Environmental Ethics and Land Management ENVR E-120

http://courses.dce.harvard.edu/~envre120

Introduction to Course

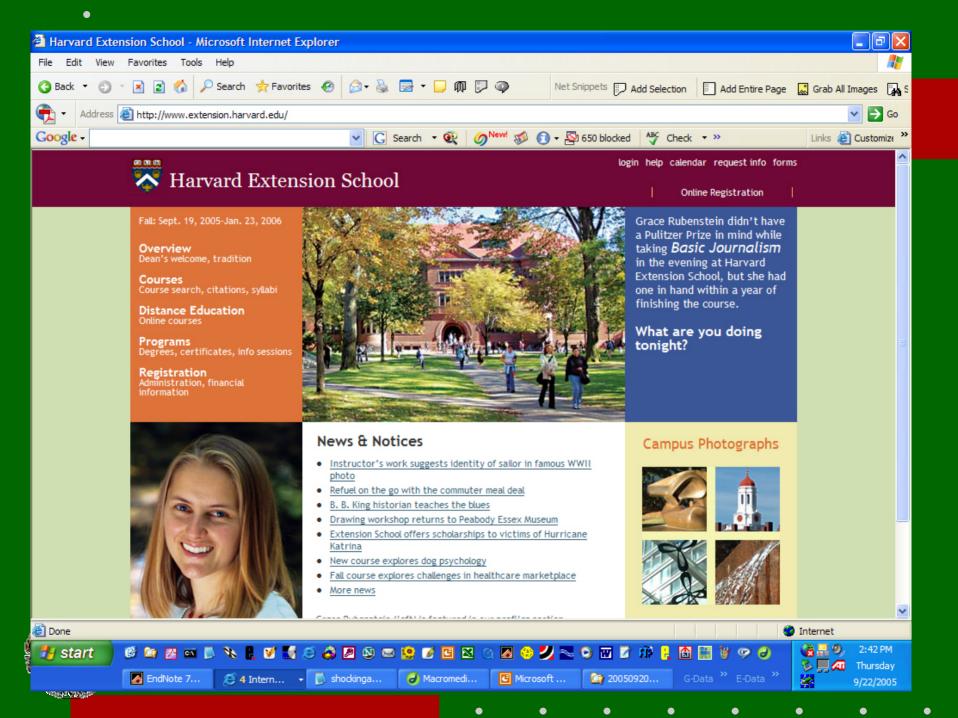


Timothy C. Weiskel

Class 1 – Part 1 22 September 2005

Harvard University Extension School Fall Semester 2005



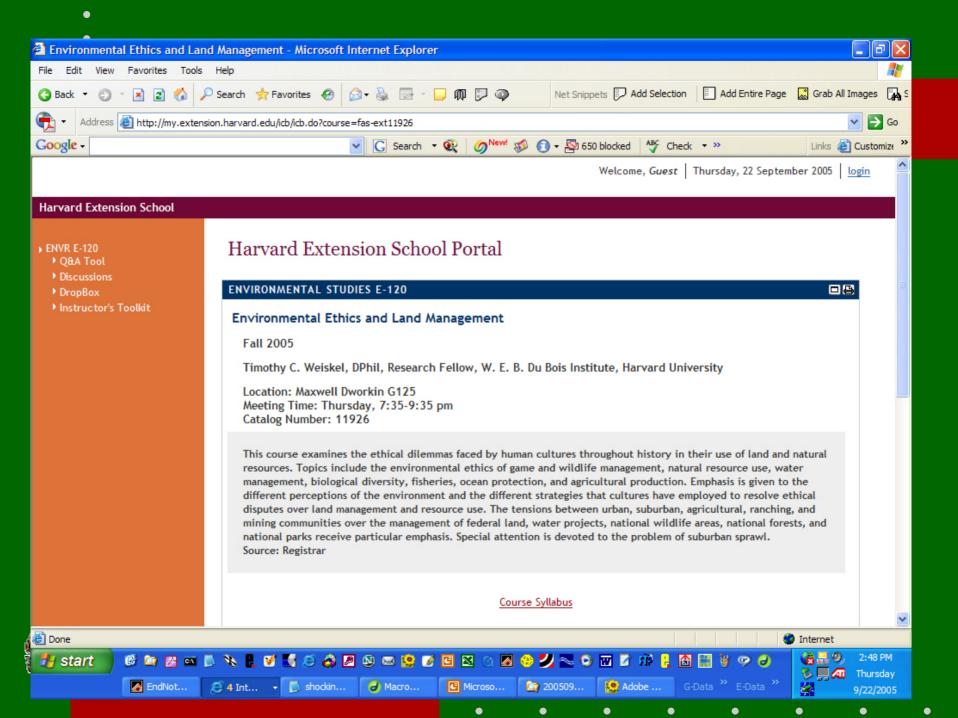


This is where we are in cyberspace.

http://www.courses.fas.harvard.edu/~ext11926/

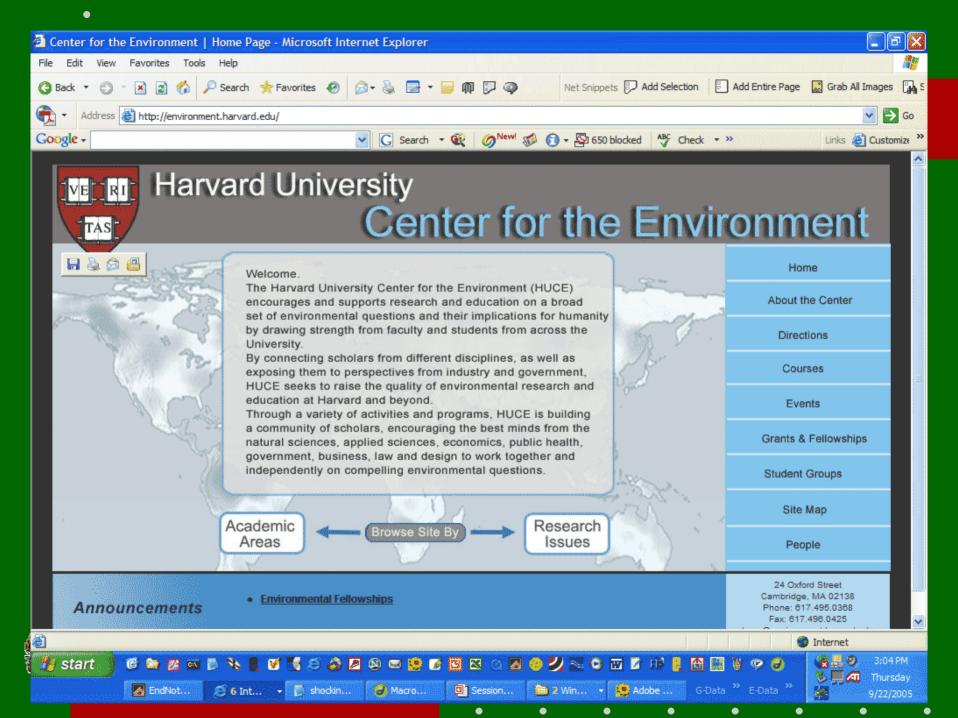
Check the site often -- several times a week -- for assignments, news, announcements, etc.



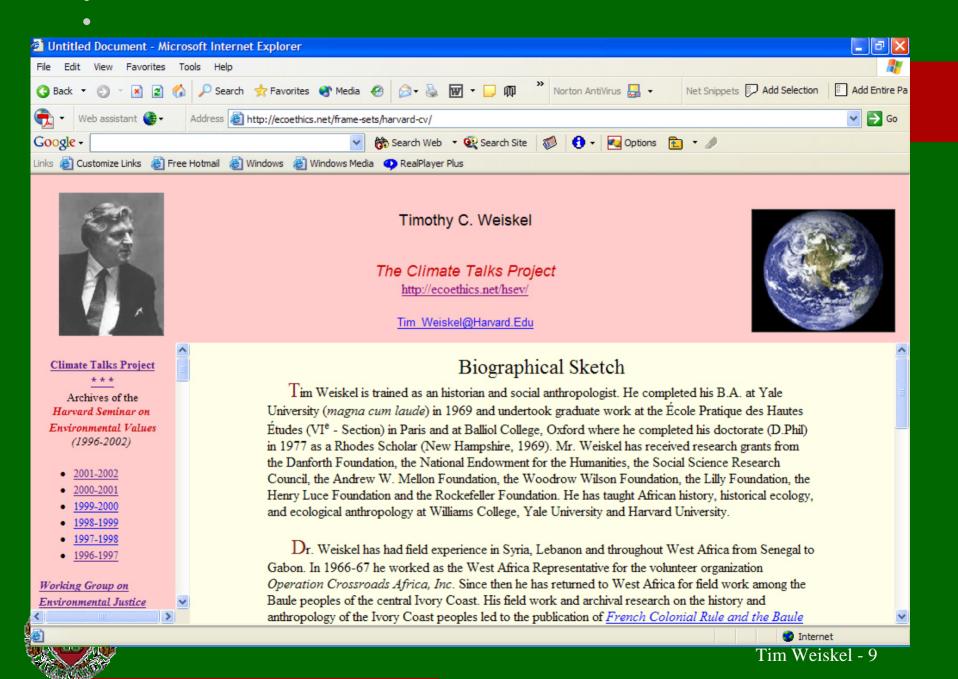












Course Description:

Our environmental circumstances pose problems of value and choice for each of us and challenge us to reconsider the way we act individually and collectively in an ever changing ecosystem. Whether we like it or not there is no escaping the fact that ethical values are embedded in the premises and assumptions of all decisions we make concerning land and resource use.

Responsible land management has come to include concern for land as habitat -- not just for humankind alone -- but for other communities of species that inhabit it as well. In addition, we have come to understand that land management needs to reflect an understanding of the land in its ecological context, including its local and larger significance in the hydrological cycle, the carbon cycle, public health, etc.

This course invites students to reflect upon the problems confronting those who have to make decisions about land management and resource use. It highlights different approaches to environmental ethics and examines the underlying assumptions of the scientific, managerial, economic, aesthetic, religious, judicial and public policy discourse on the environment.



So, to begin with...

Key question:

[please write your answer on the paper provided & print your name clearly at the top]

What does "environmental ethics" mean to you?

With a short paragraph, in your own words, complete the phrase, and elaborate in a few sentences....

"Environmental ethics is concerned with..."



An appropriate pause for you to think and write



What this course is NOT

This course is NOT:

- An introduction to environmental studies
- A field or laboratory course in environmental science
- A course in environmental policy making.
- A course in the history of environmentalism
- A survey course in the literature of environmental ethics

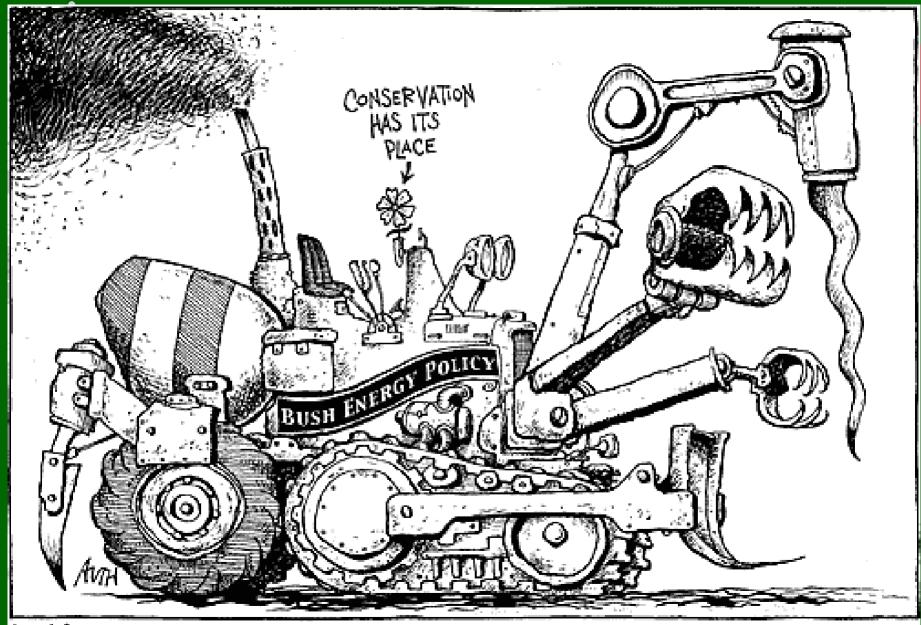
In effect, it will help you place all these other kinds of courses in perspective.

We will take on....

This course will take on controversy.

It will touch upon many of the current debates in the field — like those surrounding the recent publication of *The Skeptical Environmentalist*

It will include -- where ever possible -- interviews, video clips, news reports and multimedia documentation relating to contemporary and historical environmental problems that illustrate clear conflicts in environmental ethics. *



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We will examine the current administration's energy policy and what forces lie behind it...





The administration's stance underscores that the US has become a culture of consumption in a world of constraint







Bush Defends New Environmental Rules

More Debate Follows Assertion That Economy and Air Will Benefit

By RACHEL L. SWARNS

MONROE, Mich., Sept. 15 — President Bush toured one of the nation's largest power plants today and hailed the sprawling complex here as a symbol of how the relaxation of clean air rules would boost the economy and protect the environment.

After donning a white hard hat and viewing the roaring turbine generators at the Detroit Edison plant here, Mr. Bush told cheering workers that cumbersome and complicated government regulations had prevented the plant from upgrading to cleaner and more efficient generators for nearly five years.

Last month, in one of the most farreaching environmental decisions of his tenure, Mr. Bush eliminated those rules, allowing thousands of power plants, refineries and factories to make extensive upgrades that increase pollutants without havcy, quickly reignited the fierce debate between government officials and environmental groups. While Mr. Bush was greeting workers, environmentalists said the relaxation of clean air rules known as the new source review would allow this plant to increase emissions by more than 30,000 tons a year, a 56 percent increase over current levels.

A power plant is used as an argument for and against Bush's policy.

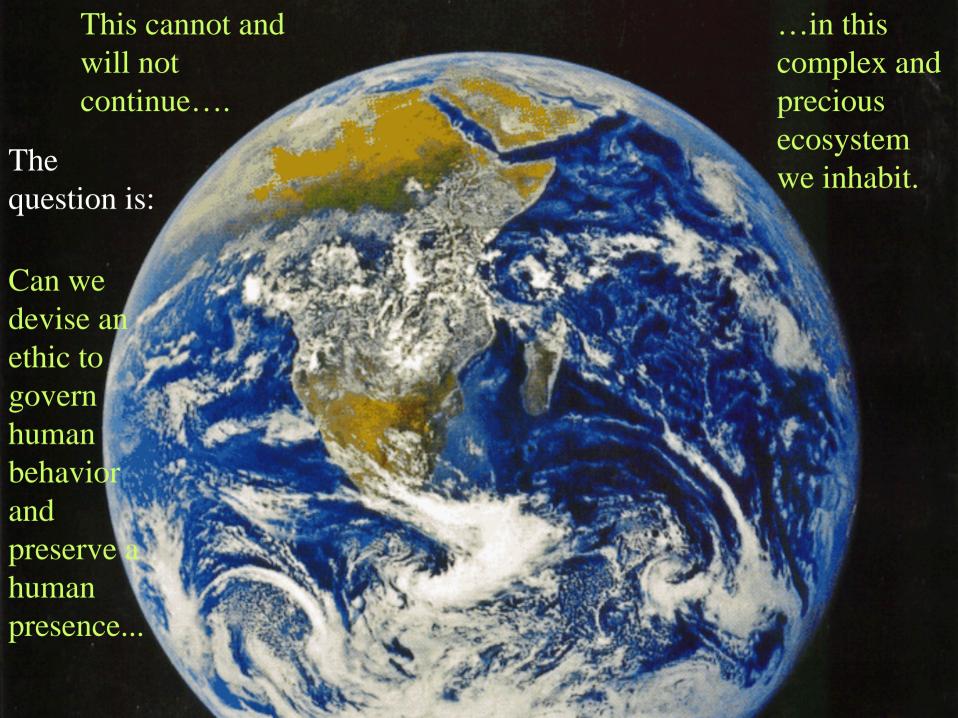
advocacy director of the Clean Air Task Force, an environmental group. "We want to see real power plant cleanup legislation that will protect the health of every American."

Senator James M. Jeffords, the Vermont independent and ranking minority member on the Environment and Public Works Committee, echoed those concerns. He described Mr. Bush's policies as "the exact opposite of what the nation needs."

"The administration's deregulatory agenda, specifically the gutting of the new source review program, will lead to more pollution and therefore more disease and premature deaths," Mr. Jeffords said.

Government officials dismissed the concerns raised by environmental groups.

"They're wrong," said James L. Connaughton, chairman of the Council on Environmental Ouality. a



"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

Late Edition

New York: Today, partly cloudy, less humid, high 79. Tonight, clear, cool, low 61. Tomorrow, mainly sunny, not as warm, high 75. Yesterday, high 77, low 72. Weather map is on Page D8.

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NEW YORK, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2003

ONE DOLLAR

RETIREES ALARMED AT THREAT OF CUTS IN DRUG BENEFITS

ISSUE FOR MEDICARE BILL

Congress Weighs Giving Tax Credits to Employers Who Uphold Coverage Levels

By ROBERT PEAR

WASHINGTON, Sept. 15 - As Congress works on legislation to cover prescription drugs under Medicare, lawmakers have been deluged with complaints from retirees who fear bsing drug benefits they already have from former employers.

Some lawmakers say this issue is emerging as the most immediate threat to the legislation.

Congress is frantically seeking ways to address the concern, by offering tax credits, subsidies or other incentives for employers to continue providing drug benefits to retirees. The tax credits would be available to employers who maint ain drug coverage or supplement what Medicare provides.

Medicare generally does not cover outpatient prescription drugs. Some employers voluntarily provide such coverage though they are not re-



NASA TV. via Associated Press

Hurricane Isabel, as seen yesterday from the International Space Station. Its landfall is expected on Thursday.

CALIFORNIA'S VOTE DELAYED BY COURT **OVER PUNCH CARDS**

Error-Prone Machines Could Alter Outcome, U.S. Judges Say

By DEAN E. MURPHY

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 15 - A federal appeals court here today ordered that the recall election for Gov. Gray Davis be delayed, ruling that them cheduled date, Oct. 7, did not give veral counties with large minority populations enough time to replace outdated punch-card voting machines.

A three-judge panel of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, all Democratic appointees, said a postponement was warranted because "punch-card voting systems are significantly more prone to errors" than other systems and could lead to an inordinate number of ballots being disqualified.

"This is a critical time in our nation's history when we are attempting to persuade the people of other nations of the value of free and open elections," the judges said in their ruling. "A short postponement of the election will accomplish those aims

in session and it was unclear when or if it would take up the matter.

"The voters deserve finality," said Thomas Hiltachk, a lawyer for the group, Rescue California, which represents the recall's original proponent, Ted Costa, "We need, and the voters deserve, to know sooner rather than later if this election is going

Mr. Hikachk accused the three judges of "making up" and "twisting" facts to reach their conclusion, particularly in arguing that about 40,000 voters in the punch-card counties would be disenfranchised because of anticipated problems on Election Day. Rescue California argued that there was no evidence that punch-card machines have a higher rate of error than other forms of

"They simply ignored the evidence that was offered to them," Mr. Hiltachk said.

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Sector Stronger

Huge Typhoon Lashes South Korea

A floating hotel in the South Korean port city of Pusan, about 280 miles southeast of the capital, Seoul, lay on its side yesterday after being knocked over by a powerful typhoon that hit the southern part of the country. The typhoon, called Maemi, has left at least 72 people dead.

Does anyone think that they can "control" the water cycle?



National Report

The New Hork Eimes

East Coast Warily Waits as Forecasters Warn of Dangerous Storm

By PATRICK HEALY and ANDREW C. REVKIN

With weather forecasters all but certain Hurricane Isabel will strike the central Atlantic coast late this week, state and local governments up and down the Eastern Seaboard are bracing for what is expected to be an extremely dangerous storm.

Computer models showed yesterday that a region from New Jersey to North Carolina was at highest risk for a direct hit, with Washington nearly in the dead center of the storm's projected path, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported.

Michelle Mamelli, a meteorologist for the administration's National Hurricane Center, said the most recent forecasts showed tropical-storm-force winds lashing the coast of North Carolina early Thursday and hurricane-force winds of 71 miles per hour or more strking Maryland's Chesapeake Bay area later that day. The hurricane could veer as far north as New York and New England or as far south as South Carolina.

Weather experts acknowledged that such predictions were never ironclad. But for the first time in the eight days that federal officials have issued advisories about the storm, they said there was almost no chance it would miss the coast entirely.

"Everything points to a landfall," Ms. Mainelli said.

Forecasters said they expected Isabel to weaken slightly as it neared land, falling from a Category 5 or 4 storm, the most destructive classes

of hurricane, to a Category 3. Joe Bastardi, a hurricane expert 13 of 66 (A12/A13) National



Logica March Stating (Gety Engage)

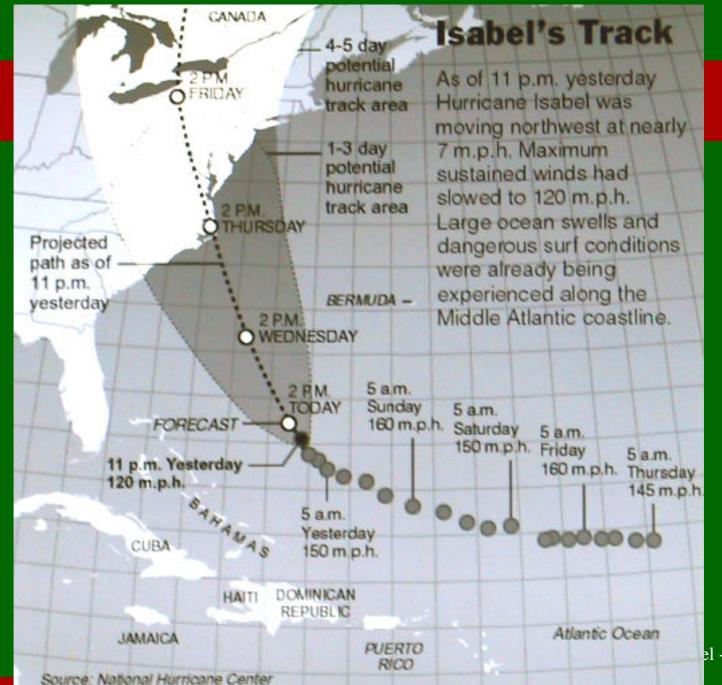
Surfers left the beach yesterday as clouds gathered over Wrightsville Beach, N.C. Some state residents are already preparing for Hurricane Isabel.



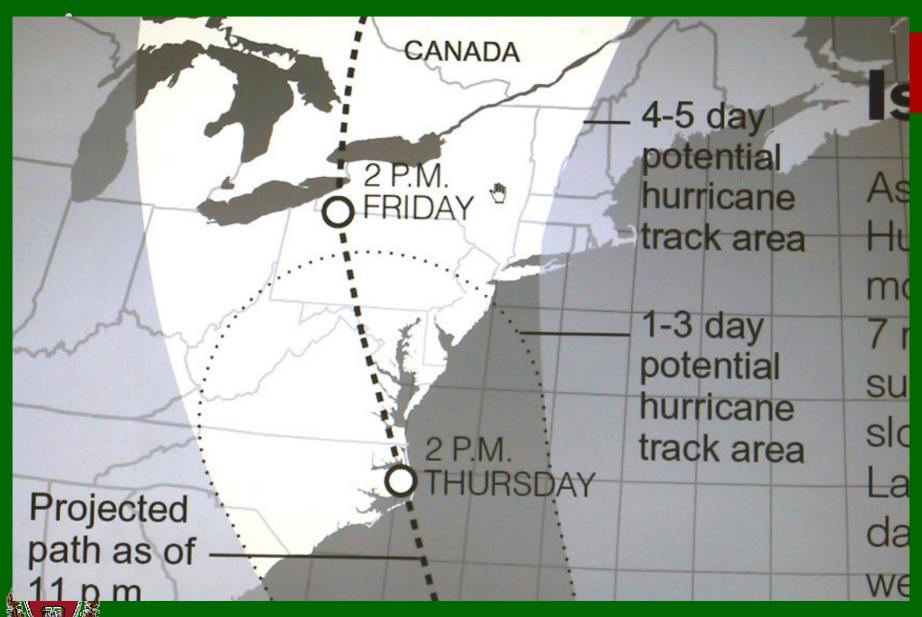
Jamie Turner, director of Delaware's Emergency Management Agency. If it appears that hurricane-



Isabel's Approach







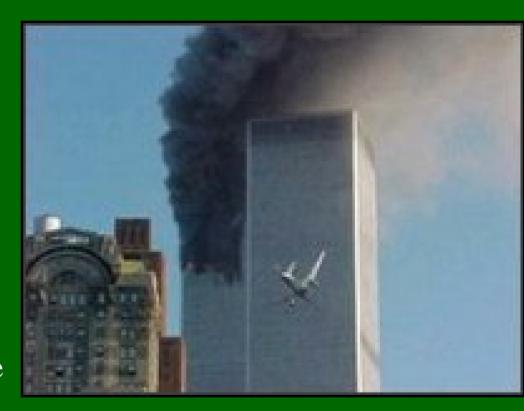
Did you see this coming?

Were you surprised by this?

Have you ever asked: "Why?"
-- not only "why did it
happen?"

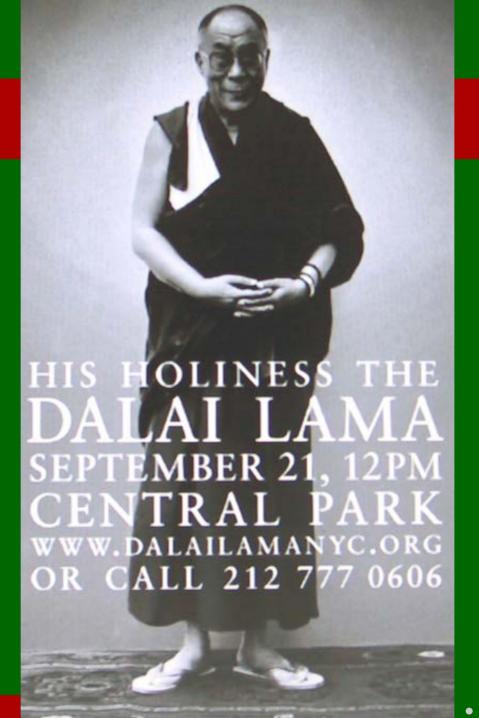
But, "why were you surprised?"

What other "blind spots" to we suffer from as a culture?





Other cultures have their own blind spots as well as their unique insights on the humanecosystem interaction.







Our task will be to devise set of principles of selfimposed, self-restraint — an ethic — for human behavior to sustain human life as part of the complex ecosystem we have evolved within and cannot live without.

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Who Should Take This Course?

Anyone who wants to orient themselves in the ecosystem in which they live.

Anyone who wishes to understand the trends and directions of evolution in both natural and sociopolitical systems around them.

Anyone who wants to live with themselves through complex and conflict ridden times.



Who Should Take This Course?

You should pay attention to how your mind is furnished....

You will have to live with it for the rest of your life.

Your own sanity is worth a great deal in a world and way of life that is showing signs of collapse.

If you don't furnish your own mind, someone else will do it for you (corporate, government, religious ideologues).

If you don't learn to stand for something, you can fall for anything.



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