

Assignment 1: Wilderness and Pastoral Now

Due: Friday, April 21, 11:59pm
Length: 500-750 words, plus a link to or photo of the text, image, or video you found.
How: Please submit via "Assignments" on our BruinLearn website.

This assignment asks you to pay attention to all the images, texts, ads, songs, and signs that we run into every day and look out for stories and images related to wilderness and/or pastoral in action:

Your task is to find a text, image, video, website, song, or similar that uses one of these story templates and explain how it does so. The range of texts here is wide open and we encourage you to be creative. Any text, image, or video that uses one of these environmental story templates is fair game (except those we're reading for this class - you'll have opportunities to write about those later in the quarter!). Here are some kinds of texts and images to pay attention to in your search:

- commercials and advertisements of all kinds (digital, TV, print, billboards)
- product packaging
- signs
- posters and flyers
- social media posts, especially by organizations (for example, the Sierra Club on Twitter)
- newspaper articles (on latimes.com or nytimes.com or other newspapers)
- magazine articles
- TV news
- movie trailers
- poems or artwork
- songs, song lyrics, music videos
- textbooks and reading for other classes

Aim to choose a short text or video because you will need to focus on its details, and you don't have much space. If you really want to write about something longer, like a book, film, or TV show, pick a short excerpt from it, such as a paragraph to a page of a book or a short clip (thirty seconds to two minutes) from a film or TV show, and focus entirely on that. Include a link to or photo of the text, image, or video you're focusing on in your post.

In your 500-to-750-word post:

- Give some context for the text, image, or video if necessary: for example, if you chose to write about a sign at an event, explain what the event was and

what role the sign played.

- Show that your text, image, or video does in fact use this particular story template by citing specific details from it as evidence.

For example: "Ford's 'Tough Love' TV commercial for the Explorer sets the vehicle in sweeping landscape shots of rugged, snowy mountains and shows it driving down dusty, rutted roads through the desert. These images invoke the story template of wilderness. The landscapes in the ad are beautiful, but also threatening, with storm clouds, lightning bolts, and a rock falling down a slope toward the vehicle...."

- Finally, explain *how* the text, image, or video uses the story template. Here are some questions that might help as you do this. You do not have to address all of these; they are simply meant to get you thinking:

- What is the purpose of the text, image, or video? For example, is it making an argument, selling you something, trying to make you take action, entertaining, provoking reflection?
- To what ends does the text, image, or video use this story template? What's the purpose of using the story template? To take the example above, how is Ford using wilderness to sell you an Explorer?

A possible argument might be: "The commercial's inspiring shots of harsh landscapes suggest that the viewer should buy a Ford Explorer to escape into the freedom and rugged beauty of the wilderness, while, at the same time, the threatening lightning and snowstorms imply that the Explorer will protect the viewer from the danger of wild nature."

- Does the text, image, or video use the story template sincerely or ironically? In other words, does the text seem to "buy in" to the story template, or to question it?
- Does the text, image, or video use the standard images and icons linked with this story template, or does it vary those in some way?

For example, does an article about sustainable farming use only traditional pastoral images of a green countryside or vary the pastoral story template by adding images of urban, vertical farms?