Course Number: 01:090:284:01
Top Floor, 35 College Avenue
Class meetings: Thursdays, 2.50-5.50
Instructor: Paul Blaney
Email: blaney.paul@gmail.com
Office hours: Wednesdays and Fridays, by appointment

Course Description: The course will examine the connections and disconnections between human beings and the world we live in. We’ll be reading essays, stories and poems, watching films and documentaries, walking, visiting gardens, and writing personal responses. There will also be a number of short research assignments and presentations.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive punctually. If you expect to miss a class, please use the University absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email will then be sent automatically to me. If you email me directly, I’ll also tell you what you need to do.

Requirements: Willingness to attempt writing in many different modes
Preparation for and active participation in discussion and exercises
Timely completion of all assignments

Grading: Students will be graded on the basis of class attendance and participation (50%) and a series of written assignments and presentations (50%). Any more than one absences will (adversely) affect your grade. 3 lates = 1 absence

Required reading: Chatwin, Bruce, The Songlines
Sebald, W. G., The Rings of Saturn
Pogue Harrison, Robert, Gardens: An Essay on the Human Condition
From time to time you will need to print and bring to class documents uploaded to the Resources section of the class Sakai site.
Week One (January 19th): A Better Place?

Arendt, Hannah; sections from *The Human Condition* (cf Golden Bough)


The Icarus and Phaethon myths, Ovid

A Better Place?

FFW: Imagine there’s (no) Heaven . . . Reincarnation/Karma

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Week Two (January 26th) Nature v Culture

*Baraka*: What argument is the film making? How? Problematic?

Women/Mothers of the Gods/Earth or Mother Godesses in myth, two-minute presentations: Rhea (moon of Saturn), Cybele, Hera, Isis, Durga/Kali/Devi, Demeter/Persephone, Eve, Guanyin, Fatima, Virgin Mary, Tonantzin, Sheela na gig, Pachamama, Freyja, Ishtar, Geb/Nut, Anu/Danu, Nerthus. Mother Earth gods precede Father Sky Gods?

Mythopoetic Men’s Movement/Radical Faeries

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Week Three (Feb 2nd) Women and Nature

Ortner, Sherry, “Woman to Nature as Man to Culture?”

FFW: Women more natural than men?

Rukeyser poem : women as agents.

Amazons?

Woolf, Virginia, from *Three Guineas*: Male nature/aggression

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Week Four (February 9th): Changing World: Enclosure in 18th/19th Century England

Barrel, John; *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place*

John Clare, poems: students present plus imitations

Making of the English Landscape DVD? (D-143, 52 mins)

Auden, W.H., “In Praise of Limestone”
Enclosure/Transport Revolution alter relation to land

**Week Five (February 16th): Ways of Seeing/Painting**

Berger, John; *Ways of Seeing*

Students present landscapes by: Paul Cezanne; Rene Magritte (The Human Condition); Paul Klee; Bruegel (elder); Caspar David Friedrich; Altdorfer, Andy Galsworthy; Claude Monet; J. M. Turner; Richard Long; Albert Bierstadt; Frederick Church, Thomas Cole, Georgia O’Keeffe (Southwest landscapes); Janet Cardiff; Anselm Kiefer; Salvator Rosa; John Robert Cozens, Poussin (Et in Arcadia Ego).

**Week Six (February 23rd): On Wilderness**

Cronon, William: “Getting Back to Nature or The Wrong Wilderness”

Bryson, Bill; from *Lost Continent*

13 Ways of Looking at a Rainforest/Iceberg/National Park . .

**Week Seven (March 1st): “Only Connect!”**

Haynes, Todd; *Safe*

FFW: Her “illness”?

**Week Eight (March 8th): Solvitur Ambulando**

Kinder Scout Trespass

Chatwin, Bruce; *What am I doing here?* (Herzog in Ghana, Nomads)

Thoreau, Henry David, *Walking*

Wordsworth, William, ‘The Excursion’

Suburban compromise?

**SPRING BREAK:** Sebald Assignment, photos and text of walk
Week Nine (March 22nd): Tell it walking
Songlines topics presented on the canal path

Week Ten (March 29th): National Land Myths
Schama, Simon, Landscape & Myth, Chapter 2
FFW: American myths
Presentations: Great Britain; La douce France; Italy; Spain; Japan; China; America; Australia; Ireland

Week Eleven (April 5: Living in Nature?)
Student presentation on Frank Lloyd Wright/Japanese architecture/breaking down the barrier between interior and exterior
Student presentations on Chs from Pogue Harrison: Versailles; Japanese Gardens; Central Park; Epicureans; Rittenhouse Square; Chinese Garden (Portland)

April 7 & 8th: Proposed trip to Fallingwater & Kentuck Knob

Week Twelve (April 12th): Garden v Park
Tour of Rutgers Gardens or Leonard J Buck Garden: Wild or Landscaped?
Marvell Andrew, “The Garden”

Week Thirteen (April 19th): Exile
Chatwin, Bruce, What am I doing here? (Chiloe)
Antonioni, Michelangelo, The Passenger

Week Fourteen (April 26th) Beyond Home
Said, Edward, Culture & Imperialism, Ch. 4, part iii, “Movements & Migrations”
Chekhov trilogy