

Class 5: The Anthropocene & Energy

Themes:

- Homo sapiens' unique species role
- Acceleration of changes, planetary boundaries
- Energy sources, depletion, renewables & fossil exploitation

Articles:

- 1. “Addressing the Anthropocene from the Global South” (Frontiers in Earth Science, 2024)
→ <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/earth-science/articles/10.3389/feart.2024.1470577/full>

→ **Q1.** *How does the article challenge dominant “Global North” narratives about the Anthropocene, and what alternative perspectives does it propose regarding responsibility and agency?*

→ **Q2.** *The authors argue for decolonial approaches to planetary change. What would a decolonial understanding of the Anthropocene look like in practice—scientifically, politically, or culturally?*

- “Does renewable electricity promote Indigenous sovereignty? Reviewing support, barriers, and recommendations for solar and wind energy on Native lands” (2023)
→ https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/environmental_studies_pubs/28/

→ **Q1.** *What are the main barriers identified to Indigenous participation in renewable energy projects, and how do they reflect deeper issues of sovereignty and equity?*

→ **Q2.** *The article reviews success stories in solar and wind energy development. What factors made these projects sustainable both environmentally and socially?*

- 3. “Advancing Energy Sovereignty and Economic Prosperity Through Indigenous Ownership of Renewable Energy” (2025)
→ <https://epress.lib.uts.edu.au/journals/index.php/mcs/article/download/9603/8612?inline=1>

→ **Q1.** *How do the authors define “energy sovereignty,” and in what ways does it extend beyond mere access to renewable energy?*

→ **Q2.** *Discuss the potential tensions between economic prosperity and cultural or ecological sustainability in Indigenous-led energy projects.*

Podcasts:

- 2. “Indigenous Perspectives: What Makes a Just Transition?” (Climate One, 2024)
→ <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/indigenous-perspectives-what-makes-a-just-transition/id296762605?i=1000643044298>

→ **Q1.** *How do Indigenous speakers in the episode define a “just transition,” and how does their definition differ from mainstream policy discussions?*

—> **Q2.** *What role do land, community, and intergenerational responsibility play in shaping Indigenous visions of climate justice?*

- John Green, “The Anthropocene Reviewed, Reviewed”

→ <https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/anthropocene-reviewed/episodes/anthropocene-reviewed-john-green>

—> **Q1.** *How does John Green’s reflective tone complicate our emotional relationship with the Anthropocene? What literary or narrative strategies does he use to engage listeners with scientific and moral questions?*

—> **Q2.** *The podcast blends humor, melancholy, and critique. How might this mix of registers help students think differently about environmental crisis and human self-awareness?*

- Mike Osborne, Miles Traer, and Leslie Chang, “Generation Anthropocene”

→ <https://soundcloud.com/generation-anthropocene>

—> **Q1.** *How do the hosts of Generation Anthropocene use storytelling and interviews to make scientific discussions about the Anthropocene accessible?*

—> **Q2.** *Which idea or story from the episode most challenged your assumptions about human responsibility in shaping the planet—and why?*

Music:

Listen carefully to the three assigned songs and read through their lyrics. In preparation for class, reflect on the following questions: How do these songs connect to the themes we are exploring this week? In what ways do they highlight social, cultural, or ecological dimensions of the climate crisis? Finally, describe your personal response to the music—what emotions, images, or ideas did it evoke, and why do you think it felt meaningful (or not) in relation to our discussions?

- “After the Gold Rush” – Neil Young
- “Mother Earth” – Within Temptation
- “The Rape of the World” Tracy Chapman