

T3 4605  
**Culture, Energy, and Environment**

Fall 2015  
Wednesdays, 3:05-6  
Gordy Hall 310

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 10-12, Thursdays 11-12  
\*my office during Fall 2015 is Putnam 116\*

This course explores the arts and culture of our region as related to energy and the environment both past and present. Culture is conceived of broadly, encompassing human expression and experience from everyday life to artistic presentation. With an emphasis on current engagements with the past, issues we will examine include the history of coal mining, labor politics and practice, the growth and decline (and renovation) of small towns, and environmental remediation efforts.

In Southeast Ohio, human life and land are intimately connected through experiences, stories, and commemorative efforts. Drawing on interconnected work being done in the region, spaces and expressive mediums examined in the course will include energy infrastructure; local history museums, with an emphasis on archival collection, organization, and display; and environmental remediation efforts. We will also discuss, as relevant, historical markers; murals; festivals; and performance of music and theater.

Readings that provide historical and structural understandings of past and present dynamics of Southeast Ohio are paired with field trips, screenings, and guest lectures.

### **Course Objectives**

At the end of this course you will be able to:

- describe how culture, energy, and environment are meaningfully related in Southeast Ohio
- explain the significance of expressive and material culture for life in mining towns past and present
- interpret and deploy collection, exhibition, and mapping strategies
- investigate social, cultural, and environmental consequences of energy extraction across time

Through class field trips, assignments, and group projects you will:

- acquire and analyze information through online and other library resources
- utilize technology in research and class presentations
- effectively present information orally to an audience of peers and faculty

## Readings

The following book is available in campus bookstores:

Freese, Barbara. 2003. *Coal: A Human History*. London: Penguin Books.

Other readings are available as PDFs on Blackboard

## Requirements

### Attendance and participation [15%]

The class will be a mix of fieldtrips, lectures, seminar format discussion, and group presentations. You should complete all the readings and be prepared to discuss them. Attendance is crucial. If you *must* miss class please let me know in advance. Doctor's notes are required for absence due to illness. It is especially important that you attend all the fieldtrips and group presentations. If you have more than **1** unexcused absence your grade will be reduced by a half grade.

### Group projects [45% (15% each)]

Each module will include a group project and presentation. You will work in groups of 4-5 students to conduct research, develop the presentation format, and present in class. Guidelines and topics will be provided in class. No PowerPoint or handmade posters allowed! 75% of your grade will be based on the presentation and 25% will be based on your contribution to its development.

These must (1) present a concept or argument, (2) be based in original research, and (3) be formally successful. Include a bibliography of sources used.

You will be given some class time to work on your projects, but most of the work will have to be done outside of class. Specific guidelines will be provided for each project.

### Fieldtrip Reports [15%]

A 2-3 page report on each fieldtrip is due Wednesday of the following week (double spaced, with 12 pt. Times New Roman font and 1" margins). While the assignment is open, you might discuss what you found to be the most important aspect of the fieldtrip and/or the most surprising. You could focus on sensory experience or historical information, on exhibition strategies or hidden infrastructure. Draw on course readings as relevant. Writing matters, and your essay will be marked down for spelling and grammar errors.

### Final paper [25%]

Your final paper (8-10 pages, double spaced, with 12 pt. Times New Roman font and 1" margins) should develop an independent argument from one of the group projects, drawing on the research conducted and the course readings. It must have a thesis, and follow academic paper format with an introduction, body, and conclusion. Further guidelines will be provided.

Due: Wednesday, December 9 by 5 p.m.

Extra Credit possible for attending (and writing about) theme events! Stay tuned for schedules of events from the following themes: OHIO: Sense of Place, Sustainability, Making and Breaking the Law.

## Grading Scale

A-	90-92	A	93-100		
B-	80-82	B	83-86	B+	87-89
C-	70-72	C	73-76	C+	77-79
D-	60-62	D	63-66	D+	67-69
F	0-59				

## Academic Honesty

The Ohio University Student Code of Conduct prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty. These include cheating, plagiarism and forgery. If a student engages in course-related academic dishonesty, he or she will automatically fail the course. Instructors may also report cases of academic dishonesty to the Director of University Judiciaries for further action; however, by so doing, an instructor does not in any way relinquish the right to assign a grade in a course.

If you are unfamiliar with Ohio University's policies and procedures related to Academic Misconduct, visit: <http://www.ohio.edu/judiciaries/academic-misconduct.cfm#students>.

*It is important that you understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.* If you don't, visit "How to Recognize Plagiarism" at: <https://www.indiana.edu/~istd/examples.html>.

## Equal Educational Opportunity Policy

It is the policy of Ohio University that there shall be no discrimination against any individual in educational opportunities because of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, veteran status, sexual orientation and/or disability. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. If you are not yet registered as a student with a documented disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 740-593-2620 or visit: <http://www.ohio.edu/disabilities/>

In this class there will be no discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation or physical handicap.

We will maintain an ethos of respect for diverse opinions, backgrounds, and disciplinary approaches.

**Right to Revise:** I reserve the right to make changes in this syllabus to improve your learning experience!

## SCHEDULE

### Week 1, August 26

Introductions and course overview

Reading:

Williams, Raymond. 1985. "Culture." In *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Pp. 76-82. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

### Module 1: Mapping Energy Infrastructure

Week	Date	Readings	Activity
2	9/2	Freese, Barbara. 2003. <i>Coal: A Human History</i> . London: Penguin Books. Ch. 7: Invisible Power	Field Trip: Gavin Power Plant
3	9/9	Bakke, Gretchen. Forthcoming. <i>The Grid Book</i> . London: Bloomsbury. Introduction and Ch. 5: Things Fall Apart  Peterson, Marina. 2013. Surface Effects: Vital Traces and Underground Spaces in Appalachian Ohio. <i>O-Zone: A Journal of Object-Oriented Studies</i> . <a href="http://ozone-journal.org">http://ozone-journal.org</a> .	Special Collections, meet on 5 <sup>th</sup> floor in the Voinovich Center (3:05)  Mapping Energy: Lecture and discussion
4	9/16	Barbour, Ian, Harvey Brooks, Sanford Lakoff and John Opie. 2010. Energy and the Rise of American Industrial Society. In <i>The Energy Reader</i> , ed. Laura Nader. Pp. 32-44. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.  Mitchell, Timothy. 2011. Machines of Democracy. In <i>Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil</i> . Pp. 12-42. London: Verso  "How I Gave Up Alternating Current" <a href="http://arstechnica.com/gadgets/2015/08/op-ed-how-i-gave-up-alternating-current/">http://arstechnica.com/gadgets/2015/08/op-ed-how-i-gave-up-alternating-current/</a>  After Oil <a href="http://afteroil.ca/">http://afteroil.ca/</a>	Office of Sustainability Presentation (3:05)  Cultures of Energy: Group activity and discussion
5	9/23		Group Presentations: Mapping Projects

## Module 2: Mining, Memory, and Material Culture

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Activity</b>
6	9/30	Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. 1998. Objects of Ethnography. In <i>Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage</i> . Pp. 17-78. Berkeley: University of California Press.	Visit the Athens Historical Society
7	10/7	Crowell, Douglas L. 1995. <i>History of the Coal-Mining Industry in Ohio</i> . Columbus: State of Ohio Department of Natural Resources. [excerpts]	Field Trip: New Straitsville/Shawnee
8	10/14	Freese, Barbara. 2003. <i>Coal: A Human History</i> . London: Penguin Books. Chapter 4: Full Steam Ahead Chapter 5: A Precious Seed Chapter 6: The Rise and Fall of King Coal  Buckley, Geoffrey L. 2004. Coal mining in Appalachia, History of. In <i>Encyclopedia of Energy</i> , Volume 1, eds. Cutler J. Cleveland, et al. Pp. 495-505. San Diego: Elsevier, Inc.  Hodder, Ian. 2001. The Interpretation of Documents and Material Culture. In <i>Qualitative Research Methods</i> , ed. Darin Weinberg. Pp. 266-280. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.	Objects and Collections: Group activity and discussion
9	10/21		Group Presentations: Exhibits  Rural Action Presentation

### Module 3: Sensing Environment

Week	Date	Readings	Activity
10	10/28	Gordon, Christopher P. 2009. Mine Subsidence: Mitigating that Sinking Feeling. <i>Ohio Geology</i> 1:1-7.  Twidale, C.R. 2004. River Patterns and Their Meaning. <i>Earth-Science Reviews</i> 67:159-218.	Field Trip: Acid Mine Runoff
11	11/4	Carse, Ashley. 2012. Nature as Infrastructure: Making and Managing the Panama Canal Watershed. <i>Social Studies of Science</i> 42(4):539-563.  Willow, Anna J. 2014. The New Politics of Environmental Degradation: Un/expected Landscapes of Disempowerment and Vulnerability. <i>Journal of Political Ecology</i> 21:222-348.  “The Music of the Environment,” by R. Murray Schafer	Environment, Energy Futures, and Soundscapes: Lecture and discussion  “Voices of the Forest, A Village Soundscape – Bosavi Village” by Steven Feld  National Park Service, Natural Sounds <a href="http://www.nature.nps.gov/sound/">http://www.nature.nps.gov/sound/</a>
12	11/11	Veteran’s Day: No Class	
13	11/18		Group Presentations: Energy Soundscapes

**Week 14, December 1:** No class, work on final paper

**Final Paper Due: Wednesday, December 9, by 5 p.m.**