Women and Water: Fighting for Environmental Justice
EXP-0048-F
Tuesdays 6-8:30
Instructor: Lindsey C. Williams

Description: When is the last time you really thought about what it means to have access to water? Even in the driest of places, its essential role in not just human, but all life means that we don’t exist unless there is water. But just because water is essential, doesn’t mean it’s always valued. There are many stories of the fights to protect access and quality of drinking water, conserve wetlands and coastal areas, and understand and protect other living things that rely on water. This course will explore environmental studies concepts through the lens of the role women have played in conservation and environmental justice with a focus on water. Concepts addressed through presentations and discussions around women and water include: using the case study method, environmental justice, consensus based decisions, coalition building, science translation, gender bias, negotiation styles, writing, art of storytelling, critical thinking, representativeness, and others.

Required Reading:
Weekly news or journal articles to facilitate discussion. Specific readings are TBD drawn from Environmental Studies, Negotiation, Interdisciplinary science, and other readings.

Projects and Grading: In addition to readings and discussion, participants will conduct research on a woman of their choosing and present throughout the course to augment weekly themes. The project proposal will be presented to class and reviewed by lecturer and one other student for written feedback. Students will also complete a two-page reflection paper on a course topic of their choosing no later than the 7th week. Students will present their research findings and share a draft of their research paper for additional student feedback prior to submission. Students will share edits/comments with lecturer and peer. Participation is expected in all classes and discussions.

- Class Participation – 20%
- Initial project proposal (1 page) and presentation (5 minutes) – 10%
- Peer comments on proposal – 5%
- Reflection paper (max two pages on choice of topics) – 10%
- Research Presentation – 15%
- Rough Draft Paper – 10%
- Peer review/edit of rough draft – 10%
- Final Paper – 20%
**Course Overview – subject to adjustments based on student interests:**

Week 1 – Overview and Introductions/ Discussion of interests / The case study method

Week 2 – The US Environmental Movement
This week will provide context for future discussions by ensuring the class has the same foundational knowledge about the US environmental movement and its connection to other national and global movements.

Week 3 – Pioneers in Environmental Science
We will discuss examples of women in science, conservation, community activism, etc. to set the stage for individual research throughout the semester.

Week 4 – Muddy waters: race, gender, poverty, environment
Discussion on how these issues are treated together in some contexts and separately in others – and how that impacts the outcomes.

Week 5 – Getting the word out: convincing your neighbors, convincing the world
Exploring efforts to highlight a problem, bring people in to act, and tell the story after.

Week 6 – Taking matters into their own hands: women conservation organizers
This class will reinforce previous discussions by focusing on how women served as organizers.

Week 7 – It’s not just about me: bringing others to the table
Revisiting environmental justice with a consensus building and negotiation frame

Week 8 – “Thinking globally, acting locally”
This class will revisit and expand on the discussion of women outside the U.S.

Week 9 – Barriers and Bridges: Gender as help, gender as hurdle
This week we will discuss the benefits and challenges that being a woman brings to the cases we are exploring. Discussion will also include research on gender biases in a range of settings.

Week 10 – From activist to bureaucrat
As the environmental movement progressed, institutions changed (or were created) and people who had once fought for change began working for these organizations. Class will explore what that means for the issues and institutions.

Week 11 – Unsung heroes
Why are some women celebrated and others vilified? Are there women that history has forgotten?

Week 12 – Presentation wrap up, course revisit

Week 13 – The way ahead: what will we do with what we have learned?