

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS  
University of Virginia, Academic Sponsor

**Voyage: Spring 2016**  
**Discipline: Media Studies**  
**MDST 3559-101: Media & the Environment**  
**Meeting: "A" course schedule, 11:00-12:20**  
**Division: Upper**  
**Faculty Name: Patrick D. Murphy**  
**Credit Hours: 3; Contact Hours: 38**

**Pre-requisites:** None

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Media & the Environment provides students with an understanding of how people's relationship with the environment is shaped by media and communication. By addressing questions of media representation and the role of different media industries and genres, students examine how ideas and issues regarding the environment are bound and circulated through communication networks which privilege different "environmental ideologies." To better understand these ideologies and how they are interrelated, students critically analyze how key tropes, master terms and reoccurring images are related to corporate agendas, national policies, citizens groups, commodity hunger, class conflict, news reporting, and community activism. Of central interest is how media's representation of environmental issues promotes modern lifestyles, influences public perceptions of natural resource exploitation and sustainability, and shapes the possibility for environmental action. The port of call field excursion and in-country independent travel provide opportunities to visit and analyze key media institutions, observe and experience local mediascapes and dialogue with citizens about environmental issues facing different cities.

### **COURSE GOAL & OBJECTIVES**

**Goal:** Identify, through entertainment, news and advertising, the communicative role that media play in shaping the social imagination and cultural practices about the environment.

**Objectives:** Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify and critically evaluate the presence of key environmental ideologies in commercial and public media
- Recognize the interplay between symbolic & economic dimensions of media institutions and public communication that frame environmental issues
- Recognize and critically analyze ethical and diversity issues involving media tied to environmental justice and globalization
- Recognize and understand the environmental implications of the interrelationship between media, global capitalism, and commodity hunger

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

1. Cox, R. (2012). *Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage (ISBN-10: 1412992095)
2. Corbett, J. (2006). *Communicating Nature: How we Create and Understand Environmental Messages*. Washington: Island Press (ISBN: 9781597260688)

## TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Ensenada- January 5:

**A1- January 7: Introduction to Studying Media & the Environment\***

readings: Cox, Introduction and 1

Q: “Why do we need to speak for the environment?”

Watch on Ship’s Loop: *Baraka* (Jan 8)

**A2- January 9: Defining “the environment”? –Social/symbolic constructions\***

readings: Cox Chapter 2 & 3;

screening: various video clips

**A3- January 11: Environmental Ideologies\***

readings: Corbett Chapter 1 & 2

Honolulu: January 12

**A4- January 14: Environmental Discourses \***

Reading: re-read Corbett Chapter 2

Watch on Ship’s Loop: *Avatar* (Jan 15)

**A5- January 17: The Environment in US Animation\***

reading: Starosielski, N. (2011). ‘Movements that are drawn’: A history of environmental animation from *The Lorax* to *FernGully* to *Avatar*”

screening: *Avatar* and others (*selected clips*)

Study Day: January 19

Watch on Ship’s Loop: *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (JAN 19)

**A6- January 20: Japanese Anime and the Environment \***

reading: Mayumi, K., Solomon, B., Chang, J (2005). The ecological and consumption themes of the films of Hayao Miyazaki. *Ecological Economics*. 54: 1-7

screening: clips from *Spirited Away* and *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*

**A7- January 22: EXAMINATION 1**

Yokohama: January 24-25

Field Lab: January 25— Museum of the Art of Studio Ghibli

In-Transit: January 26

Kobe: January 27-28

**A8- January 29: News Media and the Environment**  
readings: Cox Chapter 6, Corbett Chapter 8  
screening: *China: The Electronic Wastebasket to the World (CNN)*

*Field Lab Report Due*

Shanghai: January 31-February 1  
In-Transit: February 2-3  
Hong Kong: 4-5

**A9- February 6: Media, the Environment and Consumerism\***  
readings: Corbett Chapter 4 & 6  
reading: Corbett Chapter 6  
screenings: various clips

Ho Chi Minh: February 8-12

**A10- February 13: Public Relations & the Environment**  
reading: Corbett Chapter 9, Cox Chapter 10  
screening: **various clips**

**A11—Feb. 16: EXAMINATION 2**

Yangon: February 18-21

**A12- February 23: Media and Consumerism**  
- Student field reports from Viet Nam and Burma

**A13- February 25: Media, the Environment and Democratic Problem Solving**  
readings: Cox chapters 4 & 5

*Watch on Ship Loop: Getting to the Wild Heart of Earth's Rights (Feb. 25)*

Cochin: February 27-March 3

**A14-March 4: Media and Environmental Justice/Climate Justice \***  
readings: Cox Chapters 8 & 9  
screening: *The World According to Monsanto*

**A15- March 7: Entertainment Media and the Limits of Growth**  
screening: various clips

*Paper Proposals Due*

Port Louis: March 9

**A16- March 10: Communicating Nature through Animals\***  
reading: Corbett Chapter 7; Corbett Chapter 5  
screening: Planet Earth clips

Watch on Ship Loop: *Planet Earth—Great Plains, Jungles, Shallow Seas (March 11)*

**A17- March 13: Media and Nature's Revenge**

reading: Corbett Chapter 5

screenings: various clips

Cape Town: March 15-20

**A18—March 21: Media & the Environment Online\***

reading: Cox chapter 7

screening: *The Meatrix*

**A19- March 23: Media and Grassroots Groups**

reading: Corbett Chapter 10

Watch on Ship's Loop: *The Sakawa Boys (March 23)*

**A20- March 25: Media, Technology & Waste\***

reading: Maxwell, R. & Miller, T. (2008). "E-waste: Elephant in the Living Room,"

"The politics of e-waste: A cadmium lining" *The Economist*, Jan. 26, 2013

screening: clips of *The Sakawa Boys*

Tema: March 27-29

Takoradi: March 30-31

**A21- April 1: Team workshop session**

**A22- April 3: Final Team Presentations**

**A23- April 6: Final Team Presentations**

Casablanca: April 7-11

**A24- A Day Finals, April 13**

April 16: Disembarkation Day

**Student Field Report (Burma or Vietnam)**

**Due: Feb. 23**

During your visits for Myanmar and Vietnam be aware of the media representations around you. Try to find an example of environmental communication in the form of advertising, branding, green consciousness raising or some other notable example the presentation of environment issues in consumer culture that you can share with the class. Your job will be to bring back a photo, video recording or some other form of documentation that you will share with and analyze for the class in relation to concepts and theories learned in the course. You will have 5 minutes and the assignment is worth 50 points.

**Team Research Assignment: Media, Environmental Antagonisms and Social Justice****Proposal DUE: March 7<sup>th</sup>****Paper DUE: April 6<sup>th</sup>**

A team of no more than three (3) students should write a 12-15 page paper that analyzes the role media and communication play in shaping or presenting an environmental antagonism in a country you have visited during this semester @ sea. This should be presented in relation to a social justice issue that is global in scope but experienced locally/ nationally/ regionally in a specific way (e.g., e-waste, seed saving, consumer excess, privatization of water, pollution, acidification of sea, climate change). At the center of your analysis should be how an environmental issue has impacted marginalized or disenfranchised groups such as indigenous peoples, or certain gender, race and social class groups or communities in an industrialized, newly industrialized or developing nation. Your job will be to explicate how social justice concerns have been shaped by access to financial sources (or lack thereof), communication means, participation and governance for historical, social and cultural reasons. For example, you can write about the treatment of a local environmental issues and community activism by the press; how climate change is affecting farming communities in Burma or China; the impact of the privatization of water the poor; the impact of industrial polluters on the neighboring communities; women's groups and GM seeds in India or Vietnam; the impact of plastics in the ocean on traditional fishing communities; the rights of endangered animals versus the rights of communities; etc. Central to your analysis should be the role of media. Have marginalized communities been able to use media to gain "voice." Has news media covered or ignored the problems? Has popular (entertainment) media represented the antagonism (and if so, how)? What role have "new media" (the internet, mobile media) and/or legacy media (radio, TV) played in framing the issue?

In addition to sound research and the incorporation of theory and concepts learned in this course, your team presentation should include original photographs, videos, and other artifacts collected in the assigned country. Each team will have approximately 15 minutes for its presentation.

In developing your research report and presentation, be sure to cover the following:

- **The Problem:** Identify the environmental problem in relation to political, economic, historical and cultural forces.
- **Social Group:** Clearly identify the group or community affected, and describe the historical and social conditions of its marginalization.
- **Sources:** Analyze current trends and situations citing at least 6 sources coming from newspapers, trade magazines, journal articles or scholarly texts.
- **Media:** When writing about group affected by xxxx, describe how it has been framed by the press, entertainment and/or documentary media by analyzing the application of key images, master terms and metaphors. Also, describe what ways, if any, the community has used media to insert its own "voice" into the public sphere.
- **Theory & Concepts:** Relate this information to media and environment theories and concepts we have studied.
- **Action/Improvement:** Imagine possible communication approaches that alternatively could improve the situation or better serve the group being affected.

**FIELD WORK & LAB DESCRIPTION:**

We will be visiting the Museum of the Art of Studio Ghibli located in Mitaka, Japan. This field lab excursion is designed to deepen your understanding of how environmentalism can be incorporated into story telling that resonates with national culture and other aspects of cultural life (in this case, that of Japan). Learning objectives of this excursion will center on:

- The identification of place of environmental ideologies in the public celebration of entertainment media.
- Identifying, as a mediascape, what environmental issues and concerns are privileged in the museum and how they are articulated in relation to national culture.
- Analyze and make sense of how anime fits into the broader history of environmental animation.

*Participation in a Field lab is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of your field lab.*

## FIELD ASSIGNMENTS

**Lab Experience Report:** Due by January 29.

Your report should be approx. 1,000 words and make connections with material presented in class and covered in your readings and with what you've discovered during the field visit. Be sure to address the following: Who is the museum for (what audience)? How much attention does the museum give to Miyazaki's focus on environmental issues? What examples can you provide (environmental ideologies, key tropes, narrative, imagery, and other rhetorical devices tied to environmentalism)? How do you think the public might respond to these? In what ways does the museum underplay or miss the opportunity to recognize the eco-conscious aspects of Miyazaki's work? "A" level Lab Reports will respond to these questions in relation to theory and concepts addressed in class.

## METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC

### GRADES:

Final grades for this course will be determined in the following manner:

Examination 1	15% (150 points)
Examination 2	10% (100 points)
Student Field Report	5% (50 points)
Final Examination	20% (200 points)
Lab Experience Report	20% (200 points)
Team Research Paper:	15% (150 points)
Team Research Presentation:	10 % (100 points)
Participation	5 % (50 points)
<b>= 100 % (1000 points possible)</b>	

### IMPORTANT DATES:

Jan. 22	—	Examination 1
Jan. 25	—	Field Lab (Museum of the Art of Studio Ghibli)
Jan. 29	—	Field Lab Report
Feb. 17	—	Examination 2
Feb. 23	—	Student Field Reports from Vietnam or Burma
March 7	—	Proposals due
April 6	—	Team Research Assignment
April 3 & 6	—	Team Research Presentation
April 13	—	Final Examination

**METHODS OF EVALUATION:**

You will be evaluated on:

- 1.) Participation—Active participation in class.
- 2.) Examinations— There will be 3 examinations. These will consist of short answers, essay questions, true/false and multiple choice. These exams will be based on readings, class lectures, videos and presentations. Students **should expect essay questions that demand thoughtful, integrated responses**, and all essays should be written in a narrative form using proper grammar and complete sentences. The purpose of exams is to encourage students to master the material, and to assess their grasp of course concepts and ability to critically apply this knowledge. The exams will focus on understanding terms and on the substance of class topics and on linking together and applying course concepts.
- 3.) Lab Experience Report (see above)
- 4.) Student Field Report (see above)
- 5.) Research Assignment (see above)
- 6.) Research Presentation (to be explained in class)

**All written work should conform to the following formal guidelines:**

Original Title to essay centered above first paragraph; Student Name, Class, Date, and Professor's Name in upper left hand corner. Stapled in upper right hand corner (folded-over papers that are unstapled will NOT be accepted).; Double-spaced throughout (except block-quotes).; Block-quotes (long quotes, e.g., any quote longer than 40 words) are to be 1.) indented and 2.) single-spaced.; 12-point font maximum (no minimum).; Margins not more than 1 inch on both sides.; Works cited page in APA style (the style used by most media and communication scholarly journals).

**Requirements:**

**Reading Assignments** – material on the reading list will complement and/or parallel class discussions. Students are expected to have these readings done before date of lecture. Exams will draw substantially from the readings.

**Class participation and discussions**

Attendance and participation are mandatory parts of Semester at Sea, and you are expected to be on time for class. It is imperative that you read the material closely before class so you can discuss it knowledgeably with your peers during class. Your active role in class discussions and group activities will get you higher points for the participation portion.

**Assignments.** *Assignments must be submitted in hard copy (unless otherwise indicated).* Keep a backup copy of all work you submit. In the case of an emergency that prevents you from attending class to turn the hard copy of an assignment, to receive full credit for the assignment you must bring a hard copy of the assignment to the following class meeting along with documentation of why you were not able to submit the assignment in person. In such a case, your assignment should be submitted via email the day it is due so it will not be counted as late. Finally, everything submitted for this class except in-class activities and exams should be typed and stapled. Spelling, grammar, punctuation and neatness are part of any written work, and will count toward the grade.

**Missing Deadlines:** *Be prompt*—Missed deadline are penalized 10 points per day, which is subtracted from the final grade of your paper. Zero will be recorded for papers not turned in by 7 days after the deadline.

**Notes, Powerpoint lectures & AV screenings:** Students are responsible for material delivered during class sessions. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to seek out the material from a reliable classmate and/or obtain materials screened via the library and elsewhere. Material delivered via Powerpoint is *not* provided after class or posted, and is not provided electronically or in hard copy to students who missed class.

**Personal communication devices:** Laptops are not permitted during class as they are a distraction. You will be asked to leave class and not return for that session if you choose to use them.

**Recording lectures:** The instructor *does not* give permission to be audio or video recorded.

## HONOR CODE

Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University's honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager's Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: "On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment." The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed "[signed]."

## Websites of Interest:

Environmental News Network—[www.enn.com](http://www.enn.com)  
 Real Climate—[www.realclimate.org](http://www.realclimate.org)  
 Dot Earth—<http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com>  
 Environmental Media Services -[www.ems.org](http://www.ems.org)  
 Society of Environmental Journalists -[www.sej.org](http://www.sej.org)  
 Climate science and global warming website -[www.realclimate.org](http://www.realclimate.org)  
 Environmental Defense -[www.environmentaldefense.org](http://www.environmentaldefense.org)  
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)  
 Indigenous Environmental Network—[www.ienearth.org](http://www.ienearth.org)  
 National Environmental Policy Act -[www.nepa.gov](http://www.nepa.gov)  
 U.S. Dept. of Energy - [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)  
 Energy Information Administration -[www.eia.doe.gov](http://www.eia.doe.gov)  
 Zero Footprint global warming solutions - <http://zerofootprint.net/>

## RESERVE BOOKS AND FILMS FOR THE LIBRARY

AUTHOR: Hayao Miyazaki, Studio Ghibli  
 FILM: *Spirited Away*  
 YEAR: 2001

AUTHOR: Hayao Miyazaki, Studio Ghibli  
 FILM: *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*  
 YEAR: 1984

AUTHOR: Marie-Monique Robin  
 FILM: *The World According to Monsanto*  
 YEAR: 2008

AUTHOR: Florentine Films (Larry Hott and Diane Garey)  
FILM: *The Wilderness Idea*  
YEAR: 1989

AUTHOR: James Cameron  
FILM: *Avatar*  
YEAR: 2009

#### **ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS**

AUTHOR: Nicole Starosielski  
ARTICLE TITLE: 'Movements that are drawn': A history of environmental animation from *The Lorax* to *FernGully* to *Avatar*  
JOURNAL TITLE: *International Communication Gazette*  
VOLUME: 73  
DATE: 2011  
PAGES: 145-163

AUTHOR: K. Mayumi, B. Solomon and J. Chang  
ARTICLE TITLE: The ecological and consumption themes of the films of Hayao Miyazaki  
JOURNAL TITLE: *Ecological Economics*  
VOLUME: 54  
DATE: 2005  
PAGES: 1-7

AUTHOR: Richard Maxwell & Toby Miller  
ARTICLE TITLE: E-waste: Elephant in the Living Room  
JOURNAL: *Flow*  
VOLUME: 9  
DATE: 2008  
PAGES: on-line

AUTHOR:  
ARTICLE TITLE: **The politics of e-waste: A cadmium lining**  
JOURNAL TITLE: *The Economist*  
VOLUME:  
DATE: **Jan. 26, 2013**