

Lecture 9: Analysis of Historical Framework

1. Questions
2. Why History?
3. Beginnings
4. Reform & Conservation
5. Age of Ecology
6. Post-1970

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## Why History?

- Examine birth of environmental movement
- Explore causes of changing values
- Understand role of public attitudes on political action
- Understand administrative philosophy of environmental laws

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## Germination

- Environmental concerns > 300 yrs old
- Early 1600's: forest reserves for ship masts
- 1700s: controls on deer and waterfowl hunting
- First environmental crime (1825): forest poaching

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## Early Leadership



- Lewis & Clark, 1804-1806
- Nature Writing:
  - Catlin, 1832: proposed national park idea
  - Emerson, 1837: *Nature*
  - Olmstead, 1857: 'architect of Central Park'
  - Thoreau, 1858: *Walden Pond*

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## National Interest



- Sportsman's Magazine: sparked by hunting, fishing & natural history
- 1871: *The American Sportsman*
  - 1873: *Forest & Stream*

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## Urban Growth



- Rapid urban growth in late 1880's
- Chicago (6X), Los Angeles (20X)
- Foundries, machine shops, mills, refineries, steel mills
- Concerns about garbage, clean water, clean air, and sewage

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## Urban Reform



Lead by women's civic organizations:

- 1884: Ladies' Health Protective Association
- 1894: Civic Club of Philadelphia
- Organized garbage collection, sewage treatment, smoke abatement

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## Preservation movement



Preserve natural areas:

- Focus on intrinsic vs. instrumental value
- Championed by John Muir (1834-1914)
- Place to retreat & regenerate
- Founded the *Sierra Club* (1892)

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## Preservation movement



Creation of National Parks:

- 1872: Yellowstone
- 1890: Yosemite
- 1899: Mount Rainier

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## Conservation movement



Wise use of natural resources:

- Focus on instrumental value
- Advocated multiple, sustainable-use
- Championed by Gifford Pinchot (1865-1946)
- Appointed Chief of *Forest Service* (1898)

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## Conservation vs. Preservation

- Conservation ethic became federal policy
- Largely coexisted until the 1950's
- Famous clash over *Hetch-Hetchy Valley*

*"Dam Hetch Hetchy! As well dam for water-tanks the people's cathedrals and churches, for no holier temple has ever been consecrated by the heart of man." -- John Muir*



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## Post-WWII

- Strong economic & population growth
- Dramatic increase in recreation in national parks :

1940	»	1950	»	1960
16 million		33 million		79 million

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## Science & Awareness



- Scientific research documented effects
- Major popular books:
  - Aldo Leopold: *Sand County Almanac* (1949)
  - Rachel Carson: *Silent Spring* (1962)
  - Paul Ehrlich: *Population Bomb* (1968)

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## Polarization

Continued urban growth and associated pollution caused divergence of:

1. Those who supported & profited from industrialization ('*cornucopians*')
2. Those who worried about the effects of pollution ('*environmentalists*')

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## Rise of NGOs



New organizations:

- 1961: *World Wildlife Fund*
  - 1967: *Environmental Defense Fund*
- Sierra Club* increased 10X in 1960s

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## Catalysts

1960s rise of activism & unrest from the Vietnam War and civil rights movement



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## Catalysts

1969 burning of the Cuyahoga River, OH



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## Catalysts

1969 Santa Barbara oil spill



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## Television



- 1960: 87% of US, mostly B & W
- 1970: 98% of US, color outsold B & W
- Satellites began global news
- Public Service Announcements (PSA)

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## The Perfect Legislative Storm

1. Compelling problem defined
2. Supportive political climate
3. Available solution

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## Early Legislation

### Federal Government responds:

- 1963: *Clean Air Act*
- 1965: *Water Quality Act*
- 1966: *Endangered Species Preservation Act*
- 1968: *National Wild & Scenic Rivers Act*

*Early, weaker versions of major legislation*

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## 1970s: “Environmental Decade”

### Federal Government responds:

- 1970: *NEPA*
- 1970: Creation of *EPA*
- 1970: *Clean Air Act*
- 1973: *Endangered Species Act*
- 1977: *Clean Water Act*

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## Earth Day



### April 22, 1970:

- Modeled after college teach-ins
- 20 million people
- Beginning of “environmental movement”?

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## Change in Environmental Ethics

- Unprecedented change in the legal relationships between humankind & the environment
- Routine behavior came to be recognized as antisocial, morally wrong, and criminal
- Unthinkable for federal official to place the environment at risk without first completing an EIS

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## The Empire Strikes Back?

Industry respond to new regulations:

- Form research groups
- Form policy groups
- Develop educational materials
- Enhance public relations

Successfully battle NGOs in the courts

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## Shifting Strategies

Broadening issues weakens NGOs

Rise of radical environmentalism:

- *Greenpeace*: 1971
- *Sea Shepherd*: 1977
- *Earth First!*: 1980

Green Party begins to appear in politics

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## Environmental “Warriors”



Backlash to failure of traditional approaches

- Solutions through anarchy

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## Deregulation

Reagan Administration: 1980-1988

- Goal to minimize federal regulations
- CEQ: 1 member; small budget
- Used White House Councils to sidestep EPA
- James Watt, Secretary of Interior

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## Disasters



Kept focus on the environment:

- Love Canal (1978)
- Ixtoc I (1979)
- Three-mile Island (1979)
- Bhopal (1984)
- Chernobyl (1986)
- Exxon Valdez (1989)

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## Love Canal



Used by Hooker Chemical (1942-1953):

- Dumped 21,000 tons of solvents, acids & pesticides, PCBs

Sold to Niagara Falls Board of Education for \$1

School and subdivision built on top

High rates of birth defects & miscarriages

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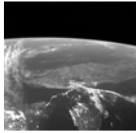
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## Global Awareness



1990s: elevation of environmental issues

- Scientific evidence of ozone hole, global warming, declining resources
- 1990 Earth Day; 1992 Rio Summit
- Strong environmental policy of Clinton-Gore Administration (1992-2000)

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## 21<sup>st</sup> Century



Environmental issues low priority:

- Bush-Chaney Administration
- Economic downturn
- Energy issues
- Terrorism, National Security & War
- Paradigm shift with President Obama

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## Conclusions

- Environmental movement has long history
- Interest in the environment varies
- Public participation & activism can cause policy-shifts
- Federal policy based on short-term reactive response

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## Next Time. . .

- Legislative History of NEPA
- Reading:
  - NEPA!

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