

Cornell Roundtable on Environmental Studies Topics

Water in a Mediterranean Village

Gail Holst-Warhaft (Near Eastern Studies and Institute for European Studies)

March 17th, 2011

12:30 – 2:00 PM

G01 BioTech

Water in a Mediterranean Village

With funding from the Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future, Cornell Professors Gail Holst-Warhaft and Tammo Steenhuis took three students from diverse backgrounds to the town of Neapolis, Crete last summer.

The students were from BEE, Law, and Natural Resources, and their mandate was to collect the data necessary to produce a 'water profile' of a Mediterranean village. With help from the mayor and other officials, farmers and others, the students discovered that there was a delicate balance of water in the area, sufficient for the needs of the population provided that they continued to grow the traditional crops of olives and vines, that temperatures remained constant, and the population remained fairly stable. Any change in crops, tourism, or climate, could upset the balance.