

**What's Wrong with the World? How Do We Fix It?  
Perspectives and Solutions from the Environmental Humanities and Social  
Sciences<sup>1</sup>**

**INT 133B: The Social Sciences**

**Summer Session B 2017**

**Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays: 12:30-3:20 p.m.**

**Phelps 1160**

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Office Hours: John's office hours will be held at the Coral Tree Cafe (near Cheadle Hall) on Tuesdays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. and in his office (SSMS 3417) on Wednesdays from 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., and by appointment (I'll also do lots of e-mail consultation)

*Feel free to discuss your work with John at class, by e-mail, or in office hours.*

Zack King, Teaching Assistant

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Office hours: Tuesdays 10am to 12pm

If you care about children, health, poverty, farmers, food, hunger, or the economy, you really have no choice but to care about climate change. The reasons for acting may be somber, but the fight is a gift and an honor. What it will give you in return is meaning, purpose, hope, your best self, some really good company, and the satisfaction of being part of victories also to come. But what victory means needs to be imagined on a whole new scale as the news worsens....

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<sup>1</sup> If you have a learning or physical disability and require extended time to complete assignments, please contact John Foran and Ken Hiltner in the first week of the course.

This is, among other things, a war of the imagination: the carbon profiteers and their politicians are hoping you don't connect the dots, or imagine the various futures we could make or they could destroy, or grasp the remarkably beautiful and complex ways the natural world has worked to our benefit and is now being sabotaged, or discover your conscience and voice, or ever picture how different it could all be, how different it will need to be.

They are already at war against the wellbeing of our Earth. Their greed has no limits, their imagination nothing but limits. Fight back. You have the power. It's one of your gifts.

Rebecca Solnit, "[2013 as Year Zero for Us – and Our Planet](#)"

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This 8-unit course will be team taught by Ken Hiltner, Professor of English and Director of the [Environmental Humanities Center](#), and John Foran, Professor of Sociology and co-founder of the [Climate Justice Project](#). *What you are reading right now is John Foran's half of the course.*

In this course, we will investigate the future, asking what might the world look like in the year 2050? What will be the state of climate change? What will schools, cities, agriculture, jobs, nations, energy sources, technology, political systems, international relations, the global and local economy, and much more look like? How will people make sense and meaning of their world? What future worlds can we foresee from where we are now, ranging widely and wildly from the awful to the utopian? How will we get to the better worlds we hope to be living in?

Starting with the current political, economic, cultural, and climate crises of Earth and humanity, we consider alternatives to the present system – sustainable development, *buen vivir*, transition towns, resilience, and ecosocialism among them – and our roles in building what could possibly turn out to be a far better world by 2050. We will also consider the ways that climate change is being fiercely debated on the public stage through a careful look at the rhetoric of these debates.

This course will involve immersive, project-based work, with role playing, creative productions, group projects, field trips, and more. This is not a multiple

choice, mid-term and final class! Essential to these two courses that are one will be a collaborative model of discovering, curating, and analyzing material.

### **Statement of Purpose and Course Description – PLEASE READ THIS**

Why is this class important? Because it's your (our) future we'll be trying to figure out!

Visionary climate justice scholar-activist Naomi Klein has said: "There is no more potent weapon in the battle against fossil fuels than the creation of real alternatives." For sociologist Constance Lever-Tracy: "We must ultimately aim for a thorough going de-carbonisation, a halt to all emissions, by a complete revolution in the way we produce and live."

This special course starts with the current crisis of the Earth and humanity, marked by economic insecurity, a lack of faith in political parties, pervasive cultures of violence, and now, the wild card that makes them all much scarier – climate change.

But this course is about hope, imagination, and the roles all of us could play in building a far better world in our lifetimes.

This means we will need to *take action* to deal with the most pressing problem of the 21st century, the problem of climate change. Importantly, this means moving the world toward the most progressive possible global climate and development goals, contributing to the strongest possible global social justice movement participation, and through both of these channels helping to bring about the creation of a low-carbon, sustainable, equitable, and deeply democratic future. A simple working definition of sustainable development might be "a just and ecologically-based society"; the 1987 [Brundtland Report](#) – also known as *Our Common Future* – has given the most famous definition: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

*I believe that if we are to pass on a world worth living in to the next generation (that's you!), this movement against the crises besetting us and for climate justice – in the broadest sense of the term – must become the biggest (and most effective) the world has ever seen.*

A growing international scientific consensus has emerged that there is now

only a 50 percent chance that the official United Nations target of limiting the rise in average temperature to 2 degrees Celsius by the year 2050 would effectively avert irreversible climate change (and recent reports indicate that there is just a five percent chance of actually staying below two degrees).

In 2012, climate activist and scholar Bill McKibben estimated the cap for maximum atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> [carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas responsible for global warming] emissions at 565 gigatons as the upper limit for staying at or below a 2 degrees Celsius temperature rise. With annual global emissions currently running around 30 gigatons a year, this cap was then roughly equal to a fourteen-year supply – till about 2026 – if “business as usual” trends of economic production and growth continue. The terrifying part is that the estimate of the world’s already proven reserves of fossil fuels exceeds McKibben’s cap by five times. In other words, the richest corporations in the history of the world would have to forego four-fifths of their future earnings – by some estimates, an astronomical \$20 trillion. But instead, they are currently spending over \$600 billion a year trying to discover *new* sources of fossil fuels – fracking, tar sands, deep-water drilling, Arctic oil, mountain-top removal – while each year the amount we can afford to burn decreases.

Unfortunately, meanwhile, the recently agreed international climate treaty – the December 2015 “Paris Agreement” – is not nearly adequate for the task, since if every one of its *non-binding* country pledges are met, we are still headed for around three degrees of warming. The dominant parties to the climate negotiations continue to advance positions completely at odds with climate science, thus ignoring the terrible fact that humanity is on a collision course with nature that we cannot win.

The good news is that since at least 2007, a promising global climate justice movement has emerged behind the slogan “System change, not climate change!” and is making demands for a socially just, scientifically informed, and legally binding treaty. Governments who do not want to vote for it, or whose short-term interests and economic elites are not served by signing, will need to be persuaded or *forced* to do the right thing by their own citizens and Earth citizens everywhere – that is, *by us*. One major question addressed in this course has been posed by my friend Bill Barnes: “Can we create new, transformative narratives to inspire political movements able to force vigorous engagement with climate change?” This emphasis on finding new narratives puts us firmly in the domain of the environmental humanities and qualitative social sciences, the perspectives that inform this course. And it is an invitation to *you* – to *all* of us – to put our growing knowledge and imaginations to good purpose!

The main focus of this course is to focus our sociological and ecological imaginations on creating the kind of society that might weather the climate maelstrom that is coming and actually come out on the other side (or more realistically in the midst of it as it deepens) with societies far more suited to human well-being and thriving than the ones we presently have all around the world.

Along the way we will encounter such ideas as sustainable development, transition towns, resilience, ecosocialism, *buen vivir*, and a slew of other alternatives to the present system, and we will read some of the best writing on these and other topics by their inventors, critics, activists, academics, and others, including the genres of the essay and blog post, fiction, and film, with a startlingly innovative collective project that you will work on throughout the term!

*This course is about gaining useful knowledge that will enable positive action to secure a better future. This course is for you, about you, and ultimately will be driven by you.*

## **My Philosophy of Teaching and Learning**

I consider teaching a radical, loving act of the imagination ... and we will need lots of imagination to achieve the purposes laid out above!

Learning and teaching are complex, endlessly fascinating collaborations. I learn enormous amounts from the students in my classes, whom I consider companions on an intellectual, potentially life-changing journey. My goals for my classes and myself include honing our critical thinking skills, improving on the ways we write for each other and speak with each other in class, acquiring the ability to work collaboratively, learning the art of applying theoretical concepts to actual historical, contemporary, and *future* situations, and making connections between what we study and how we live.

In the course of more than two decades of university teaching I have come to value interaction, participation, and exchange – *discussion in its many forms* – as the best way to teach and learn. So we will teach and learn from each other.

We will do this through a variety of learning approaches, including discussions of many kinds, student-led presentations, improvised mini-lectures, films, interaction with guests, role playing, making short videos, and ... *did I mention discussions?*

This quarter, Ken Hiltner, Zack King, Baron Haber, and I will ask each of you to do *a lot* of reading, thinking, discussing, and writing; my pledge is that engagement with these materials should prove a rewarding – and, who knows? – possibly a life-changing experience.

## **Texts**

There will be quite a bit of reading in this course (which has to contain the full ten weeks' worth of material for a full quarter 4-unit course). My goal is to keep the core reading down to around 150 pages a week – sometimes more and sometimes less – plus the two novels, which hopefully you will find engaging, if not quick reads. This includes some exciting and inspiring materials you can't find elsewhere – or your money back! [No one's ever asked by the way ;)]

There is only one book you must buy for this course, and you should have it by the end of week one:

Danny Chivers. *The No-Nonsense Guide to Climate Change*. Oxford: New Internationalist. 2010. Get it at the UCSB Bookstore or order it at Amazon, right away (it ships in two days, and costs \$13.33)

*All other course readings* – including three books – are posted on our GauchoSpace for the class. What you might spend money on is printing out key texts, which I encourage you to do. Let me know if you have any problems accessing the readings.

## **Using GauchoSpace and Your UCSB E-mail**

This summer we will make *extensive* use of UCSB's on-line course website at Gaucho Space. You will all have access to the materials we post there – it is, in effect, the course reader. Please *check it out well before every class*, as it contains all the items that would normally have gone into a course reader. It is also the place where you will hand in all your work electronically. *In addition*, please check your UCSB e-mail on a regular basis for important announcements, valuable tips, and special treats.

## **Following the News: Tracking Current Events in Global and International Climate and Environmental Issues**

This class is about current events around the world. Because of this, it is valuable to tap into the news, wherever you find it. Excellent resources, among many others, are:

*The New York Times* (the paper of record in the U.S.): <http://www.nytimes.com/>

*BBC News* (England and U.K.'s TV/radio/webnews of choice):

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/>

*The Guardian* (England and U.K.'s best critical newspaper):

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/>

*Grist* (“a source of intelligent, irreverent environmental news and commentary that’s been around since 1999, when the internet was made of rubber bands”): <http://grist.org/>

*Resilience* (website of the Post-Carbon Institute, which features longer than news analysis essays on topics of sustainable development, social movements, and the current crisis): [www.resilience.org](http://www.resilience.org)

*EcoWatch* (“a leading news website reporting on environmental issues and news that helps transform the ability of individuals to learn about them and take action”): <http://ecowatch.com/>

*The Real News Network* (“daily television news that reports with ordinary people’s interests in mind. The Real News is ... the missing link in the global media landscape”), at <http://therealnews.com/t2/about-us/mission>

*Democracy Now!* with Amy Goodman, perhaps the best source of critical global political journalism in the U.S., broadcast daily on KCSB 91.9 FM and on KPFK 98.7 FM, along with much other excellent political reporting, with transcripts archived (you can receive a daily summary by e-mail), at <http://www.democracynow.org/>

National Public Radio, another excellent radio station, is at <http://www.npr.org/> and can be listened to at: KCLU 1340 AM or KSBX 89.5 FM

### **Some Important Messages from UCSB Student Services**

(1) *Disabled Students Program: accommodations for exams.* Students with disabilities may request academic accommodations for exams online through the UCSB **Disabled Students Program** at <http://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu/>. Please make your

requests for exam accommodations through the online system as early in the quarter as possible to ensure **proper** arrangement.

(2) *Managing stress / Supporting distressed students.* Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationships, depression, cultural differences, can interfere with your ability to succeed and thrive. For helpful resources, please contact **UCSB Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)** at [805-893-4411](tel:805-893-4411) or visit <http://counseling.sa.ucsb.edu/>

(3) *Responsible scholarship.* Honesty and integrity in all academic work is essential for a valuable educational experience. **The Office of Judicial Affairs** has policies, tips, and resources for proper citation use, recognizing actions considered to be cheating or other forms of academic theft, and students' responsibilities, available on their website: <http://judicialaffairs.sa.ucsb.edu>. Students are responsible for educating themselves on the policies and to abide by them.

(4) *Academic support.* For general **academic support** visit **Campus Learning Assistance Services (CLAS)** early and often. CLAS offers instructional groups, drop-in tutoring, writing and ESL services, skills workshops and one-on-one consultations. CLAS is located on the third floor of the Student Resource Building, or visit <http://clas.sa.ucsb.edu>

**Five Rules for Best Participation [this section was written by Zack King, UCSB scholar-activist and your TA for this course, for one of his classes]**

**1. Think critically and work hard.** We're confronting dire problems faced by humanity. Your critical thinking needs to be turned on – ask questions, be curious, do outside research, question all authority.

**2. Don't just do the reading. Engage with it.** Read it, question it, think about it, write on it, talk to your friends and family about it, take it out to dinner, dream about it, whatever you need to do. It's an important part of these six weeks and it matters.

**3. We're a community.** Be as polite, open-minded, friendly and understanding as you can be. Don't do anyone's work for them, but do help them figure out how to do it themselves. Try to make some friends.



**4. Everybody talks and everybody listens.** One of the most important skills you'll learn in college is engaging, out loud, with other people whom you may not know, on the most important issues we as a species face. You need to learn these skills to change the world. There's something in activist circles called "step up, step back." The step back part means, if you've had the chance to speak a great deal, you make an effort to drop back, listen, and encourage others to speak. Step up means, if you're having trouble engaging, you push yourself to speak up and engage.

**5. If we're going to make the most of our time together, you'll need to be actively engaged in class.** This means that I'd like you to sit toward the front if there is any room. It also means you need to be taking care of yourself - get enough sleep, get enough to eat and drink. Stay healthy. If you're gonna fall asleep, you're better off staying home and catching up later."

[John: it's actually ok to sleep in class if you have to, and I would advise you never to skip class to finish a paper – it's better to finish it after attending class that day.]

## Course Requirements

**Policy on Plagiarism** (we agree with the following quote from the syllabus of Dr. LeeAnn G. Kryder, for Writing 109AC). "Plagiarism is stealing. It is the copying of a part, or the whole, of another person's work while promoting the text as if you created it. Avoid plagiarism by acknowledging the author or source of that idea or text. Plagiarism may jeopardize a student's entire career." If we detect plagiarism on any assignment (be aware that internet plagiarism is among the easiest to detect), neither you nor we will be happy because you will receive an F for the assignment, and quite possibly for the course, as well as face potential disciplinary action from the University.

**Now for the fun stuff!** Everyone is expected to attend **all** class meetings and to prepare reading assignments in order to participate *fully* in discussions – we *know* that speaking in class is difficult for some – perhaps many – students, and we will work together to ease the burden of this. For help, see "On talking in class" on our Gauchospace. Participants will be asked for on many occasions to volunteer to facilitate the discussion in various ways, which we will work out together in class. We will conduct the class in a discussion-based way much of the time, so *you must be prepared to participate at every meeting*. Have we mentioned this already?

### ***Attendance and Participation***

*Attendance at all meetings is indispensable for making this course a success for all of us.* Participation will be measured by attendance and participation in class, volunteering to present on one or more of the assigned readings, contributing to class projects, and all-around engagement with the course materials and activities. You may ask for the occasional excused absence but we will have to see the reason for it within 24 hours of the missed class, if not in advance, in order to honor your request. ***It is always greatly to your advantage to attend class.*** *Note on participation grades: you will get one of three grades for your participation: v-, v, or v+. The first will lower your grade by a half step, the last will raise it by the same amount, the middle will have no impact on your grade.*

### ***Making a Class Presentation***

In some of our sessions, a class member, or sometimes two or more students working in pairs will make a 2-5 minute (and sometimes longer) presentation on one of the readings. See “How to Make a Great Presentation” on our GauchoSpace.

### ***The Written Assignments: One hundred percent of your grade***

**Please note:** The format guidelines for all papers in this course are 1” margins all around, 12 point size, and double spacing (not 1.5 lines). You will upload papers as Word or pdf documents onto our class GauchoSpace AND hand in a double-sided hard copy to Zack. Hard copies are due at the beginning of lecture on the first class day following each paper deadline. No hard copy is needed for the final paper.

*Two book reviews. Twenty percent of your grade (ten percent each)*

You will be asked to write short reviews of two of the three books assigned for this class. *Do not* use your space to summarize the book. Instead, develop an argument or discuss an issue from your reading of the book. Be sure to state the reasons for your views, and back them up with evidence, quotations, and reference to specific page numbers. *If you plagiarize a book or film review, you will receive an “F” for the course.*

These are your options: pick two of the following.

- A two-page essay on Danny Chivers, *The No-Nonsense Guide to Climate Change*, to be posted on GauchoSpace by midnight on Monday, August 21.
- A two-page essay on Jonathon Porritt's *The World We Made*, to be posted on GauchoSpace by midnight on Monday, August 28.
- A two-page essay on Paul Raskin's *Journey to Earthland*, to be posted on GauchoSpace by midnight on Tuesday, September 5.

*Two film reviews. Twenty percent of your grade (ten percent each)*

You will be asked to write two two-page double-spaced essays on any two of the movies shown in this course. *Do not* use your space to summarize what the film is about. Instead, develop an argument or discuss an issue from your consideration of the film. This assignment must be completed and posted on GauchoSpace by midnight on Thursday, August 17 for *Demain*; by midnight on Thursday, September 7 for *What the Health*; or by midnight on Thursday, September 14, for *Where to Invade Next?*

*Role Play: Ten percent of your grade*

After we do Zack King's role play on Monday, August 21, you will write a two-page analysis of your experience: What did you think of it? What did you learn? How did it make you feel? What did you like? What improvement would you suggest? Your write-up will be due by midnight on Friday, August 25.

*Isla Vista Project. Ten percent of your grade*

We will have an I.V. class project, which will be introduced and coordinated by UCSB scholar-activist and Eco Vista project co-founder Jessica Alvarez on Tuesday, August 8. As she will explain, there are two options for this assignment: 1) a hands-on half-day experience working on an Isla Vista community project (either the new bike shop or the community gardens), and then writing a two-page essay about your experience, or 2) a comparative 2-3 page study of the materials on any three of the nineteen IV projects started by UCSB students in spring 2017, offering a description of how the three projects could be analyzed from a systems point of view;<sup>2</sup> assessing which ones have the most potential and why; and

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<sup>2</sup> For example: How can community gardens (food production/social-cultural space) be linked to the bike shop (transportation & recycling), and waste

including a social media/website plan for one of them. Your write-ups will be due by midnight on Monday, September 11.

*Final paper. Twenty percent of your grade*

You will be asked to write a four-page double-spaced essay due on GauchoSpace by 12 noon on Monday, September 18. This exciting final assignment will be the place where you get to reflect deeply on what you have learned about our topic this quarter. A few of the possible questions can be found at the end of the syllabus – you might even be able to make up your own!

*Group project. Twenty percent of your grade*

*OK, here's the creative part of the class process, in more ways than one.* We have come up with a very special idea for the group projects, which will be introduced in the first week of the class. Groups will be formed by the end of week two, and group presentations are scheduled for the last week of class. It will be a blast! Here is the basic idea: Form a five-person group and either make a video of about ten minutes or put on a play/skit/performance in class of about ten minutes. Topics can be chosen by you as long as they are relevant to the themes of the class. The first three days of the last week of class will be largely devoted to these presentations.

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Thus, to some degree, you can choose the topics and schedule your own work this term and focus on the issues that *you* find most interesting. *Your job is to manage these assignments; you are advised to do all of them as best you can rather than to miss any*, which will affect your grade more than doing a poor job on one or two of them.

With this comes the responsibility for careful planning and organization of your assignments, needless to say. We may certainly devote some time in class to discussing these assignments and how to prepare for them, if you wish.

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management/composting in a way that makes these projects more successful than if they were to be attempted in isolation?

What we are looking for are creative and practical solutions that provide opportunities for community employment (economics), and solidifying a culture of sustainability and social justice within Isla Vista.

## Course Topics and Reading Assignments

### Week One: The Name of the Crisis is Climate Change

“There is no more potent weapon in the battle against fossil fuels than the creation of real alternatives.”

Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*

### PLEASE READ THESE TWO PIECES BEFORE OUR FIRST CLASS MEETING:

Oliver Burkeman, “Is the world really better than ever?” (July 28, 2017),  
<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/jul/28/is-the-world-really-better-than-ever-the-new-optimists>

Joe Brewer, “Do You Still Feel Capitalism Dying?” (July 28, 2017),  
<http://www.resilience.org/stories/2017-07-28/do-you-still-feel-capitalism-dying/>

### Monday, August 7: Welcome, introduction, first discussions

After an introduction to the course and to each other we will start a discussion of the world situation today, and begin to identify some of the questions we may want to ask this quarter.

*Readings:* See above for two readings to do *before* class!

### Tuesday, August 8: The triple crisis, and just how do *you* feel about living at the dawn of the Anthropocene?

A look at the nature of the intersecting crises humanity faces, and an examination of our feelings about living at this crucial moment in history, through a reading of David Wallace-Wells and his critics.

Video: John Foran, *The Global Climate Justice Movement Must Gear Up for Taking Political Power*, <http://ehc.english.ucsb.edu/?p=17122#comment-1028>

*Reading and website on Isla Vista:*

Website: <https://medium.com/human-parts/isla-vista-history-and-hope-1deb3b3bdf7b>

George Thurlow, “Isla Vista: So Close to UCSB, So Far from Good” (Winter 2014),  
[http://www.ucsbalum.com/Coastlines/2014/Winter/feature\\_ivhistory.html](http://www.ucsbalum.com/Coastlines/2014/Winter/feature_ivhistory.html)

*Readings:*

David Wallace-Wells, “The Uninhabitable Earth” (July 9, 2017),  
<http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2017/07/climate-change-earth-too-hot-for-humans.html>

Michael E. Mann, Susan Joy Hassol and Tom Toles, “Doomsday scenarios are as harmful as climate change denial” (July 12, 2017),  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/doomsday-scenarios-are-as-harmful-as-climate-change-denial/2017/07/12/880ed002-6714-11e7-a1d7-9a32c91c6f40\\_story.html?hpid=hp\\_no-name\\_opinion-card-e%3Ahomepage%2Fstory&utm\\_term=.b88e12d4b3b9](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/doomsday-scenarios-are-as-harmful-as-climate-change-denial/2017/07/12/880ed002-6714-11e7-a1d7-9a32c91c6f40_story.html?hpid=hp_no-name_opinion-card-e%3Ahomepage%2Fstory&utm_term=.b88e12d4b3b9)

Joe Romm, “We aren’t Doomed by Climate Change. Right Now we are Choosing to be Doomed” (July 12, 2017),  
<http://www.resilience.org/stories/2017-07-12/we-arent-doomed-by-climate-change-right-now-we-are-choosing-to-be-doomed/>

Nathan Thanki, “Fuck your apocalypse” (July 11, 2017),  
[https://medium.com/@n\\_thanki/fuck-your-apocalypse-c82696b533d9](https://medium.com/@n_thanki/fuck-your-apocalypse-c82696b533d9)

Robert Scribbler, “Facing Down Climate Doom — Wallace-Wells’ Truth in Fiction Warnings Earn Michael Mann’s Necessary Critiques” (July 12, 2017), <https://robertscribbler.com/2017/07/13/facing-down-climate-doom-wallace-wells-truth-in-fiction-warnings-earn-michael-manns-necessary-critiques/>

Gaius Publius, “Telling the Climate Truth” (July 21, 2017),  
[http://www.nakedcapitalism.com/2017/07/telling-climate-truth.html?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+NakedCapitalism+%28naked+capitalism%29](http://www.nakedcapitalism.com/2017/07/telling-climate-truth.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+NakedCapitalism+%28naked+capitalism%29)

Kate Aronoff, “Your Personal Consumption Choices Can’t Save the Planet: We Have to Confront Capitalism” (July 20, 2017),  
<http://inthesetimes.com/article/20337/climate-change-personal-consumption-capitalism-socialism-neoliberalism>

## **Week Two: The Current Situation: Crisis and Opportunity**

“A crisis, says one dictionary, is ‘the point in the progress of a disease when a change takes place which is decisive of recovery or death; also, any marked or sudden change of symptoms, etc.’ This crisis could be the death or the recovery of a more democratic, more inclusive, more generous America. Where we go from here is up to us.”

Rebecca Solnit,

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jun/18/resistance-victories-trump-mounting-final-blow>

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### **Monday, August 14: *No-Nonsense Guide to Climate Change*: Chivers**

Today we will try to wrap our heads around the climate crisis by discussing one of the best short books on the topic, *The No-Nonsense Guide to Climate Change*, by Danny Chivers.

#### *Readings:*

Danny Chivers. *The No-Nonsense Guide to Climate Change* (Oxford: New Internationalist, 2010), *entire book*.

Chris Hedges, “We Can’t Fight Climate Change if We Keep Lying to Ourselves” (June 18, 2017),

[http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/we\\_cant\\_fight\\_climate\\_change\\_if\\_we\\_keep\\_lying\\_to\\_ourselves\\_20170618](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/we_cant_fight_climate_change_if_we_keep_lying_to_ourselves_20170618)

**Tuesday, August 15: *Demain/Tomorrow***

Today we will screen and discuss *Demain/Tomorrow*, a French film from 2016 (Elle Driver, 96 minutes).

Please take at least 10-15 minutes to explore the movie's website, which is rich in content, solutions, and ideas for this class:

<https://www.demain-lefilm.com/en/film>

*Readings:*

Rob Hopkins, "The unstoppable rise of '*Demain*'" (February 5, 2016), <http://www.resilience.org/stories/2016-02-05/the-unstoppable-rise-of-demain>

*Assignment due on Thursday, August 17: Film review essay on Demain – if chosen as one of your two film reviews – is due by midnight.*

**Week Three: Scenarios (some better than others)**

"We need to engage in whatever actions appeal to us. There is no act too small, no act too bold. The history of social change is the history of millions of actions, small and large, coming together at certain points in history and creating a power which governments cannot suppress."

Howard Zinn, "An Occupied Country" (2002), <http://www.progressive.org/oct03/zinn1003.html>

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*Assignment: Chivers book review – if chosen as one of your two book reviews – is due on Monday, August 21 by midnight.*



### **Monday, August 21: Apocalypse Here at UCSB: Zack's Role Play**

Today we will engage in a full session role play of a rather more dire future, led by Zack King.

*Readings:* Zack King will provide us with a text for the role play.

*Please read also:*

Charlotte McGuinn Freeman, "Clothesline at the End of the World" (May 10, 2017), <http://www.resilience.org/stories/2017-05-10/clothesline-at-the-end-of-the-world/>

### **Tuesday, August 22: Would You Want to Live *Here* in 2050?**

Today we will explore the world of Jonathon Porritt's imagination – a soft landing in a better world by 2050.

*Readings:*

Jonathon Porritt, *The World We Made: Alex McKay's Story from 2050* (New York: Phaedon Press, 2013), selected chapters from the pdfs of the book on Gauchospace.

*Assignment:* Role Play essay due by midnight on Friday, August 25.

### **Week Four: Systematic Alternatives**

"In order to carry a positive action we must develop here a positive vision."

Dalai Lama

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*Assignment:* Book review of Porritt – if chosen as one of your two book reviews – is due by midnight on Monday, August 28.

### **Monday, August 28: Paul Raskin, *Journey to Earthland***

Today we will enter the worlds of Paul Raskin’s Earthland, in order to understand how various scenarios about the future may be constructed, and discuss how to navigate toward some and away from others.

*Readings:*

Paul Raskin, *Journey to Earthland*, entire: download the pdf at <http://www.greattransition.org/publication/journey-to-earthland>

Read also some of the 100-plus page “Comments” on this book posted as a single document on Gauchospace.

**Tuesday, August 29: Doughnut Economics, Buen Vivir and the Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth**

Today we’ll consider two alternative models for a better future, including 1) the indigenous concept of *Buen Vivir/Sawmaq Kawsay* (whose meaning is roughly “living better”) – a perspective on the future from the Global South taken together with one of the most radical documents ever written, the “Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth,” and 2) U.K. economist Kate Raworth’s new idea of “doughnut economics,” a perspective from the global North.

Please take at least 10-15 minutes to explore these websites:

The Pachamama Alliance –  
<http://www.pachamama.org/about/mission>

The Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature –  
<http://therightsofnature.org/>

Kate Raworth’s website –  
<https://www.kateraworth.com/doughnut/>

*Readings on Buen vivir (please read the Universal Declaration very closely before coming to class):*

World People’s Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth “Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth,” Cochabamba, Bolivia (April 27, 2010), 1-3,  
<http://climateandcapitalism.com/?p=2268>

Pablo Solón, “Is *Vivir Bien* possible? Candid Thoughts about Systemic Alternatives” (August 2016),  
<http://lifeonleft.blogspot.com/2016/09/vivir-bien-going-beyond-capitalism.html>

*Readings on the doughnut economy:*

Kate Raworth, “Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think like a 21st Century Economist” (April 6, 2017),  
<http://www.resilience.org/stories/2017-04-06/3466105/>

Kate Raworth, “Seven Ways to Transform 21st-Century Economics — and Economists” (May 11, 2017),  
<http://www.defenddemocracy.press/10027-2/>

George Monbiot, “Finally, a breakthrough alternative to growth economics – the doughnut” (July 7, 2017),  
<http://www.ecologise.in/2017/07/07/finally-breakthrough-alternative-growth-economics-doughnut/>

Ugo Bardi, “Doughnut Economics: a Step Forward, but Not Far Enough” (June 30, 2017),  
<http://www.resilience.org/stories/2017-06-30/doughnut-economics-a-step-forward-but-not-far-enough/>

## **Week Five: Culture, Radical Social Change, and Us**

“This fight, as it took me too long to figure out, was never going to be settled on the grounds of justice or reason. We won the argument, but that didn’t matter: like most fights it was, and is, about power.”

Bill McKibben

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**Monday, September 4: Labor Day – school’s out for summer**

*Assignment: Book review of Raskin – if chosen as one of your two book reviews – is due on Tuesday, September 5.*

## **Tuesday, September 5: Transition Towns and Ecosocialism, plus a screening of *What the Health***

Today we will explore two very different alternative models for the future: the local, reform-oriented vision of transition towns, and the global, post-capitalist perspective of ecosocialism. In addition, we'll screen a new documentary on the U.S. food system, national diet, and the institutions that promote them.

Please take at least 10-15 minutes to explore these websites:

Transition United States –

<http://www.transitionus.org/about-us>

Global Ecovillage Network –

<http://gen.ecovillage.org/en/article/what-ecovillage>

System Change Not Climate Change –

<http://systemchangenotclimatechange.org/>

*What the Health* –

<http://www.whatthehealthfilm.com/facts/>

*Readings on transition towns:*

Stephanie Van Hook, “What is Transition?” (March 14, 2017),

<http://www.resilience.org/stories/2017-03-14/what-is-transition/>

Wikipedia, “Transition Town,”

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transition\\_town](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transition_town)

Tom Henfrey and Justin Kenrick, “The Transition Movement in Global Perspective” (February 2, 2016), 1-28,

[http://climatesecurityagenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/018138c\\_TNI\\_Climate-Commons-Hope.pdf](http://climatesecurityagenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/018138c_TNI_Climate-Commons-Hope.pdf)

*Readings on ecosocialism:*

Ian Angus, “Ecosocialism and Human Solidarity,” pp. 132-145 in *Facing the Anthropocene: Fossil Capitalism and the Crisis of the Earth System* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2017)

Belem Ecosocialist Declaration, prepared by a committee elected at the Paris Ecosocialist Conference of 2007 (Ian Angus, Joel Kovel, Michael Löwy, <http://climateandcapitalism.com/2008/12/16/belem-ecosocialist-declaration-a-call-for-signatures/>)

System Change Not Climate Change, “What is Ecosocialism?” (September 2014), 1-14

*Readings for the movie:*

Chris Hedges, “Eating Our Way to Disease” (July 9, 2017), [http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/eating\\_our\\_way\\_to\\_disease\\_201707091](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/eating_our_way_to_disease_201707091)

Chris Goodall, “How to reduce your carbon footprint” (January 19, 2017), <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/jan/19/how-to-reduce-carbon-footprint>

Madeline Ostrander, “How Do You Decide to Have a Baby When Climate Change Is Remaking Life on Earth?” (March 24, 2016), <http://www.thenation.com/article/how-do-you-decide-to-have-a-baby-when-climate-change-is-remaking-life-on-earth/>

*Optional readings for the movie:*

Kamalamani, “Other than Mother? The Parenthood Decision with Resilience in Mind” (April 17, 2017), <http://www.resilience.org/stories/2017-04-17/other-than-mother-the-parenthood-decision-with-resilience-in-mind/>

Heather Smith, “Want to fight climate change? Here are the 7 critical life changes you should make” (February 19, 2016), [http://grist.org/climate-energy/want-to-fight-climate-change-here-are-the-7-critical-life-changes-you-should-make/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=climate-newsletter&utm\\_campaign=round-2-image](http://grist.org/climate-energy/want-to-fight-climate-change-here-are-the-7-critical-life-changes-you-should-make/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=climate-newsletter&utm_campaign=round-2-image)

Reynard Loki, “3 Most Environmentally Damaging Habits You Might Be Able to Change” (April 17, 2016), 1-6,  
<http://ecowatch.com/2016/04/17/environmentally-damaging-habits/>

*Assignment: Film review essay on What the Health – if chosen as one of your two film reviews – is due on Thursday, September 7 by midnight.*

### **Week Six: The Future is Ours to Make**

“We do not know how long we have, but we do know that the fight just can’t wait. And we know that just fighting isn’t enough: to succeed, we must simultaneously work for immediate changes *and* advance a vision of the world we want to build.”

Ian Angus, *Facing the Anthropocene: Fossil Capitalism and the Crisis of the Earth System*

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*Assignment: IV Project analyses or memos due on Monday, September 11 by midnight.*

### **Monday, September 11: Presentations I plus the first part of the film: Michael Moore’s *Where to Invade Next?***

Today we will start class presentations of final projects, plus begin to screen Michael Moore’s *Where to Invade Next* (2015, 120 minutes).

Website for *Where to Invade Next*:  
<http://wheretoinvadenext.com/>

*Optional:* Kristine Mattis, “We Are Barely Even Trying” (April 13, 2017),  
<https://www.counterpunch.org/2017/04/13/we-are-barely-even-trying/>

**Tuesday, September 12: Presentations II plus the conclusion to Michael Moore's *Where Invade Next?***

Today we will continue our class presentations of final projects, and finish and discuss Michael Moore's *Where to Invade Next*.

**Wednesday, September 13: Presentations III**

Today we will finish presentations of class projects in the first part of the class, then ...

**Thursday, September 14: Final class events and celebration**

*Assignment: Class projects [20 percent] [script or video due in class on Thursday, September 14]*

*Film review essay on Where to Invade Next – if chosen as one of your two film reviews – is due by midnight on Friday, September 15.*

Today we will conclude our work in a variety of ways, and there may be surprises! This will also be a final brainstorming session about everything we've all learned and for those who are interested, some ideas on how to get more involved in fixing the world for the better.

*Final Assignment [20 percent]: Final 4-page Essay [due Monday, September 18]*

**Essay Question Options**

Please write an essay of up to four double-spaced pages due as a Word document or pdf on GauchoSpace by midnight on Monday, September 18. No hardcopy is needed. This exciting final assignment is the place where you get to reflect deeply on what you have learned this quarter.

The format guidelines for all papers in this course are 1" margins all around, 12 point size, and double spacing (not 1.5 lines).

## Topics to Choose From

### *Beyond Capitalism*

Do you think capitalism can be *reformed and made sustainable*, or should it be *radically transformed and/or abolished*? Make an argument for either position. If you think capitalism must be transformed or abolished, make sure you analyze 1) the reasons you think this system is undesirable or ineffective in the pursuit of a sustainable world, or whatever other fatal flaws you identify, 2) a working idea of an alternative system that would better address the global crises and 3) a working idea of how this transformation can actually be attained, drawing on examples from this class and informed predictions. If you think capitalism can or should be reformed and made sustainable, try to address roughly the same three questions of your reasons, the reformed model to be attained, and how it would be achieved.

### *The World in 2050*

What is the *best* world you think it will be possible to achieve by 2050? What world do you imagine is the *most likely* that we will be living in?

Drawing on all of the course materials you wish, give us all your best ideas about getting the first and avoiding the second. Note: if your two worlds are the same, just tell us how we get there!

What role would you like to play, or see yourself playing, in getting this world?

### *Culture, Social Movements, and Building a Better World*

If we are going to build a more equal, more sustainable and environmentally friendly future world, how might we have to change our cultural relationship to nature and social life as we live it every day? What sort of cultural production (video, fiction, spoken word, art, music, etc.) do you think could play a role? Be as specific as you can.

What sort of social movement might bring all this about?

Feel free to bring in materials from the class project and relate them to readings, films, and any other relevant material from lecture. Oh, and don't forget your imagination!



*or*  
*Write your own question!*

We invite you to write your own question/topic for an essay, and after approval by the instructors, you may write your essay on the agreed upon topic. You should obtain this green light by Thursday, September 7, with a one-page proposal.

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Abolish grades.  
Abolish email.  
Abolish borders.  
Abolish prisons.  
Create love, beauty, and justice instead.  
The beginnings of my platform.  
(And the government is run by cats, natural anarchists.)

■ Molly Talcott