Climate Justice Now! Art, Activism, Environment Today
HAVC 7, UC Santa Cruz, Spring 2016
M/W 5:00 – 6:45pm
Media Theater (M110)

Prof. T.J. Demos
Department of History of Art and Visual Culture, UCSC
Office: Porter College, D-209
Hours: Tue, 12-2 (please sign up for office hour times: http://doodle.com/poll/3acfk8wuniybbgtk)

Teaching Assistants and office hours

Sara Blaylock, blaylock@ucsc.edu, Wednesdays 3:30-4:30, Kresge 220
(Students: Addleman – Fox: Sign-in sheet: Sky Blue)

Zach Corse, wcorse@ucsc.edu, Mondays, 3-4pm DARC 104
(Students: Frangos - Lynch: White)

Ace Lehner, alehner@ucsc.edu, Mondays 7-8pm, Porter 226
(Students: Maddy - Sandoval: Turquoise)

Kris Timken, kristimken@gmail.com, Wednesdays 3:30-4:30, Porter 213
(Students: Scheuermann - Zhou: Yellow)
Introduction
As climate change threats grow more severe, and in the absence of government leadership, artists and activists are inventing creative strategies of consciousness-raising, mass mobilization, and ecologically sustainable thinking and living. This class, joined by a diverse array of guest speakers, all leaders in the area of climate justice and cultural politics, will explore current imperatives for making a just transition to a post-carbon future.

Requirements
This class requires attendance, as much of the learning will occur in class via lectures and presentations of guest speakers. Students will be marked down if they miss classes without excused absences.

Students are expected to submit written responses (400-500 words each) to 8 out of 12 guest presentations (it is your choice which you write about). All responses should be submitted to eCommons and placed in appropriate folders: Week 1, Week 2, etc., as inline texts (no attachments), and done so no later than one week after the class lecture to which the student is responding. Late responses will not be accepted.

Responses should offer a short recap of what the speaker discussed, and then consider some aspect of the lecture in depth, offering a well considered, researched, and intelligent essay. Placing the lecture in relation to class readings is also advisable. Please keep the essays within an academic framework, dedicated to concepts and analysis, not subjective opinion (e.g. don’t waste time describing how much you liked or didn’t like the guest, how you felt that day, why you were late, etc.). These should be articulate, thoughtful essays that reveal insight about what was presented, and how you were able to connect it to class readings and lectures. They should also make it very clear that you were present and paid close attention.

Grading
Responses will be graded according to UCSC standards of excellence, reflecting writing quality, originality and coherence of thought and argument, and evidence of having paid attention to lectures and course readings. Each response will be weighted equally in determining the final grade. No late papers will be accepted. There will be extra credit options, to be announced in class.

Reading:
Many of the readings are available online. All other readings will be made available to students in digital format on eCommons.

Program Learning Outcomes
This course fulfills the following History of Art and Visual Culture Program Learning Outcomes:
-PLO 1: Breadth of Cultural Knowledge: Students will be able to demonstrate an appreciation for, and foundation in, visual studies grounded in a range of historical, social, cultural, and ideological perspectives.
-PLO 2: Critical Thinking: Students will be able to apply critical thinking skills that will enable them to analyze and solve problems through observation, experience, reflection, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and/or explanation of visual, material, and historical cultural forms and values. Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills through oral and/or written communication.
-PLO 3: Research Proficiency: Students will be able to formulate research questions that expand their knowledge of art and visual culture. Students will be able to apply research methods to answer these questions by consulting the current literature and developing independent results through archival, library, or field research.
-PLO 4: Written Communication: Students will be able to present clear visual and historical analysis and interpretation in writing. Students will be able to demonstrate standard writing conventions in visual studies appropriate to purpose and context.
Accommodations for Learning Needs
Any student who thinks s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to submit their Accommodation Authorization and discuss specific needs, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. Please contact the Disability Resource Center at 831-45-2089 in room 146 Hahn Student Services or by e-mail at drc@ucsc.edu to coordinate those accommodations.

Standards of Academic & Community Integrity
All students in this class are expected to uphold high standards of academic integrity as set forth in http://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic_integrity and the UCSC Principles of Community, which can be read here: (http://registrar.ucsc.edu/navigator/appendix-a/community.html)

Avoid plagiarism
Plagiarism is when an idea, work, or information (including a text of any length from someone else’s writing) is taken and used without giving credit to the originator or source (i.e. taking credit for someone else’s work). Any plagiarism or cheating will result in an automatic and non-negotiable F in the course. In addition, the professor will follow the procedures for Dispensation of Academic Dishonesty as set forth here: http://www.ue.ucsc.edu/ai_policy-2

SCHEDULE

Monday 03/28: Introduction: Climate Justice and Activist Art

Reading:


Recommended:


Wed 3/30: David Solnit: “Using Arts Organizing to Fight for Climate Justice and More”

David Solnit has used arts to win positive social change for the last 25 years, using culture, art, creative actions and theater in mass actions, popular education, and celebrations. He has worked with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers–Florida tomato pickers who won dramatic changes for workers–and recently co-coordinated large scale arts and visuals for the 2015 Climate Justice mobilizations in Paris and the 2014 Peoples Climate March in NYC. Solnit has been a nonviolent direct action organizer and trainer for 35 years, co-organizing the shutdown of the World Trade Organization in Seattle in 1999, the shutdown of Financial District of San Francisco the day after the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, and the Flood Wall St in conjunction with the 2014 People’s Climate March. He is the editor/co-author of numerous books, including: Globalize Liberation: How to Uproot the System and Build a Better World (2004), Army of None: Strategies to Counter Military Recruitment, End War, and Build a Better World (2007), and The Battle of the Story of the Battle of Seattle (2009).
Reading:


Recommended:


Mon 4/4: In the Shadows of COP 21: Art Activism and Climate Justice Today

Reading:


Wed 4/6: Amy Balkin: “Climate Justice, Cultural Production, and the Atmospheric Commons”

Amy Balkin’s projects propose a reconstituted commons, considering legal borders and systems, environmental justice, and equitable sharing of common-pool resources in the context of climate change. These include clean-air park Public Smog, A People's Archive of Sinking and Melting (Amy Balkin, et al.), and This is the Public Domain, an ongoing effort to create a permanent international commons. She was a collaborator on Invisible-5, an environmental justice audio tour of California’s I-5 freeway corridor. Her work and project documentation have been included in DUMP! at Kunstal Aarhus, Anthropocene Monument at les Abattoirs, Public Works at Mills College Art Museum, dOCUMENTA (13), Globale: Infosphere at ZKM, and in Sublime at the Centre Pompidou-Metz.

Reading:

Ana Teixeira Pinto, “Atmospheric Monument” (An interview with Amy Balkin), Mousse 34 http://tomorrowmorning.net/texts/Mousse_d13_Amy%20Balkin.pdf.

**Mon 4/11: Emily Eliza Scott: “Specters of Aridity: Desertification in California and Beyond”**

Emily Eliza Scott is an interdisciplinary scholar, artist, and former park ranger who is currently a postdoctoral fellow in the architecture department at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH Zürich). Her work focuses on contemporary art and design practices that engage pressing ecological and/or geopolitical issues, often with the intent to actively transform real-world conditions. She has published in *The Avery Review, Art Journal, American Art, Third Text,* and *Cultural Geographies* as well as multiple edited volumes and online journals; and her first book, *Critical Landscapes: Art, Space, Politics,* coedited with Kirsten Swenson, was published by UC Press last year. She is a founding member of two long-term, collaborative projects: World of Matter (2011-), an international art and research platform on global resource ecologies, and the Los Angeles Urban Rangers (2004-), a group that develops guided hikes, campfire talks, field kits, and other interpretive tools to spark creative explorations of everyday habitats in their home megalopolis and beyond.

**Reading**


**Recommended:**


**Reading:**


Recommended:


**Mon 4/18: Reverend Billy: “The Earth Wants YOU!”**

William Talen is an activist, author and stage performer. As Reverend Billy, he pursues these parallel careers with the 35-voice Stop Shopping Choir under the direction of Savitri D. Talen and company lead a movement of nonviolent dramatic action, belting out their freedom-fighting lyrics on tour with Neil Young in 2015, in JP Morgan Chase bank lobbies, Wal-marts and at Monsanto’s corporate properties. Reverend Billy has been arrested more than 50 times advocating for Earth Rights and Human Rights. Talen's new book and the group's new album, both titled *The Earth Wants YOU!*, will released in April 2016.

Reading:

**Wed 4/20: Disobedient Objects, Radical Performance, and Eco-Institutional Critique**

Reading:


Ashley Dawson is Professor of English at the City University of New York’s Graduate Center and at the College of Staten Island/CUNY. He is the author of *Extinction: A Radical History* (O/R Press, 2016), *The Routledge Concise History of Twentieth-Century British Literature* (2013) and *Mongrel Nation: Diasporic Culture and the Making of Postcolonial Britain* (Michigan, 2007). He is also co-editor of four essay collections: *Against Apartheid: The Case for Boycotting Israeli Universities* (Haymarket, 2015), *Democracy, the State, and the Struggle for Global Justice* (Routledge, 2009); *Dangerous Professors: Academic Freedom and the National Security Campus* (Michigan, 2009); and *Exceptional State: Contemporary U.S. Culture and the New Imperialism* (Duke, 2007). A former editor of *Social Text Online* and of the AAUP’s *Journal of Academic Freedom*, he is currently completing work on a book entitled *Extreme City: Climate Change and the Urban Future* for Verso.
Reading:

Beth Shapiro, “Set them Free” and “Should We?,” How to Clone a Mammoth (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 175-188 and 189-207.

Wed 4/27: Against the Anthropocene: Visual Culture and Environment Today

Reading:


Mon 5/2: Not an Alternative (Beka Economopoulos), and Yates McKee: “Institutional Liberation and Climate Justice”

Not An Alternative is an arts collective with a mission to affect popular understandings of events, symbols, institutions, and history. Through engaged critical research and design, the group curates and produces interventions on material and immaterial space, bringing together tools from art, architecture, exhibition design, and political organizing. All these efforts are enacted through the occupation and redeployment of popular vernacular, semiotics, and memes. Not An Alternative’s most recent, ongoing project is The Natural History Museum, a mobile and pop-up museum that highlights the socio-political forces that shape nature, yet are excluded from traditional natural history museums.

Yates McKee is an art critic based in New York. His writing has appeared in October, Grey Room, South Atlantic Quarterly, and The Nation. He is co-editor of the anthology Sensible Politics: The Visual Cultures of Nongovernmental Activism, and the author of Strike Art: Contemporary Art and the Post-Occupy Condition (2016).

Reading:


Not an Alternative’s Website: http://notanalternative.org/

Wed 5/4: Claire Pentecost: “The Quick and the Dirty”
Claire Pentecost’s work engages collaboration, research, teaching, writing, lecturing, drawing, installation and photography in an ongoing interrogation of the institutional structures that organize knowledge. Her projects often address the contested boundary between the natural and the artificial, focusing in recent years on food, agriculture and bio-engineering. She has collaborated with Critical Art Ensemble and the late Beatriz daCosta, and since 2006 she has worked with Brian Holmes, 16Beaver and many others organizing a series of seminars to articulate the interlocking scales of our existence in the logic of globalization. In the Midwest, she collaborates with Compass, initiating a series of public hearings on the activities of the Monsanto Corporation. Recently Pentecost has exhibited at dOCUMENTA(13), Whitechapel Gallery, and the 13th Istanbul Biennial. She is represented by Higher Pictures, New York, and is Professor and Chair of the Department of Photography at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Reading:
Claire Pentecost, “Beyond Face” (2008), 1-7
Claire Pentecost, Notes from Underground (100 Notes – 100 Thoughts, No061), (Kassel and Ostfildern: documenta und Museum Fridericianum Veranstaltungs-GmbH, and Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2012), 4-23.

Mon 5/9: Gopal Dayaneni / Movement Generation: “Just Transition: Visionary Solutions for Climate Justice”

Gopal has been involved in fighting for social, economic, environmental and racial justice through organizing & campaigning, teaching, writing, speaking and direct action since the late 1980's. He currently serves on the Staff Collective of Movement Generation: Justice and Ecology Project, which inspires and engages in transformative action towards the liberation and restoration of land, labor, and culture. MG is rooted in vibrant social movements led by low-income communities and communities of color committed to a Just Transition away from profit and pollution and towards healthy, resilient and life-affirming local economies. Gopal serves on the boards of The Center for Story-based Strategy, The Working World and The ETCgroup; and is on the advisory board of the Catalyst Project. Gopal works at the intersection of ecology, economy and empire.

Reading:

Jason Negron-Gonzales and Mateo Nube, “Climate Change is Now...Is the Left Ready,” Left Turn (January 01, 2008), http://www.leftturn.org/climate-change-now-is-the-left-ready.


Wed 5/11: Climate Justice, Colonialism, and Race: From Bhopal to #BlackLivesMatter

Reading:

Nicolas Lampert, “Impersonating Utopia and Dystopia [the Yes Men],” in A People’s Art History of the United States, 296-303.


**Mon 5/16: Ricardo Dominguez: “Lines in the Sand: Geo-Aesthetics | Geo-Disturbances”**

Ricardo Dominguez is a co-founder of The Electronic Disturbance Theater (EDT), a group who developed virtual sit-in technologies in solidarity with the Zapatistas communities in Chiapas, Mexico, in 1998. His recent Electronic Disturbance Theater 2.0/b.a.n.g. lab project (http://bang.transreal.org/), the Transborder Immigrant Tool (a GPS cell phone safety net tool for crossing the Mexico/US border) was the winner of “Transnational Communities Award” (2008), an award funded by Cultural Contact, Endowment for Culture Mexico–US and handed out by the US Embassy in Mexico. Exhibited widely, the project was under investigation by the US Congress in 2009-2010 and was reviewed by Glenn Beck in 2010 as a gesture that potentially “dissolved” the U.S. border with its poetry. Dominguez is an associate professor at the University of California, San Diego, in the Visual Arts Department. He also is co-founder of *particle group*, with artists Diane Ludin, Nina Waisman, Amy Sara Carroll, which developed an art project about nano-toxicology entitled *Particles of Interest: Tales of the Matter Market* (http://hemisphericinstitute.org/hemi/en/particle-group-intro).

Reading:


**Wed 5/18: Will Wilson**

Will Wilson is a Diné photographer who spent his formative years living in the Navajo Nation. Born in San Francisco in 1969, Wilson studied photography at the University of New Mexico (Dissertation Tracked MFA in Photography, 2002) and Oberlin College (BA, Studio Art and Art History, 1993). In 2007, Wilson won the Native American Fine Art Fellowship from the Eiteljorg Museum, and in 2010 was awarded a prestigious grant from the Joan Mitchell Foundation. Wilson has held visiting professorships at the Institute of American Indian Arts (1999-2000), Oberlin College (2000-01), and the University of Arizona (2006-08). From 2009 to 2011, Wilson managed the National Vision Project, a Ford Foundation funded initiative at the Museum of Contemporary Native Arts in Santa Fe, and helped to coordinate the New Mexico Arts Temporary Installations Made for the Environment (TIME) program on the Navajo Nation. Wilson is part of the Science and Arts Research Collaborative (SARC) which brings together artists interested in using science and technology in their practice with collaborators from Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia Labs as part of the International Symposium on Electronic Arts, 2012 (ISEA). Currently, Wilson’s work can be seen at the Portland Art Museum in: Contemporary Native American Photographers and the Edward S. Curtis Legacy, Zig Jackson, Wendy Red Star and Will Wilson. He is the Photography Program Head at the Santa Fe Community College.

Reading


Rec:


**Mon 5/23: Idle No More, Indigenous Ecologies, and Blockadia**

Reading:


Rec:


**Wed 5/25: Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle, “Here Come the Ecossexuals!”**

Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle will weave together stories of their love/art adventures as they discuss their environmental art and activism. Beth a punk dyke sculptor turned art professor and Annie was a sex worker turned performance artist. They fell heels-over-head in love and have collaborated
non-stop ever since. In 2008 they invited the Earth to be their lover and launched the ecosex movement. This movement continues to engage a diverse and interdisciplinary group of outsider activists, theorists, artists, and sex workers as it creates spaces for imagining other kinds of futures in the midst of global climate change.

Reading:


Mon 05/30: Memorial Day Holiday

Wed 6/1: Conclusion: Where do we go from here?

Reading: