new chosen people who were being tested by God. They thought the test was to turn the "new world" into a   
Garden of Eden. Which of the following was not something they did?

a. massive deforestation c. filled in marshes and wetlands

b. extermination of fur bearing d. learn about the environment

animals and game birds from the people that had

preserved it for thousands of years

35. (t/f) Your professor argued that manifest destiny was an extension of the

Judeo Christian attitude towards the environment.

36. The best "grizzly range on earth" was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

37. One of the "greatest natural habitats for wildlife and game birds in the world was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

38. The basis for establishing moral standing according to utilitarian ethical theory is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

39. The basis for establishing moral standing according to Kantian ethical

theory is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

40.-47. Identify and explain the following terms as they relate to utilitarian and Kantian theories.

a. principle of utility

b. equal consideration

c. categorical imperative

d. kingdom of ends

48. Peter Singer argues that some animals should be given equal consideration

because they can \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

49.-54. Tom Regan argues that some animals have inherent value becaue they

are subjects of a life. Identify the criteria for being a subject of a life. Give a specific example from *Never Cry Wolf*

a.

b.

c.

56.-57. Aldo Leopold's land ethic is an example of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ethic, as opposed to a Judeo-Christian ethic which is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

58.-60. Compare and contrast Leopold's land ethic with the Lord of the Earth ethic of domination.

Lords of the Earth Leopold

a. humans are unique and qualitatively a

different and at the top of the Chain of Being

b. natural world is a resource, dead matter b.

waiting to be transformed into something

for humans

c. humans , through science can predict and c.

control

61.-66. According to Leopold, humans have the moral obligation to act in

what ways in relationship to the environment. Identify and explain.

a.

b.

c.

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Environmental Ethics #2

1.(t/f) Deep ecologists believe that the goal of rethinking our relationship to the natural world will lead to achieving an ecological consciousness.

2. Deep ecologists refer to overcoming the isolated ego preoccupied with its narrow self-interests and identifying with other humans and the natural world as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

3. Deep ecologists refer to the understanding that all living things are of equal inherent value including human beings as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

4. Deep ecology Principle #8 says that those who subscribe to Principles 1-7 have an obligation to try to implement the necessary changes. The method for attaining these changes should be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

5. The aboriginal ritual where the young male adult's journey to the sacred places of his land is called a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

6.-8. Give one example each from *Cadillac Desert: The Last Oasis* of how dams negatively effect people, communities, and nature.

a.

b.

c.

9.(t/f) According to Rev. Benjaomin Chavez's study "Toxic Waste and Race in the United States," race is the most significant factor in determing who is most effected by pollution.

10-12. Sociologists, and some philosphers, make a distinction between two types of racism. They are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ racism and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ racism.

13.-15. Explain briefly how the types of racism differ.

16. The way in which society is layered in terms of income, wealth, and power

is called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

17.(t/f) Where one is located in society in terms of income, wealth, and power determines one's life chances.

18. The 75 mile area in Louisiana between Baton Rouge and New Orleans is called the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

19.-21. The urban ghetto was shaped by social transformations that left mainly minorities in an impoverished and toxic environment. Identify and explain the three main transformations.

a.

b.

c.

22.-24. Identify three of the environmental hazards faced by minorities living in the urban ghetto.

a.

b.

c.

25. The EPA treats environmental hazards differently in minority areas. Which of the following is not an example.

a. enforce laws and regulations less vigorously b. lowever fines

c. slower to put toxic waste sites on Superfund list d. cover toxic waste

e. none of the above

26. The 500 years that European countries colonized and exploited the third world is called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

27.(t/f) According to Vandana Shiva, after the breakdown of colonialism, the first world came up with a new term for exploiting the third world. It was called "development."

28.(t/f) In 1951 the Atomic Energy Commission set up an nuclear test sit within the Western Shoshone reservation.

29. (t/f) Kerr-McGee and the Atomic Energy Commission knew about the effects of working in uranium mines but did not tell the Navajo workers.

30.-33. Many of the environmental consequences of uranium mining on Indian reservations still exist. Identify three.

a.

b.

c.

34. The name of the channel that targets high school students at school is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

35. Name brand products are visible throughout movies. This is called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

36.-38. Identify and explain the three social transformations during the late nineteenth century that created the conditions for the emergence of the advertising industry.

a.

b.

c.

39. What author said "advertising is the art of teaching people to want things?

a. George Orwell b. H.G. Wells c. Sinclair Lewis d. Fitzgerald

40. Which of the following technologies was referred to as having conquered living space?

a. newspaper b. radio c. TV d. magazines

41.-44 Identify the following terms as they relate to advertising and entertainment television.

a. flow

b. pod

c. hook

d. bumper

45.-47. Identify three ways that McDonalds has targeted children.

a.

b.

c.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Match the following type of commercial to its most appropriate example.

48. parable a. Marlboro, Virginia Slims

49. association of values b. Rogaine, Viagra

50. funny/stupid c. Money Tree, King Stalman

51. status community d. Texaco, Philip Morris

52. selling corporations e. 1-800-Call Att, Jack in the Box, Aflac

53. low income f. Lexus, Tommy Hilfiger

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

53.-55. Briefly explain NAFTA Ch 11 and the impact it may have on a countries ability to maintain a clean and healthy environment.

56-60. Compare and contrast the Lord of the Earth worldview with the Lakota worlview as expressed in the documentary *Paha Sapa*.