

Communication & Journalism 313:
EcoCultural Communication: Humans & “The Environment”
Fall 2015
(Section 001, CRN 49780)



Instructor:
Dr. Tema Milstein

Teaching Assistant:
Melissa Parks

Class meeting location & hours:
C & J, Room 121
Wednesdays, 4 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
2 Saturdays, 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Office hours:
Tema (C & J Office 206):
Wednesdays, 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Melissa (C & J Office 158):
Wednesdays, Noon-2 p.m.

Contact info:
Tema: tema@unm.edu,
<http://www.unm.edu/~tema>
Melissa: mparks24@unm.edu

Course content and objectives:

This course explores how culture and communication inform, shape, and shift our relations with “the environment.” We look at human-nature relations as both actively socially constructed and deeply materially experienced, focusing on the global manifestations and reverberations of environmental communication and examining international, regional, and local eco-discourses. The class is particularly interested in cultural discourses that might support more sustainable and restorative human-nature

relations. Critical and creative exploration as well as out-of-the-classroom experiences in the wider community will be central to the learning experience. Together, through readings, discussion, examples, research, and experiential field studies, we will expand our repertoire to begin to understand how:

- 1) cultural and communication processes and contexts inform, construct, and produce human perceptions of and actions toward/within nature;
- 2) ecocultural communication research can be used to deconstruct and critically investigate perceptions and practices of nature.

Required texts: Finish all assigned readings *before* you come to class. Be prepared to discuss, question, and build on the readings. **Each day will begin with a readings quiz.**

- **E-Reserves for C&J 313 (password: lobo313):** All readings are located on the course EReserves page unless otherwise noted in the schedule below.

Course and Teaching Style: The learning focus in this course is on student-driven exploration. While we utilize a wide variety of learning approaches – including interactive lectures, guided freewriting, activities, field studies, and independent projects – this course is essentially interactive and experiential. This sort of learning requires active individual and group participation. Each of you will get out of this class what you put in it. And your experience will be a collective one. To foster learning:

- Prepare yourselves by reading and involving yourselves in the readings.
- Engage in the class and actively participate in discussion, exercises, and outings.

Course Grade Requirements: Reading Quizzes, Participation, Field Study Reflection Papers, Final Project

In an effort to reduce paper use in this class, all assignments will be turned in by their due date on UNM LEARN except when otherwise noted.

1. **Reading Quizzes (*near start of every class, including field study days*):** Quizzes are not surprises in this class. You should expect a quiz near the start of each class and field study that covers your readings for the day, is graded by other students, and serves as your reading review before lecture and discussion. Quizzes may not be made up. To prepare, read carefully, outlining main points and concepts.
2. **Participation (*throughout term*):** You are expected to be an engaged and constructive participant in class. If you are present but not participating, this will count as a zero. In addition to discussion, we will have a variety of in-class and out-of-class exercises. Some of these require you to prepare before class and bring in written work to turn in for participation points, and some involve creating and turning work in during class.
3. **Field Study Reflection Papers (*due posted on UNM LEARN on dates in class schedule*):** General instructions: During our two class field studies, *bring a notebook and take detailed notes of your observations.* The observations and ideas

you write in the notebook will provide grounded specifics (e.g., examples, quotes, and details) to explore in your 3-page typed reflection paper. In your reflection papers, put your observations in conversation with concepts from class readings and meetings to analyze your experiences through the lenses of ecocultural communication concepts. These papers are meant for you to creatively and critically reflect on your field experience as it relates to your own discovery process surrounding course themes. Papers should put your *personal* reflection (your own emotional, sensory, and cognitive observations and interpretations that you take notes on within the field) in interaction with two or more class readings. ***First-person writing voice is vital.*** Choose the readings that best help you interpret, reflect upon, and analyze your field experience.

- a. **IMPORTANT:** See our UNM Learn Assignment links for detailed instructions for the two different individual reflection paper assignments. We will engage in two class field studies, #1 constructed nature and #2 “wild” nature for which you will write reflection papers.
 - b. ***Grading Rubric for Reflection Papers (also posted/used on UNM Learn):***
 - i. Originality – I expect and appreciate creative approaches to these papers;
 - ii. Depth of Critical Thinking – Use evidence to support your claims, develop your ideas in depth and explain the implications of your ideas;
 - iii. Accuracy of Analysis – Use helpful concepts from readings and class meetings accurately and do not repeat what authors or others say. Instead, explicitly cite and engage core class concepts to analyze your own individual experience;
 - iv. Grammar/Spelling – As with all your college assignments, edit carefully to show you fully respect your work and to be certain your work, in turn, receives the respect and consideration it deserves;
 - v. Organization of thoughts – Your papers should exhibit a clear flow of thought. A thesis statement and a one-sentence preview of the structure of the ideas in the entry will help here, as will a conclusion.
 - vi. Use of APA citations and reference list.
- 4. Final Project (*due posted on UNM Learn on date in class schedule*):** You can do a group project or an individual project. Either way, you have three choices of project form. This assignment can be in the form of:
- a. A conventional 10-page research paper on a communication, culture, sustainability topic that explicitly utilizes concepts from class (cite at least 5 readings from class, as well as at least 3 additional scholarly sources). Group research papers should be an additional 5 pages per additional person;
 - b. A (3-5 minute) video documentary posted on Youtube or a posted, live, and interactive web site on an ecocommunication, culture, sustainability topic or action that explicitly utilizes concepts from class. You turn in the Youtube or web site link to me on a 1-2 page reflection paper (for group

projects, each participant turns in her/his own reflection paper), which explains why you chose to do what you did, how your choices were informed by the class, and what you think the possible beneficial ecocultural outcomes are. Include a reference list that lists the class readings you used (minimum 2) to inform your documentary and includes a sentence or two on each that explains how you used them. **Be sure to also post a link to your project on the Ecocultural Communication Facebook page.** Please label your video in some way that includes “Tema Milstein’s Ecocultural Communication course” so it can be searchable by future students;

- c. An ecoculture jam that explicitly utilizes concepts from class. You design, enact, record, and post this ecoculture jam on Youtube (and via a link on the Ecocultural Communication Facebook page), and turn-in the Youtube link to me on a 1-2 page reflection paper (for group projects, each participant turns in her/his own reflection paper), which explains why you chose to do what you did, how your choices were informed by the class, what the experience was like (including how it felt, what responses were, what worked well, what you might do differently, and what you think the possible beneficial ecocultural outcomes were). Include a reference list that lists the class readings you used (minimum 2) to inform your jam and includes a sentence or two on each that explains how you used them. Be sure to also **post a link to your project on the Ecocultural Communication Facebook page.** Please label your video in some way that includes “Tema Milstein’s Ecocultural Communication course” so it can be searchable by future students.

Collaboration: You have the option of collaborating on your final project with other students. If you do so, please include a paragraph at the end of your paper that describes the collaborative process in terms of share of work, effort, etc., among project team members.

The grading rubric for final projects is as follows: The best projects will reflect or extend the themes of the class in new venues. Special attention will be paid to the depth of your engagement with the project and how you use your medium to communicate your points.

1. Effort (a reasonable amount of time and energy that is clearly apparent in quality of final project)
2. Responsiveness to feedback (open to and incorporated constructive feedback to help improve project)
3. Innovation/creativity (sheds new light, unique approach)
4. Quality of research (research was appropriate for goals of project and was well used to reach the goals)
5. Presentation (level of clarity and engagement of audience is high)
6. Completeness (project fulfills the goals of your assignment listed above and your individual goals, key points are clearly communicated)
7. Quality of writing and creative product (sophisticated level of product appearance, grammar/spelling)

8. Use of APA citations and reference list.

For some examples of final projects, see UNM Learn Assignments Final Project instructions: These are ideas that are not fully developed. I provide them merely as a jumpstart to get your creative juices flowing. Try not to feel limited by these examples; instead, they are intended to give an idea of the breadth of possibility. No one has a better idea of what you want to do than you – and I look forward to talking to you about your ideas! I encourage you to pursue projects you find compelling and to pursue a creative process you think will best engage your passions and the themes you find most interesting in this course.

Extra Credit Opportunity Life Change Experience and Reflection Paper: If you would like to attempt to earn extra credit, you can do a Life Change Experience and Reflection Paper, in which you make a change in your life toward more sustainable/restorative/regenerative human-nature relations for at least 5 weeks: For instance, you could 1) become a freegan, 2) become a vegetarian or vegan, 3) reuse, or compost all of your waste, 4) travel only in non-motorized ways (or try something else!). During your experience, take detailed notes about both the cultural and personal challenges you faced in making this change. Reflect on your own ecocultural perceptions, communication, and practices during this experience – do they change, stay the same, become reinforced? In your paper, reflect on these issues as well as the interactions you had with those people around you who witnessed your experience. Reflect on how your experience might shape your future understandings and practices of human-nature relations. Finally, offer ideas, informed by your experience and reflection, on ways such changes could be communicated as more inviting for others to make at cultural and individual scales. For this field study, in addition to the two or more relevant class readings, include an annotated bibliography (annotated bibliography means a reference list that has a short paragraph in your own words after each reference that describes what that article is about and why it was relevant to your project) of 5 non-class articles you find that deal with the change you chose to make. For example, if you chose to go vegetarian, you would include articles that deal with food production, meat and climate impact, health, etc.

- d. This assignment follows the general instructions and rubric of the field study reflection papers.
- e. Earning a B or better on this assignment will bump up your grade by a significant fraction e.g., from B+ to A-, C- to C, etc.

Grading:

Your quizzes, participation, and final project will be given the following weight in calculation of final grades:

10 Reading Quizzes:	250 points (25% of final grade)
Participation:	200 points (20% of final grade)
2 Field Study Reflection Papers:	250 points (25% of final grade)
Final project:	300 points (30% of final grade)

Total:

1,000 points (100%)

Your final grade is on a strict percentage basis based on your points earned:

900-1,000 Excellent	97-100% = A+
	93-96.9% = A
	90-92.9% = A-
800-899 Good	87-89.9% = B+
	83-86.9% = B
	80-82.9% = B-
700-799 Competent	77-79.9% = C+
	73-76.9% = C
	70-72.9% = C-
600-699 Below Average	67-69.9% = D+
	63-66.9% = D
	60-62.9% = D-
0-599 Failing	BELOW 60% = F

A = Work meets all requirements of the assignment and shows a superior understanding of the material. Excellent work is creative in presentation, and in the application and evaluation of concepts. A assignments are precise, well thought-out, well organized, and have no stylistic errors.

B = Work meets all requirements of the assignment and shows a valid understanding of the material. Good work exceeds assignment content expectations and has no to few stylistic errors. B assignments are clear in presentation and in the application and evaluation of concepts. B assignments are accurate and thought-out.

C = Work simply meets the requirements of the assignment. Average work meets the minimum assignment content expectations and has some stylistic errors. C assignments show an understanding of the material, and in general how to apply and evaluate it. Demonstrates basic competency in organization, spelling, grammar, and structure is simply meeting the average expectations of a college student.

D = Work does not meet the minimum assignment expectations for content and has several stylistic errors. Below average work misses portions of requirements and shows the student has failed to grasp or utilize concepts. D assignments do not show competency in basic fundamentals expected of college students.

F = Work does not reflect the content expectations and is plagued by numerous stylistic errors. Poor work indicates a student has no grasp of the material or does not care.

TIPS FOR SUCCEEDING IN CLASS & POLICIES:

- 1. Come to class prepared and sit up front** – *Read the assigned readings BEFORE you come to class.* This helps ensure you can participate and get the most out of lecture and discussion. *You'll feel more involved in class*

and retain more when you sit near the front, so don't be shy.

- 2. Remember you have many resources to help you learn and do well:** I am here to discuss class content and ideas with you in class (and during office hours to give you the chance to enrich your learning experience). In addition, to help you improve the grammatical and stylistic quality of your written assignments, your source for *free* writing tutoring support is UNM's Center for Academic Support (CAPS, www.unm.edu/caps), which is based in Zimmerman Library. You can work with a tutor in CAPS to help improve the quality of your writing for this class and, in the process, your overall writing ability. CAPS also provides a free online virtual tutoring lab: <http://caps.unm.edu/online/vtl>, as well as Smarthinking, <http://caps.unm.edu/online/smarthinking>, a 24-7 online tutoring and academic support service that allows you to submit your writing and receive the tutor's comments usually within 24 hours. I highly recommend taking advantage of these resources for your written assignments.
- 3. Ethics: Students found plagiarizing will receive a failing grade for the class, and the case will be reported to the University.** The course emphasizes ethical practices and perspectives. Above all, both students and the teaching team should strive to communicate and act, both in class interactions and in assigned coursework, in a manner directed by personal integrity, honesty, and respect for self and others. Included in this focus is the need for academic honesty by students as stated by the UNM Pathfinder. Students need to do original work and properly cite sources. Directly copying more than 3 or 4 words from another author without quoting (not just citing) the author is plagiarism. Further, course content will encourage the ethical practices and analysis of communication. If you commit plagiarism or engage in academic dishonesty of any kind, you will receive an "F" for the course and be reported to the Dean of Students where further disciplinary action may be taken (Please see UNM's *Pathfinder Handbook* for more details on the university's Academic Dishonesty policy).
- 4. Late work & absences:** Late work will not be accepted. Turn in your work in a timely manner by due date and time. In addition, you will *not* have a chance to rewrite your work after it has been turned in. However, you are encouraged to meet with the professor in advance to discuss and ask questions about your assignments in progress. If you know you have a UNM-excused absence coming up, you must turn in your assignments in advance or by due date and time. Any excused absence must be documented, and you must get this documentation to the professor if you want to receive credit for your work. Late work, again, will not be accepted.
- 5. Professional work quality:** Work turned in should be polished. Unless otherwise noted, all written assignments turned in for a grade must be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, stapled, and must conform to

standard rules of English grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Assignments that seriously depart from these rules (due to sloppiness and not deliberate and careful creative effort) or the required format described in the assignment will be returned un-graded and counted as a zero/F. APA style is required for all of your citations and reference list. **For guides on how to use APA style, see <http://www.stylewizard.com/apa/apawiz.html> and <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/16/>.**

6. **Email etiquette & responsibility:** A good rule to follow when addressing all people via email in a professional context is to use a greeting and that person's name or title to open your email message. Since you are not texting a buddy, it is respectful to begin one's email with "Hi, Tema" or "Dear Dr. Milstein," before going into your message itself. If you feel more comfortable addressing people by title, note that professors are not addressed as Ms. or Mr., but as Professor so-and-so or Dr. so-and-so. Check your UNM email account regularly, as I use this account to keep in touch with you about course requirements or updates. If you use another email address, please set up your UNM account to forward your UNM account email to that address.
7. **In-class technology:** Be respectful of each other's learning by turning off cell phones and not using the internet, texting, or listening to music while in class or meetings with your professor. I will ask you to leave if you are engaging in such activities as they disrupt learning.
8. **Grade appeals:** I have a 24-7 policy, which means you must wait 24 hours after receiving a grade and appeal within 7 days. I will not discuss grades on the day a grade for an assignment is returned. If you receive a grade you feel is unfair, please provide me a **written response** either via email or on paper, no later than 7 days after the grade has been assigned (note: not the day you receive your grade), explaining how you feel the grade you received did not reflect your fulfillment of the assignment. I will then assess your written response and reassess your graded assignment.
9. **Diversity:** This course encourages different perspectives related to such factors including gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and other relevant cultural identities. The course seeks to foster understanding and inclusiveness related to such diverse perspectives and ways of communicating.
10. **ADA accessibility:** Qualified students with disabilities needing appropriate academic adjustments should contact Accessibility Services (277-3506) and inform the professor as soon as possible to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Aug. 19 - Introduction to class and each other

Week 2: Aug. 26 - Ecoculture and Communication

2 Readings:

Cox, R. (2012). Introduction & Chapter 1: Studying environmental communication. In *Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere* (pp. 1-37). Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage.

Cronon, W. (1996). Forward to the paperback edition. In W. Cronon (Ed.), *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature* (pp. 19-22). New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

*LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM AN 8-WEEK COURSE WITH 100% REFUND:
AUG. 28*

Week 3: Sept. 2 - Ecocultural Theories and Ideologies

2 Readings:

Corbett, J. B. (2006). Chapter 2: A spectrum of environmental ideologies. In *Communicating Nature: How We Create and Understand Environmental Messages* (pp. 26-56). Washington, DC: Island Press.

This second reading is not on EReserves. Access it online here:
<https://unm.academia.edu/TemaMilstein>

Milstein, T. (2009). Environmental communication theories. In S. Littlejohn & K. Foss (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory* (pp. 344-349). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Week 4: Sept. 9 – Culture, Childhood, and Ecological Interaction

2 Readings:

Pyle, RM (2002). Eden in a vacant lot: Special places, species, and kids in the neighborhood of life. In PH Kahn, Jr. & SR Kellert (Eds.), *Children and nature: Psychological, sociocultural, and evolutionary investigations* (pp. 305-327). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Chawla, L. (2002). Spots of Time: Manifold Ways of Being in Nature in Childhood. In P. H. Kahn, Jr. & S. Kellert (Eds.), *Children and Nature: Psychological, Sociocultural, and Evolutionary Investigations* (pp. 199-226). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press

Due today by 3 p.m.: Participation Childhood and Nature paper on UNM Learn under “Assignments”

Sept. 12

FIELD STUDY DAY #1 – Constructed Nature & Power

Downtown Growers Market & Rio Grande Biopark

3 Readings:

Glenn, C. B. (2004). Constructing Consumables and Consent: A Critical Analysis of Factory Farm Industry Discourse. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 28(1), 63-81.

Plumwood, V. (1997). Androcentrism and anthropocentrism: Parallels and politics. In K. J. Warren (Ed.), *Ecofeminism: Women, Culture, Nature* (pp. 327-355). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

This third reading is not on EReserves. Access it online here:
<https://unm.academia.edu/TemaMilstein>

Milstein, T. (2009). ‘Somethin’ tells me it’s all happening at the zoo:’ Discourse, power, and conservationism. *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture*, 3(1), 24-48.

Week 5: Sept. 16 - Ecocultural Case Studies

1 Reading:

Okanagan in Western colonizing culture case study:

Armstrong, J. (1995). Keepers of the Earth. In T. Roszak, M. E. Gomes & A. D. Kanner (Eds.), *Ecopsychology: Restoring the Earth, Healing the Mind* (pp. 316-324). San Francisco: Sierra Club Books.

Young American in New Zealand case study: In class, we will watch *The Graceful Descent* – and have a Q&A session with moviemaker Katie Young.

Fieldstudy Reflection Paper #1 Due today by 3 p.m. turned in on UNM Learn

Week 6: Sept. 23 – Popculture, Media, and Nature

2 Readings:

Sturgeon, N. (2009). Introduction & Chapter 1: The politics of the natural. *Environmentalism in Popular Culture: Gender, Race, Sexuality, and the Politics of the Natural* (pp. 3-49). Tucson: The University of Arizona Press.

Stibbe, A. (2012). Advertising awareness: The ability to expose advertising discourses that undermine sustainability, and resist them. In P. Villiers-Stuart & A. Stibbe (Eds.), *The Handbook of Sustainability Literacy: multimedia version* (pp. 1-4). Brighton Faculty of Arts: Sustainability Network.

Sept. 26

FIELD STUDY DAY #2 – Wild & Hearing Nature Speak

Lecture and activity, “When I Say Nature” performance, Wild solo experience

3 Readings:

Pollan, M. (2001). *The botany of desire: A plant's-eye view of the world*. New York: Random House. Pp. xiii-xxv.

Brown, T., & Morgan, B. (1983). *Tom Brown's field guide to nature observation and tracking*. (pp. 17-87). New York: Berkley Books. *

- *Note: The Brown & Morgan reading is especially assigned to provide preparation and framework for your “wild” nature #2 fieldstudy. Brown has become a controversial figure for good reason (see <http://www.trackertrail.com/tombrown/controversies/>). Still, I have not yet found a better primer on wild awareness. If you know of one, please share!*

Evans, M. M. (2002). "Nature" and environmental justice. In J. Adamson, M. M. Evans & R. Stein (Eds.), *The Environmental Justice Reader: Politics, Poetics, and Pedagogy* (pp. 181-193). Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

LAST DAY TO DROP 8-WEEK COURSE WITHOUT DEAN'S PERMISSION: SEPT. 25

Week 7: Sept. 30 – EcoCulture Jamming

1 Reading:

Sandlin, J. A., & Milam, J. L. (2008). Mixing pop (culture) and politics: Cultural resistance, culture jamming, and anti-consumption activism as critical public pedagogy. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 38(3), 323-350.

Fieldstudy Reflection Paper #2 Due today by 3 p.m. turned in on UNM Learn

LAST WEEK

Week 8: Oct. 7 - Culture and Communicating Eco-Transformation

&

Final Project Presentations - Present projects in class today

3 Readings:

Dilling, L., & Moser, S. C. (2007). Introduction. In S. C. Moser & L. Dilling (Eds.), *Creating a Climate for Change: Communicating Climate Change and Facilitating Social Change* (pp. 1-27). Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo: Cambridge University Press.

Corbett, J. B. (2006). Chapter 10: Communication and social change. In *Communicating Nature: How We Create and Understand Environmental Messages* (pp. 280-311). Washington, DC: Island Press.

This third reading is not on EReserves. Access it online here:

<http://www.yaleclimatemediaforum.org/2013/03/millennials-change-and-outlook-for-climate-activism-and-coverage/>

Wihbey, J. (2013). Millennials, change, and outlook for climate activism and coverage. *The Yale Forum on Climate Change & the Media*.

Final Projects due posted on UNM Learn today *no later than noon*.

Optional Extra Credit assignment due by Friday

Thank you for being an interconnected co-creator of our class!