Initially this seminar surveys the phenomena and processes of change in cultural evolution and history. First the instructor critically analyzes Jared Diamond’s books: *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (1997), and his *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* (2005). This follows the video based on the first book. In this initial section of the course the primary question is: How do environmental changes influence social and cultural changes, and vice versa? We will also review historically and critique anthropological theories used in the study of social and cultural change as well as their complicity in maintaining power relationships of inequality, oppression, and exploitation including ecocide, ethnocide and genocide. One of the main examples will be revelations in Patrick Tierney’s *Darkness in El Dorado: How Anthropologists and Journalists Devastated the Amazon* (2001) concerning some of the researchers who worked with the Yanomami during the Cold War era and beyond. Another example will be Colin Turnbull’s *The Mountain People* (1973) about the forced relocation and consequent disintegration of Ik society generated by a Ugandan state initiative to develop ecotourism.

For the bulk of this semester the seminar will focus on cross-cultural and cross-national comparisons from a selected sample of a variety of environmentalisms from the local, national, and global levels and from the 19th century to the present. Their influence on social and cultural change including revitalization movements will be analyzed. The primary question to be addressed is: How has environmentalism influenced social and cultural change, and vice versa? A secondary question is: What changes in society and culture would be needed to develop and maintain a genuinely sustainable, green, just, nonviolent, and peaceful society? We will consider environmental thought as well as actions and reactions, ultimately as background to global warming.

We will survey environmental organizations from the Sierra Club founded by John Muir to Earth First! and the Earth Liberation Front influenced by Edward Abbey and Dave Foreman. Other key historical and contemporary personalities discussed range from the radical Medieval monk St. Francis of Assisi to the deep ecologist Gary Snyder. Also we will consider Ted Kaczynski (“The Unabomber”), eco-terrorism, anarchic environmentalism, Marxist and liberation ecology, indigenous environmental movements, eco-imperialism, religious environmentalism, Green Party, Al Gore’s environmentalism, and a variety of other fascinating and important phenomena. Contemporary pathologies like evolutionism, modernism, scientism, industrialization, capitalism, economic development and globalization will be exposed.

The venue for this seminar is an extended critical analysis, discussion and debate based on these four textbooks together with a set of case studies presented by students:

The course grade will be based on mid-term and final take home essays, a panel discussion of a case study book of the student’s choice, a research report to the class using PowerPoint, and class attendance and participation.

The full syllabus will be posted on the instructor’s homepage in late December:

http://www.soc.hawaii.edu/Sponsel