

Actors & Strategies for Change - Towards Global Sustainabilities 2013

Make-up Assignment 2

Learning Outcomes

- have an up-to-date, interdisciplinary understanding of the issues of sustainable development;
- give an account of, and be able to evaluate, the strategies, room to maneuver and limitations of different societal actors in striving toward a sustainable society;
- be able to discuss individual/actors perspectives compared to structural/system perspectives on cultural change.

Background:



The Scenario: The Keystone Pipeline system is a means of transporting petroleum products from Canada and the Northern United States to oil refineries on the Gulf coast. Certain parts of the pipeline are already under construction, but the controversial Keystone XL Pipeline Project is awaiting President Obama's approval. This pipeline would begin at the oil distribution hub in Hardisty, Alberta and extend 1,897 km, to Steele City, Nebraska and would run over the Ogallala Aquifer in Nebraska. Some of the hot topics of debate are issues concerning, but not limited to, accelerating climate change, energy security, job creation, and environmental and social justice.

A map of the Keystone pipeline network. See a larger Keystone pipeline map [here](#).
U.S. State Dept.

The Actors: The vastness of these debate topics means that a myriad of stakeholders are heavily involved. The main ones are: TransCanada (owner of the pipeline project), President Obama, the Environmental Protection Agency, Bill McKibben (environmentalist and head of 350.org), Canadian government, and indigenous communities in Canada.

Instructions:

1: Read the introductory chapter on debating by Robert Trapp. This can be found on the course portal.

2: Research (can be [government](#), news, scientific, wikipedia, etc. sources) and identify at least 5 claims (consisting of 1 + warrants) by at least 2 opposing actors (total of 5 claims /5 warrants). Be sure to make clear who the actors is and what the source of the information was. e.g.

ACTOR	CLAIM	WARRANT (S)	SOURCE
1: USA EPA	There is a potential spill over of 672,000 gallons on more than 200 public water supplies and 40 private wells	1. Keystone conducted an assessment of the maximum potential pipeline spill volume from a complete pipeline structural failure. Keystone estimated that the maximum spill volume would be approximately 2.8 million gallons, which would be possible along less than 1.7 miles of the proposed pipeline route due to topographic conditions. For approximately 50 percent of the proposed pipeline route (approximately 842 miles), the maximum spill volume	USA gov: http://keystonepipeline-xl.state.gov/documents/organization/182010.pdf



		would be approximately 672,000 gallons. 2. DOS assessed the potential impacts of the proposed Project on many aquifer systems. The aquifer analysis included the identification of potable groundwater in water wells within 1 mile of the proposed centerline of the pipeline. More than 200 Public Water Supply wells, most of which are in Texas, are within 1 mile of the proposed centerline, and 40 private water wells are within 100 feet of the centerline. No sole-source aquifers, or aquifers serving as the principal source of drinking water for an area, are crossed by the proposed pipeline route.	
2: USA EPA	The XL Pipeline should not be stopped	1.Many of the sources outside of North America are in regions that are experiencing declining production or are not secure and reliable sources of crude oil, including the Middle East, Africa, Mexico, and South America 2. The oil will be transported through trains, boats and trucks if the pipeline is stopped.	(ibid)

3: Identify fallacious arguments by analyzing the warrants (appeal to authority, red herring, straw man, etc.). *You should have finished “How to Become a Really Good Pain the Ass” by now.

4: Write 2-3 pages analyzing your findings. Some questions to consider are: Which actors seems to have a solid rhetorical strategy? Can you infer anything about the real motivations or value systems of the actor based on their rhetorical fallacies? What does it mean to have a good rhetorical strategy but no power to make decisions? Do you see any patterns between political goals and strategies? Assuming this is a good example of environmental issues and how conflict over natural and public resource use plays out, what does this mean for the sustainability of our society and the value of current strategies?

Due no later than May 27.