

## CARLETON UNIVERSITY COURSE OUTLINE

### "ENVIRONMENTAL GEOPOLITICS"

#### GEOG 4400 (Fall, 2006)

Professor: **Simon Dalby**,  
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Seminars: **Mondays 11:30-2:30 in Tory 213.**

**Office Hours:** B450B LA Tuesdays 12:30 - 13:30, or by appointment.

The growing concern over environmental degradation and the possible impacts of stratospheric ozone depletion and climate change have, in the last two decades, linked environmental themes with the traditional geopolitical themes of military and foreign policy in a discourse of "environmental security". Notions of environmental security are now commonplace even if there continues to be an intense academic and policy debate about what the term might mean in various contexts. Persistent arguments that environmental change will lead to conflict have been subject to intense academic analysis which reveal many interesting methodological matters in the social sciences.

More generally, numerous biological threats and environmental worries haunt public discussions and policy debates. In particular heightened awareness of bioterrorism is linked to numerous fears and threats to various identities in the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup>. How environmental threats are constructed is a key theme in academic discussions of these matters. Recently there has also been an emphasis on the importance of resources as the causes of conflict at a variety of scales. But while these heightened concerns about security gain public attention, much skepticism is needed in analyzing the production of these threats.

This seminar course will introduce the literature in environmental security, looking at the geopolitical premises in the debate, and at both the viewpoints of environment implicit in academic and popular text, as well as the conceptualizations of security. It will also focus on the reformulations of security policy and crucially on the geopolitical premises that underpin these articulations of danger and policy prescription. In summary the course focuses on how geographical formulations of environmental geopolitics shape policy and public debate and does so by asking explicit questions about the construction of threats.

#### COURSE BOOKS

Betsy Hartmann, Banu Subramaniam, and Charles Zerner (eds) Making Threats: Biofears and Environmental Anxieties (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield 2005) (MTBEA below)

Colin Kahl States, Scarcity, and Civil Strife in the Developing World (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006). (SSCSDW below)

Both books are available, and should be purchased, at the Carleton University Bookstore.

Many of the readings listed below are available on line, and in the appropriate scholarly journals; the book, chapters and articles designated with an '\*' below are on reserve in the main library.

**Please Note: ALL THE READINGS listed below will be REQUIRED reading for the weekly seminars. Make sure that you allow time to read materials well in advance of the weekly seminars so that you can prepare your weekly commentary.**

## **COURSE SCHEDULE AND WEEKLY ASSIGNED READINGS**

Week 1, (11 September) **Introduction: “Top Guns and Toxic Whales”**

Week 2, (18 September ) **Making Threats**

Betsy Hartmann, Banu Subramaniam, and Charles Zerner “Introduction Making Threats: Biofears and Environmental Anxieties” MTBEA 1-22.

Ronnie Lipschutz and Heather Turcotte “Duct Tape or Plastic? The Political Economy of Threats and the Production of Fear” MTBEA 25-46.

Jackie Orr “Making Civilian Soldiers: The Militarization of Inner Space” MTBEA 47-69.

Paul Passavanant “Reflections – Consuming National Security” MTBEA 71-78.

Week 3, (25 September) **Scarcity, Security and Violence**

Gregory D. Foster, “A New Security Paradigm” Worldwatch Magazine 18 (1) (January/February) 2005, 36-46.\*

R.D. Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy" The Atlantic Monthly 273(2). 1994, 44-76.\*

Larry Lohmann “Malthusianism and the Terror of Scarcity” MTBEA 81-98.

Michael Watts “Reflections – Scarcity, Modernity, Terror” MTBEA 99-106.

Week 4, (2 October) **Dangerous Tropes: Purity and Circulation**

Hugh Gusterson “De-coding the Debate on Frankenfood” MTBEA 109-133.

Banu Subramaniam “The Aliens Have Landed: Reflections on Biological Invasions” MTBEA 135-148.

Alan Goodman “Reflections: (Im)Pure Biology: Deadly Synergy of Racialization and Geneticization” MTBEA 149-156.

Charles Zerner “Emerging Cartographies of Environmental Danger: Africa, Ebola, and AIDS” MTBEA 159-185.

Emily Martin “Reflections: Feeling Invasion” MTBEA 187-193.

Week 5, (9 October) **NO CLASS, UNIVERSITY CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING**

Week 6, (16 October) **Terror and Environmental Threats**

Jeanne Guillemin “Inventing Bioterrorism: The Political Construction of Civilian Risk” MTBEA 197-216.

Betsy Hartmann and Anne Hendrixson “Pernicious Peasants and Angry Young Men: The Strategic Demography of Threats” MTBEA 217-236.

Richard Matthew “Reflections: Bioterrorism and National Security: Peripheral Threats, Core Vulnerabilities” MTBEA 237-246.

Daniel Deudney, "Environmental Security: A Critique," in Daniel Deudney and Richard Matthew, eds., Contested Grounds: Security and Conflict in the New Environmental Politics Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999, 187–219.\*

Week 7, (23 October) **Environment and Violent Conflict 1**

Colin Kahl SSCSDW Chapters 1, 2 & 3, 1-116.

Week 8, (30 October) **Environment and Violent Conflict 2**

Colin Kahl SSCSDW Chapters 4, 5 & 6, 117-248.

Week 9, (6 November) **Resource Wars**

Philippe Le Billon "The Geopolitical Economy of 'Resource Wars' " in Philippe le Billon (ed.) Geopolitics of Resource Wars London: Frank Cass 2005 1-28.\*

Philippe Le Billon and Fouad El Khatib " From Free Oil to 'Freedom Oil': Terrorism, War and U.S. Geopolitics in the Persian Gulf" in Philippe le Billon (ed.) Geopolitics of Resource Wars London: Frank Cass, 2005, 109-137.\*

Kathryn Furlong "Hidden Theories, Troubled Waters: International Relations, the 'Territorial Trap', and the Southern African Development Community's Transboundary Waters" Political Geography 25. 2006, 438-458.\*

Week 10, (13 November) **Climate Geopolitics**

Jon Barnett "Security and Climate Change" Global Environmental Change 13. 2003, 7-17.\*

Richard B. Alley "Abrupt Climate Change" Scientific American November 2004, pp. 62-69.\*

Peter Schwartz and Doug Randall An Abrupt Climate Change Scenario and its Implications for United States National Security Global Business Network 2003.\*

Week 11, (20 November) **Media, Identity, Security**

Maxwell Baykoff and Jules Baykoff "Balance as Bias: Global Warming and the US Prestige Press" Global Environmental Change 14. 2004, 125-136.\*

Matthew Paterson and Simon Dalby "Empire's Ecological Tyreprints" Environmental Politics 15(1). 2006. 1-22.\*

Mark Neocleous, "Against Security" Radical Philosophy 100 (March/April) 2000, 7-14.\*

Week 12, (27 November) **Policy and Fear: Human Security?**

Ken Conca "The Case for Environmental Peacemaking" in Ken Conca and Geoffrey Dabelko (eds) Environmental Peacemaking Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 2002, 1-22.\*

Adil Najam "The Human Dimensions of Environmental Insecurity: Some Insights from South Asia" ECSP Report 9. 2003, 89-96. \* (<http://ecsp.si.edu>)

Jenny Clover "Human Centred Environmental Security in Africa" African Security Review 14(2) 2005, 103-106.

Betsy Hartmann, Banu Subramaniam, and Charles Zerner "Conclusion: Unraveling Fear" MTBEA 247-250.

Week 13, (4 December) **Conclusions: Course Wrap-Up and Paper Submission**

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Students will actively **participate** in each week's discussion (20%, judged more in terms of quality than quantity of participation), prepare **weekly single page commentaries** (maximum 350 words) of the assigned readings (30%), and **write a term paper** on a topic relevant to the course themes (approx 4,000 words) (50%). (**Term Paper deadline: in class, 4 December**)

**Participation:** This is an important component of this course; the seminar will only work as a venue to explore the questions raised by contemporary literature on environmental security if there is sustained dialogue among all students. The weekly single sheet commentary on the required readings is designed to **focus attention on the key issues in the weeks readings** and to provide a vehicle for **clarifying questions and comments** for the seminar discussion. It may be written as a series of comments, meditations or personal reflections on the readings. However it is formatted it must engage with the arguments and claims made in the readings. It will be graded A, B, C, D or F and **must be submitted at the beginning of each class**. If in doubt remember three questions of overriding concern for the whole course: 1) who or what is insecure? 2) where, specifically, is the insecurity or conflict? 3) what is the appropriate scale for analysis?

**Papers:** Papers, are open to any empirical or theoretical issue that is **directly relevant** to the course themes. Papers must be original, in that they will be written specifically for this course, (note applicable policies on plagiarism in the University Calendar) clearly organized, and should articulate a coherent theme or argument and use appropriate evidence to support their case. They must use the appropriate scholarly literature and academic sources, especially journal articles, in the relevant fields. Papers will be approximately 4,000 words in length, correctly and completely referenced, using any one of the standard reference or footnoting styles. Each of these factors will be taken into consideration in evaluating the paper which is due in class on 4 December.

## BACKGROUND READING AND ADDITIONAL SOURCES

Numerous sources are relevant to the themes of the course and are listed extensively, although not completely comprehensively, in the bibliographic sections of the annual Environmental Change and Security Project Report published by the Woodrow Wilson Center. The complete text of the Wilson Center Reports and their China series, is available on line at <http://ecsp.si.edu>. Hans Gunter Brauch *et.al.* (eds) Security and Environment in the Mediterranean (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 2003) is on reserve in the Carleton Library for this course (UA646.55 S43 2003). This huge volume contains numerous articles of relevance to course themes, including Brauch's own chapter "Security and Environmental Linkages on the Mediterranean Space" (pp. 35-134) and an 86 page bibliography that lists much of the environmental security literature over the last fifteen years. See also the on line United Nations University "scanner" with monthly updates on many environmental security matters at <http://www.acunu.org/millennium/env-scanning.html>. As additional background for the discussion of climate geopolitics on 13 November, students unfamiliar with climate change matters should probably read Tim Flannery The Weather Makers (Toronto: Harper Collins 2006). My own publications, some of which are directly relevant to the course, are listed on my website at [www.carleton.ca/~sdalby](http://www.carleton.ca/~sdalby).