EARTH JUSTICE DAY
by Scott Lankford

Introduction
In a series of classes and activities culminating in an all-campus Earth Justice Day on April 17, 2013, Foothill College students and faculty together explored the often hidden, always-explosive links between environmental destruction and human slavery -- including contemporary child slavery from the Americas to Africa to Asia and Europe -- through a sequenced series of readings, research, writing, and all-campus discussions, debates, and events. The project placed special emphasis on the role of social media in catalyzing discussion and archiving events for wider distribution -- as well as cause-and-effect and intervention strategies demanding in-depth critical thinking and sophisticated analysis of complex factors.

Courses
Designed for English 1A “College Reading and Writing” and English 1C “Advanced College Writing and Critical Thinking”. Applicable to a wide variety of English, Humanities, and Social Sciences courses. Faculty fully participating -- along with their classes -- in the Foothill College Earth Justice Day Event included Sociology, English, History, Anthropology, and Biology.

Essential Questions
• What are the causal links between environmental destruction and globalized human slavery in the 21st Century?
• What are the causal/historical links to previous forms of slavery prior to the 21st Century?
• How can an in-depth understanding of these causes/effects inform effective interventions to help ameliorate both problems?
• How can students best leverage their personal/academic strengths and perspectives to approach these problems effectively?

Procedures
• 1) Assigned Reading
• 2) Independent Research
• 3) Writing (both as in-class essay tests and as formal research papers)
• 4) In-Class Presentations

Assessment
Students were graded based on their formal writing, in-class presentations, and participation/leadership in Earth Justice Day events.

Materials and Resources
For an overview of events, background materials, videos, and photos visit the Facebook page titled “Earth Justice Day at Foothill College at https://www.facebook.com/pages/Earth-Justice-Day-at-Foothill-College/436052529806166?ref=ts&fref=ts