

# Environmental Issues

Environmental Studies Program  
DENISON UNIVERSITY

## Visiting Scholar Addresses Apathy and Action

by Lindsay Mason ('99)

Students, faculty, and staff from Denison and other Ohio colleges spent one week this May intensively exploring environmental and social activism in the first Mellon Visiting Scholar Workshop, titled "From Apathy to Action: Making a Difference in a Cynical World," with Paul Loeb.

Paul Loeb has researched and written about social movements and activism for nearly 30 years. He is the author of four books: *Nuclear Culture*, *Hope in Hard Times*, *Generation at the Crossroads: Apathy and Action on the American Campus*, and the most recent, *Soul of a Citizen: Living with Conviction in a Cynical Time*. (Visit his website: [www.soulofacitizen.org](http://www.soulofacitizen.org))

Throughout the week the 32 participants in the workshop explored their own activist history and learned about how and why other people take action on causes they care about.

Many of the themes from Loeb's books were incorporated into the workshop, including barriers and entry points to involvement, how to act, and avoiding burnout. Participants also spent time discussing the stereotypes of activists, differences in the role of activism on college campuses, and the widening gender gap in social movements.

Each day, participants broke into small groups to discuss issues and reflect on their own experiences with activism. In addition, everyone was encouraged to keep a journal of reactions to discussions, personal experiences, and to explore the paths that have led to becoming involved with an issue or movement.

Project groups were formed around topics of Environmental Justice, Sustainable Agriculture, Social Justice, Land Use, and Local Communities. Each of the five groups worked on these



Thirty-two participants took part in the first Mellon Visiting Scholar Workshop with Paul Loeb from May 22nd - 26th, 2000.

topics throughout the week to learn more about the issues and began to act on them at a local level by going on field trips and talking to people in the community who are actively engaged in creating change.

Participants also received first-hand perspectives of a panel of four activists who joined our group for an afternoon of discussion. Noreen Warnock (Ohio Citizen Action), Jeff Dickinson (Stratford Ecological Center), Susan Studer ('96) (Ohio Environmental Council), and Hapi Cummons (Flint Ridge State Memorial), each shared their own experiences and views as activists and answered questions from the workshop participants.

"I really enjoyed meeting people involved in different types of activism. Their passion inspired me," reflects Sarah Borron ('02).

Although most participants were from Denison, there were also students and faculty from Mount Union College, Oberlin, Wooster, and Swarthmore. There was also a wide range of majors represented, from ENVS to Economics to English, which added to the diversity of the group and discussions.

"We have achieved a facet of the educational process that almost never takes place in an academic setting. We hope to have caused people to learn, to reflect, and to become motivated in a wide range of social and environmental issues," said Dr. Abram Kaplan.

This workshop was made possible by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation whose grant to the Environmental Studies Program sponsored this event. The Service Learning Center also contributed as a cosponsor. We look forward to the next Mellon Visiting Scholar Workshop in 2002, and the Mellon Environmental Conference in 2001.



Noreen Warnock, Jeff Dickinson, Susan Studer ('96), and Hapi Cummons shared their perspectives on activism during an afternoon panel session.

## Mellon Internship Grants Fund Summer Experiences

by Lindsay Mason ('99)

Five students have been awarded stipends and/or housing assistance for their summer internships from the Environmental Studies Program. The Internship Grant Program is one of the initiatives made possible by the \$298,000 grant the ENVS Program received from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation earlier this year.

The Internship Grant Program was designed to offer students the opportunity to pursue environmental positions that would otherwise be unpaid or underpaid. "This grant is a wonderful chance to discover and contact organizations because they are doing the exact work I am interested in doing, regardless of whether the organization has funds to support internships," commented Meg Geissler ('01), one of this year's grant recipients.

Meg is working for the Community Food Security Initiative at the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C., this summer. The program works to create partnerships between groups interested in solving food security problems, including nonprofit organizations, government, private businesses, and citizens. Last summer, Meg was involved with a community gardening project in Newark, Ohio. This summer she hopes to gain experience at the federal level: "It seems clear to me that in order to gain a complete perspective of the food security and agricultural system I should participate not only in farming and non-profit work, but also government initiatives and policy."

Ellen Hawkey ('02) is working with Denison alumna Susan Studer ('96) at the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC) in Columbus, Ohio. The non-profit organization aims to educate and empower citizens of Ohio to protect, conserve, and clean up the environment. Ellen will work on programs to protect the health

and welfare of several Ohio communities. "As an environmentalist who is interested in issues of social justice, I find the fight for environmental justice a fascinating and beneficial aspect of the current environmental movement," states Hawkey.

Adam Daigneault ('01), an Economics major with a minor in ENVS, will be the Commercial Recycling Coordinator with the Boothbay Region Refuse and Disposal District in his hometown of Boothbay, Maine. Adam will help establish a recycling program for the businesses in the region. Currently, the recycling plant services more than 50% of the residents in the Boothbay region, accepting a wide range of recyclables including glass, metal, lumber scraps, and tree clippings. "I have the opportunity to do something that I really enjoy while helping the community at the same time," says Daigneault.

Ilana Silverstein ('02) is looking forward to her internship with Second Nature, a nonprofit organization in Boston. Second Nature aims to "help higher education teach and practice how to achieve a sustainable relationship between humans and the environment so that the health, social, and economic needs of all current and future generations can be met." Ilana will be researching environmental programs at colleges and universities nationwide.

Carrie Kotula ('01) will work in Alaska as a Field Manager for the Anchorage office of PIRG (Public Interest Research Group). Working on the "Campaign to Save the Environment," Carrie and other campaign staff will be fund-raising, educating citizens, and organizing campaigns on issues such as endangered species, clean air, recycling, and ancient forest protection.

We hope these students have wonderful experiences this summer and we look forward to them sharing what they learn with the rest of the ENVS program in the fall.

## Capstone Class Cleans Up Recycling on Campus

by Kira Navarre ('00)

Each spring, senior ENVS majors enroll in the Capstone Seminar. Professors take a hands-off approach by letting students control the direction of the class, and encourage them to use the skills they've developed on a real problem. Past Capstone classes have focused on environmental improvements in an urban community, farmland preservation, and proposing the green renovation of Barney Hall. The 2000 graduating class was given the topic of solid waste management.

Students decided to focus their efforts on improving Denison's existing recycling program, run by the Denison University Recycling Program (DURP). Their goal was to increase the percentage of waste that is recycled.

Students did research on similar colleges' recycling programs, and the waste stream was examined to find out what people were throwing away. In addition, a survey was done to gather information about student behaviors and attitudes about recycling.

Students took on various implementation projects to test their ideas for improving recycling. One group made an informational video to be shown to students at the beginning of each school

year and designed a recycling awareness pamphlet to be distributed around campus. Another group attempted to convince departments to buy recycled paper, and received positive feedback from a few who have agreed to the proposal.

The class also designed an informational web page ([www.denison.edu/enviro/waste/](http://www.denison.edu/enviro/waste/)) that presents their findings and recommendations. The class urges the University to hire a full-time Recycling Coordinator to oversee and implement a comprehensive recycling program at Denison.

"University staff and administration challenged us to 'do something useful.' I strongly believe that this Capstone class has laid a rational, detailed, and persuasive foundation for solidifying Denison's commitment to recycling," said Dr. Katrina Smith Korfmacher, instructor of the class.

The Capstone class also offers seniors one last chance to connect with other ENVS majors before heading in different directions after graduation. "Capstone gave me the opportunity to talk more with other ENVS majors who had different concentrations. This broadened my perspective on environmental issues and taught me to look at them from different angles," reflects Emily McAlpin.

## Senior Researchers Explore Personal Passions

by Justin Jaeger ('00)

This year the Environmental Studies Program had four students complete senior research projects. Ranging from wildlife management to literary analysis, a diversity of subjects is represented in their work. Each is described briefly below.

### **Sarah Baird: *The Agricultural Imagination***

Sarah's research was centered on three regional farmer/writers: Wendell Berry, David Kline, and Gene Logsdon. Through their texts and personal interviews she explored the influences on their agricultural views and methods and how these play into their sense of the environment. Her thesis is a series of essays on the themes of community, work, gardening, food, and wilderness/wildness. Each of these essays contains details about the writers' sense of tradition, history, knowledge, spirituality and creativity; and their thoughts on issues such as technology, economics, and culture.

"I've always been fascinated by these writers and this project gave me the chance to meet them and come to a fuller understanding of their agricultural visions," says Sarah.

### **Justin Jaeger: *Amish Cultural Elasticity: Retaining autonomy through the proliferation of Amish Industry***

Justin studied Amish culture and how its structure has enabled them to resist assimilation with the English world. He focused on the growing Amish woodworking industry in Ohio to see how the core principles of the culture have been maintained despite a shift from an agricultural to an industrial economy.

"The implications of this project are perhaps the coolest part. Factors that have made the Amish successful can be abstracted to other incidences of tourism development, from the rainforests of Costa Rica to the mountains of Tibet and Nepal," explains Justin.

### **Brandon Ott: *Community Mobilization Tactics of Riverkeepers as Used in Watershed Protection***

"I have always been fascinated by the tactics used by ecosystem managers to protect their ecosystem. Due to my fascination with rivers, I became especially interested in a particular group called Riverkeepers." Brandon studied the community mobilization tactics used by Riverkeepers across North America and used this information to make suggestions for improving them. He was asked by the Water Keeper Alliance to publish the results of his survey on their web-page. He hopes that this will help increase awareness and communication between Riverkeepers which is currently lacking.

### **Robyn Shick: *The Effect of Stakeholder Desires on White-***

### ***tailed Deer Management Strategies and Success in Columbus, Cleveland, and Hamilton County Park Districts***

Robyn's project looked at deer population trends and the conflicts that arise from overpopulation within three urban metro-parks. She identified the current management strategies used within each park system and gathered the opinions of stakeholders about deer management. This data was used to determine if stakeholders have an effect on the strategies chosen as well as the success of those strategies.

"This project allowed me to take the skills I learned

while studying wildlife management in Kenya and apply them to my home state. Deer overpopulation and management in urban Ohio is a major problem that does not have a simple answer," states Robyn. She hopes that her research will help future park systems make improved management decisions.



From left: Justin Jaeger, Robyn Shick, Brandon Ott, and Sarah Baird.

## Generous Alumna Funds ENVS Directorship

by Sarah Bauer ('99)

In 1993, even before the ES major was finalized, Anne Powell Riley ('53) made a \$2.3 million gift that enabled the university to hire a full-time director for the Program. Anne's generous contribution endows the Director of Environmental Studies position, held by Dr. Abram Kaplan. Her support is a reflection of her lifelong commitment to community and her love for the outdoors. As she describes it, "Environmental Studies appeals to me because I have always liked the outdoors, and I have this big thing about our shared quality of life."

A 1953 Denison graduate, Anne Powell Riley majored in Citizenship, an interdisciplinary major that gave her a broad social science background and a deep understanding for community responsibility. After Denison, she went on to earn a master's degree in education from Syracuse. She taught elementary school in California for a number of years, and now resides in the Columbus area where she is a real estate manager.

Throughout her life's journeys, Anne has been an active member of the community through such organizations as Head Start, the Girl Scouts, and the Alvis House, an organization dedicated to helping released prisoners make a new start.

She deeply feels the need for a collective sense of responsibility. As she explains, "The often-heard phrase, 'If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem,' is especially appropriate when considering our relationship with the environment." Her support of Denison's Environmental Studies Program ensures that she is 'part of the solution.'

### Environmental Issues

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## Alumni Updates

From California to Connecticut, here are just a few of the locations where ENVS alumni (including our most recent grads!) can be found putting their skills and knowledge to use.

Matt Adukaitis ('99) is doing air quality testing and monitoring of stationary sources for Auogadro Environmental Corporation in Boyertown, Pennsylvania.

McCrea Cobb ('99) spent the winter researching carnivores in the Absaruka/Beartooth Wilderness (Montana) for the U.S Forest Service.

Jonathan Franklin ('98) is a Field Stranding Technician with the Marine Mammal Stranding Center in Brigantine, New Jersey.

Aaron Geckle ('98) is a GIS Analyst with Landrum & Brown in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Melissa Hatcher ('97) is an Environmental Consultant and Policy Analyst for Energetics, Inc. in Washington, DC, but will be attending the University of Michigan's graduate program in Environmental Policy in the fall.

Maddie Hillwig ('99) is an Outdoor Educator for Nature's Classroom in Andover, Connecticut.

Jack Hopkins ('99) is doing wildlife research for the U.S. Forest Service in Montana.

Juliana Jones ('00) will begin an internship in Washington, DC, with Representative Dennis Kucinich from Ohio, where she hopes to work on environmental issues including genetically modified food labeling.

Macciano Lewis ('98) has just completed a Masters in Public

Administration, concentration in Environmental Management and Policy, from the University of Pittsburgh.

Lindsay Mason ('99) is passing the ENVS Program Manager torch and will be in the Urban and Regional Planning graduate program at the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor) in the fall.

Emily McAlpin ('00) will be the Assistant Canvas Director for the Chicago Area with the Fund for Public Interest Research, a non-profit dedicated to fundraising and promotional work via media, canvassing and lobbying.

Jennifer McConaghie ('98) is studying for a Masters of City Planning and a Certificate in Historic Preservation at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

Tish Mick ('97) is an Environmental Scientist for Fluor Daniel Fernald in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Brian Smith ('97) is the Environmental Legislation Coordinator for Chemco Manufacturing Co. in Evanston, Illinois.

Greg Spyreas ('97) is a graduate student in Plant Biology at Southern Illinois University.

Anna Tuttle ('99) will be pursuing dual degrees in Law and Environmental Science at the University of Michigan in the fall.

Keep in touch! Send us your name, address, email, and tell us what you are doing. We will keep you informed of current events in the ENVS program and let you know what other alumni are doing! A great way to keep in touch with others in your field from Denison! ([mason@denison.edu](mailto:mason@denison.edu))

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