

**Syllabus: Environmental Identity and Ecological Self Fall 14 v4**  
Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling

**Course Number:** CPSY 501 / CECP 801  
**Term:** Fall 2014  
**Department:** Counseling Psychology / Center for Community Engagement  
**Faculty Name:** Thomas Joseph Doherty, Psy.D.  
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**Course Calendar & Meeting Times:**

**Days:** Weekly Online Activities and Two Class Meetings  
Sat 09/20/2014 & Sat 10/11/2014 from 1:00PM - 5:00PM  
**Location:** York Graduate Center, Room 107

**Catalogue Description:**

This course guides students toward self-reflection regarding identity and experience related to place, the natural world, and other species; and motivations for integrating ecological perspectives into academic, professional or advocacy work. Readings, exercises, and lectures help students explore personal visions of sustainability, emotional reactions to environmental issues, history of the environmental movement, intersectionality of environmental identity and other aspects of identity and diversity, and the interrelationships between health and wellbeing and social and environmental justice. This course is a required prerequisite for the Ecopsychology Certificate.

Prerequisites: None.

Credits: 1 semester hour

**Course Details:**

- This is a one-credit course that includes weekly readings, online activities and dialog, and in-person class sessions.
- Class sessions will balance didactic presentations with exercises, role-plays, outdoor activities, video presentations, and guest speakers.
- All students are required to have a valid email address, and to use the course Moodle page.
- Class meetings or field trips may include outdoor activities. Please dress appropriately for the weather.

**Course Requirements:**

1. Full attendance, including active and informed participation in discussions and class activities
2. Moodle site use and dialog

3. Class participation goals (50-75 words)
4. Weekly Readings and Activities
5. Weekly Blog Posts (1-2 pages, posted to Moodle)
6. Key Concepts Quiz (ungraded, multiple choice and short answer),
7. Environmental Identity Interview Project (3-5 pages, posted to Moodle)

### **Evaluation and Assessment:**

Attendance: Full class attendance is required. Since this meetings use group process, there is no effective “make up” or alternative to class attendance. Consult the instructor regarding any absences in advance. Lack of attendance in class sessions may be grounds for an incomplete.

Evaluation: Written and oral presentations will be evaluated on the basis of their clarity, thoughtfulness, and integration of themes and issues of the class. Detailed competency examples are below.

### **Competencies Assessed:**

- Academic rigor: Students will clearly demonstrate the theoretical and empirical basis of their work, and use clarity in their language (e.g., recognizing multiple meanings of commonly used terms such as “nature”).
- Theoretical and methodological pluralism: Students will demonstrate the ability to identify different theoretical and practical applications within ecopsychology
- Self reflection and collaboration: Students will articulate personal and professional motivations regarding ecopsychology and demonstrate the ability to collaborate with others having differing values.
- Effective and equitable application: Students will demonstrate the ability to describe their work in terms of practical and measurable outcomes (at various scales, e.g., for individuals, the local community, and natural systems).
- Ethical thinking: Students will demonstrate the ability to articulate relevant principles of counseling and educational ethics as well as the strengths and weaknesses of existing ethics codes in providing guidance for ecologically-based practice.

Evaluating Blog Posts: As an instructor, Thomas uses the blog posts to track students' progress through the course. He'll be looking for evidence of assimilation (students integrating the weekly material into their existing knowledge base, or into lessons learned through the course), accommodation (students describing new insights and new schemas based on novel information) and application (students discussing ways to apply and test the course materials in their academic and professional work). Beginning Week Three: Scan classmates' posts and make at least one comment per week. Be respectful and note areas of agreement or difference.

Grading: A grade of A will be reserved for comprehensive and exemplary work that demonstrates emerging mastery or a professional standard. A grade of B+ will be the benchmark for satisfactory completion of assigned tasks. Grades of A-, B, B- will be applied to work that adds to or are missing required aspects. C papers and presentations will be returned for revision. Some course activities will be ungraded and some will be pass/fail. The instructor reserves the right to use subjective judgments regarding grading.

Disability Services: If you have a disability that may impact your academic performance, you may request accommodations by submitting documentation to the Student Support Services Office in the Albany Quadrangle (x7156). After you have submitted documentation and filled out paperwork there for the current semester requesting accommodations, staff in that office will notify the instructor of the accommodations for which you are eligible.

Diversity, Culture & Accommodations: The instructor will make efforts to recognize diversity, culture and individual differences in the classroom and to create a safe and collegial learning environment for all students. Please contact the instructor regarding any special needs or accommodations required.

Sustainability: We are all encouraged to consider personal and environmental impacts associated with this course. This includes reducing or mitigating high impact behaviors by practicing alternate or communal forms of transportation (e.g., using carpools, biking; see commuter tips below). This also includes being efficient with use of energy and resources (e.g., turning off lights, computers and power strips when not in use). The use of recycled paper is encouraged as well as double-sided printing or printing on the blank side of previously used papers (clearly draw a line through non-course content). LC Commuter tips: <http://www.lclark.edu/live/news/22982-top-10-tips-for-lewis-amp-clark-commuters>

Sustainability also includes pacing yourself and remembering the basics (for you) of healthy diet, adequate rest, vigorous exercise, and nurturing relationships. Be mindful of screen time and immersion in information technology (in terms of time spent and content). Get outdoors and outside of the human sphere and in contact with the rest of nature and other species. Remember why you are in school and what this means for you. Suffering is a part of life and suffering is best met when it has a purpose.

## **Required Texts & Readings:**

The course has required readings and numerous supplemental readings and resources for further study. Required and supplementary readings will typically be available on the Lewis & Clark Moodle Site and/or on reserve at Watzek library.

### Required Texts

- Callenbach, E. (1975) *Ecoptopia*. Banyan / Bantam ISBN: 978-0-960432-01-1

Examples of Text Excerpts (posted on Moodle for students):

- Weber-Nicholsen, S. (2001). *The Love of Nature at the End of the World*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. ISBN: 978-0-262640-51-0
- Clayton & Myers (2009) *Conservation Psychology: Understanding and promoting human care for nature*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. ISBN: 978-1-405176-78-1
- Kahn, P. H. & Hasbach, P. H. (2012). *Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological species*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. ISBN: 978-0-262517-78-2

## **Written Work:**

### **Weekly Moodle Blog Posts - Due Friday 11:55 PM of each week, from 9/12/15 – 10/17**

An ecopsychology "blog" post discussing the week's readings, assignments and activities is due from each student each week on Thursday by midnight. Please post here. Integrate your thoughts about weekly readings and assignments with current events (e.g., identified from news sources such as the [NY Times Dot Earth Blog](#) and other activities or readings (such as from other classes or your work or play).

- Post length: Compatible with 250-500 words, or 1-2 double spaces pages, or as needed.
- Post title: "YOUR NAME Weekly Post DATE"
- Beginning Week Three: Scan classmates' posts and make at least one comment per week. Be respectful and note areas of agreement or difference.

**Class Participation Goal****Due Friday 9/19 Post to Moodle\***

Each student is required to formulate a personal class participation goal for this course and share it with the instructor by the end of week 2.

Please share a brief description of your self and goals that you have for the class. Include goals for class participation (e.g., speaking more or speaking less, practicing peer feedback, trying out new skills, etc.) Other goals may focus on writing or use of online format. Others may focus on self-care or life balance. (Please discuss any goals you prefer to keep private directly with the instructor.)

Length 75 – 150 words suggested.

**Quiz****Date: 10/11 In Class**

This will be a short answer and multiple-choice exam focused on terms, concepts, and techniques discussed in the class. Exams will be taken individually. Students will be allowed access to books, laptops, and the internet, including the course Moodle page. The quiz is a “learning tool” to improve retention and comprehension of class materials. Students will receive credit for taking and correcting the quiz.

**Environmental Identity Interview Project - Due: Thursday 10/9/15 Post to Moodle**

Each student will identify a person outside of the class to interview regarding the person's environmental identity and worldview. Students are encouraged to clearly apply models, research findings and techniques used in the class (e.g., childhood place map, environmental identity timeline, or use of an environmental belief or value questionnaire). Interview questions can include: What are salient experiences, places, relationships (human or with other species), events, emotions(+/-), attitudes, etc. in the person's life? Reflect on diversity and similarities between interviewer and interviewee. Students will then write a brief, anonymous, case study regarding the person they interviewed and their experience as interviewer. The goal is to be curious and practice ecopsychology interviewing skills and not to move into problem solving, therapy, or an expert stance. We will debrief at the 10/11/14 class meeting.

Length: 3-5 double-spaced pages. Post to MOODLE Environmental Identity Interview forum. Post as Word compatible Doc and also paste.

## Course Outline

### Week of 9/8/14 -- *Ecotopia*

**Readings:** Callenbach, E. (1975) *Ecotopia*. Banyan / Bantam ISBN: 978-0-960432-01-1 (Complete novel.)

### Optional Supplemental Readings and Resources

- Scott Timberg (2008, Dec. 14). The Novel That Predicted Portland. *New York Times*.
- Abbot, C. (2012) A Region by Any Name From Ecotopia to Cascadia Megaregion, visions of the Pacific Northwest – *Oregon Humanities*

### Assignments Due Friday 9/12 @ 11:55 PM

- Weekly Blog Post

### Reading: Prompts for weekly blog post

The future-focused 1970s novel *Ecotopia* describes the secession of the Northwestern United States and its formation as an ecologically focused society. In your blog post, make sure to demonstrate familiarity with the novel by briefly summarizing the story and making reference to at least two characters. Otherwise, here are examples of things you may speak to in your post:

Discuss what struck you most about the novel in terms of its description of an ecologically based society and how that society functions? How does it compare with your ideas of a just or ecological society? What does the novel suggest regarding personal health and identity in an ecologically based society? What lessons does this 1970's novel hold about trying to predict the future of ideas and social movements?

You may note dated or problematic aspects of the novel from your perspective, but please focus on its useful lessons for modern-day readers.

(Optional, for deeper reflection: Look at reporter William Weston's personal journal entries for dates in May, and his reactions to living at "The Cove" or relating to the character Marissa. From a psychological perspective, how are Weston's experiences in Ecotopia different from his life in New York (e.g., personal and social relationships, being in his body, political empowerment, attitudes toward the present and the future)? What does this imply about the psychological aspects of an ecologically focused society? How are organic or "wild" processes integrated with human

systems and technology? What are the ramifications for counseling or education? etc.)

Week of 9/15/14 – “*The Love of Nature and the End of the World*”

\*\*\*\* Class Session Saturday 9/20/14 from 1-5 PM\*\*\*\*

### Readings

- Weber-Nicholson (2001) *The Love of Nature at the End of the World*, Chapters 2, pages 35-62
- Scranton 2013 Nov 10 Learning How to Die in the Anthropocene – *NY Times*

### Optional Supplemental Readings and Resources

- Doherty (2009) Shierry Weber Nicholson- The Ecopsychology interview. *Ecopsychology*
- Zalasiewicz, Williams, Haywood & Ellis 2011 The Anthropocene: a new epoch of geological time?
- Kidner (1994) Why psychology is mute about the environmental crisis.

### Assignments Due Friday 11:55 PM

- Weekly Blog
- Class Participation Goals

### Prompt for blog post on Nicholzen’s *The Love of Nature...*

If Callenbach’s *Ecotopia* described a society in which most people shared ecocentric views and practices, Nicholzen’s 2001 *The Love of Nature...* and Scranton’s 2013 editorial speak to a world in which ecocentric viewpoints are often denied or unspoken. In your blog post, describe your emotional and intellectual reactions to the writing and the implications you see for counseling, education or other work. Potential prompts include:

- What daily practices would be necessary for you to cultivate the sensibility that Weber-Nicholson is describing in her text? How would they contribute to your health? How could you imagine describing these practices and their benefits to potential clients or future students?
- Are there current news items that relate to the above materials (see news items form

## **Week of 9/22/14 The "Environmental Movement in the United States – Past and Present"**

### **Readings**

The Environmental movement in the United States - Wikipedia

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental\\_movement\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_movement_in_the_United_States)

Greenpeace Act for the Arctic Campaign Recruiting Video

<https://greenwire.greenpeace.org/usa/en/node/9293>

Roberts, D. (2014, Sept 2) Hello again! Here's what I've been up to for the past year. GRIST.org <http://grist.org/article/hello-again-heres-what-ive-been-up-to-for-the-past-year/>

Out of the Wild -- A CONVERSATION BETWEEN WILLIAM CRONON AND MICHAEL POLLAN – Orion.

<http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/articles/article/7811>

### **Supplemental Readings and Resources**

Oregon Environmental History: Cizmar (2013) Portland, Pre-pilgrim.

*Willamette Week*. [http://www.wweek.com/portland/article-21530-portland\\_pre\\_pilgrim.html](http://www.wweek.com/portland/article-21530-portland_pre_pilgrim.html)

Films:

- Kitchel, M. (2013). *A Fierce Green Fire* (excerpts shown in class 9/20/15 and 10/11)
- Marshall Curry, M. & Cullman, S. (2011). *If a Tree Falls: A Story of the Earth Liberation Front*

### **Prompt for blog post ...**

To practice ecopsychology requires engaging the concept of environmentalism. Read the Wikipedia entry, "Environmental Movement in the United States." In your blog post, summarize the movement, beginning with the late 19th century conservation movement through the present day. For example, what are key highlights or turning points in the movement? What aspects of the environmental movement most inform your personal vision regarding the natural environment—for example who are key role models or what key ideas motivate you? What links would you like to explore further? Discuss the present day examples The Greenpeace video, David Robert's essay, and the dialog between William



Cronon and Michael Pollan – how do these illustrate the current environmental thinking, debate, and strategy? How do you expect the Wikipedia “Environmental Movement” entry to read in the next 2 to 3 decades? What issues will be prominent?

Optional: Discuss since Cizmar’s invocation of Portland “pre-pilgrim” and changes in the landscape prompted by European colonialization.

Access Kitchel, M. (2013). *A Fierce Green Fire* and review (excerpts shown in class 9/20/15) or the *If a Tree Falls* documentary.

### **Week of 9/29/14 Environmental Identity, beliefs and discourses**

#### **Readings**

- Clayton & Myers (2009) *Conservation Psychology*
  - Chapter 2: Attitudes, values, and perceptions
  - Chapter 4: Environment and identity

#### **Optional Supplemental Readings and Resources**

- Macy, J. (1990) The greening of the self. *Dharma Gaia*
- Ramsey (2014). My environmentalism will be intersectional or it will be bullshit
  - <https://www.opendemocracy.net/ourkingdom/adam-ramsay/my-environmentalism-will-be-intersectional-or-it-will-be-bullshit>

#### **Prompt for blog post**

Understanding people's values, beliefs, and discourse frameworks regarding the natural environment is essential when working in an ecopsychology framework -- this promotes more effective relationships, communication and collaboration. Understanding environmental identity can also help predict and explain why someone could be aligned with an ecopsychology perspective or find it alien or off-putting,

Summarize key social science findings in the Clayton and Myers chapters and use these to describe your *own* values re. wildlife (i.e., using Kellert’s typography of values), the typical environmental discourse framework you work from (e.g., Dryzek’s model or Merchant’s model) and key determinants of your own environmental identity (e.g., Chawla, Clayton).

Optional:

Weave in Macy's transpersonal perspective into the above.

From a social justice standpoint, discuss how environmental identity can be factored into other forms of identity and sources of oppression using a Feminist Intersectionality perspective.

### **Week of 10/6/14: Environmental Justice**

#### **Note Final Class Weekend 10/11/14**

#### **Readings / Videos**

- Miniature Earth Project: What is the (human) population of the earth world was reduced to a community of 100 people? (video)
  - <http://www.miniature-earth.com/>
- Majora Carter: Greening the Ghetto (video)
  - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQ-cZRmHfs4>
- The Black Hiker (video)
  - <http://www.funnyordie.com/videos/24b56caf3e/black-hiker-with-blair-underwood>
- Bullard, R. D. and Johnson, G. S. (2000) Environmental Justice-Grassroots activism and its impact on public policy decision making. *Journal of Social Issues*, 56, 555 – 578
- Urban League of Portland (2010). Environmental Justice. In *The State of Black Oregon*. pp. 77-86. (Review entire report for context.)
  - [www.doj.state.or.us/victims/pdf/the\\_state\\_of\\_black\\_oregon.pdf](http://www.doj.state.or.us/victims/pdf/the_state_of_black_oregon.pdf)

#### **Supplemental Readings and Resources**

##### Race -Environment

- Anthony\_and\_Soule\_1998\_A\_Multicultural\_Approach\_to\_Ecopsychology.
- Keith H, J. I (2014). Desegregating Wilderness. *Orion*.  
<http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/articles/article/8275>

##### LGBTQ - Environment

- Shepard 2012 An inclusive natural world EJE

- Shepard 2013 The Nature Within (video): <http://vimeo.com/67029940>

#### Social Justice Theory - Environment

- Opatow\_1994\_green\_justice\_conceptions\_of\_fairness

#### Native American Perspectives – Environment

- Asking the Right Questions - Larry Mercurieff (Aleut)
- Shared Responsibility - Roberta "Bobbie" Conner (Cayuse)
  - <http://www.nativeperspectives.net/Videos.php>

#### **Prompt for blog post**

Review the videos and readings for this week. Define “environmental justice” and discuss why that would be important in the study of environmental identity and self. What is your subjective experience of moving from world-size scale (e.g., in the Miniature Earth Project) to that of community environments (e.g., Majora Carter's talk or the State of Black Oregon report)? How does class, racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation or other forms of diversity inform discussions of environmental health or sustainability? And, how does this affect your sense of what ecopsychology could or should be? For example: How would you prioritize issues of social justice (for other humans) versus animal and species’ rights or rights to the integrity of the earth's ecosystems? Finally, consider how ecopsychology (or your practice) can be big enough to hold multiple views on these issues.

#### **A Course Sequence Note**

This syllabus is continued in the 2-credit course CPSY 528 “Theoretical & Empirical Basis of Ecopsychology” that will be offered in Spring 2015 that follows a similar format and includes topics such as:

##### Part 1 – Therapy & Expression:

- Environmental Trauma
- Supporting Emotions about the State of the Natural Environment: Despair & Empowerment vs. Broaden and Build
- “1<sup>st</sup> Generation Ecopsychology & Responses”
- Developmental & Lifespan Perspectives
- Ecopsychology and the Arts

- Natural Environments and Health

Part II Sustainability & Action:

- “Personal Sustainability” – Individual Approaches
- Behavior Change – Empirically Supported Approaches
- “Radical Ecopsychology” and Grassroots Social Change
- Big Systems – Changing Government and Policy

Part III Integration:

- “Ecopsychology Since 1992” - Reflection and Portfolio Project