

Environmental Philosophy and Public Policy
Phil 5960.04, spring 2005
Monday & Thursday 6-7:20pm

Professor Robert Frodeman
Professor Britt Holbrook
EESAT 320a

Tentative Syllabus (1/20/05)

This course will investigate the policy turn in environmental philosophy, exploring ways to make environmental ethics/philosophy more relevant to decision-makers, public agencies, and stakeholders groups.

The course will explore the emerging field of humanities policy, which claims that our problems (environmental or otherwise) are to a significant degree humanistic in nature, and that part of the theoretical work of humanists consists of devising ways to integrate their research with the concerns of policymakers.

In particular, environmental philosophers (and other humanists) need to a) master the basic concepts of their field, and b) understand how to translate these concepts for non-philosophers, integrating them into policy research and decision making. Developing these skills constitutes our gaining a general understanding of the theory and practice of interdisciplinary research and education.

To emphasize: the work of philosophy includes theorizing the relationship between theory and practice.

More particularly, the course has three aspects:

- 1) Critiquing the often unreflective underlying assumptions of current approaches to science policy, as well as those concerning the nature of philosophic or humanistic research,
- 2) Identifying both generally and specifically the contributions that philosophy and the humanities can bridging the relation between science and society, and
- 3) Ascertaining the best means for evaluating these contributions, both ante and post facto.

Specific Questions to Consider

1. What are the problems within policy studies that drive us toward the creation of a humanities policy?
2. What is the proper role for science in the creation of policies? How do science and values relate to one another in the creation of policy?
3. What constitutes the humanities? Overall, what role does knowledge play in the addressing of our problems? What different types of knowledge do we have to draw upon to resolve our problems?
4. Is knowledge 'constructed'? If so, how? What happens when knowledge itself becomes a problem? Has this happened today? How do these questions relate to the issues of 'expertise' and 'interdisciplinarity'?

Likely Readings

Frodeman, 2003. *Geo-Logic: Breaking Ground between Philosophy and the Earth Sciences* (SUNY)

Frodeman and Mitcham, ed., 'Philosophy of Science Policy,' *Philosophy Today* Special Issue
Høyrup, Jens (2000) *Human Sciences: Reappraising the Humanities through History and Philosophy*

Jasonoff, Sheila, "STS and Public Policy," *Science, Technology, and Society*, 4:1, 1999

Kernan, Alvin, ed. 1997. *What's Happened to the Humanities?* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Kitcher, Philip, 2001. *Science, Truth, and Democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Latour, Bruno, *We Have Never Been Modern*

Menard: 'Demise of Disciplinary Authority'

Procter, Robert E. 1998. *Defining the Humanities*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Norton, Bryan, 'Conservation: Moral Crusade or Environmental Public Policy?' in *Reconstructing Conservation: Finding Common Ground*, Minter and Manning, eds., Island Press, 2003.

Sarewitz, "How Science Makes Environmental Controversies Worse," *Environmental Science and Policy*, vol. 7, no. 5, pp. 385-403.

Sarewitz, D., and R.A. Pielke, Jr., 2005. 'The Tsunami's Real Cause: Rising Tide,'

Spellmeyer, Kurt. (2003). *Arts of Living: Reinventing the Humanities for the Twenty-first Century*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Class Requirements

2 HP case studies, ~1000 words	60%	
Final research paper, or 3 HP site postings		40%

2 HP case studies: students will each choose one item from a list of 10-15 topics (below). They will then write a ~1000 word essay on the topic, which will be extensively edited by us. Each student will be expected to write on two subjects within the topic. Each draft will be graded, with the final draft counting as the final grade on the assignment. Work on these distinct two essays will be completed by March 20th.

Possible topics: interdisciplinary Ethics and Values Studies (EVS) within the following:

- international HP (up to 180 countries here! Including Canada, India, Bhutan, Nigeria)
- an account of NSF's second criterion
- humanities for policy
- a policy for the humanities
- ecological restoration
- brownfields
- global climate change
- dam removal
- Cape Cod windfarm
- Salmon restoration
- NPS's wilderness management strategy
- Humanities in the parks

Final research paper, or 3 HP site postings: students will then have a choice between either writing a 15 page research paper, or writing two three? additional HP case studies for the HP website.

Please note that attendance and participation are an important part of your grade. And: no cell phones in class.

Office Hours: before class, Mondays (Frodeman) or Thursdays (Holbrook) and by appointment.

Frodeman's office: 229 EESAT; phone 565-3547; secretary 565-2134. You may also reach me through email: frodeman@unt.edu, always with 'PP' in the subject line.

Holbrook's office: 225 EESAT; phone 565-4048. You may also reach me through jbrittholbrook@unt.edu, always with 'PP' in the subject line.

Weekly Schedule: (you are responsible for the readings on the date listed)

Section One: Critiquing the Status quo: a philosophy of science policy

Week 1: January 20 – Introduction

Day 1: Intro—course themes and goals: making the case, why does policy need philosophy and why does philosophy need policy?

Week 2: Jan 25/27

1. Sarewitz, D., and R.A. Pielke, Jr., 2005. 'The Tsunami's Real Cause: Rising Tide,' *The New Republic*, January 6. Available at <http://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/>
2. Norton, Bryan, 'Conservation: Moral Crusade or Environmental Public Policy?'
3. Latour, Bruno. (1991) *We Have Never Been Modern*. Chapter 1 – the Gordian Knot.
4. Frodeman, Robert. (2004). "Environmental Philosophy and the Shaping of Public Policy," *Environmental Ethics*, forthcoming.

Week 3: February 1/3

- holdovers from week 1, and
- Proctor, selections
- Menard: 'Demise of Disciplinary Authority'

Week 4: Feb 8/10

Week 5: Feb 15/17

Week 6: Feb 22/24

Section 2: Exploring an Alternative – Humanities Policy

Week 7: March 1/3 – Are our problems humanistic?

Frodeman, R, Pielke, R, and Mitcham, C. “Humanities Policy—and a Policy for the Humanities,” on line at http://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/admin/publication_files/2003.30.pdf

Week 8: March 8/10 – What can the humanities contribute to policy making?

March 15/17—Spring Break

Week 9: March 22/24 – Evaluating the contributions of the humanities.

Week 10: March 29/31- (Prof Holbrook) NSF 2nd criterion – evaluating science policy

Section 3: Assessment: Philosophy and Policy in action – case studies

Week 11: April 5/7 The President’s Council on Bioethics

Week 12: April 12/14 Student-led case studies

Week 13: April 19/21 Student-led case studies

Week 14: April 26/28 – Lessons learned from case studies

Week 15: May 3/5 – Wrap-up and concluding thoughts

Final assignments: due in Frodeman’s mailbox, May 4