

**GEOGRAPHY 12 (W '15):
WILDERNESS, CULTURE, AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Considerable research over the past several decades has shown that anthropogenic disturbance has significantly modified natural processes frequently leading to degraded conditions globally. The goal of the course is to first establish that shifts in climate, vegetation, and landscapes are “natural” and have occurred over geologic time, which establishes the context to ascertain the magnitude of human impacts. After establishing the physical context of nature and “natural”, we then explore how nature and wilderness were produced culturally and provided the context for Romanticism, Transcendentalism, and the early roots of environmentalism. Then we cover some of the broader management issues that are bound by this physical-cultural duality: for example, what are the physical effects of logging, grazing and agriculture and how do national identity and historical context fold into contemporary attempts to minimize the effects of these anthropogenic disturbances? One of the other major themes of the class is thus to explore how “nature” may be socially constructed, and that significant differences may exist between “nature” and “natural” and that these differences have a major influence on how we manage both private and public lands. The last part of the course will focus on the role of institutions that manage water and public lands like the Forest Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the National Park Service to show how these contemporary institutions emerged from historical ideologies and environmental conflicts over land use and land management that still frame contemporary environmental discourses and debates.

COURSE PLAN

The course will be run both as a lecture and discussion format with frequent discussion periods. Your grade will be derived from a mid-term examination in the 5th week of class (TBD); an extensive research paper due on Monday, March 9th, and a final exam during the regularly scheduled exam time (Friday, March 13th at 8AM). You should clear your topic with me by February 20th. Both the mid-term and final exams are worth 30%, and the research paper is worth 30%. There will be no extensions for the research paper nor any make-ups for the exams. Periodically, we will use part of the lecture as a discussion period. Students will be required to summarize one of the discussion articles and add it to the course blog. More details about the blog will be presented in class. Classroom participation (including article summary) will account for 10% of your grade. Also, keep in mind, the x-period for this class is Thursday 12:00-12:50.

Learning Goals:

- 1) To understand that nature may be both physically constituted and socially constructed such that it represents and reveals human values.

- 2) To comprehend how modern land management represents contemporary ideologies but also evolved from social forces occurring in previous decades and centuries.
- 3) To explain the role of science in land management and to critically examine its objectivism and how this positionality of science gets appropriated politically.

Learning assessments:

- 1) These learning goals will be assessed through weekly discussions pertaining to the readings and by an independent research paper addressing a topic that reveals the duality of nature or how its meanings and values have evolved over time. Two in-class exams will also occur.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Cronon, W. (Editor), 1996, *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, W.W. Norton and Co., 561 pages
- Pyne, S.J., 1998, *How the Canyon Became Grand*, Viking Press, NY, 199 p.
- Cronon, W., 1983, *Changes in the Land*, Hill and Wang, Inc., New York, 235 p.
- Worster, D., 1993, *The Wealth of Nature*, Oxford University Press, NY, 255 p.
- Egan, T., 2009, *The Big Burn, Teddy Roosevelt and the Fire that Saved America*, Houghton Mifflin & Harcourt, 324 pp.
- Sayre, N., 2006, *Working Wilderness: The Malpai Borderlands Group Story and the Future of the Western Range*, Rio Nuevo Publishers, 128 pp.

ON-LINE READER: The additional readings for the class are either posted on Canvas or have been placed on reserve online from Dartmouth Library in .pdf format available at:

<http://libcat.dartmouth.edu/search/r?SEARCH=geog+012>

ON RESERVE:

- Turner, B.L. II, 1990, *The Earth as Transformed by Human Action : Global and Regional Changes in the Biosphere over the Past 300 years*, Cambridge ; New York : Cambridge University Press with Clark University.

COURSE SCHEDULE

NOTE: “WON” refers to “*The Wealth of Nature*”; “ET” refers to “*Earth Transformed by Human Action*”; “UG” refers to “*Uncommon Ground*”; “BB” refers to “*Big Burn*”; and “WW” refers to “*Working Wilderness*”.

❖ Climate and Environmental Change over Geologic Time

- ET: Chapter 9: Long-Term Environmental Change (*On Canvas*) (1/7)
- Davis, M., 1983, Holocene Vegetational History of the Eastern U.S, in *Late-Quaternary Environments of the United States*, H.E. Wright, Jr., (editor), pp. 166-181, University of Minnesota Press. *On Canvas*. (1/7)

WON: Chapter 13: The Ecology of Order and Chaos (1/7)
UG: Barbour, M.: Ecological Fragmentation in the Fifties (1/7)
Stoltman and Baerreis, 1983, The evolution of Human Ecosystems in the Eastern U.S., in *Late-Quaternary Environments of the United States*, H.E. Wright, Jr., (editor), pp. 252-268. University of Minnesota Press. (*On Canvas*) (1/9)
Munoz, S. et al., 2010, Synchronous environmental and cultural change in the prehistory of the northeastern United States, *PNAS*, 107: 22008-22013 (1/9)

SUGGESTED READINGS (BUT NOT REQUIRED)

ET: Chapter 19: Climate
ET: Foreword
ET: Chapter 1: The Great Transformation

❖ **Historical Roots of Environmental Degradation and Awareness**

White, L., 1967, Historical roots of our ecologic crisis, *Science*, 155: 1203-07. (1/12)
Moncrief, L.W., 1970, The cultural basis for our environmental crisis, *Science*, 508-512. (1/12)
Tuan, Y.F., 1968, Discrepancies between environmental attitude and behaviour: examples from Europe and China, *Canadian Geographer*, 12: 176-90. (1/14)
Dubos, R., 1972, Franciscan Conservation versus Benedictine Stewardship, pp. 153-74, From: *A God Within* by R. Dubos. (1/14)
UG: Merchant, C.: Reinventing Eden: Western Culture as a Recovery Narrative (1/14)
WON: Chapter 9: The Kingdom, the Power, and the Water (1/15)
WON: Chapter 1: The Nature We Have Lost (1/15)
WON: Chapter 2: Paths Across the Levee (1/15)
WON: Chapter 3: History as Natural History (1/15)
WON: Chapter 16: The Wealth of Nature (1/15)

SUGGESTED READINGS (BUT NOT REQUIRED)

UG: Ellis, J.: On the Search for a Root Cause: Essentialist Tendencies in Environmental Emphases
ET: Chapter 4: Technological Change
ET: Chapter 8: Awareness of Human Impacts: Changing Attitudes and Emphases

❖ **Wilderness and the Origins of American Environmentalism**

Thoreau, H.D., Spring, From: *Walden*. (1/16)
Thoreau, H.D., Walking, From: *The Works of Thoreau: Nature Essays* (1/16)
WON: Chapter 15: John Muir and the Roots of American Environmentalism (1/16)
Russell, K., 2001, What is wilderness therapy?, *Journal of Experiential Education*, 24: 70-79 (1/21)
Jon Krakauer, J., 1995 (October), Loving Them to Death: The Story of One Teenager's 'Wilderness Experience', *Outside* magazine, October 1995 (URL) (1/21)
McKibben, B., 1990, The End of Nature, In B. McKibben, *The End of Nature*, p. 47-90. (1/23) (*on Canvas*)
UG: Cronon, W.: The Trouble With Wilderness; Or, Getting Back To The Wrong Nature. (1/23)

Worster, D., 1992, A country without secrets, In: Worster, *Under Western Skies*, p. 238-54. (1/26)
Krieger, M.H., 1973, What's wrong with plastic trees, *Science*, 179: 446-55. (1/28)
WON: Chapter 4: Transformations of the Earth (1/28)

SUGGESTED READINGS (BUT NOT REQUIRED)

UG: White, R.: Are You an Environmentalist or Do You Work for a Living?

❖ **The Americas before and during European settlement**

Cronon, W., 1983, *Changes in the Land* (1/30 and 2/2)
Denevan, W.M., 1992, The Pristine myth: The Landscape of the Americas in 1492, *Annals Association of American Geographers*, 82: 369-85. (2/2)
Whitmore, T. and Turner, B.L., 1992, Landscapes of cultivation in Meso-America on the Eve of the conquest, *Annals Association of American Geographers*, 82: 402-25. (2/4)
Doolittle, W.E., 1992, Agriculture in North America on the eve of contact: a re-assessment, *Annals Association of American Geographers*, 82: 386-401. (2/4)
UG: Slater, C.: Amazonia as Edenic Narrative (2/4)

❖ **Agricultural Transformations**

Worster, D. 1992, Freedom and want: the western paradox, In: D. Worster, *Under Western Skies*, p. 79-92, Oxford University Press, NY (2/9)
Worster, D., 1979, Introduction, In D. Worster, *Dust Bowl: the Southern Plains in the 1930s*, p. 3-8, Oxford University Press, NY (2/9)
WON: Chapter 5: Arranging a marriage: Ecology and Agriculture (2/11)
WON: Chapter 6: A Sense of Soil (2/11)
WON: Chapter 7: Good Farming and the Public Good (2/11)
Pisani, D.J., 2003, Federal reclamation and the American West in the twentieth century, *Agricultural History*, 77: 391-419 (2/11)

SUGGESTED READINGS (BUT NOT REQUIRED)

ET: Chapter 34: The United States Great Plains

❖ **Land Management: Deforestation, Grazing, and Logging**

Knize P., 1991, The mismanagement of the National Forests, *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 1991, pp. 98-112. (2/14)
Canfield, C. 1990, The ancient forest, *The New Yorker*, May 14th issue, pp. 46-84. (2/14)
McCarthy, J., 2002, First World political ecology: lessons from the Wise Use movement, *Environment and Planning A*, 34: 1281 – 1302. (2/16)
Town that Thrived on Logging-Is Looking for a Second Growth (URL) (2/16)
UG: Proctor, J.: Whose Nature? The Contorted Moral Terrain of Ancient Forests. (2/18)
Langston, N., 1999, Environmental and human change in old growth forests, *Research in Social Problems and Public Policy*, 7: 253-269. (2/19)
Langston, N., 1999, Environmental history and restoration in the western forests, *Journal of the West*, 38: 45-56. (2/19)

Jacoby, K., *Introduction* (pp. 1-7) and Part I: *Forest* (pp. 12-78), From *Crimes Against Nature: Squatters Poachers and Thieves (On Canvas)* (2/19)

❖ Institutional Development of Land and Water Management

- Demeritt D., 2001, Scientific forest conservation and the statistical picturing of nature's limits in the Progressive-era United States, *Environment and Planning D-Society & Space*, 19 (4): 431-459 (2/19)
- Worster, D., 1992, Cowboy Ecology, In: D. Worster, *Under Western Skies*, p. 34-52, Oxford University Press, NY (*On Canvas*) (2/21)
- WON: Chapter 11: An End to Ecstasy (2/21)
- Pisani, D.J., Reclamation and social engineering in the Progressive Era, *Agricultural History*, 57: 46-63 (2/23)
- Sneddon, C., & Fox, C. (2011). The Cold War, the US Bureau of Reclamation, and the technopolitics of river basin development, 1950–1970. *Political Geography*, 30(8), 450-460. (2/23)
- Reisner, M., Introductory Chapter & Chapter 3. In, *Cadillac Desert: The American West and Its Disappearing Water*, Penguin (*On Canvas*) (2/23)

❖ Wildfire(s): Institutions, Management, & Coalition Building

- Egan, T., 2009, *The Big Burn, Teddy Roosevelt and the Fire that Saved America*, Houghton Mifflin & Harcourt, 324 pp. (2/25)
- From NYT: Does the Government Cause or Prevent Wildfires? (URL) (2/25)
- Babbitt, B., 1995, Return fire to its place in the West, *Fire Management Notes*, pp. 6-8 (2/25)
- Grant, G.E., Tague, C.L., and Allen, C.D., 2013, Watering the forest for the trees: an emerging priority for managing water in forest landscapes, *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, 11:6, 314-321 (2/27)
- Covington, W.W., 2003, Practice and perspective: Restoring ecosystem health in frequent-fire forests of the American West *Ecological Restoration*, 21:7-11 (2/27)
- Sayre, N., 2006, *Working Wilderness: The Malpai Borderlands Group Story and the Future of the Western Range*, Rio Nuevo Publishers, 128 pp. (3/2)

❖ Nature and the Development of National Parks/National Identity

- Sax, J., 1980, Quiet Genesis, In: J. Sax, *Mountains without handrails; reflections on the National Parks*, p. 5-13, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor. (3/4)
- Abbey, E., 1968, Polemic: Industrial tourism and the National Parks, In: E. Abbey, *Desert Solitaire*, p. 45-67 (3/4)
- UG: Olwig, K.: Reinventing common nature: Yosemite and Mount Rushmore -- a meandering tale of a double nature (3/4)
- Neumann, R.P., 2001, Africa's 'last wilderness' reordering space for political and economic control in colonial Tanzania, *Africa*, 71 (4): 641-665 (3/6)

Neumann R.P., 1995, Ways of seeing Africa: colonial recasting of African society and landscape in the Serengeti National Park, *Ecumene*, 2: 149-170. (3/6)

SUGGESTED READINGS (BUT NOT REQUIRED)

UG: Hayles, N.K.: Simulated Nature and Natural Simulations: Rethinking the relation between the Beholder and the World

Cupers, K., 2008, Governing through nature: camps and youth movements in interwar Germany and the United States, *Cultural Geographies*, 15:173-205.

Jehlicka, Petr and Smith, Joe, 2007, Out of the woods and into the Lab: Exploring the strange marriage of American woodcraft and Soviet ecology in Czech environmentalism, *Environment and History*, 13:187–210

Braun, Bruce. 2003. "'On the raggedy edge of risk': articulations of race and nature after biology." In *Race, Nature, and the Politics of Difference*, eds. Donald Moore, Jake Kosek and Anand Pandian. Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 175-203

Byrne, J. and Wolch, J., 2009, Nature, race, and parks: past research and future directions for geographic research, *Progress in Human Geography*, 33(6): 743–765 (3/4)

❖ **The Social Construction of Nature and Ecological Management**

Pyne, S.J., 1998, *How the Canyon Became Grand* (3/9)

Spurgel, D.G., 1991, Disturbance, equilibrium, and environmental variability: What is “natural” vegetation in a changing environment?, *Biological Conservation*, 58: 1-18. (3/9)

UG: Price, J., Looking for nature at the mall: A field guide to the Nature Company (3/9)

SUGGESTED READINGS (BUT NOT REQUIRED)

ET: Chapter 42: The Realm of Cultural-Human Ecology: Adaptation and Change in Historical Perspective

UG: Harrison, R.: Toward a Philosophy of Nature

Fitzsimmons, M., 1989, The matter of nature, *Antipode*, 21: 106 –120

Demeritt D., 2002, What is the 'social construction of nature'? A typology and sympathetic critique *Progress In Human Geography*, 26 (6): 767-790.