

RELIGION AND NATURE IN NORTH AMERICA

SPRING 2021

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

~ Thomas Berry

SECTIONS & TIMES:

REL 3103 & 5199 | Monday 1:55-2:45 & Wednesday 1:55-3:50

INSTRUCTOR:

Professor Bron Taylor (Ph.D.)

Email: bron@ufl.edu

Office: Anderson 121

Office hours: by zoom appointment

DESCRIPTION (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.

DESCRIPTION (detailed):

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 ferment over religion and nature in America, scholarly examinations of these figures and their influence, as well as studies of social movements promoting a “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 while becoming acquainted with pivotal figures, movements, and critical questions.

COURSE OUTLINE

1. Approaching Nature, Religion, & Nature Religion
 1. Definitions of religion
 2. ‘Lived religions’, family resemblances, and spirituality
 3. Nature Religion

2. Religion & Nature with Early European Contacts (1000-1600)
 - a. The arrival, first by 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 changes.
3. The Colonial Period (1600-1775)
 - a. Fear, Ambivalence, and the Stirrings of Reverence toward Nature in the Colonial Period to the Founding of the Republic (ca. 1600-1776).
 - b. Religion & the Ideology of Manifest Destiny as the violent collision of European and Native American religious cultures escalate.
4. Early Republic to the End of the Frontier (ca. 1780 to 1890)
 - a. The subjugation of wild peoples and places (continued).
 - b. The European tributary of aesthetic, religious, and romantic attachments toward nature.
 - i. Transcendentalism and romantic theologies of correspondence.
 - ii. Wildness and wilderness emerge as nature religion.
 - iii. Nature, spirituality, and tourism.
4. The End of the Frontier to Earth Day (1880-1970)
 - a. Forest Reserves, National Parks, Conservation & the emergence of environmental activism.
 - b. Scouting and Indian Guides.
 - c. Nature writing, Back to the Land Movements, and early "post-supernaturalistic spiritualities of connection."
 - d. The Land Ethic (1948), Sea Mysticism, & Silent Spring (1962).
 - e. "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)
 - a. Asian, Pagan, and Native American Spiritualities as Nature Religions.
 - b. Religionists seeking to awaken environmental concern and action within the world's predominant religions in America and beyond.

- c. The growth of Scientific Nature Religion, including Systems Ecology and the Odumites; Conservation Biology and Restoration Ecology; "Intelligent Design" and its variants;
 - a. The consecration of scientific narratives about the origin and evolution of the cosmos and biosphere (such as the Epic of Evolution & the Universe Story) and their critics.
- d. Environmentalism and Religion
- e. Religious & ideological criticisms & reactions to the growth of nature-based spiritualities in America & beyond.
- f. International Dimensions and Future Trends
- g. Kinship, spirituality, and planetary futures

Every course involves difficult decisions about what to include and exclude. In this course, the focus is on the foundational religious (and spiritual) perceptions that have animated the most influential figures and movements in American environmental thought and conservation practices up until Earth Day and the beginning of the modern environmental period, which is often traced to the Rachel Carson and her book *Silent Spring*. The rationale for this focus is that scholars cannot really understand more recent phenomena if they do not understand the cultural soil, and the histories, from which they emerged.

Another way I have prioritized selections is to focus on those who have been the most influential on conservation and environmental movements; in other words, that whatever else they are known for, they promoted environmental conservation. Consequently, unlike a typical course taught by scholars of literature, I have not focused on novelists and poets, although many more could have been included in required and recommended readings. Such individuals are as deserving of scholarly attention as many of those included in this course, and they may well be fitting subjects for research papers for the graduate students in this course. We will discuss a number of such figures in class. For additional ideas see the separate religion and nature in North America bibliography

READINGS

Note: most of the required books can be found inexpensively from online and other used booksellers. Every effort will be made to ensure, as well, that required book readings will also be available digitally at UF's library. Additional articles will be available online via links found in the course schedule.

Required Texts (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

- Stoll, Mark. *Inherit the Holy Mountain: Religion and the Rise of American Environmentalism*. Oxford University Press, 2015. Note, this book replaces John Gatta's *Making Nature Sacred: Literature, Religion, and Environment in America from the Puritans to the Present*. Oxford University Press, 2004, which is recommended.
- Gould, Rebecca. *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 (required readings for graduate section)

- 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 W. 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.

- Kimmerer, Robin Wall. (2013). Braiding sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants. Minneapolis, Minnesota, Milkweed.

An extended scholarly bibliography will be provided as a separate document.

Students may propose other figures to study, including (but not limited to):

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 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, Mary Oliver, Robinson Jeffers, Barry Lopez, Peter Matthiessen, Gary Snyder, Starhawk, Terry Tempest Williams, Alice Walker, E.O. Wilson. Feel free to make your own proposals.

REQUIREMENTS

Undergraduate Section

- This is a reading-intensive class so a high priority will be placed on the quality of preparation, participation, and thus also attendance (30%). To ensure careful preparation, there will be regular, unannounced, quizzes held in class based on the readings, *or*, students will be asked to submit, normally no later than midnight Sunday (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, on canvas, and placed in the reading schedule; so pay attention!
- Multiple choice in class & take-home essay mid-term exam (30%); see class schedule for details.
- Multiple choice and short answer final exam (40%); see class schedule for details.

Important notes for all students

This course is a hybrid, including both upper-level undergraduate and 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.

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 for assignments and due dates, rather than this syllabus.

Graduate Section

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:

- Consistent attendance, quality of preparation, & participation (15%). Normally, by no later than Sunday 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. *You will also be regularly called upon to explain and interpret readings that the undergraduates have not had in their assignments.*

- 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.
- Midterm exam taken via Canvas with diverse formats and questions, combined with take-home essays (30%)
- Final exam: similar format as with the Midterm exam (40%).

* *Alternative:* With instructor approval, students wishing to write a standard research paper may do so, replacing this for assignment #2, above. In this case, the goal would be to prepare a paper for eventual publication in a scholarly journal. In such a case both exams, and the research paper, would each be worth 30% of the course grade.

Important additional notes for graduate students

- You will be asked to regularly share with the undergraduates what you are learning from your more extensive readings. You will also be expected to lead some discussion sessions with several of them from time to time.
- 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.

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	10 or 20 points each	150 (30%)
Midterm Exam	150 points	150 (30%)
Final Exam	200 points	200 (40%)
	Total Possible Points:	500 (100%)

Graduate Section

Assignment	Points per Assignment	Total Possible Points
Weekly Summaries	10-20 points each	75 (15%)
Research Presentation	75 points	75 (15%)
Midterm Exam	150 points	150 (30%)
Final Exam	200 points	200 (40%)
	Total Possible Points:	500 (100%)

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:

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

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

93%	A
90%	A-
87%	B+
83%	B

80%	B-
77%	C+
67%	C
60%	D
59%	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 ensure 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 reading analyses on time will not receive points for these assignments. 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 Honor 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.

SCHEDULE

All readings and the related written assignments are to be completed before class date/week under which they are listed by 11:59p.m. Sunday evenings, unless otherwise stated below. To flourish in this class you must read widely and carefully.

Module 1: A 'family resemblances' approach to 'religion,' 'spirituality,' 'nature religion,' & with a case study in 'aquatic nature religion' (Week of 11 January)

Key questions:

- What is religion, spirituality, and nature religion?
- What is 'lived religion'?
- What is 'family resemblances' approach to religion-resembling social phenomena?
- How does surfing, fly fishing, whitewater kayaking, and rock climbing, open the analytic horizon for considering the religion and nature nexus?

Readings (all)

- From the Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature (henceforth the ERN): S. Kretch [American Indians as 'First Ecologists'](#); F. Berkes, [Traditional Ecological Knowledge](#); G. Johnson, [Rock Climbing](#)
- Albanese, Nature Religion in America, "Introduction" & "Native Ground: Nature & Culture in Early America," pp. 1-46 ([Intro & ch. 1](#))

- [Aquatic Nature Religion](#)," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 75(4): 863-874, 2007. (Surfing into Spirituality...) is also recommended for undergraduate students; it is linked in the following section (it will reinforce the lecture).

Readings (grads)

- B. Taylor, [Exploring Religion, Nature, and Culture: Introducing the Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture](#), *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 1(1): 5-14, 2007.
- B. Taylor, [Surfing into Spirituality and a New, Aquatic Nature Religion](#), *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 75(4): 923-951, 2007.
- Stoll, *Inherit the Holy Mountain*, Introduction and Ch. 1
- From the ERN: K. von Stuckrad, [Mountaineering](#)

Recommended readings

- 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](#)
- Snyder, S. S. (2007). "New streams of religion: fly fishing as a lived, religion of nature." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* **75**(4): 896-922. [PDF](#)
- Sanford, W. (2007). "Pinned on karma rock: whitewater kayaking as religious experience." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* **75**(4): 875-895. [PDF](#)

Module 2: Native American and European cultures from contact to the birth of the American republic. (Week of 18 January - no class 18 January due to Martin Luther King holiday)

Key questions:

- What generalizations can be made about the religious dimensions of the ways indigenous Americans and European arrivals tended to view nature?

- How did such perceptions play out with regard to perceptions about the American republic?
- What were early American attitudes toward 'wilderness' including among Christians and those who developed a romantic appreciation for it?
- What are some of the ways that indigenous critics view Christianity and the early republic?

Your first reading summaries are due by 11:59 p.m. Tuesday 19 January. 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 Stoll).

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](#))
- Stoll, *Inherit the Holy Mountain*, Ch. 2 & 3
- Recommended: 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 readings

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

Module 3: Aesthetic and spiritual appreciation of nature during the first century of the republic, including Henry David Thoreau, & up to the end of the frontier.

(Week of 25 January)

Key questions:

- Roderick Nash provided the classic treatment of wilderness in the American mind; how does he characterize it in this week's readings?
- Who is the most prominent proponent of transcendentalism, what are its main tenets?
- What are the main ideas and practices promoted by Henry David Thoreau? Did he transcend transcendentalism?
- What is romanticism and what are the forms and means of its transmission in North America?

Your reading summaries are due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday 24 January.

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](#)

Readings (grads)

- John Sears, *Sacred Places*, re. nature appreciation and pilgrimage, first 1/2 19th century, pp. 1-71
- Stoll, *Inherit the Holy Mountain*, Ch. 4
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, [Nature](#) and other selections.
- Henry David Thoreau, Selections from Bron Taylor's Thoreau Appendix in *Dark Green Religion*. [PDF](#)
- 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](#).

Viewings: this and/or next week (all)

- *The Faithkeeper* (Bill Moyers interview of Oren Lyons).
- Excerpts from *The National Parks: America's Greatest Idea* (2009); some will be viewed in class, additional segments will be made available.

Recommended readings

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

Module 4: John Muir, spiritual conservation, & the complicated roots of the National Parks. (Week of 1 February)

Key questions:

- What are the central spiritual and ethical perceptions and views held by John Muir and Gifford Pinchot?
- Muir has been characterized as racist by some while others view such charges as based on out-of-context cherry picking that, moreover, ignores a wide variety of

other information that would illuminate his views and how they evolved. How strong are the arguments and evidence on the various sides of this debate, and what ought to be made of it more than a century since Muir's death; including, did the director of the Sierra Club make too hasty a judgment?

Your reading summaries are due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday, 31 January.

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)
- Tompkins, L. (2020). [Sierra Club Says It Must Confront the Racism of John Muir](#), *New York Times*, 22 July 2020.
- Nobel, J. (2016). [The Miseducation of John Muir](#). *Atlas Obscura*, 26 July.
- Worster, D. (2019). [John Muir Biographer: He was no white supremacist](#). *California Sun*, 30 July. (See also the interview linked at the end of Worster's essay.)

Readings (grads)

- Purdy, J. (2015). [Environmentalism's racist history](#). *The New Yorker*, 13 August.
- Stoll, *Inherit the Holy Mountain*, Ch. 5 - 7
- 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.)
- John Sears, *Sacred Places*, re. *The Sacred & National Parks nature appreciation and pilgrimage, second 1/2 19th century* pp. 122-216 (chs 6-8).

Viewing (all)

- [Battle for Wilderness](#) (The American Experience, PBS/1989).

Recommended readings

- 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]
- Lynn Ross-Bryant. *Pilgrimage to the National Parks: Religion and Nature in the United States*, London: Routledge 2012
- Kerry Mitchell, "Managing Spirituality: Public Religion in National Parks," *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 1/4 (2007): 431-49. For a more in-depth work see his *Spirituality and the State: Managing Nature and Experience in America's National Parks*, NYU Press 2016.
- ERN: B. Ortiz, [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.
- Carolyn Finney (2014). *Black faces, white spaces: reimagining the relationship of African Americans to the great outdoors*. Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press.

Recommended viewing or listening

- [Conversation between Dr. Carolyn Finney and Robert Hanna](#) (25 July 2020). Finney is the author of *Black Faces, White Spaces* (cited below); Hannah, who is the host of the conversation, is the great-great-grandson of John Muir. (Also interesting is this news about Hanna's contribution to efforts to recognize [Chiura Obata](#), a Japanese American whose California-drenched nature spirituality permeated his landscape artist).

Module 5: Dark Green, Animistic, and Gaian Spirituality (Week of 8 February).

Key questions:

- What is the difference, according to Taylor, between 'green religion' and 'dark green religion'?
- What are the main types of dark green religion and how are these related to wilderness spiritualities and biodiversity conservation?
- In what ways has nature related though in Europe and the Americas (including indigenous perspectives) been engaged and mutually influential?

Your reading summaries are due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday, 7 February.

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, (De Gruyter, 2012), 293-324; Recommended: Ch. 3, *Dark Green Religion in North America*.

Viewing (all)

- [The National Parks: America's Greatest Idea \(2009\); excerpts, this and next week.](#)

Recommended website

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

Module 6 ~ Insights and corrections to the most prevalent narratives about religion and nature in North America from the emerging discipline of environmental history (Week of 15 February)

Key questions:

- What has the discipline of environmental history contributed to the study of religion and nature in North America?

- Have the insights at times also led to lacunae that need to be remedied?
- What are the major arguments advanced by Mark Stoll in his landmark book?

No weekly analysis is due this week but students should be ready to address the readings during the in-class mid-term exam, part of which will be multiple choice and administered via Canvas on 15 February, the rest will involve take-home essays which must be emailed to Professor Taylor no later than 12:00 p.m (high noon) 21 February.

Readings (all)

- ERN: [Scouting](#)
- 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.

Readings (grads)

- Stoll, *Inherit the Holy Mountain*, Ch. 8 & Conclusion
- Kimberly Smith, "What Is Africa to Me? [Wilderness in Black Thought, 1860-1930](#)," *Environmental Ethics* 27/3, 279-97

Viewing (all)

- [American Values / American Wilderness](#) (High Plains Films/2005)
- [Buffalo should be everywhere](#) (High Plains Films/2019)

Recommended Readings

- 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.

- 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. (2006). *To love the wind and the rain: African Americans and environmental history*. Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press.

Module 7: John Burroughs & Loren Eiseley: Science & nature religion in the early & mid-20th century (Week of 22 February)

Key questions:

- How did figures including Burroughs, Eiseley, and movements such as the back to the land movement, integrate science into nature spiritualities?
- What resistance to Darwinian nature religion emerged after the publication of *On the Origin of Species* in 1859?

Due to the mid-term exam, *no reading summaries are due this 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*). [A 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, *At Home in Nature*, pp. 1-138 (ch. 1-4).

Viewing (all)

- Thinking Like a Watershed (1998); to be shown in class.

Recommended reading

- ERN: [Darwin, Charles](#)
- Todd Levasseur, *Religious agrarianism and the return of place* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2017).

Module 8 ~ Aldo Leopold, the Wilderness Society, and the breakthrough of explicitly bio/ecocentric environmental ethics (Week of 1 March)

Key questions:

- How would you characterize the worldview & ethics of Aldo Leopold?
- What was Leopold's influence on environmental thought, spirituality, and activism?

Your reading summaries are due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday, 28 February. 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*: [Foreword](#), [Arizona and New Mexico](#) (especially sub-section, Thinking like a Mountain) and [The Land Ethic](#). (Note: The Oxford University Press edition (1949/1968) does not have Part III, which includes the [Round River](#) and [Goose Music](#) essays. For these, see the Ballentine Books (1970) paperback edition.
- Also strongly recommended from *A Sand County Almanac* are the essays "Wilderness" and "Conservation Esthetic," which appear along with "The Land Ethic" in The Upshot (Part III).
- Curt Meine, [In a time of social and environmental crisis, Aldo Leopold's call for a 'land ethic' is still relevant](#), *The Conversation*, 5 January 2021.

Readings (grads)

- Whyte, Kyle, [How Similar Are Indigenous North American and Leopoldian Environmental Ethics?](#) (2015, draft)
- ERN: [Leopold, Aldo](#); [Ouspensky, Pyotr Demianovich](#)

Viewing (all)

- Green Fire / Aldo Leopold (Curt Meine/2011); to be viewed during class.

Viewing (required of graduate students, recommended for undergraduates)

- [Wild By Law](#) (The American Experience/PBS, 1992)

Recommended readings (grads)

- Meine, Curt, Aldo Leopold, Race, and Social Justice (2020, draft) [PDF](#)

Module 9 ~ Developments since 1960: From Rachel Carson to the environmental justice movement, including the increasing influence of nature writers, including by women thinkers & activists (week of 8 March).

Key questions:

- What is Rachel Carson best known for and what can you say about her spirituality?
- How would you characterize her values and cultural influence?
- Was Rachel Carson a feminist? An 'ecofeminist?' If so, of what sort?
- Who is Sylvia Earle and is she channeling a Carson-like marine spirituality?

Your reading summaries are due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday, 7 March.

Readings (all)

- ERN: [Carson, Rachel](#); [Environmental Justice & 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*.

Viewing (all)

- Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (The American Experience, 1993); available through Canvas.
- Lecture by Amanda Nichols on Sylvia Earle and other innovative and influential post-Earth Day women thinker/activists.

Recommended readings (grads)

- 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.
- 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.
- Lisa Sideris and Kathleen Dean Moore, eds. *Rachel Carson: Legacy and Challenge*. State University of New York Press, 2008.

Recommended viewing

- [Mission Blue](#), (2014) documentary about Sylvia Earle's efforts to spur "action to explore and protect the ocean." The full 2 hour, 20 minute version is linked here, a version that ran 1 hour & 35 minutes is available on Netflix.

Module 10: Native American thinkers fusing nature and spirituality and inspiring movements for social and environmental justice among diverse peoples (Week of 15 March)

Key questions:

- Who was Vine Deloria, what were his central arguments, and how extensive was his influence?
- More generally, what has been the influence of native American traditions on environmental thought and activism?
- What were Jace Weaver's contentions in his contributions to *Defending Mother Earth*?

Your reading summaries are due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday, 14 March.

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](#); [Cowboy Spirituality](#); [Law, Religion and Native American Lands](#); [Mother Earth](#); [Native American Languages](#); [Peyote](#); [Romanticism and Indigenous Peoples](#); [Savages](#); [Seattle \(Sealth\), Chief](#) (ca. 1790-1866)
- 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.

Viewing & listening (all)

- [Indigenous Reflections on Christianity](#); interviews including with Winona LaDuke (Sacred Land Film Project, 2015), 13 minutes.

Recommended reading

- Cornell, George L. "[The Influence of Native Americans on Modern Conservationists](#)." *Environmental Review* 9, no. 2 (1985): 104-17.
- ERN: [Black Mesa; Cowboy Spirituality; Peyote; Plastic Medicine Men](#)

Module 11 ~ Paganism, the New Age |& changes over time in political ideologies and nature spiritualities as exemplified by Disney's world (Week of 22 March)

Key questions:

- What are the central characteristics of Paganism (of various sorts) and New Age thought and practice, and in what ways to they have affinity and diverge?
- What are the tensions that sometimes occur between those who identify with or otherwise have affinity with New Age, Pagan, and Indigenous traditions?

Your reading summaries are due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday, 21 March.

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)
- Taylor, B. (2019). [Rebels against the Anthropocene? Ideology, spirituality, popular culture, and human domination of the world within the Disney empire](#). *Journal for Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* **13**(4): 414-454.

Viewing (all)

- Ideology & Nature Spirituality in the Disney Empire (recorded lecture by Prof. Taylor).

Recommended readings (grads)

- Taylor, Bron. [Earthen Spirituality or Cultural Genocide?: Radical Environmentalism's Appropriation of Native American Spirituality](#), *Religion* 27(2): 183-215, April 1997.
- Bron Taylor & Joel Geffen, [Battling Religions in Parks & Forest Reserves](#) (2004) [about Mt. Graham+Mato Tipila/Devils Tower].
- ERN: [Plastic Medicine Men](#)

Recommended viewing

- Sweating Indian Style: Conflicts Over Native American Ritual (Society for Visual Anthropology/1994)

Module 12 ~ Defending the Sacred: Ecological Resistance & Environmental Justice movements (Week of 29 March)

Key questions:

- What are the religious dimensions of environmental movements since Earth Day?
- In what ways are environmental individuals and groups engaged common cause, what sorts of tensions and alliances have emerged, and what does religion have to do with it?

Your reading summaries are due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday, 28 March.

Readings (undergraduates and graduates (except replace Kraft & Johnson article with the one in the graduate reading section))

- 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)

- Kraft, S. E. and G. Johnson (2018). Protective occupation, emergent rituals of solidarity: Comparing Alta (Sápmi), Mauna Kea (Hawai'i), and Standing Rock (North Dakota). *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Religion and Nature*. Eds. L. Hobgood and W. Bauman. London & New York, Bloomsbury: 185-196; 287-289. [PDF](#)

Readings (grads)

- Johnson, G. and S. E. Kraft (2018). "Standing Rock religion(s): ceremonies, social media, and music videos." *Numen* **65**: 1-32. [PDF](#)
- 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.
- Brown, M. A. (2016). "Mauna Kea: Ho'omana Hawai'i and Protecting the Sacred." *Journal for Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* **10**(2): 150-169 [PDF](#)

Viewings (all)

- [Rise: Sacred Water, Standing Rock](#), Part I (2017); 50 minutes. This documentary is the first part of an 8 part series about indigenous movements that includes a segment on Mauna Kea. It is available on Amazon Prime for \$1.99; viewing will be via Canvas.
- [Kapu Aloha 101](#) (2015), 12 minutes (Greg's recommendation).
- [The Fight for Oak Flat](#) (Craig Johnson/2020) 11 minutes
- Wrenched: How Edward Abbey lit the flame of environmental activism and gave the movement its soul (2014).
- [Lessons from the Rainforest](#) (1991) [Lou Gold]

Recommended viewings (about native American campaigns for cultural and environmental justice)

Documentaries from the Sacred Land Film Project (Christopher McLeod):

- [In the Light of Reverence](#) (2001)
- [Standing on Sacred Ground](#) (2013); four part series available on Amazon Prime.

Documentaries (misc)

- [Awake: A Dream from Standing Rock](#) (2017); 90 minutes; see especially the final 30 minutes.

- Standing Above the Clouds (re. Manua Kea) (Jalena Keane-Lee/2020), 50 minutes, not yet widely available; [film website](#)
- [The Condor and the Eagle](#) (2019); esp. focused on South America.
- [Biidaaban \(The Dawn Comes\)](#) (2018); 18 minute animated short film.
- [American Buffalo: Spirit of a Nation](#) (PBS/Nature, 1998)

Module 13 ~ Science, Religion & Nature | & The Greening of Religions? (Week of April 5)

Key questions:

- What are the competing perceptions about religion and environmental behavior, including whether the world's predominant religion are, or might, be in the process of becoming more environmentally friendly?
- What are the competing perspectives about whether the sciences can become a mythic resource for a compelling worldview and pro environmental behavior, or if in some way such efforts are misguided or pernicious?

Your reading summaries are due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday, 4 April.

Readings (undergraduates)

- ERN: [Conservation Biology](#); [Epic of Evolution](#)
- Bron Taylor, Gretel Van Wieren, and Bernard Zaleha, [Lynn White Jr. and the greening-of-religion hypothesis](#), *Conservation Biology* 30(5): 1000-1009, 2016.

Readings (graduate students)

- Bron Taylor, [The Greening of Religion Hypothesis \(Part One\)](#): From Lynn White, Jr. and claims that religions can promote environmentally destructive attitudes and behaviors to assertions they are becoming environmentally friendly, *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*, 10 (3) 2016
- Bron Taylor, Gretel Van Wieren & Bernard Zaleha, [The Greening of Religion Hypothesis \(Part Two\)](#): Assessing the Data from Lynn White, Jr. to Pope Francis, *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*, 10 (3) 2016.

These articles from a forum debating, in part, the consecration of scientific narratives, as exemplified in *Journey of the Universe*. The PDFs of these articles are all downloadable via a [ZIPFILE](#).

- Taylor, B. (2015). Editor's introduction: contesting consecrated scientific narratives in religion and environmental ethics. *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* **9**(2): 133-135.
- Sideris, L. (2015). "Science as sacred myth? Ecospirituality in the Anthropocene." *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* **9**(2): 136-153.
- Callicott, J. B. (2015). "Science as myth (whether sacred or not), science as prism." *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* **9**(2): 154-168.
- Goodenough, U. (2015). "Honoring nature all the way down." *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* **9**(2): 176-180.
- Zaleha, B. D. (2015). "Just say no to knowledge: religious postmodernism's attack on the natural sciences." *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* **9**(2): 213-220.
- Rolston, H. (2015). "Placing, displacing, replacing the sacred: science, religion, and spirituality." *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* **9**(2): 199-205.

These additional contributions to the forum are recommended:

- Deane-Drummond, C. (2015). "The uses and abuses of science in religious environmentalism." *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* **9**(2): 221-239.
- Ivakhiv, A. (2015). "New wine into old bottles? or time to jettison the bottle?" *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* **9**(2): 136-153.
- Tucker, M. E. (2015). "Journey of the Universe," *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* **9**(2): 206-212.
- Sideris, L. (2015). "Forum response: the confines of consecration: a reply to critics." *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* **9**(2): 221-239.

These contributions are less important for the present purpose:

- Northcott, M. S. (2015). "Myth, ritual, and the New Universe Story in the Inner Hebrides." *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* **9**(2): 192-198.

- Larson, B. M. H. (2015). "The role of scientism in myth-making for the Anthropocene." *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* **9**(2): 185-191.

Viewings (all)

- Journey of The Universe (2011).
- We Believe in Dinosaurs, a documentary about Kentucky's 'Creation Museum (PBS/2019), 1hr, 38 minutes, available on Amazon Prime. We will view excerpts; full viewing by arrangement via Canvas. Check out, also the online site of [The Creation Museum](#)

Recommended readings (all)

- 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.
- 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.)
- 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](#)

Recommended readings (grads)

- Oberlin, K. C. (2020). *Creating the Creation Museum: how fundamentalist beliefs come to life*. New York, New York University Press.
- 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..

- Leslie Sponsel (2012). *Spiritual Ecology: A Quiet Revolution*. Santa Barbara, Praeger.

Recommended viewings (fun)

- [Symphony of Science Music Videos](#) (especially fun); search for "We're All Connected" and "The Unbroken Thread", check out some others.
- Either or both of the PBS Cosmos television series: the first was narrated by Carl Sagan, the second by Neil DeGrassie Tyson

Recommended websites (a scholarly site illustrating religious environmentalism)

- [Forum on Religion & Ecology](#) (a scholarly site exemplifying religious environmentalism)
- [The Creation Museum](#) (the website of the Evangelical Christian museum featured in the 'We Believe in Dinosaurs' documentary.)

Module 14 & 15: International Influences & the growth of spiritualities emphasizing interconnection (Gaian & Mother Earth spiritualities) and the kinship and sacredness of life (weeks of 12 & 19 April

Key questions:

- What are the influences between North American nature spiritualities and those abroad, including within moments for social and environmental justice around the world?

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. This is not a bluff :)

Podcasts (listenings)

- [Kinship With The More-Than-Human World](#), a special series, from the PBS/PRI radio/podcast, 'To the Best of our Knowledge,' that was developed with the Center for Humans and Nature. See especially the [Eye-To-Eye Animal Encounters](#) segment

- Robin Wall Kimmerer, [*The Intelligence of Plants*](#), *On Being* (podcast with transcription); also recommended is her 2020 *Emergence Magazine* essay, [Corn tastes better on the honor system](#).

Readings (all)

- 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."

Viewing (all)

- Welcome Ceremony, United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg 2002). [Part One](#). [Part Two](#).
- [Call of Life \(Species Alliance/2010\)](#)

RESOURCES

Writing Well

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

Documentaries & other films (about and by Native Americans\)

- [The Faithkeeper](#) (Oren Lyons interview with Bill Moyers/PBS/1991)
- [In the Light of Reverence](#) (Sacred Land Film Project/Christopher McLeod/2001); for background see the [interview with Christopher McLeod](#) and his [website](#).
- [American Buffalo: Spirit of a Nation](#) (PBS/Nature, 1998)
- [Sweating Indian Style: Conflicts Over Native American Ritual](#) (Society for Visual Anthropology/1994)
- [Awake: A Dream from Standing Rock](#) (2017) (Myron Dewey, Josh Fox).

- [The Condor and the Eagle](#) (2019); esp. focused on South America.
- [Biidaaban \(The Dawn Comes\)](#) (2018); 18 minute animated short film.

Documentaries (misc)

- [Battle for Wilderness \(1989\)](#)
- [Disneynature](#)
- Greenfire (2011) [Aldo Leopold]
- 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
- [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)

Documentaries (about or by radical environmentalists)

- [American Values / American Wilderness \(High Plains Films/2005\)](#)
- [Call of Life \(Species Alliance/2010\)](#)
- Edward Abbey: A Voice in the Wilderness (1993)
- [Lessons from the Rainforest](#) (1991) [Lou Gold]
- Rage over Trees (Audubon, 1994)
- [Pickaxe](#) (Independent, 2000)
- Road Use Restricted (Independent, 1987).
- 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)
- [Buffalo should be everywhere](#) (High Plains Films/2019)

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 journals & organizations)

- [Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture](#) (scholarly journal affiliated with the [International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture](#)).
- [The International Society for Environmental Ethics \(ISEE\)](#)
- [Environmental Ethics](#) (Journal)
- [Environmental Values](#) (Journal)
- [Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale University](#) (site promoting the 'greening of religion' led by religion scholars and diverse religionists)
- [IUCN World commission on Protected Areas, Cultural and Spiritual Values Specialist Group](#).

Websites (popular & often focused on nature and spirituality)

- [Emergence Magazine](#)
- [On Being](#) (NPR/PRI podcast)
- [To the Best of Our Knowledge](#) (NPR/PRI podcast)
- [Orion Magazine](#) (Journal)
- [Sacred Lands Film Project](#)

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 instructor.

A longer bibliography will be provided separately