

**Fifty Years of Green: A Collaborative Digital Research Project
by the Students of History 222—Introduction to Environmental History—Spring 2015
for the 50th Anniversary
of the Middlebury College Program in Environmental Studies**

This spring our class (HIST 222, Prof. Morse) will research, design, and create a digital exhibit to begin documenting the Middlebury ES Program, 1965-2015, in the context of American environmental history, as well as US history more broadly, and the history of college. The Middlebury Faculty first offered an academic program in Environmental Studies in the fall of 1965, and the first ES major graduated with the Class of 1969

Using the open access web-based digital exhibit tool Omeka, the college archives, and a range of other primary and secondary sources, small groups of students will document and place in historical context shifts and developments in the ES curriculum and environmentally-related activities at Middlebury between 1965 and 2015.¹ This semester will mark a starting point; we may not be able to cover the entire period given our time this semester. This is the beginning of what may become a longer-term project created by multiple groups of students over time.

The expected audience for our digital exhibit includes current Middlebury students, faculty, and staff, as well as former students, faculty, and staff from the past half-century.

Over the course of the next year, a series of events will commemorate and celebrate this fifty year history, and participants in those celebrations can use our exhibit not only to contextualize the marking of this anniversary, but also to understand its place in a broader history.

Each team will define its own key questions and methods, and conduct its own research; the on-line exhibit may include images, original documents, text with interpretive analysis, or a timeline. Students may come up with a wider range of creative options as well.

Although the class will together work to define the project, its methods and forms, the preliminary plan is to divide the class into teams of approximately 2-4 students each. Each group will research and document one five year period over the past 50 years as the focus of their research (see eleven five-year periods listed below within preliminary chronology). We may not be able to cover than all, but that is fine.

Setting up groups/teams: Each student will survey the preliminary chronology below, and state a preference **for first, second, and third choices for 5-year chunks of time**. I will attempt to make sure everyone gets one of their choices; if we end up with larger teams interested in a single period, we might split the time periods up somewhat differently to

¹ For more information on Omeka, see Omeka.net. Omeka is a product of the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media at George Mason University (www.chnm.gmu.edu).

accommodate student interests. There will be some flexibility in making sure everyone works on a period they feel interested in, and we can adjust the plan accordingly.

Sources for research on the college may include:

college catalogues, including major requirements and new and changing courses
 Commencement Programs,
 the Middlebury Campus;
Middlebury Magazine and its predecessor
 other campus publications,
 curricular and faculty committee minutes and reports,
 records of the Environmental Studies program itself,
 records of the number of student majors and minors in ES for each year,
 topics for student theses and group projects,
 interviews with members of the faculty and staff (current and emeritus),
 interviews with former students,

Broader sources beyond the campus may include:

data on various environmental and social indicators: CO2 levels; air pollution levels;
 phosphorus levels in lakes near and far; income inequality; tuition costs at Middlebury
 U.S. history textbooks,
 works of scholarship in environmental history and other fields of U.S. history,
 magazines and newspapers (as accessed and analyzed through digital databases and other tools),
 key texts in environmental thought and politics,
 texts of laws; other legal documents; court cases, and anything else the group seeks out and finds.

While each team will pursue research and analysis on their own, the class as whole will share reading and analysis of one historical work, Finis Dunaway's just-published history of images and American environmentalism, Seeing Green. This work will provide a sense of change over time from the 1960s through the 1990s, and a common grounding in the complex work of locating, defining, and analyzing environmentalism (however defined) in American culture, particularly visual culture, over time.

Individual Component (due May 15)

For each student's individual component of the project, said student will choose a particular topic, text, event, text, idea, controversy (which does not necessarily have to come from the period they research in collaboration with their group), and research it in depth to produce a brief essay (**5-7 pages approx.**) which **may** be used in the final digital exhibit in some form.

Ideas for the individual component include:

→a chance to follow up in more depth one of the key themes which emerge from group research, either a trend over time, a particular moment in time, or an historical question which arises; as the digital exhibit may not allow much room for complex arguments about cause and effect, this individual component will provide a chance to make more nuanced evaluations of the evidence we find, and thus a more complex written argument suitable for presentation in a more formal essay

-->a deeper analysis of one of the images presented in Dunaway's book, or of another image you find NOT analyzed in Dunaway's book;

→analysis of one particular environmental text (film, book, speech, report, magazine) and how its ideas have been reflected in the ES curriculum or other college events or activities over time;

→an oral history interview with a faculty member, staff member, or alum, and an analysis of that interview with regard to the historical context of their education/work/career/thinking;

→a focus on one particular aspect of the curriculum and how it has changed over time and why, historically, such changes occurred.

Preliminary Timeline for Collaborative and Individual Work (see syllabus and calendar as well):

Wed. March 4. In class: Introduction to the FYG Project, handouts.

Mon. March 9. Turn in top 3 choices for FYG time periods.

Wed. March 11. In class: Full class visit to Special Collections and Archive/Davis Family Library including information on documenting sources and organizing metadata, including handout on nuts and bolts of collecting digital sources.

Wed. March 11-Tues. Mar. 17: Out of class: archival work/other research.

Wed. March 18. In class work; define next tasks, who to ask for help.

Mon. March 30. Back from break; in class group work; finding sources and documents.

Mon. April 6. In class check-in (brief) on finding sources.

April 6-12: Focused research/archive time outside of class.

Mon. April 13. First in-class workshop on Omeka Digital Exhibit software (Axinn 219)

Tues. April 14-Fri Apr. 24: Research time outside of class.

Mon. April 20. Second in-class workshop on Omeka Digital Exhibit software (Axinn 219); plus turn in proposals for individual component of FYG.

Wed. April 22. In class: Quick check-in in on FYG.

Wed. April 29. In class work on FYG Digital History exhibit/plus confirm topic for individual component of FYG.

Mon. May 4. The big picture: In class team presentations of results.

Wed. May 6. The big picture: In class team presentations of results.

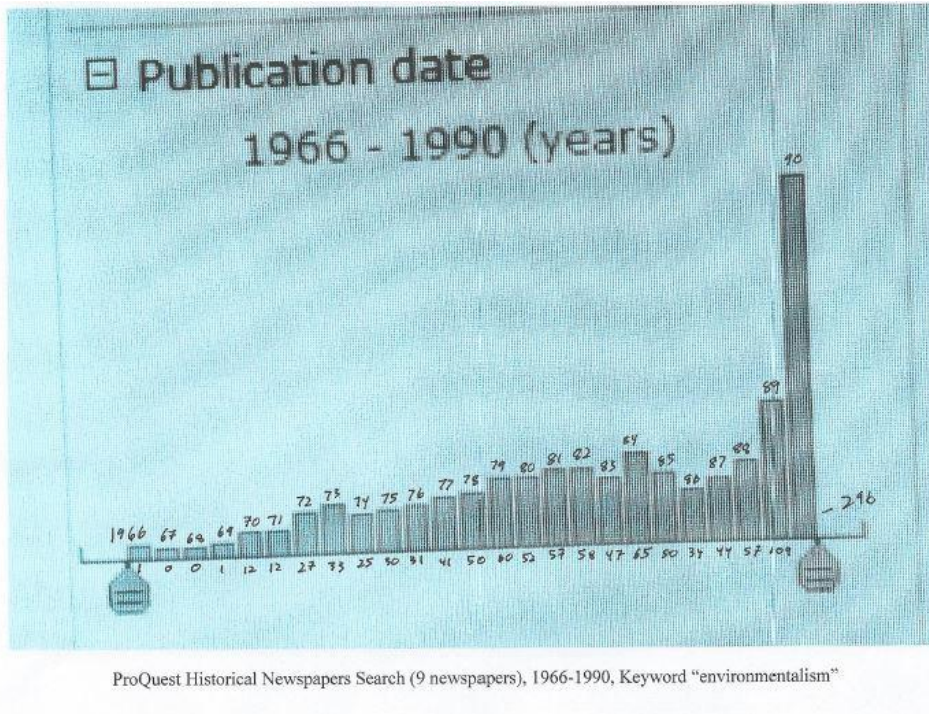
Thurs May 7. Wrap up and finalize last tasks FYG Digital History.

Mon. May 11: Complete final changes/updates to FYG group project.

Friday May 15. Submit individual component by email or hard copy, by 5 pm.

Some preliminary research questions and methods for the collaborative digital project:

- ➔ Using college course catalogues as a source: How has the ES curriculum changed over time since 1965? When did new courses, new foci, new requirements appear or disappear? What are the broader trends in change over time, over this 50 year period?
- ➔ What environmentally-related student groups existed at Midd over the past 50 years and what did they do?
- ➔ What environmentally-related speakers, conferences, gatherings, events, and other activities happened at Midd over the past 50 years?
- ➔ What environmentally-related books were published in each period; which of them were best-sellers or widely noted and read, and over what length of time?
- ➔ What key events in environmental history unfolded in each period, and how did magazines and newspapers and others sources present and portray such events or moments?
- ➔ What broader historical events and transitions unfolded in each period? How did they shape the campus curriculum in other important ways? How did they shape environmental history? Important examples: the Cuban Missile Crisis; the Vietnam War; the anti-war movement; the election of Ronald Reagan; 9/11; the women's movement; the Civil Rights movement; the internet.
- ➔ Using ProQuest Historical Newspapers for This Period: What overall trends can you detect using key word searches in national newspapers? For instance, a search of major national newspapers in ProQuest Historical Newspapers for the key word "environmentalism" over the period 1969-1990 produced a graph which looked like this:



Such a distribution of uses of the word “environmentalism” prompts some historical questions.

- ➔ How does the meaning of the word “environmentalism” change over time?
- ➔ How did reporters define it in its first uses in the late 1960s and early 1970s. What might other keyword searches produce? For “environmentalist” or “environmental crisis” or “environmental problems”
- ➔ What deeper research into newspaper articles might reveal other key patterns or moments of transition or change in environmental history? What might a keyword search of the Middlebury Campus reveal?

Sources: We will discuss possible sources in greater detail as a group. Some ideas include:

The Campus: Online at go/digitalarchives (1876-1981); On microfilm in Davis Library (not Special Collections) AND in print in Special Collections & Archives (1981-2001); Online at go/campus (2001-current).

Middlebury College News Letter (precursor to *Middlebury Magazine*; search as title with four separate words): Online at go/digitalarchives (1926/1927 through 1983/1984).

Middlebury Magazine; In print in Special Collections & Archives (1985-2015).

The College Web page: The ES program page and the Office of Sustainability Integration page both contain helpful newsletters, information, and updates on current and long-term projects on campus:

<http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/es>

<http://www.middlebury.edu/sustainability/>

College archives, ground floor, Davis Family Library—all college catalogues; commencement programs, some department records.

As above, *ProQuest Digital Newspapers*, through library website, has access to several major national newspapers through the 1980s or 1990s. Other newspapers are available at other dates through MidCat and other electronic sources, as well as microfilm.

Individual Component of Fifty Years of Green: HIST 222: Intro to EH: Spring 2015 (Morse)

This is a 5-7 page essay, emailed to kmorse@middlebury.edu by 5 pm, Friday May 15 with file name: YOUR LAST NAME_HIST 222_Paper #3.doc/docx/pdf. Extension days do not apply to this one!

Cite all sources using **footnotes**, and include a **bibliography**. Both footnotes and bibliography should follow the Turabian/CMS style: <http://guides.middlebury.edu/content.php?pid=486673&sid=3990529>

REMEMBER: The Turabian Guide on-line provides form only for FIRST CITATIONS (the first footnote for each source you use) and every SUBSEQUENT CITATION to the SAME SOURCE. After the first citation, you must use a shorter form. This is usually:

Author Last Name, p. xx. It can also be:

Author Last Name, Shortened Title, p. xx. (books)

Author Last Name, "Shortened Title," p. xx. (articles)

Write a formal essay in which you formulate an historical question and answer that question in a structured essay, including a thesis statement in the first or second paragraph which directly answers the question. Support your argument with evidence from your research, presented in clearly structured paragraphs which begin with topic or clear transition sentences.

From the FYG Project Guide: For each student's individual component of the project, said student will choose a particular topic, text, event, text, idea, controversy (which does not necessarily have to come from the period they research in collaboration with their group), and research it in some depth to produce a brief essay (**5-7 pages approx.**) which **may** be used in the final digital exhibit in some form.

Broad ideas for the individual component include (but not limited to):

- 1) a chance to follow up in more depth one of the key themes which emerge from group research, either a trend over time, a particular moment in time, or an historical question which arises; as the digital exhibit may not allow much room for complex arguments about cause and effect, this individual component will provide a chance to make more nuanced evaluations of the evidence we find, and thus a more complex written argument suitable for presentation in a more formal essay
- 2) a deeper analysis of one of the images presented in Dunaway's book as it connects to Middlebury, or of another image you find in our research but NOT analyzed in Dunaway's book;
- 3) analysis of one particular environmental text (film, book, speech, report, magazine) and how its ideas have been reflected in the ES curriculum or other college events or activities over time;
- 4) an oral history interview with a faculty member, staff member, or alum, and an analysis of that interview with regard to the historical context of their education/work/career/thinking;
- 5) a focus on one particular aspect of the curriculum and how it has changed over time and why, historically, such changes occurred.

More specific ideas from our work so far include (but are not limited to):

- 1) Senator Ed Muskie—spoke at 1969 commencement (in *Midd Coll News Letter* 7_1_69); ran for President 1972, key contender until undermined by campaign troubles and possible Nixon tactics. Threat to Nixon's re-election due to support and identification with environmental issues.

- 2) Design and Architecture at Midd: Ian McHarg (*Design by Nature*) and Buckminster Fuller—both a presence at Midd in one way or another, 1970 (Course on geodesic domes and Fuller’s ideas); McHarg spoke as reported in *Campus* on 2-1-1973, p.2; Fuller in *Campus* 2-26-1970; Richard Stein lecture, 3_8_1973, p.1, on energy and architecture.
- 3) *Ramparts Magazine* and book *Eco-Catastrophe* (quoted in *Campus* 4_30_70, p7); book reviewed in *Campus* 1-28_71, p. 10
- 4) Themes and key issues, first Earth Day at Midd, reported *Campus* 4_30_70 (March and April 1970 papers at least) Compare with this year? Compare with another year as reported in *Campus*? With a green issue of the *Campus* (have been published in some years)?
- 5) Alaska, 1977-80: John McPhee’s bestseller *Coming into the Country*, plus key legislation, plus *Campus* articles by students involved in Alaskan issues during later years of 70s energy crisis. See *Campus*, November and December 1977—big articles.
- 6) EQ—Environmental Quality—key student group 1970s, Earth Day—how many years did they have the Blackout Dances? Through 1973 but later? Other issues over time, 1970-80? Bikes, recycling, etc.? Compare to Env. Council now? SNG? Or pick three moments in the group’s history and trace changing concerns over time?
- 7) Issue of population and ideas/writings of Paul Ehrlich (*Population Bomb*, 1968). Big write up in *Campus* October 9, 1970. Search for others references to population issues?
- 8) Stewart Udall spoke 2/1/73 at Middlebury, but no coverage beyond announcement. Find speech in his archive (remotely) at U Arizona? Look for coverage in Middlebury town paper? In archive? What key themes and how received at Midd? Mentioned in *Campus* that date, but it was Thursday, so before the talk. In EQ news column.
- 9) Article on multiple disciplines and changes to curriculum, *Campus* 10/9/75, p14: broader look at idea of interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary work at the college and in higher ed? Use *Chronicle of Higher Ed* as source as well?
- 10) *Campus* food issues over time: Cesar Chavez and lettuce strike: *Campus*, 3-15-73, p. 4; vegetarian food: *Campus* 1-16-75, p.3; Responsible eating: *Campus*; 4_3_75_p.13.
- 11) Middlebury College Energy Conference, March 1976—coverage in *Campus* (3-25-76, lots of different article); find other documents; oral histories? Reports in local papers in town? More energy coverage: *Campus*, 10-26-77, p. 1, and editorial page.
- 12) Compare three versions of historian Roderick Nash’s teaching collection of documents on history of conservation/environmentalism: 1968, 1976, 1990. How does Nash’s collection help us understand changing ideas about defining these terms in environmental studies and environmental history instruction across this time period? How were such changes reflected in Middlebury’s curriculum from the 60s through the 80s? (I have the first and third editions; second is in Armstrong Science Library).

HIST 222_Spring 2015_FYG: Collaborative Digital History Project_Final Reflections

Your Name and Group _____

My tasks/jobs/contributions to my group's digital exhibit included:

My strongest work as a member of the group included (brief comment):

I might have done stronger or more work on some tasks? (Y/N plus description):

Of all my team members, I did a) the most work b) an equal or average amount of work or c) less work than others (explain if possible).

(over)

HIST 222's learning goals for students included the following (list below). On a scale of 1-5 (5 is MOST improved) rank how our collaborative research and digital exhibit project **improved your skills, knowledge, and confidence**

1) Research skills: finding sources: 1 2 3 4 5 (most improved)

Comments:

2) Analyzing sources for broader patterns and meanings: 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

3) Use primary and secondary sources to ask historical questions and make historical arguments:

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

4) Collaborate with others to define and reach a common goal: 1 2 3 4 5

Comments

5) Communicate ideas and arguments with clarity: 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

6) Communicate ideas and arguments in creative ways: 1 2 3 4 5

Comments

7) Gain a deeper understanding of post-1960 U.S. environmental history: 1 2 3 4 5

Comments: