



Topics: Citizenship, Land, and Economy (POLS-2950-1)

Fall Semester 2018-19, Monday 6-8.45 PM, Room C244 // Colloquium: December 10th

Instructor: James Magnus-Johnston (MPhil, Land Economy, Cambridge University)
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"Nothing so important... as a land ethic is ever 'written'. It arises in the minds of a thinking community"
- Aldo Leopold

Summary: Economic and ecological challenges – including climate change and inequity – are symptoms of a deeper spiritual and cultural conflict: human separation from each other, our inner-beings, and the land. This course examines acts of land justice through re/connections to people and place. We examine philosophical questions related to land justice and stewardship – including those surrounding economic scale, economic and ecological literacy, land use, land speculation – and consider alternative ways of being and acting that might foster a more just society.

Note: The course will culminate in a one-day colloquium, organized by its participants, highlighting ideas and initiatives related to ecological stewardship.

Objectives:

1. Become familiar with heterodox approaches to economics
2. Consider warrants for the appropriate use of technology and fossil energy
3. Nurture real-world connections to land and community
4. Consider "citizenship" as a way of enacting justice
5. Become aware of the connection between spiritual health and immersion in nature
6. Cultivate a contemplative learning practice through independent reading and study

Deadline for withdrawal without academic penalty: November 13

Reading List

REQUIRED TEXTS

Louv, Richard. *The Nature Principle: Reconnecting with Life in a Virtual Age*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2012.

Monbiot, George. *Out of the Wreckage*. London: Verso, 2017.

REQUIRED TEXTS (PROVIDED)

Download at magnusjohnston.ca

Alexander, Samuel. *A Critique of Techno-Optimism: Efficiency without Sufficiency is Lost (Post Carbon Working Paper Series)*. Melbourne: Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute, 2014.

Eisenstein, Charles. *Sacred Economics: Money, Gift, & Society in the Age of Transition*. Berkeley, California: Evolver Editions, 2011.

Latouche, Serge. *Towards a Society of Frugal Abundance*. Melbourne: Simplicity Institute, 2014.

Magnus-Johnston, James. "What is the Steady State Economy?" in Washington, Haydn and Twomey, Paul, *A Future Beyond Growth: Towards a Steady State Economy*. London: Routledge, 2016.

Schumacher, E. F. *Small Is Beautiful: Economics As If People Mattered: 25 Years Later ... with Commentaries*. Point Roberts, Wash: Hartley & Marks Publishers, 1999.

Weber, Andreas. *Enlivenment: Towards a fundamental shift in the concepts of nature, culture, and politics*. Berlin: Heinrich Boll Foundation, 2013.

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS

Hopkins, Rob. *The Transition Companion: Making Your Community More Resilient in Uncertain Times*. London: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2011.

Raworth, Kate. *Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st Century Economist*. White River, Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2017.

Assignments and Grades

Free writing notebook (Oct 15/Dec 10)	10%
Attendance and Participation (ongoing)	10%
Reading summary (ongoing)	20%
Essay proposal and bibliography (Nov 5)	20%
Final essay (Nov 31)	20%
Colloquium participation (Dec 10)	20%

Letter	Percentage	GPA	Descriptor
A+	90-100	4.5	Exceptional
A	80-89	4	Excellent
B+	75-79	3.5	Very Good
B	70-74	3	Good
C+	65-69	2.5	Satisfactory
C	60-64	2	Adequate
D	50-59	1	Marginal
F	0-49	0	Failure

An "excellent" assignment (A) would display:

1. original thinking and a superior grasp of the subject matter
2. a highly developed capacity for analysis, synthesis, and critical evaluation
3. clear and appropriate description, with evidence of an extensive knowledge base
4. the ability to organize information well, plus excellent writing and/or speaking skills in English
clear and thorough documentation of research sources using a recognized style format

Assignment descriptions

Free writing (“commonplace”) notebook / class activities: In order to catalyze conversation for in-class discussions, students will be expected to maintain a notebook that keeps track of direct and indirect connections to course material. In your notebook, you will be expected to record daily experiences, quotations of readings, facts, and summaries of information that you might use throughout the course. You might also record something provocative or interesting from class discussion, a link to relevant online material, a relevant photograph you have taken, or a summary of a presentation, newscast, sermon, speech, or film that you experienced. You can be creative: draw diagrams, write in point form, take pictures, record sounds, or come up with some other brilliant way to share information with the class. Some class time will be designated for free writing reflections, exercises, and peer evaluation.

Here are some online tools that provide some examples and ideas for record-keeping:

<https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Commonplace-Book>

<https://evernote.com/blog/how-to-create-commonplace-with-evernote/>

<http://www.marknagelberg.com/creating-a-commonplace-book-with-google-drive/>

Attendance / Participation: To foster more active discussions on class readings, your participation will be graded. You will be graded on the quality and quantity of interaction – that is, not only the volume of interaction, but its quality and consistency. Someone who interacts often but attempts to monopolize the conversation, for instance, may receive a lower grade than someone who contributes regularly and is respectful of the contributions of others. Regular contributions, however, are required. Your participation grades will be posted at the middle and the end of the semester.

Note: When the weather cooperates, classes will be held outside in Assiniboine Park and in the Assiniboine Forest. Destinations won't always be pre-determined; being on-time is therefore important.

Reading / Summaries: Much of this class draws upon the required reading. Our first exercise will be for you to come up with a reading schedule to designate time outside of class to read; you will be expected to hold yourself accountable to this reading schedule. If helpful, you can arrange peer group reading sessions. For each assigned reading, one student will prepare a synopsis in point form that outlines the main argument of the reading in order to catalyze in-class discussion. Following the discussion, please prepare a 1-2 page written summary of the reading and discussion to be handed in (by email) the following day.

Note: Periodically, class time will be allocated to readings, but students should not rely on this time to integrate the topic matter.

Essay Proposal / Annotated Bibliography: In preparation for your research paper and eventual conference participation, you will be expected to identify a topic of interest relatively early in the course. For this proposal, you are expected to identify a problem and pose a research question, which will inform the scope of your research (related to resilience, economics, environmental policy, land use, community engagement). Your annotated bibliography gives an account of the research that has been undertaken on a given topic. In addition to bibliographic data, an annotated bibliography also provides a concise summary of each source and some assessment of its relevance to your paper. Please include 5-10 sources, and ensure that approximately half of them are scholarly journals or books.

Final essay: Write a 2000-word thesis dealing with an issue related to the course material. Your paper will be evaluated on its appraisal of the issue, its quality of argument, and the topic's relevance to the subject matter covered in the course. Following from the work you will have undertaken in your proposal, your paper must interrogate the problem and prescribe potential real-world solutions. The essay will be used as the basis for your participation in a final colloquium, in which you will participate in a panel discussion with other participants.

Colloquium participation: In lieu of a final exam, you will be expected to participate in a student-led multi-class final colloquium. Students will be expected to organize and participate in a round-table discussion, in which you will discuss the contents of your final paper. Your contribution to this conference will be peer-reviewed through a web-based form.

Peer grading: A number of assignments will be peer-reviewed using a web-based form; grades and feedback will be "crowdsourced" and recommended to the instructor (the instructor reserves the right to adjust grades up or down). Peer-reviewed assignments include the free writing notebook, reading synopses, the essay proposal, and final colloquium participation.

Policies

Handing in: Both e-mail and paper formats will be accepted for written assignments. If you submit by e-mail, watch for a reply from me within 48 hours confirming receipt of your document. If you do not receive my response, please contact me or drop into my office.

Late submissions: Unless otherwise specified (ie. the persuasive essay assignment above), papers are due on Fridays at 4 PM in my office. Late papers are subject to a 5% per day penalty. Any paper received after 4 PM will be deemed to be received on Monday and subject to a 15% penalty (Tuesday, 20% deduction, 25% for Wednesday, etc.). Extensions can be provided for extenuating circumstances. Extensions will be given for trips and involvement in sports and music activities *with advance notice*.

Final grades: Grades submitted by instructors become final only after they are vetted by the Dean's Council. That process occurs early in January for fall semester grades and early in May for winter semester grades.

Plagiarizing: Cases of plagiarizing are taken seriously and can result in academic penalties and disciplinary action. CMU policies regarding 'academic misconduct' can be found in the Academic Calendar, available at https://www.cmu.ca/uploaded/files/Academic_Calendar_Section_II_Academic_Policies.pdf

Accessibility: CMU strives to provide a fair and supportive learning environment for academically qualified students with disabilities. The Accessibility Services office coordinates with the Academic Office to provide academic accommodations to eligible students. If believe you are eligible for these services or have questions about becoming eligible, please contact Sandra Loeppky, Coordinator of Accessibility Programs at sloeppky@cmu.ca or 204.487.3300 x 340.

Course Schedule (at-a-glance)

	Topic	Readings (download at magnusjohnston.ca)				
Sept	Land/Economy themes	<i>Schumacher</i>	<i>Monbiot</i>	<i>Eisenstein</i>	<i>Louv</i>	<i>Other</i>
	Definitions and Objectives					
10	<i>Mainstream economics and heterodox alternatives (degrowth; SSE)</i>	Part I				Magnus-Johnston; Latouche
17	<i>Time/money: gift econ, productivist culture, and the "great separation"</i>		Ch. 1-2	Ch. 1-6	Part I	
24	<i>Separation from other: individualism, alienation, isolation</i>		Ch. 3-5		Part II	Delistraty, Jaffer, Jay, or Leung
Oct	1 <i>Separation from inner-being: desire, the soul, and mindfulness</i>	Ch. 6		Ch. 7-8		Burch (Educating...)
	15 <i>Separation from land: body and place</i>	Ch. 7-8		Ch. 9-10	Part III	Leopold
	22 <i>Heterodox approaches: conclusion and criticisms</i>		Ch. 6-7	Ch. 11-13		Latouche I/II
	Themes of "Citizenship" (or, "enacting our new knowledge")					
	Critical Questions: Technology, Energy, Jobs					
	29 <i>Energy: EROEI, labour, and dividends</i>	Ch. 9		Ch. 14-15		Tverberg; Hall/Day
Nov	5 <i>Non/electoral citizenship: appropriate tech, social polarization, engagement</i>		Ch. 8-9		Part IV	Alexander; Burch (Tech...)
	19 <i>International citizenship: development and improving wellbeing</i>	Ch. 10-14			Part V	Batker + DeGraff (TBD)
	Re/framing the Big Picture					
	26 <i>Cosmological citizenship: widening the frame for wellbeing</i>	Ch. 15-16		Ch. 16-17		Korten; Weber; Norgaard
	28 <i>Questions of appropriate engagement and right livelihood</i>	Ch. 17-end		Ch. 18-20		Graeber; CBC
Dec	3 <i>The "more beautiful world"</i>		Conc.	Ch. 21-end		
	10 <i>Colloquium</i>					

Course Schedule

LAND / ECONOMY

Definitions

Sept 10 // Definitions: Mainstream economics and heterodox alternatives (degrowth; SSE)

Schumacher Pt I: The Modern World

Magnus-Johnston: What is the Steady State Economy?

Latouche: What is Degrowth?

Sep 17 // Time/money: Gift economics, productivist culture, and the "great separation"

(Monbiot, Ch. 1-2: A Story of Our Times; A Captive Audience)

Eisenstein, Ch. 1-6 (Pt I): The Economics of Separation

Louv, Pt I: Nature Neurons: Intelligence, Creativity and the Hybrid Mind

Interrogating "Separation"

Sept 24 // Separation from other: individualism, alienation, isolation

Monbiot, Ch. 3-5: Alienation; Belonging; Our Economy

Pick one: Jay: A History of Alienation / Jaffer: In Extremis / Leung: Why is Loneliness So Toxic?

Delistraty: Only the Lonely

Louv, Pt II: Vitamin N: The Power of the Natural World...

Oct 1 // Separation from inner-being: desire, the soul, and mindfulness

(Schumacher Ch 6: The Greatest Resource – Education)

Burch: Educating for Simple Living

Eisenstein Ch. 7-8: The Crisis of Civilization; Turning of the Age

Oct 15// Separation from land: body and place

Schumacher Ch. 7-8: The Proper Use of Land; Resources for Industry

(Eisenstein Ch. 9-10: The Story of Value; Law of Return)

Louv Pt III: Near is the New Far...

Leopold: The Land Ethic

Oct 22 // Heterodox approaches: conclusion and criticisms

(Monbiot Ch. 6-7: Our Economy; Framing the Economy)

Eisenstein Ch. 11-13: Currencies; Negative-Interest; Steady-State and Degrowth

Latouche I/II: Towards a Society of Frugal Abundance

****REFELCTION JOURNALS DUE****

CITIZENSHIP

Technology, Energy, Jobs

Oct 29 // Energy: EROEI, labour, and dividends

(Schumacher Ch. 9: Nuclear Energy...)

Eisenstein Ch. 14-15: The Social Dividend; Local Currencies

Tverberg: The Physics of Energy and the Economy

Hall/Day: Revisiting the Limits to Growth

Nov 5 // Non/electoral citizenship: appropriate tech, social polarization, engagement

Monbiot Ch. 8-9: Our Politics; Making it Happen

Louv Pt IV: Creating Everyday Eden

Alexander: A Critique of Techno-Optimism

Burch: Twenty Questions – Technology and Simple Living

Nov 19 // International citizenship: development and improving wellbeing

Schumacher Ch. 10-14: Development; Intermediate Technology; Ownership

Louv Pt V: The High-Performance Human

Batker + Degraff (TBD)

Re/framing the Big Picture

Nov 26 // Cosmological citizenship: widening the frame for wellbeing

(Schumacher Ch. 15-16: A Machine to Tell the Future; Large-Scale Organization)

Eisenstein Ch. 16-17: Transition to Gift Economy; Roadmap

Weber: Enlivenment

Korten: A New Story for a New Economy

Norgaard: The Church of Economism and its Discontents

****ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE****

Nov 28 // Questions of appropriate engagement and right livelihood

(Schumacher Ch. 17-end: Socialism; Ownership)

Eisenstein Ch. 18-20 (Pt III): Living the New Economy

Graeber: A World With No BS Jobs

CBC: The Disappearing Company Job

****ESSAY DUE****

Dec 3 // The "more beautiful world"

Eisenstein Ch. 21-end: The Gift; The Unquantifiable; The New Materialism

Dec 10 // Colloquium