

## SHERP Environmental Reporting Syllabus 2020

### ADD FOR NEXT YEAR INSTEAD OF WEDGES

Kind of like the Pacala/Socolow "wedge" exercise we did in class, but way more interactive.

Watch the 5-minute video first: <https://youtu.be/2Y9AjscMFNg>

Then play with it here: <https://en-roads.climateinteractive.org/scenario.html> //Dan

Environmental Reporting (SHERP) G54.1188.01 – Spring 2020  
Wednesdays, 10:00-1:15, 20 Cooper Square, Room 654

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### Overview

This class has four broad aims: first, to help you learn to produce deep, engaging and important stories on environmental topics; second, to ground you in vital environmental issues including risk assessment, epidemiology, environmental law, sustainability, biodiversity threats, energy choices and climatology; third, to introduce (or reintroduce) you to the work of exemplary environmental writers and thinkers, from Henry David Thoreau to John McPhee and beyond; and fourth, to understand how environmental communication and audience perception are changing in the era of digital platforms, including social media. We'll also spend a day on tech coverage because it's not adequately addressed elsewhere in the SHERP curriculum. Lastly, because environmental journalism is the journalism of place, we will go on three field trips: to the Bronx Zoo, the American Museum of Natural History and the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. At each site, we will go behind the scenes to meet researchers and discuss what it means to be an environmental scientist and an environmental storyteller in the Anthropocene, the age of humans.

### Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate awareness of journalism's core ethical values
- Write clear, accurate and engaging prose in an audience-appropriate manner
- Demonstrate critical thinking, independence, and creativity appropriate to the role of journalism in a democratic society
- Interview subjects, conduct research, and evaluate information
- Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diverse perspectives

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- Use technological tools and apply quantitative concepts as appropriate

### Scheduling and Attendance

The class will meet Wednesdays from 10-1:15 in Room 654 of 20 Cooper Square, except the following days:

- **March 11** we will meet at the American Museum of Natural History, probably from 9:30-3.
- **March 18** is spring break week.
- **April 29** we will meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge from 10:00-2:00.

We will start class promptly at 10:00. **Please be on time.** If you're late, you'll be interrupting your own classmates' critique presentations, which is a pretty rude thing to do. Because we are going to move very quickly through a lot of material, I expect you to attend every class session. If there's some reason you can't, you need to let me know beforehand via e-mail or telephone.

### Ethical Conduct

Now that you're in your second semester of grad school, there is no excuse for appropriating someone else's work, even if you didn't mean to. The same is true for other journalistic lapses that have the effect of misleading your readers, sources, peers, editors, or professors. If you have any doubt *at all* about how to handle an ethics-related concern – everything from a sticky situation with a source to uncertainty over how much information needs to be attributed in your writing – resist the temptation to deal with it on your own. Instead, ask your professor for guidance or – even better – bring it up as an in-class discussion topic. Also, please don't forget about the Carter Institute's [ethics handbook](#), an excellent, searchable resource. Ethical behavior is an absolute must at in grad school and beyond. Violators face sanctions ranging from failing grades to expulsion. Similar lapses after graduating are the surest way to end your career in journalism. **If you have any doubt at all about an ethical issue, always ask!**

### Participation

This success of this class depends on robust discussion, which in turn depends on diligent preparation. The best journalists are skeptical but not cynical. You should emulate them! Come prepared to contribute, to question, to argue – and to be called upon if you're too quiet! There will be reading assignments every week. I expect you to be compulsive about keeping up with the readings and being prepared to discuss them intelligently. I'll be calling on you at random to talk about them.

### Laptops and Attention

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There's good evidence from research that you're more likely to remember notes you've written by hand than typed on your laptop. Still, I know many of you like to take notes on your laptop, which is fine. What's not fine is to be distracted by something else on your screen. Make the most out of in-class time and don't be rude to your classmates, speakers and professor. Keep your eyes and attention on the speaker, always.

### Writing Assignments

Writing and rewriting are the two most important things you are doing at SHERP, and this class is no exception. You'll write a 1,300-word feature, a 1,000-word profile, an 800-word issue story, an 800-word persuasive/observational essay, as well as two study-based assignments. For the feature, issue and profile stories, you'll also do rewrites. For the essay, a rewrite is optional. On your assigned day, you'll also present a brief oral critique of a recently published piece of environmental journalism.

For the feature, issue and profile story assignments, you'll be pitching three ideas and sending them to me 24 hours before in-class pitching. If two people are proposing the same idea, we'll work it out. All feature, issue and profile story topics need to be pre-approved by me.

It's important that you type all your assignments; don't write any of them by hand. All assignments should be written in Microsoft Word (.doc files), so I can edit them and return them to you with comments. (I'll use the 'track changes' function, as usual.) If you need to use some other word-processing program, it's your responsibility to make sure it's a program I can work with. Unless I tell you otherwise, e-mail all your assignments as attached .doc files to dan.fagin@nyu.edu. **Unless otherwise specified, all assignments are due via attached e-mail at the start of class.**

### Story Critiques

Close readings of environmental stories published in mass-market media are an important part of this class. We will set aside a short time at the beginning of most class days to dissect recently published environmental stories and figure out ways to improve them. (I've already assigned everyone a designated day at random, as you'll see in the weekly schedule at the end of this syllabus. If you want to switch your critique date with someone else, that's fine, just get their permission and let me know.)

The article you pick for your critique should be: a) on an environmental topic, b) written for a broad, non-specialized audience by a professional journalist, c) between 500 and 2,000 words long, and d) less than perfect (because how do you critique a perfect story?) but not so awful that your criticisms are obvious. If you prefer, you may instead choose an audio or video piece between two and ten minutes long to critique.

You'll prepare a **five-minute oral presentation** in which you'll tell the class what worked and what didn't work in the story you critiqued, and what you would do

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differently to improve the story. Be ready to point out at least three ways the story succeeds and three ways it falls short, as well as specific ideas to improve the story.

**Important note:** When it's your assigned week, you will need to bring 15 printed copies of the article you're critiquing to class, so we can all read it before you lead the discussion. If you decide to critique a video or audio piece, you need to make sure the URL is publicly accessible, and you need to let me know by 5 p.m. on the day before you're critiquing so I can arrange to play it in the classroom.

The point of the critiquing exercise is to ask and answer questions such as: Was the writing effective? Was the sourcing complete? How could the piece have been organized better? How would your reporting strategy have been different? Your job is not just to show what went wrong in a piece of journalism, but more importantly to figure out what you would do differently to improve the piece!

There are, of course, many places you can find suitable stories to critique. It's boring to have every critique come from the *New York Times*, so try to range more widely. If you're stumped, here are some ideas: newspapers such as the *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Boston Globe*, *Chicago Tribune* and *USA Today*; magazines such as *Time*, *Atlantic*, *Harper's*, *Guardian*, *Newsweek*, *Mother Jones*, *Smithsonian*, *The Nation*, *Outside*, *Audubon* and *Chemical and Engineering News*; web sites such as [buzzfeednews.com](http://buzzfeednews.com), [npr.org](http://npr.org), [bbc.com](http://bbc.com), [vox.com](http://vox.com), [insideclimatenews.org](http://insideclimatenews.org), [qz.com](http://qz.com), [livescience.com](http://livescience.com), [sciam.com](http://sciam.com), [politico.com](http://politico.com), [businessinsider.com](http://businessinsider.com), and many others. Every weekday, the Society of Environmental Journalists posts a [daily selection](#) of new and notable environmental stories from around the U.S. (You don't have to join SEJ to get access to this daily service, but if you're interested in environmental journalism you should definitely [join!](#)) Feel free to select stories from outside the U.S., too. Another very useful place to find environmental stories is the "in the news" [links](#) at Environmental Health News.

### Readings

**You need two books for this class.** The first is *American Earth*, edited by Bill McKibben. Unless you borrow one from a former SHERPie or the library, Amazon is usually cheapest source ([new](#) or [used](#)), but of course it's widely available elsewhere, too. *American Earth* is available only in hardcover, but we are going to use it pretty heavily and it's packed with great environmental writing and thinking, so I hope it's a book you'll want to keep forever.

The other book you need is [Encounters with the Archdruid](#) by John McPhee. Any version is fine. We're going to be reading "A River", the third piece in the book. It's vintage McPhee. After you read it, you're going want to read the other two pieces, too!

If you want, you can also buy [Toms River](#) and thus avoid the annoyance of reading seven chapters as online pdfs. But please don't feel pressured to buy it; I won't

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mind at all if you don't! (Back in the day, I used to get annoyed when professors made me buy books they wrote.)

All the readings for this class that are not in the McKibben and McPhee books will be available online, either via links in this syllabus (see the weekly schedule at the end of this document) or as pdf files in the class folder labelled "2020 Environmental Reporting" in Google Drive. In that folder, you'll also see the latest version of this syllabus, including links. Remember that the weekly readings and assignments will change somewhat as the semester progresses, so **always rely on the online, Google Drive version of the syllabus**, which will always be up to date.

Again, it's essential that you do the readings each week and be ready to discuss them productively. When I list a reading as "optional" that means it truly is optional; if you're interested and have time, then read it. If you're not or you don't, then don't feel pressured to do so.

### Grades, Due Dates, and Story Lengths

**All assignments are due by 10 a.m. on the assigned due date**, unless otherwise specified. Meeting deadlines is truly critical in the professional world, so you need to build that self-discipline now. If you can't meet a deadline for an assignment in this class, I expect you to have a very good reason and to talk to me about it ahead of time. Unless there's a true emergency, even the best reason will not be good enough to avoid being marked down for lateness.

Similarly, writing to the assigned length is an absolute necessity for a professional journalist. All written work in this class should be turned in **within 100 words of the assigned length**, which means that, for example, your feature story can be anywhere from 1,200 to 1,400 words long. **Please also note that the topics of your feature and profile need to be approved by me in advance.**

Your final grade in this class will be a combination of your written work and class discussion. Here's the formula, plus deadlines for every assignment:

- 800-word issue story: **15 percent** (divided equally between draft and revision).  
Three pitches due Feb. 4, story due to peer editor Feb. 22, revision due March 13.
  - Toxicology/Exposure assignment: **5 percent**. Due Feb. 19.
  - Epidemiology assignment: **5 percent**. Due March 4.
  - 1,300-word feature: **25 percent** (divided evenly between draft and revision).  
Three pitches due Feb. 18, story due to peer editor March 22, revision due April 15.
  - 1,000-word profile: **20 percent** (divided evenly between draft and revision).  
Three pitches due March 24, story due to peer editor April 23, revision due May 13.
- (NOTE: If you prefer, you may make your profile a video or audio piece – as long as the effort is equivalent, and I sign off on it. If you're interested, let me know and we'll talk about it. The topic cannot be the same as what you're already covering in another class or in the audio workshop, but it can be an offshoot. Talk to me and we'll work it out.)

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- 800-word observational/persuasive essay. **10 percent.** Due May 3. Optional revision (worth half the grade) due May 13.
- Class participation (including oral article critique and attendance): **20 percent.**

### Contacting Me, Contacting You

You can contact me any time at dan.fagin@nyu.edu. If you prefer good old-fashioned interpersonal communication – and who doesn't? – call me at my home office (516-801-2477) or my NYU office (212-998-7971). My cell is 516-660-6383 but I'm not great about answering it. The best option: You can usually find me in person at my NYU office after class on Wednesdays until 5:30.

### Accommodations

Students with disabilities that necessitate accommodations should contact and register with NYU's Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu. Information about the Moses Center can be found at [www.nyu.edu/csd](http://www.nyu.edu/csd). The Moses Center is located at 726 Broadway on the 2nd floor.

### Diversity and Inclusion

The Institute is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment. The Institute embraces a notion of intellectual community enriched and enhanced by diversity along a number of dimensions.

### Tentative Course Sequence and Assignments

We will take some detours as the term progresses, so **always check the Google Drive class folder every week for an updated schedule.** Here's the tentative plan:

- Due Jan. 29:** Read the following and be prepared to discuss:
- Henry David Thoreau, bio page and excerpts from *Walden*, pages 1 and 9-25 in *American Earth*.
  - Rebecca Solnit, "The Thoreau Problem," pages 971-974 in *American Earth*.
  - George Perkins Marsh, bio page and excerpts from *Man and Nature*, pages 71-80 in *American Earth*.
  - John Muir, bio page and "A Wind-Storm in the Forests," pages 84 and 89-96 in *American Earth*.
  - Gifford Pinchot, bio page and excerpts from *The Fight for Conservation*, pages 173-180 in *American Earth*.
  - Aldo Leopold, bio page and excerpts from *A Sand County Almanac*, pages 265-276 in *American Earth*.

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**Jan. 29 – Progenitors.** We'll discuss the readings and the deep roots of environmental writing and environmentalism. We'll also review the syllabus and discuss your upcoming writing assignments.

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**Due Feb. 4:** Prepare three 100-word written pitches for your 800-word issue story and email them to Dan by 10 a.m.

**Due Feb. 5:** Read the following and be prepared to discuss:

-- Aldo Leopold, excerpts from "The Land Ethic", pages 276-294 in *American Earth*.

-- Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science*, December 13, 1968 (in Google Drive class folder). (Note: please read "Hardin" in Google Drive, not in *American Earth*.)

-- Elinor Ostrom et al., "Revisiting the Commons: Local Lessons, Global Challenges," *Science*, April 9, 1999 (see "Ostrom" in Google Drive class folder).

-- Joseph Lelyveld, "Millions Join Earth Day Observances Across the Nation," pages 484-488 in *American Earth*.

-- Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus, "[The Long Death of Environmentalism](#)," transcript of Feb. 25, 2011, speech at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

-- David Roberts, "[The Green New Deal, Explained](#)," *Vox*, Dec. 21, 2018.

**Feb. 5 – Environmental Law.** JONNY will critique, and then we'll discuss the tortuous past, present and future of environmental law. At 11:45, *Popular Science* Editor in Chief Joe Brown will join us to give you feedback on your 800-word issue story pitches.

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**Due Feb. 12:** Read the following and be prepared to discuss:

-- Theodore Dreiser, bio page and "A Certain Oil Refinery", pages 186-192 in *American Earth*.

-- Rachel Carson, bio page and excerpt from *Silent Spring*, pages 365-376 in *American Earth*.

-- David Ropeik, "[Risk Reporting 101](#)," *Columbia Journalism Review*, March 11, 2011.

-- Dan Fagin, Prologue and Chapters 1 and 2, *Toms River* (see "Toms River Readings 1" in Google Drive class folder).

**Feb. 12 – Pollution and Public Health I.** MARIA PAULA and HANNAH will critique and then we'll discuss toxicology and exposure science.

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**Due Feb. 18:** Prepare three 100-word written pitches for 1,300-word feature story and email them to Dan by 10 a.m.

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**Due Feb. 19:** Read the following and be prepared to discuss:

- Lily Hay Newman, "[These Hackers Made an App that Kills to Prove a Point](#)," *Wired*, July 16, 2019.
- Jordan Robertson and Michael Riley, "[The Big Hack: How China Used a Tiny Chip to Infiltrate U.S. Companies](#)," *Bloomberg Businessweek*, Oct. 3, 2018.
- Lily Hay Newman, "[There's No Good Fix if the Supply Chain Gets Hacked](#)," *Wired*, Oct. 4, 2018.
- Andy Greenberg, "[The Untold Story of Notpetya, the Most Devastating Cyberattack in History](#)," *Wired*, Aug. 22, 2018.
- Lily Hay Newman, "[The Privacy Battle to Save Google From Itself](#)," *Wired*, Nov. 1, 2018.
- Matt Richtel, "[Apple Introduces What It Calls an Easier to Use Portable Music Player](#)," *The New York Times*, Oct. 24, 2001.
- Optional reading: Alexis Madrigal, "[Raised by YouTube](#)," *The Atlantic*, Nov. 2018.
- Optional reading: Jill Lepore, "[The Cobweb: Can the Internet be Archived?](#)" *The New Yorker*, Jan. 26, 2015.

**Feb. 19 – Technology.** Guest speaker Lily Hay Newman (SHERP 31), who covers security technology for *Wired*, will lead us in a discussion of how to cover technology news successfully. Then at 11:45, guest editor Rachel Nuwer (SHERP 29) will give you feedback on your feature pitches. We'll also assign the first pairings for peer editing.

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**Due Feb. 22:** Authors turn in 800-word issue story draft to peer editors.

**Due Feb. 24:** Editors return drafts to authors.

**Due Feb. 26:** 1) Authors turn in 800-word issue story draft to Dan; 2) Read [LipProductsStudy.pdf](#) and then do [ToxandExpAssignment.doc](#) (both in class Google Drive folder) and turn it in to Dan; 3) Read the following and be prepared to discuss:

- Daniel Wartenberg, "Epidemiology for Journalists" (see "Wartenberg" in Google Drive class folder).
- Stephen S. Hall, "[Trump's Environmental Policies are Putting the Health of American Children at Risk](#)," *New York*, Feb. 20, 2019.
- Dan Fagin, Chapters 14, 15, 16 and 17, *Toms River* (see "Toms River Readings 3" in Google Drive class folder). (Note: We're skipping "Toms River Readings 2" this year.)

**Feb. 26 – Pollution and Public Health II.** MARTHA and LILI will critique, and then we'll discuss epidemiology.

Also, "How to Get an Internship" panel discussion with science editors, organized by Rene, 1:30-3 in Room 654. (lunch provided!)



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**Due March 4:** 1) Read ArsenicCancer.pdf and then do EpidemiologyAssignment.doc (both in class Google Drive folder); 2) Read the following and be prepared to discuss:

- Annie Dillard, “Fecundity,” pages 531-549 in *American Earth*.
- Emma Marris, “Nature is Everywhere – We Just Need to Learn to See It”, [TED Talk](#).
- Fred Pearce, “[Sparing vs. Sharing: The Great Debate Over How to Protect Nature](#),” Yale E360, Dec. 3, 2018.
- Dan Fagin, unpublished introduction to next book. See “Monarch Intro Draft” in class folder.
- Robert Draper, “Madagascar’s Pierced Heart,” *National Geographic*, September, 2010. See “Madagascar Draper” in class folder.
- Wangari Maathai, excerpt from [The Challenge for Africa](#), Random House website.
- Optional reading: Elizabeth Kolbert, “The Sixth Extinction?” *The New Yorker*, May 25, 2009 (see “KolbertExtinction” in Google Drive class folder).

**March 4 – Biodiversity and the Anthropocene.** TAYLOR and ANUSHREE will critique and then we’ll discuss the future of life on Planet Human.

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**Due March 11:** 1) Explore [this section](#) of the AMNH website, 2) Work on issue story revisions and feature drafts!

**March 11 – Field trip to American Museum of Natural History, probably 9:30-3:00.** Behind-the-scenes tour and meetings with scientists. Meet at the 77<sup>th</sup> Street entrance under the stairs.

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**Due March 13 (10 a.m.):** Turn in 800-word issue story revision.

**No Class March 18 – Spring break!**

**Due March 22:** Authors turn in 1,300-word feature story draft to peer editors.

**Due March 23:** Editors return feature drafts to authors.

**Due March 24:** Prepare three 150-word pitches for 1,000-word environmental profile and send them to Dan by 10 a.m. (NOTE: If you prefer, you may make your profile a video or audio piece – as long as the effort is equivalent, and I sign off on it. If you’re interested, let me know and we’ll talk about it. The topic cannot be the same as what you’re already covering in another class or in the audio workshop, but it can be an offshoot. Talk to me and we’ll work it out.)

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- Due March 25:** Read the following and be prepared to discuss:
- Michael Pollan, bio page and excerpt from *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, pages 948-960 in *American Earth*.
  - Bill McKibben, "[To Fight Global Warming, Think More About Systems Than About What You Consume](#)," *New York Times*, Aug. 28, 2019.
  - Nathanael Johnson, "[Costa Rica Modernized Without Wrecking the Environment. Here's How](#)," *Grist*, Dec. 15, 2016.
  - Amy Harmon, "[A Race to Save the Orange by Altering its DNA](#)," *The New York Times*, July 27, 2013.
  - Jane Jacobs, bio page and excerpt from "The Death and Life of Great American Cities," pages 359-364 in *American Earth*.
  - Optional reading: Wendell Berry, bio page and "The Making of a Marginal Farm", pages 504-516 in *American Earth*.

**March 25 – Sustainability. RAHUL** will critique and then we'll discuss the challenges of covering sustainability issues (including food and 'green living'). At 11:45, [Ferris Jabr](#) (SHERP 28), a contributing writer at the *New York Times Magazine* and *Scientific American*, will join us to give you feedback on your profile pitches.

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**Due March 27, 10 a.m.:** Authors turn in 1,300-word feature story draft to Dan.

- Due April 1:** Read the following and be prepared to discuss:
- Elizabeth Kolbert, "The Climate of Man – Part III," *The New Yorker*, May 9, 2005 (in Google Drive class folder as "KolbertClimate").
  - David Wallace-Wells, "[The Uninhabitable Earth](#)" (read the annotations, too), *New York*, July 9, 2017.
  - Somini Sengupta, "[Becoming Greta: 'Invisible Girl' to Global Climate Activist, with Bumps Along the Way](#)," *The New York Times*, Feb. 18, 2019.
  - Somini Sengupta, "['Bleak' U.N. Report on a Planet in Peril Looms Over New Climate talks](#)," *The New York Times*, Nov. 26, 2019.
  - Brad Plumer, "[Traffic and Pollution Plummet as U.S. Cities Shut Down for Coronavirus](#)," *The New York Times*, March 22, 2020.
  - Brad Plumer, "[Coronavirus and Climate Change](#)," *New York Times* "Climate Fwd." Newsletter, March 11, 2020.
  - Brad Plumer, "[5 Global Trends Shaping Our Climate Future](#)," *The New York Times*, Nov. 12, 2019.
  - [Climate Change: Where We Are in Seven Charts and What You Can Do to Help](#), BBC, Jan. 14, 2020.

- Optional reading:
- [Executive Summary, Fourth National Climate Assessment](#), Vol. 1, 2017.
  - David Biello, "[The Most Important Number in Climate Change](#)," *Scientific American*, Nov. 30, 2015.

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**April 1 – Climate.** CURTIS will critique and then we'll discuss the science, politics and psychology of climate change. Guest speaker at Noon: *New York Times* climate writers [Somini Sengupta](#) and [Brad Plumer](#).

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**Due April 8:** 1) After you complete the assigned readings (below), use the worksheet on page 13 of the “Stabilization Wedges Game” (in Google Drive folder) to create a rational eight-wedge strategy to achieve carbon stabilization, and be prepared to defend it in class (you don't need to cut out and label the colored wedges, just use the worksheet on page 1); 3) Read the following and be prepared to discuss:

-- Stephen Pacala and Robert Socolow, “Stabilization Wedges: Solving the Climate Problem for the Next 50 Years with Current Technologies,” *Science*, August 13, 2004 (see “Pacala and Socolow” in Google Drive class folder).

-- Justin Gillis, “[The Real Unknown of Climate Change: Our Behavior](#),” *New York Times*, Sept. 28, 2017.

-- Robert Socolow, “Climate Change and Destiny Studies: Creating Our Near and Far Futures,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol. 71 (6), 2015 (see “Socolow 2015” in Google Drive class folder).

-- David Keith, “Toward a Responsible Solar Geoengineering Research Program,” *Issues in Science and Technology*, Spring, 2017. (See “Keith” in Google Drive class folder)

**April 8 – Energy.** MK will critique. We'll talk about paths forward on climate: mitigation, adaptation and geoengineering. We will also discuss your wedge strategies. We'll be joined at 11:30 by an eminent guest speaker: [Michael Oppenheimer](#), Professor of Geosciences and International Affairs at Princeton University.

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**Due April 15:** 1) Turn in 1,300-word feature story revision; 2) Read the following and be prepared to discuss:

-- Matthew Francis, “[Just How Contagious is COVID-19?](#)”, *Popular Science*, Feb. 20, 2020.

-- Maryn McKenna, “[The Ibuprofen Debate Reveals the Danger of Covid-19 Rumors](#),” *WIRED*, March 26, 2020.

-- Maryn McKenna, “[The Plague Years](#),” *The New Republic*, April 1, 2019.

-- Helen Branswell, “[Understanding What Works: How Some Countries are Beating Back the Coronavirus](#),” *STAT*, March 20, 2020.

-- Amy Maxmen, “[The Race to Unravel the Biggest Coronavirus Outbreak in the United States](#),” *Nature*, March 7, 2020.

Optional reading:

-- Kai Kupferschmidt, “[‘A Completely New Culture of Doing Research.’ Coronavirus Outbreak Changes How Scientists Communicate](#),” *Science*, Feb. 26, 2020.

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**April 15 – Infectious Disease I: Covering Epidemics.** LETO will critique and then we will talk about covering COVID-19 and future epidemics. Freelancer and author [Maryn McKenna](#) will join us at 11:30.

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**Due April 22:** Read the following and be prepared to discuss:

- Start reading John McPhee, “A River” in *Encounters with the Archdruid* (read the full 92-page story, not the six-page excerpt in *American Earth*).
- John Vidal, “[Tip of the Iceberg: Is Our Destruction of Nature Responsible for Covid-19,](#)” *Guardian*, March 18, 2020.
- “[Spillover Warning: How We Can Prevent the Next Pandemic,](#)” interview with David Quammen, *Yale Environment 360*, April 9, 2020.
- Jennifer Daskal, “[Digital Surveillance Can Bring the Coronavirus Pandemic Under Control – But Also Threatens Privacy,](#)” *The Conversation*, April 3, 2020.
- Catrin Einhorn, “[Animal Viruses are Jumping to Humans. Forest Loss Makes it Easier,](#)” *New York Times*, April 9, 2020.

**April 22 – Infectious Disease II: Ecology.** CORRYN will critique. Guest speaker at 11:30: Journalist and writer [David Quammen](#).

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**Due April 23, 10 a.m.:** Authors turn in 1,000-word profile draft to peer editors.

**Due April 25, 10 a.m.:** Editors return drafts of 1,000-word profiles to authors.

**Due April 27, 10 a.m.:** Turn in 1,000-word profile draft to Dan.

**Due April 29:** 1) Start thinking about a topic for your observational/persuasive essay; 2) Read the following and be prepared to discuss:

- Finish John McPhee, “A River” in *Encounters with the Archdruid* (read the full 92-page story, not the six-page excerpt in *American Earth*).
- Edward Abbey, bio page and “Polemic: Industrial Tourism and the National Parks,” pages 413-433 in *American Earth*.
- Mary Annise Heglar, “[I work in the environmental movement. I don’t care if you recycle,](#)” *Vox*, June 4, 2019.
- Susan Matthews, “[Are We Doing the Right Thing?,](#)” *Slate*, March 23, 2020.
- Dan Fagin, “[A Mine vs. a Million Monarchs,](#)” *New York Times*, April 29, 2016.
- Optional reading: Barbara Kingsolver, bio page and “Knowing Our Place,” pages 939-947 in *American Earth*.
- Optional reading: E. O. Wilson, bio page and excerpt from *Biophilia*, pages 671-689 in *American Earth*.

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**April 29 – Observational and Persuasive Environmental Writing.** XIMENA will critique, and then we'll talk about the rich and diverse literary canon of environmental observation and persuasion. We'll also talk about how to write an effective observational/persuasive piece of your own. Susan Matthews (SHERP 30), the features editor (and former science editor) at *Slate*, will join us at 11:30.

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**Due May 3, 10 a.m.:** Turn in 800-word observational/persuasive essay

**Due May 6:** Read the following and be prepared to discuss:

- Matthew C. Nisbet and Chris Mooney, "Science and Society: Framing Science," *Science*, April 6, 2007. Also, read letters from Aug. 31, 2007, edition of *Science* (see "Nisbet" and "Nisbet Reaction" in Google Drive class folder).
- Clare Foran, "[Donald Trump and the Triumph of Climate-Change Denial](#)," *The Atlantic*, Dec. 25, 2016.
- Dan M. Kahan et al., "[Why We Are Poles Apart on Climate Change](#)," *Nature*, August 15, 2012.
- Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway, Defeating the Merchants of Doubt, *Nature*, June 20, 2010, pages 686-687 (see "Oreskes and Conway" in class Google Drive folder).
- Anthony Leiserowitz, et al., [Climate Change in the American Mind](#), *Yale Program on Climate Change Communication*, November 2019. Read pages 1-26.

**May 6: Framing, Cultural Cognition and Spin.** REBECCA will critique and then we will discuss what recent social science research tells us about what works, and what doesn't, in communicating contested science. Also, evaluations and path forward at SHERP.

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**Due May 13:** 1) Turn in 1,000-word profile revision; 2) Turn in optional revision of 800-word essay.