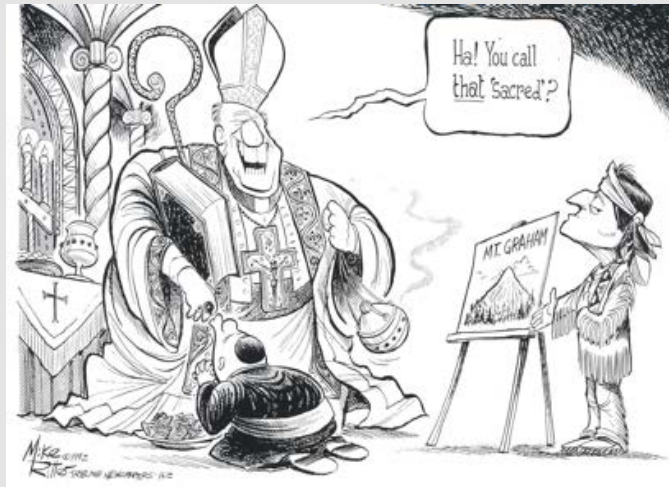


RELIGION & NATURE IN NORTH AMERICA

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Religion & Nature in North America ~ Fall 2013 ~ The University of Florida

"Without a fascination with the grandeur of the North American continent, the energy needed for its preservation will never be developed" ~ Thomas Berry



SECTIONS

REL 3103: Monday, Period 10-E1 (5:10-8:10p.m.), Anderson Hall, Room 134

REL 5199: Monday, Period 10-E1 (5:10-8:10p.m.), Anderson Hall, Room 134

Additional discussion periods by arrangement

INSTRUCTOR

Professor Bron Taylor (Ph.D.)

Email: bron@religion.ufl.edu

Office: Anderson 121

Office hours: Wednesday 1:30-3:00 and by appointment

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DESCRIPTION

Brief Course Description (in UF Catalogue)

Investigation of the ways that "religion" and "nature" have evolved and influenced one another during the cultural, political, and environmental history of North America since European Contact.

Précis

This course critically examines the roles played by "religion" and "nature" during the evolution of the cultural, political, and

environmental history of North America. Specifically, it considers questions such as:

- What are the various and contested ways terms such as “religion” and “nature” are understood, and do such understandings enhance or constrain our ability to apprehend their reciprocal influence in American cultural, political, and environmental history?
- Have the habitats of North America shaped human consciousness, including “religious” or “spiritual” perceptions, ritualizing, and ethical practices, and if so, how? This question will be in mind throughout the course, from an examination of the cultures of the continent’s “first peoples,” to religionists, environmentalists and scientists in the 20th century.
- How and to what extent have religions of various sorts influenced human behavior in ways that contributed to the transformation of North American ecosystems?
- What roles have religiously-shaped concepts of nature played in American political history? For example, how have notions such as “natural theology” “natural law” and understandings of “sacred nature” influenced social life and natural systems during the history of the United States?
- How have religion-related nature discourses, attitudes, and practices been shaped by, and shaped European cultures, and later, by such developments in international spheres?

The course will draw on diverse sources, including ethnographies and other studies pertinent to America’s aboriginal peoples, environmental histories that attend to the role of religion in landscape transformations, primary texts written by the figures most responsible for watersheds in the “religion and ecology” ferment in America, scholarly examinations of these figures and their influence, as well as studies of social movements engaged in the “greening of religion” or conversely, resisting religion-inspired environmentalism. A variety of theoretical issues and background articles, including biographies of many of the central figures to be examined, will be provided from *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature* (2005). Students will complete the course with a broad knowledge of nature-related American religious history, acquainted both with pivotal figures, movements, and critical questions.

Course Outline & Learning Modules

1. Religion & Nature with Early European Contacts (1000-1600).
 1. The arrival, first of the Norse, then the Spanish and other European peoples, set in motion dramatic and sometimes devastating changes to the land, its first inhabitants, and the new immigrants. Religion had much to do with the character of these encounters and these changes.
2. The Colonial Period (1600-1775).
 1. Fear, Ambivalence, and the Stirrings of Reverence toward Nature in the Colonial Period to the Founding of the Republic (ca. 1600-1776).
 2. Religion & the Ideology of Manifest Destiny as the violent collision of European and Native American Religious Cultures escalate.
3. Early Republic to the End of the Frontier (ca. 1780 to 1890).
 1. The subjugation of wild peoples and places (continued).
 2. The European tributary of aesthetic, religious, and romantic attachments toward nature,
 1. Transcendentalism and romantic theologies of correspondence.
 2. Wildness and wilderness emerge as nature religion.
4. The End of the Frontier to Earth Day (1880-1970).
 1. Forest Reserves & National Parks; Scouting and Indian Guides.
 2. Nature writing, Back to the Land Movements, and early “post-supernaturalistic spiritualities of connection.”
 3. the Land Ethic (1948), Sea Mysticism & Silent Spring (1962).
 4. “The Historic Roots of our Ecologic Crisis” (1967) and the turn toward the indigenous cultures of Turtle Island (1969) and those originating in Asia.
5. Religion and Nature from Earth Day & the Age of Environmentalism (1970 to present)
 1. Asian, Pagan, and Native American Spiritualities as Nature Religions.
 2. the “Greening” of some factions of the World’s Major Religions.
 3. The growth of Scientific Nature Religion, including Systems Ecology and the Odumites; Conservation Biology and Restoration Ecology; “Intelligent Design” and its variants; and the Consecration of Scientific Narratives in Cosmos, The Epic of Evolution, & the Universe Story
 4. Environmentalism and Religion

5. Reactionary Responses
6. International Dimensions and Future Trends

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READINGS

Note: most of the required books can be found inexpensively from online and other used booksellers. Wherever available, required book readings will also be available on reserve at the library. Additional articles will be available online via links found in the course schedule.

Required readings (graduate and undergraduate sections)

Albanese, Catherine L. *Nature Religion in America: From the Algonkian Indians to the New Age*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990.

Deloria, Vine (Jr.). *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion*. Updated ed. Golden, Colorado: 1972; reprint, Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum, 1994.

Nash, Roderick Frazier. *Wilderness and the American Mind*. 4th ed. 1967; reprint, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967.

Pike, Sarah. *New Age and Neopagan Religions in America*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

Additional Required Readings for Graduate Section.

Gatta, John. *Making Nature Sacred: Literature, Religion, and Environment in America from the Puritans to the Present*. Oxford & Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Gould, Rebecca Kneale. *At Home in Nature: Modern Homesteading and Spiritual Practice in America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005.

Sears, John. *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Highly recommended for purchase; selections required or recommended.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *Nature*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1986 (reprint); also in Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *The Essential Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Edited by Brooks Atkinson. New York: The Modern Library, 2000. Or *Essays and Lectures* (includes *Nature*) Library of America, 1983.

Muir, John. *Nature Writings*. Edited by William Cronon. New York: Library of America, 1997. This is the best single volume of Muir's writings and it belongs in religion and nature scholars libraries.

Thoreau, Henry David. There are many editions; two from the Library of America are nicely produced, 1985 & 2004.

Supplementary Primary Texts

Burroughs, John. *Accepting the Universe*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920. Commemorative Edition, George W. Lugg, ed., reprint of 1920 publication; Moore Haven, Florida: Rainbow Books, 1987, or 2001 edition from Fredonia Books; and *Time and Change* (the Complete Writings of John Burroughs). Amsterdam: Fredonia Books, 2001

Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring*. New York City: Houghton Mifflin, 1962; *The Sea Around Us*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1950; *Under the Sea Wind*. New York: Dutton, 1991; *The Edge of the Sea*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1955. Carson, Rachel. *Lost Woods: The Discovered Writing of Rachael Carson*. Edited by Linda Lear. Boston: Beacon Press, 1998.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *Nature*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1986 (reprint); also in Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *The*

Essential Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Edited by Brooks Atkinson. New York: The Modern Library, 2000.

Eiseley, Loren. *The Immense Journey: An Imaginative Naturalist Explores the Mysteries of Man and Nature*. New York: Vintage, 1959; *The Firmament of Time*. New York: Atheneum, 1960; *The Invisible Pyramid*. New York: Scribners, 1970; *The Unexpected Universe*. New York: Harcourt, 1972; *The Star Thrower* (anthology). New York: Harcourt/Harvest, 1979; *All the Strange Hours*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.

Jefferson, Thomas, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Penguin Classics, 1998.

Leopold, Aldo. *The Sand County Almanac with Essays from Round River*. Oxford: 1949; reprint, New York: Sierra Club and Balentine Books, 1971.

Muir, John. *Nature Writings: The Story of by Boyhood and Youth; My First Summer in the Sierra; The Mountains of California; Stickeen; Essays*. Edited by William Cronon. New York: Library of America, 1997.

Students may propose a variety of other figures, to name a few possibilities:

Willa Cather, Susan Fenimore Cooper, Cotton Mather, Jonathan Edwards, Gifford Pinchot, Ernest Thompson Seton, Sarah Orne Jewett, Theodore Roosevelt, Ansel Adams, David Brower, Mable Osgood Wright. Moreover, although the first priority in this class is to help students understand the premium on this class is to focus on the period leading up to 1970, Earth Day, and the Age of Ecology, I will consider proposals to focus on more recent figures including: Edward Abbey, Thomas Berry, Wendell Berry, Annie Dillard, Denise Levertov, Joy Harjo, Robinson Jeffers, Barry Lopez, Peter Matthiessen, Gary Snyder, Starhawk, Terry Tempest Williams, Alice Walker, E.O. Wilson. Feel free to make your own proposals.

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REQUIREMENTS

Undergraduate Sections

1. This is a reading-intensive class so a high priority will be placed on the quality of preparation, participation, and thus also attendance (20%). To ensure careful preparation, there will be regular, unannounced, quizzes held in class based on the readings, **or**, students will be asked to submit by email, normally no later than midnight Saturday (otherwise by announcement), a 300-500 word summary of the major arguments being articulated in the major reading, and identify major fault lines and competing perspectives. The weeks in which these short essays will be required will be announced in class, by email, or placed in the reading schedule; so pay attention!
2. Multiple choice in class & take home essay mid term exam (40%); see class schedule for details.
3. Multiple choice and short answer final exam (40%); see class schedule for details.

Important notes:

This course is a hybrid, including both upper-level undergraduate and a graduate student sections. This has both disadvantages and advantages, but the course has been designed to amplify the advantages. It may be necessary to make adjustments to course readings and requirements along the way. The online version of this syllabus is the operative and binding version, so it is imperative that you use the online version, rather than versions printed out earlier in the class.

The quality of this course depends on the preparation and insights of every participant. Only in exigent circumstances may students be absent, and the instructor should be informed of any absence before the class that is missed, unless health and safety prevents such notice. Students are expected to be punctual, for this expresses courtesy and respect for your colleagues and prevents repetition of material presented in class.

Graduate Sections

This course is a luxury in that the premium in it is the reading of primary and secondary sources that you will likely not have the opportunity to do in a similar way unless your research takes you in these directions. Consequently, it is what I call a 'readings' course. This means I do not require a research paper. Rather, I prioritize careful reading and class preparation, in-class presentations, and exams, which provide an opportunity to demonstrate careful reading and analytical insights. Here are the specific assignments:

1. Consistent attendance, quality of preparation, & participation (15%). Normally, by no later than Saturday evening (otherwise by announcement), students are to email a 500-800 word summary of the major arguments being articulated in the major readings, with some reflection on the relationship among these arguments and other currents in the class, first in other readings from that week, and then, with regard to other theoretical streams they are encountering. In other words, after articulating the arguments being advanced and what is at stake with regard to them, you are to identify the fault lines and competing perspectives that are emerging and make connections among the various understandings. If the key readings are not argumentative, then you should describe the perspective(s) presented and note connections among this week's and prior readings. Remember that the course has to do with religion and nature in America, so you should be especially alert to and engaged in analysis of the religious dimensions of the arguments, figures, movements, and so on, that appear in your readings. *In fall of 2013 you will also be regularly called upon to explain and interpret readings that the undergraduates have not had in their assignments.*
2. Biographical, Movement Research, or Controversy Analysis (& related classroom presentation). (15%) Each student will either (1) read the major writings of and about seminal figures or (2) read about movements critical to the America's religion and nature ferment, and then, provide written, and if time allows, oral reports to the classroom, as negotiated with and scheduled through agreement with the instructor. In your presentations you should endeavor to situate the subject within the broader cultural ferment of the time. Presentations focused on individuals will include the reading of biographies (see course bibliography for some examples). A third option will be to read into a critical controversy, such as related to Frederick Jackson Turner's "Frontier Thesis" and its "New Western History" detractors, analyzing the controversy's relevance to this course's critical questions. Whatever else they do, all presentations will bring the same sorts of critical questioning to these analyses as identified under #1, above.
3. Mid term exam with in-class and take-home essay components (30%)
4. Final exam: with in-class and essay dimensions specified in the course schedule (40%).

** Alternative: Students wishing to write a standard research paper may do so, replacing this for assignment #2, above. In such a case both exams, and the research paper, will each be worth 30% of the course grade.*

Important notes:

This course is an important one for Religion and Nature graduate students seeking competence in Occidental traditions in general and North America in particular. It is also an elective in the Religions in the Americas concentration. Given that other courses are offered that focus on Asian and Abrahamic religions, and do so making a priority of examining developments since 1970, the priority in this course is historical. The central objective is to illuminate broad cultural trends and nature-related practices and transformations, rather than attempting to survey the world's major religious traditions, and their natural dimensions, in America.

Course readings and requirements may be modified. The online version of this syllabus is the operative and binding version, so it is imperative that you use the online version, rather than versions printed out earlier in the class.

The quality of this seminar depends on the insights of every participant. Only in exigent circumstances may students be absent. In such cases, such an absence should be pre-approved by the instructor and the reasons documented.

Students are also expected to be punctual, for this expresses courtesy and respect for your colleagues.

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EVALUATION

Points Possible for Required Assignments

This chart shows the points it is possible to earn for each assignment:

Undergraduate Section

Assignment	Points per Assignment	Total Possible Points
Quizzes & Summaries	500 minimum, 750 maximum words	100 (20%)
Midterm Exam	150 points	200 (40%)
Final Exam	200 points	200 (40%)

Total Possible Points:

500 (100%)

Graduate Section

Assignment	Points per Assignment	Total Possible Points
Weekly Summaries	700 minimum, 1000 maximum words	75 (15%)
Research Presentation	written and perhaps oral reports	75 (15%)
Midterm Exam	150 points	150 (30%)
Final Exam	200 points	200 (40%)
Total Possible Points:		500

Calculating Grades

For both the midterm and final exams, the total number of points earned by each student will be divided by the total number earned by the highest-scoring student. The resulting percentage will be used to calculate each student's grade for the course. Put in a formula, it looks like this:

$$\frac{\text{the score of each individual student (your score)}}{\text{(divided by) the highest score earned by a student}}$$

The percentage arrived at by means of this formula will be evaluated according to the following scale:

	A
93%	A-
90%	B+
87%	
83%	B
80%	B-
77%	C+
67%	
60%	C
59%	D
	F

This kind of scoring is fairer than many other forms of grading because: (1) It is based on what students actually achieve rather than some preconceived standard held by the professor; (2) Each student can receive a high grade; (3) Hard-working students will not be penalized for staying in a demanding course full of industrious students. With a traditional curve, demanding courses that "weed out" less industrious students, leaving hard-working ones, can unintentionally harm good students putting them in competition with each other. This will not occur in this course. To further insure fairness, any extra credit points will be added to the individual student's score, *only after the highest score earned by a student has been established*. This ensures that the extra credit earned will not increase the difficulty of the grading scale.

Course instructor reserves the right to lower or raise course grades based on classroom contributions or upon absences. Instructor also reserves the right to change course requirements.

Late or Missing Assignments. Students who do not turn in study guides or reading analyses on the days they are collected will not receive points. The total number of points *possible* for the review essay will be reduced by 20% for each day it is late.

Returned Assignments. Assignments will usually be returned to students no later than one week after they were due. At the end of the semester, unreturned course work will be available for pickup in the Religion Department office in Anderson 107 for 30 days after the official date that grades are posted by the registrar. After this time, they will be recycled.

Academic Dishonesty. Students engaged in any form of academic dishonesty, as defined under the "Academic Misconduct" section of the [Student Discipline Code](#), will be subject to other disciplinary measures. Students are expected to know what constitutes plagiarism and to understand and avoid inadvertent forms of it that can occur by cutting and pasting quotations

from various texts on the world wide web and elsewhere.

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SCHEDULE

WEEKS: August - **01** September - **02 - 03 - 04 - 05** October - **06 - 07 - 08 - 09**
November - **10 - 11 - 12 - 13** December - **14**

Note: All readings are to be completed before the class date/week under which they are listed. This schedule is subject to change so do not print this syllabus but rather, bookmark and consult it regularly.

*** IMPORTANT NOTE FOR FALL 2013 COURSE: BECAUSE THE SEMESTER STARTS ON A WEDNESDAY AND THERE WILL BE NO CLASS ON MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER FOR LABOR DAY, IT IS STRONGLY ADVISED THAT YOU PREPARE A WEEK OR TWO IN ADVANCE.**

(Week 1) 26 August

Starting with a question: Does surfing (ocean not internet) have anything to do with religion, nature, and ethics in North America? If so, why?

Native American and European cultures and nature from contact to the end of the colonial period.

Readings (all)

- From the Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature (henceforth the ERN): [American Indians as 'First Ecologists'; Traditional Ecological Knowledge](#)
- Albanese, *Nature Religion in America*, "Introduction" & "Native Ground: Nature & Culture in Early America," pp. 1-46 ([Intro & ch. 1](#)) -Bron Taylor, "Surfing into Spirituality" ([pdf](#) or [html](#)) from the *Journal for the American Academy of Religion* 75/4, 2007.

Readings (grads)

- Bron Taylor, "Aquatic Nature Religion" ([pdf](#) or [html](#))
- Gatta, *Making Nature Sacred*, Introduction and "Landfall," pp. 3-33; "Meditating on creatures in early American life and letters," pp. 34-54; re. "Intimations of an environmental ethic in the writings of Jonathan Edwards," 55-70 (chs. 1-3)
- From the *ERN*: [Anishnabeg Culture](#); [Harmony in Native North America](#); [Lakota](#); [Sacred Geography in Native North America](#); [Shoshone \(Western North America\)](#); [Shamanism-Traditional](#); [Traditional Ecological Knowledge among Aboriginal Peoples in Canada](#); [Yoeme \(Yaqui\) Ritual](#)

Website (more examples)

- The website providing complementary resources for the book [Dark Green Religion](#) has additional examples of [Surfing Spirituality](#), including the Ross Cummings video (also immediately below), music, and slide shows. See also the video on surfing dolphins and river kayakers at [DGR favorites](#).

(Week 2) 9 September (no class 2 September due to Labor Day)

Readings (below) will explore the entwining of nature and religion attending the birth of the republic. The documentary *The Faithkeeper* (Bill Moyers interview of Oren Lyons) will be made available; view during

the first two weeks of the semester.

* All students will submit by the end of Saturday, 7 September, an essay on the readings (through those below) according to the instructions provided above. Since these will cover two weeks, undergraduates may take up to 1,000 and graduates up 1,500 words. Focus especially on Albanese & Nash (and Grad Students also on Gatta).

Readings (all)

- From the *ERN*: [Haudenosaunee Confederacy](#); [Deism](#); [Book of Nature](#); [Christianity \(7h\)-Natural Theology](#)
- Albanese, *Nature Religion ...*, "[Republican Nature](#)" pp. 47-79 (ch. 2)
- Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, xii-43 ([chapters 1 & 2](#))

Readings (grads)

- Nash, *Wilderness ...*, "The Romantic Wilderness" and "An American Wilderness," pp. 44- 83 ([ch. 3](#) & [ch. 4](#))
- Gatta, *Making Nature Sacred*, "Revelation to US: Green shoots of romantic religion in Antebellum America," pp. 71-99 (ch. 4)
- From the *ERN*: [Unitarianism](#); [Manifest Destiny](#)

Recommended

- Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia, "[Aborigines](#)" pp. 98-113; "[The Administration of Justice](#)" pp. 137-155, and "[Religion](#)" pp. 163-167.

(Week 3) 16 September

New streams of aesthetic and spiritual appreciation of nature emerge and evolve in the early republic's first century and to the end of the frontier.

* Reading summaries due by the end of Saturday, 14 September.

Readings (undergrads)

- Nash, *Wilderness ...*, "The Romantic Wilderness" and "An American Wilderness," pp. 44- 83 ([ch. 3](#) & [ch. 4](#))

Readings (all)

- Nash, *Wilderness ...*, "Henry David Thoreau;" pps. 84-95, ([ch. 5](#))
- From the *ERN*: [Transcendentalism](#); [Emerson, Ralph Waldo](#)

Recommended

- From the *ERN*: [Thoreau, Henry David](#)

Readings (grads)

- John Sears, *Sacred Places*, re. nature appreciation and pilgrimage, first 1/2 19th century, pp. 1-71
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, "[Nature](#)" and other selections.
- Henry David Thoreau, Selections from Bron Taylor's Thoreau Appendix in *Dark Green Religion*, which Dr. Taylor will provide via email
- Nash, *Wilderness ...*, "Preserve the Wilderness" and "Wilderness Preserved," pp. 96-121 ([chs. 6 & 7](#) (*read quickly*))
- From the *ERN* (European tributaries): [Romanticism-in European History](#); [Romanticism in European Literature](#); [Rousseau, Jean-Jacques](#); (American manifestations): [Romanticism-American](#); (See also a contemporary reading by a LDS scholar of the natural aspects of the teaching of Joseph Smith and others in the entry): Church of Jesus Christ, Latter Day Saints.

Recommended

- Albanese, *Nature Religion ...*, re. "[Wilderness and the Passing Show](#)" (on Transcendental Religion), pp. 80-116 (ch. 3)

- Gatta, *Making Nature Sacred*, "Variations on Nature: from the Old Manse to the White Whale," pp. 102-125 (ch. 5), which is about early 19th century poets and writers; and "Rare and delectable places: Thoreau's imagination of sacred space at Walden," pp. 127-142 (ch. 6)

Websites

- [Cedar Grove](#), the National Park Service sponsored site devoted to Thomas Cole, and the Hudson River School of Art, which he founded.
- [The Catskill Archive](#), a site devoted to the history of the Catskill Mountains, has many images from Thomas Cole's paintings.
- * Note the differences between the various periods of his work, and the environmental and religious values in the paintings, as well as the view of environmental history implicit in them, especially in the "empire" series.

(Week 4) 23 September

John Muir and the ambivalent ethical legacy of American National Parks

Documentary: Battle for Wilderness (PBS/American Experience, 1989); and segments from The National Parks: America's Greatest Idea (2009).

* Reading summaries due by the end of Saturday, 21 September.

Readings (all)

- From the ERN: [National Parks and Monuments](#); [Pinchot, Gifford](#); [Muir, John](#); [Sierra Club](#)
- John Muir. From *Nature Writings*. Edited by William Cronon. New York: Library of America, 1997. Read, "[Cedar Keys](#)," pp. 818-827; "[Wild Wool](#)," pp. 598-606
- Nash, [Wilderness and the American Mind](#), "John Muir," pp. 122-140, "The Wilderness Cult," pp. 141-160, and "Hetch Hetchy," pp. 161-181 (chs. 8-10)

Readings (grads)

- Mark David Spence. "[Introduction & Looking Backward and Westward](#)," pp. 1-23, "[The Heart of the Sierras](#)," "[Yosemite Indians and the National Parks Ideal](#)," and "[Conclusion](#)," pp.101-139. (*Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks*. Oxford University Press, 1999.)
- Ross Wakefield, "[Muir's Early Indian Views](#): Ross Wakefield, —Muir's Early Indian Views: Another Look at My First Summer in The Sierra," from *The John Muir Newsletter*, v.5, no.1, Winter 1994- 95
- John Sears, *Sacred Places*, re. The Sacred & National Parks nature appreciation and pilgrimage, second 1/2 19th century pp. 122-216 (chs 6-8).

Recommended

- John Muir. *Nature Writings*. Edited by William Cronon. New York: Library of America, 1997. In addition to the required readings, strongly recommended are "[Stickeen](#)," pp.553-571; and then skim widely, looking especially for his emerging biocentrism and ambivalent attitudes toward Native Americans, in "My First Summer in the Sierra*," pp. 147-309. [Note: this is the volume you should all get for your libraries]
- Kerry Mitchell, "Managing Spirituality: Public Religion in National Parks," *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 1/4 (2007): 431-49.
- ERN: [Miwok People](#)
- *Dispossessing the Wilderness* (the remaining chapters) pp. 24-100,* and Robert Keller and Michael Turek, "[Everglades National Park and the Seminole Problem](#)," pp. 216-231, from *American Indians and National Parks*. Tucson: Arizona University Press, 1998.

(Week 5) 30 September

Theorizing "Dark Green Religion"

*** Reading summaries due by the end of Saturday, 28 September.**

Readings (all)

- Taylor, Bron, *Dark Green Religion*, [Preface & Ch. 1, Exploring Critical Terms](#) (Ch. 1 begins at the bottom of the preface); Ch. 2, Dark Green Religion, and [Wilderness, Spirituality and Biodiversity in North America: tracing an environmental history from Occidental roots to Earth Day](#), in *Wilderness in Mythology and Religion*, ed. Laura Feldt, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 293-324; Recommended: Ch. 3, Dark Green Religion in North America in *Dark Green Religion*.

Website (more examples)

- The *Dark Green Religion* website has a variety of [supplementary materials](#) that students may enjoy perusing, including video, music, and images.

(Week 6) 7 October

No weekly analysis is due on 5 October but students should be ready to address the readings during the in-class and take home portions of their mid-term exam.

7 October: The in-class portion of the mid-term exam will be administered 7 October in class and the take home essay section will be distributed. The take-home essay will be due 14 October before class and submitted as a word or rich text document by email. Students not in class that day will receive a 1 grade deduction on the essay portion of the mid term.

Readings (all)

- ERN: [Scouting](#)
- Kimberly Smith, "What Is Africa to Me? [Wilderness in Black Thought](#), 1860-1930," *Environmental Ethics* 27/3, 279-97.
- Paul Sutter, [The World with Us: The State of American Environmental History](#), *Journal of American History*, 2013.
- Bron Taylor, [Its not all about us](#), *Journal of American History*, 2013.

Recommended

- Rebecca Gould, *At Home in Nature*, especially "Ambivalent Legacies II: Gender, Class, Nature, and Religion" 201-235.
- ERN (recommended): [Indian Guides](#); - [Nature Fakers Controversy](#); [Ernest Thompson Seton Institute & Seton biography](#) (Brief)
- Eileen Smith-Cavros, "Modern Black Churchgoers in Miami-Dade County, Florida: Place, Nature, and Memory," *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 1/3: 351-70, 2007.
- New books indirectly pertinent: Ian Finseth, (2009). *Shades of green: visions of nature in the literature of American slavery, 1770-1860*. University of Georgia Press, 2009; Diane Glave and Mark Stoll, eds. *To love the wind and the rain: African Americans and environmental history*. Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006.

(Week 7) 14 October

John Burroughs & Loren Eiseley: science & nature religion in the early & mid-20th century

Documentary: Thinking Like a Watershed (1998) (or next week)

Readings (all)

- ERN: [Back to the Land Movement](#); [Creationism and Creation Science](#)
- John Burroughs. "Preface" and "The Long Road" pp. 1-38, and "The Gospel of Nature" pp. 243-73, in Time

& Change (vol. xv) in *The Complete Writings of John Burroughs* Amsterdam: Fredonia Books, 2001. Commemorative Edition, George W. Lugg, ed., reprint of 1920 publication; Moore Haven, Florida: Rainbow Books, 1987, or 2001.

- ERN: [Eiseley, Loren](#)

- Loren Eiseley, "[The Flow of the River](#)" pp. 15-27, "[The Judgment of the Birds](#)" pp. 163-78, "[The Bird and the Machine](#)" pp. 179-93, and "[The Secret of Life](#)" pp. 195-210, from *The Immense Journey*, and "[The Star Thrower](#)" pp. 67-92, from *The Unexpected Universe* (or reprinted in *The Star Thrower*). "[The Small Death](#)" pp. 139-49, and "[The Coming of the Giant Wasps](#)" (pp. 236-47), and "[The Other Player](#)" (258-66) from *All the Strange Hours*.

Readings (grads)

- Rebecca Gould, "Getting (Not Too) Close to Nature: [Modern Homesteading and Lived Religion in America](#)" in David Hall, ed. *Lived Religion in America*, 217-242

- Rebecca Gould, At Home in Nature, pp. 1-138 (ch. 1-4).

Religion and resistance to Darwinian thought and scientific nature religion

Recommended

- ERN: [Darwin, Charles](#)

Students not in class on 14 October will receive a one grade deduction on the essay portion of the mid term that is due prior to that class.

(Week 8) 21 October

Aldo Leopold, the Wilderness Society, and the breakthrough of explicitly biocentric environmental ethics.

Documentary: Wild By Law (The American Experience/PBS, 1992): on Marshall, Leopold & Zanheiser and the Wilderness Society, or American Values / American Wilderness (High Plains Films/2005).

* Reading summaries due by the end of Saturday, 19 October. Since these will cover two weeks, undergraduates may take up to 1,000 and graduates up 1,500 words.

Readings (all)

- ERN: [Environmental Ethics](#)

- Nash, Wilderness ..., "Aldo Leopold: Prophet," pp. 182-99, "Decisions for Permanence," pp. 200-237, (chs. 11-12)

- Aldo Leopold, from *A Sand County Almanac* "[Forward](#)," "[Arizona and New Mexico](#)" (especially sub-section, "Thinking like a Mountain"), "[The Round River](#)," "[Goose Music](#)," and "[The Land Ethic](#)," (Note: The Oxford University Press edition (1949/1968) does not have "Part III", which includes the Thinking like a Mountain, [Round River](#), and [Goose Music](#) essays. For these, see the Ballentine Books (1970) paperback edition. *Strongly Recommended*: read widely, esp. "A Sand County Almanac" and "Wilderness" and "Conservation Esthetic."

Readings (grads)

- ERN: [Leopold, Aldo](#); [Ouspensky, Pyotr Demianovich](#)

(Week 9) 28 October

Rachel Carson, the environmental Era, the environmental justice movement, and the rising influence of nature writing.

Documentary: Rachel Carson's Silent Spring (The American Experience, 1993)

* Reading summaries due by the end of Saturday, 26 October.

Readings (all)

- ERN: [Carson, Rachel](#); [Environmental Justice and Environmental Racism](#); [Williams, Terry Tempest](#)
- Rachel Carson, [Nature Religion Selections](#). See also [selections and commentary](#) on *Silent Spring*. Recommended, peruse *Under the Sea Wind*, about which she ruminated in the hyperlinked selections, or read "[Preface](#)" and "[The Marginal World](#)" (pp. 1-7), and "[The Enduring Sea](#)" (pp. 249-50), in *The Edge of the Sea* (1955), or read widely from *The Sea Around Us* or *Silent Spring* (in this, her most famous book, see especially the introductory "[Fable for Tomorrow](#)" (pp. 1-3), and the concluding section, "[The Other Road](#)" pp. 177-97, esp. its concluding two pages).

Readings (grads)

- Kathleen Dean Moore, "The Truth of the Barnacles: [Rachel Carson and the Moral Significance of Wonder](#). In *Rachel Carson: Legacy and Challenge*.
- Gatta, Making Nature Sacred, "Post-Darwinian Visions of Divine Creation," pp. 143-173, "Imagined Worlds: the lure of numinous exoticism," 175-198, "Reclaiming the sacred commons," 199-224, "Learning to love creation: the religious tenor of contemporary ecopoetry," 225-243, (chs. 7-10), and "Afterword," 245-46.

Readings (grads/recommended)

- ERN: [Dillard, Annie](#); [Berry, Wendell](#); [Lopez, Barry](#)
- Sarah McFarland Taylor, "[Land as Lover: Mormon eco-eroticism and planetary plural marriage in the work of Terry Tempest Williams](#)" *Nova Religio* vol. 8 no 1 (July 2004): 39-56
- Terry Tempest Williams, "[Epilogue: The clan of the one-breasted women](#)," pp. (pp. 281-90), in *Refuge: an Unnatural History of Family and Place*. New York: Pantheon, 1991. Also, see *Desert Quartet: an erotic landscape*. New York: Pantheon, 1995.
- Lisa Sideris and Kathleen Dean Moore, eds. *Rachel Carson: Legacy and Challenge*. State University of New York Press, 2008.

(Week 10) 4 November

Developments from & since the 1960s

Documentary: [American Buffalo: Spirit of a Nation \(PBS/Nature, 1998\)](#)

* No reading summaries due this week.

Readings (required)

- ERN: [Deloria, Vine Jr.](#)
- Vine Deloria (Jr.) *God is Red* (peruse/skim the entire book, reading carefully 1-113 (ch 1- 6), pp. 185-202 (ch 11); pp. 236-282 (ch. 14-16).

Readings (grads)

- ERN: [Bison Restoration and Native American Traditions](#); [Black Elk](#); [Black Mesa](#); [Cowboy Spirituality](#); [Holy Land in Native North America](#); [Mother Earth](#); [Native American Languages](#); [Peyote](#); [Plastic Medicine Men](#); [Romanticism and Indigenous Peoples](#); [Savages](#); [Seattle \(Sealth\), Chief](#) (ca. 1790-1866)
- Cornell, George L. "[The Influence of Native Americans on Modern Conservationists](#)." *Environmental Review* 9, no. 2 (1985): 104-17.
- Weaver, Jace, ed., especially "[Introduction](#)" (pp. 1-26 and "[Afterward](#)" (pp. 177-191), in *Defending Mother Earth: Native American Perspectives on Environmental Justice*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1996.

(Week 11) 11 November

Paganism and the New Age

* Reading summaries due by the end of Saturday, 9 November. Since these will cover two weeks, undergraduates may take up to 1,000 and graduates up to 1,500 words. Focus especially on Native American traditions and Paganism.

Documentary: *In the Light of Reverence* (PBS/POV, 2001)

- For background and an interview with film maker Christopher McLeod, see <http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2001/inthelightofreverence/thefilm.html>.
- See also the filmmaker's website, <http://www.sacredland.org/>.

Readings (all)

- ERN: [Paganism-Contemporary](#); [Odinism](#); [Celestine Prophecy](#); [New Age](#); [Harmonic Convergence](#); [Harmonic Convergence and the Spiritualization of the Biosphere](#); [Wicca](#).
- Nash, Wilderness ..., "Toward a Philosophy of Wilderness," pp. 238-271

Readings (grads)

- Pike, Sarah. *New Age and Neopagan Religions in America* (pp. 3-172)

(Week 12) 18 November

Wilderness victories and the intensification of social conflict over nature religions, wildlands, and sacred space claims

* Reading summaries due by the end of Saturday, 16 November; focus on the religious dimensions of radical environmentalism and wilderness protection movements.

Documentaries:

- *Rage over Trees* (Audubon, 1994)
- *Pickaxe* (Independent, 2000), for access online see <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-1915772001649860572>
- *Road Use Restricted* (Independent, 1987).

Readings (all)

- ERN: [Radical Environmentalism](#); [Earth First! and the Earth Liberation Front](#); [Indigenous Environmental Activism and the Indigenous Environmental Network](#); [Law, Religion, and Native American Lands](#)
- Nash, Wilderness ..., "The Irony of Victory" pp. 316-341 (ch. 15)

Readings (grads)

- Taylor, Bron. "Resacralizing Earth: Pagan Environmentalism and the Restoration of Turtle Island." *In American Sacred Space*, eds. David Chidester and Edward T. Linenthal, 97- 151. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995.
- ERN: [Black Mesa](#); [G-O Road](#); [Devil's Tower, Mato Tipi, or Bear Lodge \(Wyoming\)](#); [James Bay Cree and Hydro-Quebec](#)

(Week 13) 25 November (Thanksgiving is 28 November)

The "Greening" of Mainstream Religions?

Documentary: *Renewal: America's Emerging Religious Environmental Movement* (2007)

- *Renewal* ([project website](#)).

Readings (all)

- ERN: [Religious Studies and Environmental Concern](#); [The Religious Environmentalist Paradigm](#); [Nature Religion in the United States](#); [Lynn White Thesis](#)

Readings (grads)

Recommended:

- ERN: "World religions" sections (especially Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism and Daoism, then following as many cross-references as possible). For recent religious resistance to these developments, see [Paganism: a Jewish Perspective](#), and [Wise Use Movement](#).
- Albanese, *Nature Religion ...*, re. "Recapitulating Pieties," pp. 153-198 (ch. 5), and "Epilogue," pp. 199-201.

No more reading reviews will be due, but do keep up with the readings, for they will need to be well in hand to do well on your final exam.

Scientific and other forms of contemporary nature religion

Music Videos (all)

- [Symphony of Science Music Videos](#) (view "We're All Connected" and "The Unbroken Thread" (at least).

Readings (all)

- ERN: [Conservation Biology](#); [Disney Worlds at War](#); [Epic of Evolution](#); [Mountaineering](#); [Rock Climbing](#); [Yoga](#)
- Thomas Berry, "The Human Presence" pp. 13-23 (ch. 3), "The New Story" pp. 194-215 (ch. 15), in *Dream of the Earth*. (Alternatively, read the selections from *The Great Work*, immediately below.)

Readings (grads)

- Bron Taylor, "[Ecology and Nature Religions](#)" *Encyclopedia of Religion*, v. 4, 2nd ed., Lindsay Jones, ed., MacMillan Reference, New York: 2005, pp. 2661-2668
- ERN: [Natural History as Natural Religion](#); [Restoration Ecology and Ritual](#); [Process Philosophy \(and Theology cross-reference\)](#); [Sagan, Carl](#); [Space Exploration](#).

Motion Pictures (possible film night): Carl Sagan's "Contact" or Disney's "Pocahontas" or James Cameron's "Avatar"

Recommended

- Thomas Berry, pp. 1-71 and 166-201, * from *The Great Work*. New York: Bell Tower, 1999.
- ERN: [Berry, Thomas \(and adjacent to this entry\): Thomas Berry on Religion and Nature](#)

(Week 14) 2 December (last class)

The international influence of American, nature-related Religion

Film: Welcome Ceremony, United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg 2002).

View: [Part One](#). [Part Two](#).

Readings (required)

- Nash, *Wilderness ...*, "The International Perspective," pp. 342-378 (ch. 16) and "Epilogue," pp. 379-390.
- ERN: [United Nation's 'Earth Summits'](#); [Earth Charter](#); [Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Sites](#)
- Bron Taylor, "[Civil Earth Religion versus Religious Nationalism](#)," *The Immanent Frame*, or better, *Dark Green Religion*, chapters 7-9, especially chapter 8, "Terrapolitan Earth Religion."

Readings (recommended)

- Robert Paelke's *Environmentalism and the Future of Progressive Politics* (Yale U.P, 1989), 273-283
- Martin Lewis, *Green Delusions* (Duke U.P., 1992), p. 150-90 & 242-51.

In-class portion of final exam administered in class 2 December. The essay portion will be made available no later than 2 December and is due by midnight 11 December.

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Resources

Writing Well

[Joshua Sowin's 'A guide to writing well'](#)

[Bron Taylor's Writing Well Guide](#)

Documentaries

[American Values / American Wilderness \(High Plains Films/2005\)](#)

[Battle for Wilderness \(1989\)](#)

[Call of Life \(Species Alliance/2010\)](#)

[Disneynature](#)

[Edward Abbey: A Voice in the Wilderness \(1993\)](#)

[Dave Foreman, Radical Environmentalism talk, the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh \(1990\)](#)

[Earth First!, on 60 Minutes \(1990\)](#)

[If a Tree Falls: A story of the Earth Liberation Front \(2011\)](#)

[Greenfire \(2011\) \[Aldo Leopold\]](#)

[Lessons from the Rainforest \(1991\) \[Lou Gold\]](#)

[The Faithkeeper \[Oren Lyons with Bill Moyers\]](#)

[Holmes Rolston Lecture on Leopold, Greenfire, and Earth Ethics \(2013\)](#)

[Gaia-Goddess of the Earth \(1986\) PBS|Nova \(1995\)](#)

[Ecopsychology-Restoring the Earth|Healing the Self \(1995\)](#)

[Thinking like a Watershed](#)

[Faithkeeper \(Bill Moyers/PBS/1991\)](#)

[In the Light of Reverence \(Sacred Land Film Project/Christopher McLeod/2001\)](#)

[The National Parks / Americas Best Idea \(Ken Burns/PBS/2009\)](#)

[Renewal: America's Emerging Religious Environmental Movement \(2007\)](#)

[Spirit & Nature' \(PBS/Moyers, 1991\); \(viewable, here, online\)](#)

[Sweating Indian Style: Conflicts Over Native American Ritual \(Society for Visual Anthropology/1994\)](#)

Motion Pictures (theatrical)

[Dances With Wolves \(1990\)](#)

[The Color Purple \(1985\) Contact \(1991\)](#)

[Pocahontas \(Disney/1995\)](#)

[Avatar \(2009\)](#)

[The East \(2013\)](#)

Television

[Game of Thrones](#)

Many productions on Discovery, Animal Planet, PBS, Disney channels.

Websites

Academic organizations intersecting with themes of this course:

[The International Society for Environmental Ethics \(ISEE\)](#)

[International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture](#)

[Environmental Ethics \(Journal\)](#)

[Environmental Values \(Journal\)](#)

[Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale University](#)

[Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture](#)

Additional resources, such as links to podcasts, music, slideshows, video, music, and websites, will be made available here during the course. Students are encouraged to send their own ideas for resources to the course instructors.

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