

# Political Science 232: Environmental Policy & Politics

Winter 2008

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## Outline for Today

- Discussion on presidential campaign/election
- Description of syllabus and course material
- Introductions
- Introductory Lecture/Discussion

Week 1, Mon Jan 07, 2008

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## Discussion: 2008 presidential campaigns/election

- How central are environmental issues to the campaign in general?
- Which presidential candidate(s) focus most centrally on environmental issues?
- Which one do you trust most to protect the natural environment?

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## What is the environment? What is an environmentalist?

- The stances that are called "environmentalist" by Americans and citizens of other industrialized nations are often not seen as "environmentalist" by citizens/activists in developing countries.
  - Instead, the activists might see their cause as one of economic justice, social justice, human rights, etc.
- Is environmentalism a philosophy that only the privileged can afford to embrace?
  - Or is environmentalism relevant and essential for the most disadvantaged people in the U.S. and around the world?

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## Discussion:

### Will technological breakthroughs save us?

- Does history prove that technological innovation (e.g. wind power, electric cars, carbon sequestration, etc.) will continue to solve global environmental problems (e.g. global warming, oil depletion, etc.)?
- Or are we depleting and polluting the Earth's natural resources in such an unsustainable way that
  - We will run out of the affordable fuel and materials needed to manufacture these promising technologies (e.g. solar cells, wind turbines, electric cars, etc.) and
  - There will be a shortage of clean air, water, and land needed to sustain our quality of life?

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## Announcements

- Lecture slides – suggestions on how to take notes
- Electronic reserve readings - update
- Readings for Friday:
  - Kraft *Chapter 1: Environmental Problems and Politics*:
    - how is Kraft's *risk assessment* approach similar to / different from Layzer's *values* approach?
  - Lindblom: *The Market as Prison*
    - What is the "automatic punishing recoil"?
    - Why are businesses in a "privileged position"?
    - What recommendations does Lindblom provide for freeing environmental policymakers from the "prison" of the market?

Week 1, Wed Jan 09, 2008

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## Outline for Today

- Problem Definition and Value Conflicts:
  - A. Layzer/Stone's innovative *sociological approach* to Understanding Environmental Policy/Politics as being about how problems are defined and what values get translated into policies
  - B. Environmentalists versus Cornucopians (a.k.a. economic libertarians, rugged capitalists)

Week 1, Wed Jan 09, 2008

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## Are Value Conflicts At the Heart of Environmental Conflicts?

- Layzer argues that "environmental policy disputes are, at heart, contests over values" (1).
- Do you agree or not?
- What values are clashing?
- What else might such disputes (e.g. whether to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge) be about besides values?

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## Competing frameworks for understanding environmental policy & politics

- Citizens and experts alike disagree over what frameworks best explain what environmental policy disputes are about. Are environmental policy disputes primarily about ...
  - (Political and moral) values?
  - The (national/state) economy and/or my wallet?
  - History and tradition?
  - Cultural and social forces?
  - Psychological factors (whether rational or irrational choices)?
  - Scientific expertise (e.g. risk assessment)?
  - Technical expertise (e.g. cost-benefit analysis)?

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## The Environmentalists versus The Cornucopians

- **Cornucopians** (e.g. Julian Simon and Herman Kahn):
  - Prioritize economic growth and individual economic liberty (e.g. rugged American-style capitalism)
  - Are economic libertarians and thus believe that rugged capitalism (e.g. private property rights) or corporate capitalism is the best way to protect the environment (4)
  - Are technological optimists (Layzer 4)
  - Dismiss environmentalists' doomsday predictions of environmental and economic harms that will happen if government doesn't enact strong environmental protections...
    - ... but create own doomsday predictions of economic harms that will happen if government does enact these strong environmental regulations.
  - E.g. see the [Cato Institute](#)

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## Announcements

- Lecture notes have been posted online
- Group presentations: rank preferences
- "Climate Change at K" event on Wed 1/16 at 7pm
- Assignment for Monday:
  1. In addition to reading Kraft Chapter 2: Judging the State of the Environment, ...
  2. ... also watch "The Story of Stuff" (20 minute web video) at [www.storyofstuff.com](http://www.storyofstuff.com)

Week 1, Fri Jan 11, 2008

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## Charles Lindblom: *The Market as Prison*

1. **Privileged position of business:** Why according to Lindblom does business have a *privileged position* in government (when it comes to making environmental policies)? (326)
2. **Automatic Punishing Recoil:** What is the A.P.R. (325) and how does it lead to
  - the privileged position of business (in influencing environmental policy)?
  - The imprisoning of
    - the environmental policies government makes? (326, 329)
    - Americans' thoughts? (333)
3. **Solution?** How can lawmakers and citizens become less imprisoned and more free to pass the strong environmental laws they want to pass? (330, 332)

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## Kraft Chapter 1: *Environmental Problems and Politics*

- Main points Kraft makes in this chapter:
  1. **Centrality of Democracy:** Kraft argues that “democratic politics is essential to the development of effective public policy” (3).
    - See page 12 for less optimistic view about democracy’s capacity
  2. **Complexity of Sustainability:** The goal of sustainability is far more complex and difficult to achieve than preservation, conservation, and pollution control (4).
  3. **Need for Value Change:** The *Dominant Social Paradigm* (DSP) of Western Industrial societies is the biggest threat to environmental sustainability
  4. **Importance of Risk Assessment Framework:** Assessing risks is a valuable tool for designing effective environmental policies

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## Announcements

- Group presentation pairings and assignment
- Tue Jan 15, 7pm. “Martin Luther King: The Fierce Urgency of Now!” lecture by Dr. Grace Lee Boggs, Olmsted, LAC.
- Wed 1/16, 7pm. “Climate Change at K” event. Olmsted, LAC.
- Vote in the Michigan presidential primaries tomorrow (Tuesday, Jan 15)

Week 2, Mon Jan 14, 2008

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## Outline for Today

- Discussion of [The Story of Stuff](#) web video
- Kraft Chapter 2: Judging the State of the Environment
- Final comments on Lindblom and Stone articles

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## Dominant Social Paradigm (DSP)

- Below are several core beliefs in Western industrial society:
  1. **Superiority of humans:** “Humans are fundamentally different from all other species on Earth (9)
  2. **Omnipotence of humans:** “People are masters of their own destiny and can do whatever is necessary to achieve their goals
  3. **Cornucopia – unlimited resources:** “The world is vast and provides unlimited opportunities for humans
  4. **Progress and growth:** “Human history is one of progress in which all major problems can be solved”

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## Environmental values

- Below are several core beliefs of a competing environmentalist perspective:
  1. **Protect nature:** Ecological systems, wilderness, and biodiversity must be protected,
  2. **Protect human health:** Negative impacts on human health must be minimized,
  3. **Use resources sustainably:** Sustainable patterns of resource use must be established

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## Kraft – Chapter 2 – slide 1 of 3 *Judging the State of the Environment*

- Assessing the science: what is the state of the environment? What do we know, and what don't we know?
- Citizen beliefs versus expert knowledge: what environmental problems does the public underestimate?
- The psychology of fear, denial, and saliency

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## Kraft – Chapter 2 – slide 2 of 3 *Judging the State of the Environment*

Here are some findings that stand out in Chapter 2 of Kraft's textbook:

1. Population growth: American citizens tend not to realize how serious this problem is.
  - 2.7 billion people live on less than \$2 per day (49)
  - A staggering number of deaths in poor countries result from the failure to treat easily treatable conditions (e.g. malaria, diarrhea, measles, tetanus, respiratory infections) (49)
2. Biodiversity loss: here too, Americans tend not to recognize the severity of this problem.
3. Indoor air quality: the harm to human health from "sick building syndrome" and other indoor air problems is much worse than Americans tend to realize.
4. Drinking water pollution: leaking underground storage tanks are one of the biggest sources of polluted drinking water.

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## Kraft – Chapter 2 – slide 3 of 3 *Judging the State of the Environment*

4. Water pollution:
  - beach closings are often caused by the backing up of storm sewers after heavy rains so that human sewage spills into the storm sewers and pollutes the lakes. This is entirely preventable and is due to very outdated infrastructure of underground pipes.
  - Cow manure from factory farms is the biggest source of water pollution. Cow manure is also one of the biggest sources of methane gas (a greenhouse gas) in the air.
5. Fish advisories: coal-fired power plants are one of the biggest sources of the dangerous levels of mercury in freshwater fish.
6. Most polluting industries: mining, coal power plants, chemical manufacturing, steel mills, plastics and rubber plants, and automobile and airplane factories are the most polluting industries.
  - The U.S. military is the biggest polluter in the world

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## Announcements

- Romney & Clinton win Michigan primary
- Tonight (Wed Jan 16), 7pm. "Climate Change at K" event. Olmsted, LAC.
- Hand out group presentation assignment today
- The Paper 1 assignment will be handed out on Friday.

Week 2, Wed Jan 16, 2008

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## What is politics?

- When people say that an environmental issue is influenced by "political" conflict, here are several types of conflicts:
  - Partisan (e.g. Democratic v. Republican)
  - Ideological (e.g. liberal v. conservative)
  - Separation of powers (e.g. President v. Congress)
  - Federalism (e.g. U.S. EPA v. state of California)
  - Elite v. Citizens
  - Regionalism
  - Bicameral (e.g. House v. Senate)
  - Agency turf wars (e.g. EPA v. Department of Energy)

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## The Policy Process

- A. The Oversimplified "Textbook" Stages of the Policy Process (Layzer 15, Kraft 59)
  1. Problem formation (Stone, Layzer)
  2. Agenda setting (Kraft 60)
  3. Formulation of policy alternatives (Kraft 63)
  4. Decision making & Legitimation (Kraft 66)
  5. Implementation (Kraft 67)
  6. Evaluation (Kraft 67)
  7. Reform

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## A definition of interest groups

- Interest groups:
  - An organization that attempts to influence the policies of government through normal extra-electoral channels, such as
    - lobbying,
    - writing letters,
    - testifying before legislative committees, or
    - advertising.

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## Executive agencies as merely implementers?

- See chart on p. 77 of Kraft
- Executive agencies do much more than just implement the policies that Congress (and state legislatures) pass:
- The Bush administration's "Out of the spotlight" (Kraft 67) rewriting of / chipping away at environmental laws...
  - ... by rewriting of environmental rules and regulations by Bush administration...
  - ... more than by passing (anti)environmental legislation in Congress

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## Announcements

- Hand out [Paper 1 assignment](#) on Friday.

Week 2, Fri Jan 18, 2008

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## Urban Sprawl

- What is urban sprawl? See the following **definition** in the Charles Schmidt article (*Sprawl: The New Manifest Destiny?*):
  - Urban sprawl is "the outcome of four related factors: low residential density; a poor mix of homes, jobs, and services; limited activity centers and downtown areas; and limited options for walking or biking"
- See [www.walkscore.com](http://www.walkscore.com) to measure how walkable your neighborhood is.

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## Urban Sprawl: Environmental Problems

- What harms are exacerbated by urban sprawl?
  - Air pollution: smog and greenhouse gases
    - Surprisingly, air pollution is worse in sprawl areas than in urban areas!
  - Obesity: sedentary lifestyle in a driving culture
  - Habitat fragmentation and biodiversity loss...
    - ... which also leads to the spread of diseases (e.g. Lyme disease and the bird flu) by species (such as rats) that serve as disease carriers
  - Urban decay and poverty
  - Destruction of wetlands...
    - ... which exacerbates flooding and water pollution (because wetlands serve as sponges that capture and absorb both excess runoff and polluted runoff)

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## Urban Sprawl: Environmental *Policies* – Slide 1 of 3

- Urban sprawl has grown dramatically in part because of basic *economic* forces of supply (e.g. developers building suburban housing developments) and demand (e.g. customers rapidly buying these homes)
- But the pace of urban sprawl has been accelerated in part because of government policies.
- What national/regional/local policies have fostered sprawl?

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## Urban Sprawl: Environmental *Policies* – Slide 2 of 3

- Policies that have fostered sprawl:
  - National:
    - Oil subsidies (see [Greenpeace's](#) and [Union of Concerned Scientists'](#) reports on federal subsidies to oil companies)
      - see especially pages ES-2 through ES-4 of Executive Summary of Greenpeace Report, which are the 12<sup>th</sup> through 14<sup>th</sup> pages of the document if you print it out or read it via Adobe Acrobat Reader software)
    - Highway subsidies
  - State/Local:
    - Low taxes in suburbs that encourage companies and residents to leave urban areas for suburbs.
    - Zoning laws that require entire neighborhoods to be only residential and others to be only commercial.
    - The lack of zoning laws to protect farmland (from being turned into residential subdivisions)

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## Urban Sprawl: Environmental *Policies* – Slide 3 of 3

- Policy proposals to mitigate sprawl and instead foster “smart growth”:
  - Farmland zoning (Layzer 471)
  - Urban growth boundaries (471)
- Regional planning (rather than giving autonomy to local government bodies) is essential.

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## Urban Sprawl: Environmental *Politics*

- What political forces stand in the way of “smart growth” policy reforms?
  - **Values:** the libertarian discourse of property rights and free markets leads many Americans to be wary of regional planning measures.
  - **Interest group power:** developers are a powerful lobbying force, as are industries that profit from lower taxes in the suburbs. They lobby lawmakers to oppose “smart growth” measures.
  - **Federalism:** our system of federalism gives some powers to the federal government and leaves many others to states and localities. This constrains the federal governments’ – and even states’ – powers to enact smart growth policies.
  - **Inertia versus changing incentive structures:** to really limit sprawl would require a shift in how our economic system values land. As long as an acre of forest, wetlands, or farmland can yield major profits when the owner sells it to a developer, then sprawl will continue. To limit sprawl will require that the costs be restructured (through zoning changes, property tax reform, fees added on to the cost of development to offset sprawl’s environmental damages, etc.) such that smart growth – rather than sprawl – is profitable.

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## Announcements

- [News presentations](#) begin in two days (Week 3, Fri Jan 23)
- The "How Local Foods Build Healthy Strong Communities" event (listed on [syllabus](#) as taking place tomorrow (Week 3, Thu Jan 24) will be moved to Week 10, Thu Mar 13 (Olmsted, 8pm).
- [Focus the Nation](#) event tonight, 7pm, Christian Church, 2208 Winchell.  
Panelists:
  - Kurt Cobb, authority on energy issues, columnist for Scitizen, the Paris-based science news website, and writer of the blog "Resource Insights."
  - Dr. Binney Girdler, Biology professor and co-director of the environmental studies program at Kalamazoo College, with a specialty in community ecology.
  - Dr. David Karowe, Biology professor, Western Michigan University, with a specialty in the effects of climate change on plants native to Michigan.
  - Dr. Tom Small, Professor emeritus, WMU, co-founder of the Kalamazoo Area chapter of Wild Ones and co-editor of the newsletter of the West Michigan Climate Change Network.
- Service learning project

Week 3, Wed Jan 23, 2008

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## Current Events

- "Oil Demand, the Climate and the Energy Ladder": [Interview](#) with Jeroen van der Veer, 60, [Royal Dutch Shell](#)'s chief executive
- [The Food Chain: An Oil Quandary: Costly Fuel Means Costly Calories](#)
- Representative Upton (R-MI) (Kalamazoo is in his district): "[Key Republican deals blow to House Dems' emissions plans](#)"

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## The Historical Waves of Environmentalism

1. Preservation and Conservation (1800s and early 1900s)
2. The New Deal (1930s and 1940s)
3. Pollution Prevention (1960s and 1970s)
4. Sustainable Development? (1970s, 1990s, and current decade) (see p. 2 of Kraft for definition)

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## History of the Environmental Movement: Before the three waves

- The Settlement and "Conquest" of Nature (Kraft 86)
  - How would you tell the early history (17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries) of "America" from a natural resources perspective?
    - How did the colonists view the natural environment of "America" in contrast to the natural environment of Great Britain?
    - What European values and traditions did they embrace? What American values did they create and embrace?

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## History of the Environmental Movement:

The three waves – Slide 1 of 3

### 1. Progressive Era – 1890-1915 (88)

- Conservation & Public Health
- National parks
- Waste management, waste water, clean water supplies
- Nutrition, hygiene

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## History of the Environmental Movement:

The three waves – Slide 2 of 3

### 2. New Deal – 1930s and 1940s (89)

- Response to natural resource problems
- Flood control via Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), soil conservation (Dust Bowl), Trail building via Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), creation of Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Third wave of conservation begins in 1950s and 1960s

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## History of the Environmental Movement:

The three waves – Slide 3 of 3

### 3. Environmental Protection via Social regulation – 1960s & 1970s (89)

- Broader wave – focus on health and safety, environmental quality
  - OSHA, Consumer Product Safety Commission, EPA reform
- Distrust of establishment organizations (93)
- Open administrative process (93)
- Activist or reformist orientation within agencies (93)
- Extensive participation by public interest groups (93)
- Bipartisan support for environmental policies (Kraft 85, 91)
- Policies were nationalized (91)

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## Group Presentation #1:

Environmental Justice

- Presentation on “Environmental Justice” by Allie Sachnoff, Hussain Turk, Stephanie Willette, and Garrett Johnson

Week 3, Fri Jan 25, 2008

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## Announcements

- Focus the Nation events this week – see K College homepage ([www.kzoo.edu](http://www.kzoo.edu)) for events.

## Current Events

- Watch Bush's final State of the Union Address tonight at 9pm if possible. See what, if anything, he says concerning environmental issues.
- Michigan Governor Granholm delivers her State of the State address tomorrow (Tue) evening.

## Global warming: outline for today's class

- The Bush administration's legacy on global warming
- How a Gore presidency from 2001 to 2008 would have differed from the Bush presidency on global warming-related issues.
- What's in the Kyoto Protocol
  - Why Bush administration refuses to sign
  - What role the Senate plays, and why it's so hard to get this international treaty ratified in the Senate

## Announcements

- Focus the Nation events this week – see K College homepage ([www.kzoo.edu](http://www.kzoo.edu)) for events.
- Friday: group presentation on threats to the Great Lakes
- Service learning project: rank preferences on hand-out

## Group Presentation #2:

### Threats to the Great Lakes

- Presentation on “Threats to the Great Lakes” by Rob Carollo, Theresa Tejada, and Hank Wisner

## Current Events

- Bush's 2008 State of the Union Address:
  - Global warming: No Major Climate Initiatives From State of the Union
  - Renewable energy
- USA Slips Behind Ecuador in Environmental Ranking

## Group Presentation #3: Logging and Endangered Species

- Presentation on “Logging and Endangered Species” by Brandon Foutz, Jenna Hertz, and Marcquel Pickett

## Current Events

- Super Tuesday results from yesterday
- Wall Street Shows Skepticism Over Coal; Banks Push Utilities To Plan for Impact Of Emissions Caps
- Grand Rapids Press Editorial: Aiding fight against Great Lakes invaders
- NYT Editorial on Bush and Global Warming
- A Green Energy Industry Takes Root in California

## Group Presentation #4: Acid Rain

- Click [link](#) for presentation on “Acid Rain” by Sophie Huckabay, James Hutchinson, Eli Melaas, and Zach Klug

## Outline for Today

1. Resource Wars: oil and U.S. foreign policy
2. Peak Oil Predictions: are they believable?
3. Good Policy:
  - renewables &
  - Conservation (curtailment & efficiency)?
4. Politics: if peak oil predictions are right... what would it take for lawmakers to
  - Believe it
  - Act on it
  - Educate the public on it?
5. Lifestyle versus Policy Change:
  - Is the sustainability dependent mostly on us as individuals changing our lifestyle, or is it mostly dependent on government to restructure our energy/transportation/housing/agriculture/military systems?

## Layzer – Chapter 4: *Government Secrets at Rocky Flats*

- Key themes:
  1. **The world’s largest polluter**: the U.S. Military is the world’s largest polluter. This includes the Department of Defense (located in the Pentagon) and military-related divisions of the Department of Energy and other related agencies such as the Atomic Energy Commission)
  2. **The power of “framing”**: when framed in terms of national security (whether anti-communism, anti-terrorism, anti-drugs, etc.), the public and media attention are diverted from environmental harms... instead focusing on the values of “secrecy” and “security”

## Layzer – Chapter 4: *Government Secrets at Rocky Flats*

3. **“Iron triangles” in the 1950s and 1960s**: three sets of actors dominated military policy via a “sub-government” during this period:
  - a) **Heads of Executive Agencies**:
    - Secretary of Defense &
    - Secretary of Energy
  - b) **Congressional Committee Chairmen**:
    - the Chairman of the House Armed Forces Committee and
    - Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee
  - c) **Powerful Regulated Interest Groups**:
    - Dow Chemical
    - Rockwell International

## Layzer – Chapter 4: *Government Secrets at Rocky Flats*

- Today, all three of these actors in the “iron triangle” sub-government dominate at times, but they share power with...
  - d) White House leaders (president, VP, top aides)
  - e) Congressional Party Leaders (House Speaker & Majority Leader plus Senate Majority Leader)
  - f) Public Interest groups
  - g) Media

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## Layzer – Chapter 4: *Government Secrets at Rocky Flats*

4. **Where Does the Waste Go?**
  - **NIMBY** (Not in my backyard) dynamic limits government's options of where to dispose of wastes (82), often resulting in **environmental racism**.
5. **How Clean is Clean Enough?**
  - Beneath the competing values (e.g. of environmental protection versus national security or short-term economic growth) are technical questions of how many parts-per-million of hazardous materials are acceptable levels.
    - Citizens become skeptical of government experts who seek to convince them that the levels of toxins present in soil, air, water, and hence human body are safe.

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## Group Presentation #5: The Wise Use Movement

- Presentation on “The Wise Use Movement” by Chris Begeny, Patrick Grucelski, and Mali Gruezo

Week 7, Fri Feb 22, 2008

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## Current events

- Michigan state legislature close to passing Great Lakes water diversion compact.
- [League of Conservation Voters \(LCV\) 2007 National Environmental Scorecard](#)
- Use of sugar beet extract as alternative to salt for road deicer

Week 8, Mon Feb 25, 2008

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## *Rapanos v. U.S. (2006):* federalism, the Clean Water Act, and wetlands

- *Rapanos v. U.S. (2006), Carabell v. Army Corps of Engineers (2006)*
  - Plaintiffs wanted to fill Michigan wetlands with shopping malls and condos.
    - Rapanos wanted to build a mall in Midland (by Saginaw).
    - June Carabell wanted to build condos in Chesterfield Township (near Detroit, one mile from Lake St. Clair).
  - Question: what wetlands and “navigable waters” are covered under the Clean Water Act?
    - Rapanos’s land was 20 miles from navigable waterways.
  - Kennedy concurring opinion (case was split 4-1-4, majority opinion written by Scalia):
    - Must be a “substantial nexus” between the non-navigable water-way (e.g. wetland in Midland) and the adjacent traditional navigable waters (e.g. Lake Huron)

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## Connections between Rocky Flats and Kalamazoo PCB controversy

- Both are stories of
  1. local communities forming coalitions (among citizens, neighborhood groups, local/state/national government leaders, business leaders, etc.) to expose government’s actions for threatening rather than protecting human health.
  2. NIMBY pressures succeeding in derailing government proposals
  3. Government agencies being accused of being too cozy with polluting companies
  4. Communities rallying the news media to expose the dangers of the above “state-corporate nexus”

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## Connections between Rocky Flats and Kalamazoo PCB controversy

5. Revelations that the government had already secretly endangered the public’s health/safety for years without the public knowing (e.g. secret incineration of radioactive waste 9 times prior!) (90)
6. Government and industry seek to find ways to avoid paying to dispose of hazardous wastes in officially licensed hazardous waste sites.

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## Disposal dangers

- The shipment of radioactive wastes by trucks or train en route to nuclear repositories threatens public health
- The lack of a functioning nuclear repository (see NYT article on Yucca Mountain Repository) leads nuclear facilities to store nuclear wastes on-site, threatening public health

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## Where do hazardous wastes come from?

- Byproduct of recycling plastic/metal/glass
- Byproduct of trash incineration and paper bleaching (e.g. dioxin)
- Byproduct of steel manufacturing,
- Byproduct of coal-fired power-plant electricity generation
- Mining of naturally-occurring uranium and other radioactive materials
- Production of plutonium and other radioactive materials
- Production of plastics
- Use of solvents and other chemicals for industrial purposes (e.g. PCBs for producing carbon paper; TCE solvent to clean up factory machinery)

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## Where do hazardous wastes go?

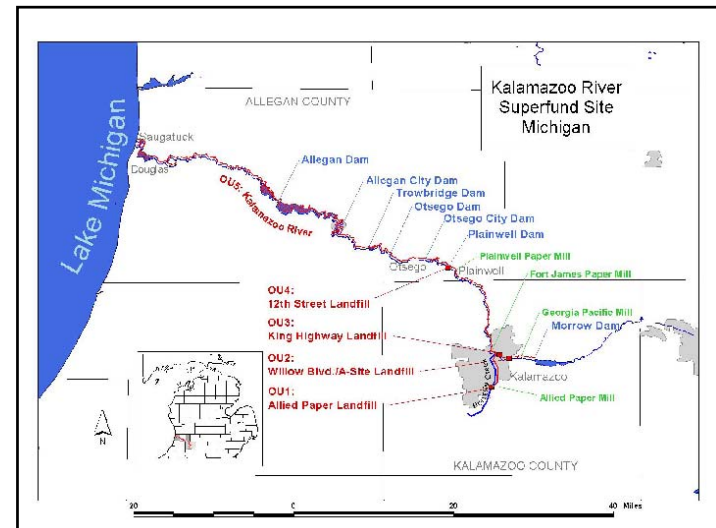
- Buried underground (whether legally or illegally), polluting soil and groundwater
- Dumped in oceans, lakes, streams (by industry, military, etc.)
- Released into air (via steel mills, coal-fired power plants, trash incinerators, satellites, nuclear power plant accidents, aerial spraying of pesticides, aerial spraying of Agent Orange during Vietnam "War", firing of depleted uranium missiles during current Iraq and Afghanistan "wars")
- **Diluted and added as ingredient into commercial products!** Sold to fertilizer companies via loophole in law (see *Fateful Harvest* book). Thus, added into fertilizers, leading to "lead in your French fries." Also sold to companies producing asphalt for road construction. Called "**dilution is the solution to pollution.**" Reason is that the industries listed on previous slide seek to find ways to avoid the expensive costs of paying to dispose of hazardous wastes in officially licensed hazardous waste facilities.
- Shipped to China and other developing countries via the global trade in trash. Then dumped in unlicensed landfills, seeping into air, soil, and water.

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## The Kalamazoo River PCB Removal / Allied Paper PCB Disposal Controversy: Maps of the removal and disposal sites

- **Removal site:**
  - Plainwell section of Kalamazoo River
- **Disposal site:**
  - Former Allied Paper site in Kalamazoo

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## EPA/PCB Controversy: Key points and issues

1. **Upton's Pivotal Role:** Getting U.S. Representative Fred Upton (R-MI) to oppose the EPA's decision to dump the PCBs in the former Allied Paper Mill site was key. Why was Upton so pivotal?
2. **Not In My Back Yard (NIMBY):** Was the decision to dispose of these PCBs (from the removal of PCBs from the Plainwell segment of the Kalamazoo River) in Zeeland and Belleville/Romulus (in Metro Detroit) a case of NIMBY leading to **Environmental Injustice**? What makes some disposal sites less-worse than other disposal sites?

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## EPA/PCB Controversy: Key points and issues

3. It was revealed that the former Allied Paper site in Kalamazoo already has a ton of PCBs from a previous round of PCB removal (without the city government officials knowing about it)!
4. The City has plans to redevelop this former site – note that residents object to it being called a “landfill” – to include biking/walking trails and/or “light industrial or commercial development”

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## The Kalamazoo River and PCBs: A Public Education Forum



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## Announcements (page 1 of 2)

- Lecture notes are updated on web site
  - ... though there were no lecture slides on several classes in the past few weeks)
  - ... though I haven't yet added links to your groups' slide presentations
- Reading for Week 9 Monday:
  - Fast Food Nation:
    - Introduction
    - Chapter 5: Why the Fries Taste So Good
- Guest speaker Week 9 Friday: Ken Bowers '71 on reducing our ecological footprint

Week 8, Fri Feb 29, 2008

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## Group Presentation #6:

### Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

- Click [link](#) for presentation slides on “Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge” presentation by Nick Leonard, Sara Locke, Naseem Mazloom, and Erin Mette

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## Announcements (page 2 of 2)

- Assignment for service learning project:
  - Due this coming Wednesday (Week 9, Mar 5)
  - Turn in a draft of your group’s writing section. Recommended page length is 4-6 pages double-spaced.
  - Since it is a draft, turn in what you have – even if this means turning in questions or comments about disappointments, frustrations, confusions, or further work needing to be done.
- Paper #3: I’ll get the formal paper assignment to you soon. But here is the topic I’m thinking about:
  - how much of the political solution to the myriad of problems of our “fast-food nation” need to be rooted in
    1. *individual life-style change* versus in
    2. *strengthening government “command regulations”* or
    3. *market-based incentives?*

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## Group Presentation #7:

### Free Trade versus the Environment

- Click [link](#) for presentation slides on “Free Trade versus the Environment” presentation by Ben Cooper, Chloe Reeves, and Laura Sayen

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## Announcements

- [First draft](#) of service learning project report due this Wednesday (Week 9, Wed Mar 5)
  - Use [MLA style of citations](#) in your draft
- Paper #3 assignment due last day of class (Week 10, Fri Mar 14)
- [Readings for next class:](#)
  - *Fast Food Nation* Chapters 6 through 8
  - Also, watch the Meatrix I, the Meatrix II, and the Meatrix II ½ at [www.meatrix.com](http://www.meatrix.com).

Week 9, Mon Mar 3, 2008

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## Free trade (a.k.a. trade liberalization)



- The debate between “free trade” versus “fair trade” operates at several levels:
  1. Free trade agreements (a.k.a. trade liberalization, e.g. North American Free Trade Agreement - NAFTA)
    - Reduces or eliminates tariffs and other restrictions upon trade
  2. Labeling and certification
    - “fair trade” labeling for coffee, tea, bananas, chocolate, etc.

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## Free trade (a.k.a. trade liberalization)

- “The battle in Seattle”: 1999 protests against the World Trade Organization (WTO)



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## Free trade (a.k.a. trade liberalization)

- The case *for* free trade agreements:
  - Comparative advantage
  - Developing countries' opposition to eco-imperialism / environmental protectionism
- The case *against* free trade agreements:
  - **Race to the bottom**: companies will move to the country with the weakest environmental laws
  - **Threat to national sovereignty**: free trade as envisioned by WTO / IMF / World Bank blocks the United States from banning imports of products that would otherwise violate U.S. environmental laws

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## Environmentalists' Recent Focus on Agricultural Policy

- Cow manure is the single largest source of water pollution, and the methane gas from cow manure is a significant greenhouse gas.
- Industrial agriculture has more impact on the nation's environment than the preservation of national parks and conservation of national forests.

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## The intersection of individual lifestyle solutions and structural government solutions

- While Schlosser's *Fast Food Nation* focuses primarily on problems, we will also focus on solutions, including...
  - Support local farms first (even if not organic), then non-local organic farms second
  - Build and support community gardens in your town
  - Shop at local food co-operatives (like the People's Food Coop)
  - To reduce your ecological footprint, eat small amounts of farm-raised meats and large amounts of locally-grown vegetables, legumes, and grains.
  - Make gardening and food systems education a central part of K-12 and college education – change the discourse from “farming is for hicks” to “farming is an amazingly valuable lifestyle choice”
  - Shift the discourse of agricultural policy and markets (a) away from the goal of increasing yields via petroleum-intensive pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers and (b) towards the goal of sustainability and health

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## Eric Schlosser: *Fast Food Nation: Introduction*

- **Price ≠ Cost:** Fast Food costs consumers (and the nation) far more than the low prices would suggest (9).
- **Pervasive:**
  - ¼ of adult Americans eat fast food each day (3)
  - Average American consumes three hamburgers and four orders of fries every week (6)
  - McDonalds is
    - largest purchaser of beef, pork, and potatoes (and 2<sup>nd</sup> largest purchaser of chicken) (4)
    - Largest owner of retail property in the world (4)
- **Women in workforce:** demand for fast food grew when fewer women stayed at home to prepare meals (4)
- **Low-wage labor:** Fast food model is based on low-wage labor – fast food companies grew at a time when the real (that is, adjusted for inflation) minimum wage declined by 40% (8)

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## Eric Schlosser: *Fast Food Nation: Introduction*

- The success of fast food companies has not been simply a function of the marketplace.
  - **Corporate subsidies:** They have instead lobbied successfully for numerous government subsidies that artificially lower their true business costs (7).
  - **Anti-regulation:** They have lobbied aggressively against minimum wage increases, worker safety laws, and food safety laws (8)
- **Abuse of children:** Children are central to fast food – both as consumers and as low-wage employees (9)

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## Eric Schlosser: *Fast Food Nation: Chapter 5: Why the Fries Taste Good*

- Fast food potatoes were made possible by massive government “reclamation” projects – specifically damming and diverting of rivers in American West for irrigation and power (112).
- J.R. Simplot dehydrated potatoes, then bought a phosphate mine for fertilizer, and shipped frozen, processed potatoes (113).
- He owns phosphate mining companies, is one of the nation's biggest landowners (115). He's still alive at the age of 99 and is the 89<sup>th</sup> richest American.

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## Eric Schlosser: *Fast Food Nation*: Chapter 5: *Why the Fries Taste Good*

- Three potato suppliers – Simplot, Lamb Weston, and McCain – supply to the fast food companies, which buy potatoes at 30 cents/lb. and sell at \$6/lb (117).
- 2 cents out of every \$1.50 order of French fries goes to the farmer who grew the potatoes (117).
- A dozen multinational corporations are earning a profit from every food transaction (119) between the 300 million consumers and the 2 million ranchers/farmers (119).

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## Eric Schlosser: *Fast Food Nation*: Chapter 5: *Why the Fries Taste Good*

- Flavor industry:
  - McDonald's fries used to taste so good because they were fried in beef tallow, which had "more saturated beef per ounce than a McDonald's hamburger" (120).
  - Since 1990, McDonald's was pressured to switch to vegetable oil. Now McDonald's – like most products with frozen foods – relies on natural/artificial flavors since canning/freezing/dehydrating techniques destroy most flavor (120).
  - Natural flavors aren't necessarily any healthier than artificial flavors (126).
  - Vegetarians may be eating food with flavors from beef or shellfish extracts (128).

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## Announcements (page 1 of 2)

- [Paper #3 assignment](#) due on last day of class (Week 10, Fri Mar 14)
- Updated (and more readable) [syllabus](#) posted online
- [Readings for next class](#) (for Ken Bowers' class visit):
  - [Jeffrey Sachs](#) article on global warming (3 pgs)
  - [James Fallows](#) article on U.S. (9 pgs)
  - ["The oil in your oatmeal"](#) article
- Paul Bucholtz (Lead Project Manager for the Kalamazoo River Superfund Site for the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality) will visit our class this Monday (Week 10, Mar 10) from 10am to 11am.
- [Dick Cheney will be in Marshall](#) (between Battle Creek and Ann Arbor on I-94) on Friday to fundraise for Congressman Tim Walberg (R-MI), who is likely to face tough opposition in the general election from Democratic state senator Mark Schauer.

Week 9, Wed Mar 5, 2008

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## Announcements (page 2 of 2)

- Tomorrow, (Thu Mar 6):
  - Kalamazoo College will be hosting the first Flesche Lectureship. [David Broder](#), the Pulitzer-prize winning [columnist of the Washington Post](#), will be speaking at 8pm in Dalton Theatre on the American political landscape in the run-up to the 2008 elections (LAC).
  - David Broder will lead an [informal discussion for students](#) at 4pm on Thu, Mar 6, in the Olmsted Room.



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## Current events

- [Ecoterrorism Suspected in House Fires in Seattle Suburb](#)
- [USDA Rejects 'Downer' Cow Ban: Agriculture Secretary Finds Existing Meat-Processing Rules Adequate](#)
- [House Passes Renewable Energy Credits](#) / bill would slash subsidies to oil companies
  - "Environmental groups, however, cheered the plan. 'This bill is an important and effective step in strengthening America's clean energy economy,' Anna Aurilio, the Washington director of **Environment America**, said in a statement, adding that the bill 'would help solve global warming and promote and retain long-term development and growth in the clean energy technology industry.'
  - Our Congressman Fred Upton is the "target of the week" of a national coalition of environmental groups (including Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, Sierra Club, etc.) because he voted against this Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Act of 2008 (HR 5351). There will be a protest outside his downtown Kalamazoo office at noon on Friday

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## Eric Schlosser: *Fast Food Nation* Chapter 6: *On the Range*

- Chicken processing
  - Chicken McNuggets have twice as much fat per ounce as hamburgers (140)
  - Chicken growers deep in debt (141) / processor owns the birds
- Beef processing:
  - Return of the collusion of the "Beef Trust" (137)
  - Price fixing scandals
    - Archer Daniels Midland (ADM):
    - "Our competitors are our friends, and our customers are our enemies" (143)

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## Eric Schlosser: *Fast Food Nation* Chapter 7: *Cogs in the Great Machine*

- De-unionization of meatpackers
  - companies instead lure vulnerable undocumented workers (152-155, 160-164)
  - 40% wage cuts resulted from union-busting (158)
  - Price-fixing results (159)
- Factory farms:
  - Greeley, Colorado, feedlots produce more manure than the cities of Denver, Boston, Atlanta, and St. Louis – combined (150)
  - Cattle naturally graze on grasses. Instead, feedlots feed cattle grains (esp. corn) and also parts from cattle remains!

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## Eric Schlosser: *Fast Food Nation* Chapter 8: *The Most Dangerous Job*

- High injury rates
- Speed of Production lines dangerously fast
- De-skilling / disassembly line (153) leads to repetitive stress injuries (e.g. trigger finger)
- Most dangerous job in America:
  - Lacerations, tendonitis, and back/shoulder injuries are the most common (173)
  - Late-night cleaning crews: 180 degree Fahrenheit water/chlorine (177)
- Workers pressured not to report injuries
  - Workers often fired when they do report injuries (175)
  - Turnover rates incredibly high / companies don't provide health care for first year
- Companies rarely inspected by federal government (OSHA) (179)
  - Reagan's "voluntary compliance" (179)

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