

The American Forest: Its Ecology, History, and Representation
Spring Semester 2007

Environmental Science, Policy, and Management C191

History of Art C 189

American Studies C112F

Undergraduate and Interdisciplinary Studies C136

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Course Description and Objectives: Looking at historical and at present-day forests, this course is designed to introduce students to both the scientific dimensions of forest environments and to the ways in which those environments have been seen, analyzed, utilized, and represented in this country since the seventeenth century. It investigates geographic facts, cultural value systems, the operation of forest ecosystems, and the mechanisms by which photographers, artists, and writers have engaged the American forest imaginatively.

This course is one of several courses sponsored by the Hewlett Foundation to encourage the development of courses in General Education that are conceptually interdisciplinary and team-taught by faculty in Letters & Sciences and the Professional Schools and Colleges.

Field Trips:

Two required weekend field trips will involve on-site study of forests and forest products:

1. Muir Woods and the manufacturing of wood.
2. Forest of Yosemite National Park. April 21 and 22. We will be staying in cabin-tents.

The field trips for this course are sponsored in part by the University's Consortium for the Arts and by an anonymous donor.

Required Texts:

1. A xeroxed Reader in 2 volumes will be available at a local copy company and in Moffitt Library
2. M. Williams, *Americans and Their Forests* (Cambridge: 1999). This book is available at the Cal Student Store and will also be on reserve in Moffitt Library.

I. Introduction

Week 1

- A. Tues. Jan. 16: Introduction I: Objectives of the course, overview of the forests of North America. Forests and cultural interpretation
- B. Thurs. Jan. 18: Introduction II: Forest communities and psychological response to experience. The prehistory of thinking the American Forest: Robin Hood, Thomas Gainsborough, and others.

Sections:

1. Enrollment; expectations of the discussion sessions; field trips

2. Response to a forest image
3. Conceptualizing forest data (comparison of redwood and red fir forests)

Readings:

- Simon Schama, 1995, "Liberties of the Greenwood" in *Landscape and Memory*, pp. 135-85.
- Duffield, J. W., 1982. Forest Regions of North America and the World. In R. Young (ed.) *Introduction to Forest Science*. J. Wiley & Sons NY, pp. 37-66.
- Gobster, P. H. 1994. The urban savanna. *Restoration and Management Notes*. 12(1): 64-71.
- Kloss, M. 2002. Picturing Yosemite. *American Forest*. (Summer): 41-43.

II. Pre-Revolutionary Period

Week 2

- A. Tues. Jan. 23: The Pre-settlement Forest and its Use by Native Americans--Distribution and characteristics of the forests. The use and management of these forests by the Native Americans.
- B. Thurs. Jan. 25: Characteristics of the Colonial Forests and Their Early Utilization--European technology for tree felling, removal, and sawmilling applied to the American forest. The variety of products from the colonial forests.

Sections:

1. Discussion of childhood experience of forests, of forest images in books and media; impact on adult attitudes and understandings
2. Forests in the news – Part I
3. Introduce term research projects

Readings:

- Cronon, W. 1983. *Changes in the Land*. Hill and Wang. N.Y. pp. 108-126 (Taking of the Forest)
- Williams, M. 1989. *Americans and their forests* (Chapter 2: The forest and the Indian). Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, pp. 22-49.
- Williams, M. 1989 *Americans and their forests* (Chapter 3: The forest and pioneer life; Chapter 4: Two centuries of change: The commercial uses of the forest). Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press. pp. 53-81; 82-110.
- Bonnicksen, T. M. 2000. *America's Ancient Forests*. NY: John Wiley and Sons. pp. 226-235 and 258 –292.

Week 3

- C. Tues. Jan. 30: Thinking and Picturing the Colonial Forest--Euro-Americans map, draw, and paint the forest, utilize it as an intellectual resource and recurrent metaphor.
- D. Thurs. Feb. 1: Using the Colonial Forest--colonial wood products: home use, import, and export--building buildings, crafting furniture, burning wood for warmth and industry.

Sections:

Instead of going to section room go (rain or shine) to

* Redwood Grove (between Men and Women's Faculty Clubs, along Strawberry Creek)

* Oak Woodland (adjacent to Memorial Stadium, on west side)

In each 'forest,' note the presence, relative scale and density of ground cover, underbrush, mature trees. Write a brief statement of (1) sunlight conditions, (2) people who were present (3) animals, birds, insects and sounds (4) your response to each stand. Do you see any correlation between physical and biological characteristics of the different stands and your response to them? To what degree was your response influenced by sunlight condition and the people (or animals/birds) present?

Return to classroom for last 10 minutes.

Readings:

"Champlain, Among the Huron, Lost in the Woods" from *The Voyages of Samuel de Champlain, 1615*, collected in *Heath Anthology of American Literature*, v.1, pp.135-6.

Thomas Morton (1632), Roger Williams (1643), and Proclamation of 1730 documents, collected in C. Merchant, *Major Problems in American Environmental History* (Lexington, 1993), pp. 73, -5, 76-77.

Lovell, M. 2005. *Art in a Season of Revolution*. Philadelphia, PA: Univ. Pennsylvania Press. pp. 225-266.

Saturday February 3: All day field trip to Muir Woods**III. Early National Period (1776-1840)**Week 4

- A. Tues. Feb. 6.: Newly Acquired Forests--Nature of the forests acquired by the new nation.
- B. Thurs. Feb. 8: Conversion and Utilization of the Forests during the Federal period.

****Come to lecture Feb. 8 with part A of your project in hand (give it to your section leader before lecture begins)****

Sections:

Discussion of Saturday (Feb. 3) Field trip

1. Impressions of Muir Woods

* Experience of a National Park vs. non-recreational forest

* Your cultural and historical context for observing the forest

* Previous images which influenced your expectation of the forest

2. Impressions of the manufacturing of wood and wood related products

Readings:

Williams, M. 1989. *Americans and their Forests*. Cambridge Univ. Press. N.Y. pp. 111-45; 507-10 (Chapter 5 - The Quickening Pace: Agricultural Clearing, 1810-60).

Williams, M. 1989. *Americans and their Forests*. Cambridge Univ. Press.

NY. pp. 146-89; 510-13 (Chapter 6: The Quickening Pace: The Industrial Impact, 1810-1860).

Bonnicksen, T. M. 2000. *America's Ancient Forests*. NY: John Wiley and Sons. pp. 293 – 343.

Cikovsky, Jr., N. The Ravages of Axe: meaning of the tree stump in 19th C. American Art, *The Art Bulletin*. V. 61. (Nov.-Dec. 1979).: 611-626.

Week 5

- C. Tues. Feb. 13: Painting the Hudson, Thinking New England--Ralph Earl, Thomas Cole and others
- D. Thurs. Feb. 15: The Republican Farm, Forest, and City: Trees Aesthetic, Scientific, and Useful: Thomas Jefferson, Washington Square, and Balloon Framing.

Sections

Reading paintings; reading buildings: description and analysis

Readings:

Cole, Thomas, "The Bewilderment" and, "Essay on American Scenery" (1836), collected in *Thomas Cole: The Collected Essays and Prose Sketches*, ed, Marshall Tymn (N.Y, 1980), pp. 3- 17, 97-102.

Godman, John D., "Rambles of a Naturalist: No. IX," from *Rambles of a Naturalist* (1828), collected in *This Incomparable Lande*, ed. Thomas J. Lyon (Boston, 1989), pp. 126-31.

Heiman, Michael, "Civilization Over Nature" (1989), collected in C. Merchant, ed., *Major Problems in American Environmental History* (Lexington, 1993), pp. 191-99.

Jefferson, Thomas, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1781) , selections; pp. 148-74.

A Report on the Trees and Shrubs Growing Naturally in the Forests of Massachusetts (Boston, 1846), pp. 1-36.

IV. Mid-19th Century (1840-1870)

Week 6

- A. Tues. Feb. 20: Abandoning the Land--Exodus from the New England landscape and the resulting old-field succession.
- B. Thurs. Feb. 22: Picturing Trees: Forests as Sites of War, National Ideology, and Contemplation--F. Church, John F. Kensett, Winslow Homer, and Henry D. Thoreau at Walden.

Sections:

Discuss the readings to date; "how to read with a purpose."

Readings:

Raup, H. M. 1966. The view from John Sanderson's farm: A perspective on the use of land. *Forest History* 10:2-11.

Harvey, Eleanor Jones, " The Artist in the Field" and "The Alchemy of the Studio" from *The Painted Sketch*, (Dallas, 1998), pp. 25-61.

Kelly, Franklin, "The Stillness of Twilight and the Solemnity of

Undisturbed Primeval Nature: *Twilight in the Wilderness*," in
Frederic Edwin Church and the National Landscape, pp. 102-22.
 Thoreau, H. D., *Walden*, selections.

Week 7

- C. Tues. Feb. 27: Fitz H. Lane: Picturing the New England Lumber Economy at Mid-century

*** Thurs. March 1: Midterm Exam ***

Section:

Review for Mid-term

Readings:

Nicholas T. Mirov, The Pines of Ravenna, *Natural History* v. 80, no. 1, January 1971, pp. 24-26.

Week 8

V. Turn of the Last Century (1870-1910)

- A. Tues. Mar. 6 Forests of Colonial California--Characteristics and distribution of the forests of California.
 B. Thurs. Mar. 8: Forests of the Pacific Northwest
 Characteristics and distribution of the forests of the Pacific Northwest.

Section:

1. Analysis of Nicholas T. Mirov, The Pines of Ravenna, *Natural History* v. 80, no. 1, January 1971, pp. 24-26.
2. Forests in the news II: each student bring to section one news item relating to forests to discuss with class; select a news item on which you have particular insight or strong opinions.
3. Discussion of term projects--models, strategies, evidence, argument.
 Documenting research.

If you miss this section meeting, make an appointment to see Prof. Lovell

Readings:

Bonnicksen, T. M. 2000. America's Ancient Forests. NY: John Wiley and Sons. pp.240-257, 401-419, and 386-401.

Week 9

- C. Tues. Mar. 13: Harvesting the forest of the west (1850-1900) Technologies used by the early loggers of the western forest. Innovations in timber harvesting necessary due to the large size of trees: axes, saws, Dolberg steam donkey.
 D. Thurs. Mar. 15: Forests of the Rocky Mountains The geography and ecology of the forests of the Rocky Mountains and the role mining played in their utilization.

Section:

Bancroft Library as a resource: photographs, paintings, books.
Meet in foyer of Bancroft Library rather than usual section location.

Readings:

Williams, R. L. 1976. *The Loggers*. Time-Life Books. New York.
pp. 89-127.

Bonnicksen, T. M. 2000. *America's Ancient Forests*. NY: John Wiley and Sons. pp.344 – 385 and 236 - 240.

Week 10:

- E. Tues. Mar. 20: A. Bierstadt and T. Moran: Hunting the Sublime in The Forests of the West
- F. Thurs. Mar. 22: Forests, Memory, and Loss--Tree Portraits, Sugaring Off; Schwinfurth, John G. Howard, and Bernard Maybeck.

Section:

J. G. Howard, Senior Men's Hall (1906); B. Maybeck, Faculty Club (original hall: 1902). Meet in front of Senior Men's Hall instead of usual section classroom.

Readings:

Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., "Winslow Homer: Time in the Adirondacks" in *Winslow Homer: Artist and Angler*, Patricia Junker and Sarah Burns, eds., (Amon Carter Museum, 2002)

Truettner, William H., "Ideology and Image: Justifying Westward Expansion," in *The West as America*, ed W. H. Truettner, (Washington, 1991), pp. 27-53

Schama, Simon. "Grizzlies" in *Landscape and Memory*, 1995, pp. 185-206.

Rebecca Bedell, "Thomas Moran and The Western Surveys," chapter 6 in *The Anatomy of Nature: Geology and American Landscape Painting 1825-1875* (Princeton U. Press), pp. 123-146

Sally Woodbridge, *Bernard Maybeck*, pp. 64-73.

Keeler, Charles, *The Simple Home*, c. 1900, pp. 7-17, 18-23, 32-3.

Week 11 – Spring Break

VI. 1910-1950 (Twentieth Century, part one)

Week 12

- A. Tues. Apr. 3: The Development of Forest Conservation in America: John Muir and Gifford Pinchot
- B. Thurs. Apr.5 Forest Recreation and the Forest in the City

Section:

1. Discussion of readings
2. Forest Issues in the News: students bring in articles about forest issues

Readings:

Williams, M. 1989. *Americans and their Forests*. pp. 393-424; (Chap 12- Preservation and Management, 1870-1910).

Nash, R. 1968. *The American Environment: Readings in the History of Conservation* (Catlin, Marsh, Olmsted, Schurz, Pinchot, Muir, Johnson). pp. 5-9, 13-18, 18-24, 24-28, 39-42, 58-68, 68-71, 71-74.

Week 13:

C. Tues. Apr. 10: Forests in the City

D. Thurs. Apr. 12: Forest Wildlife, Ecology, Human Interventions. Guest lecture by Reg Barrett, Professor of Wildlife Biology and Management (ESPM)

Section:

Term research paper workshop: bring a draft of your opening paragraph to section in multiple copies.

Readings:

Williams, M. 1989. *Americans and their Forests*. pp. 289-330; 520-25 (Chap. 9 - The Last Frontier: The Rise of the Pacific Northwest, 1880-1940)

Nash, R. 1968. *The American Environment: Readings in the History of Conservation* (Hornaday and Leopold). pp. 117-121.

VII. 1950-2004 (Twentieth Century, 1950 to the Present)

Week 14

A. Tues. Apr. 17: Authenticity--the return to wood in avant garde and vernacular design.

B. Thurs. Apr. 19: American Forest Management and Policy in the First Half of the 20th Century

Section:

Discuss readings

Assignment:

screen TV segment on reserve in Media Resource Center, Moffitt

Readings:

Nash, R. 1968. *The American Environment: Readings in the History of Conservation* (Leopold, Marshall, Roosevelt, Fechner). Pp. 105-109, 121-126, 127-130.

Muir, J. *My first Summer in the Sierra*. 1911, Sierra Club Books. San Francisco, CA. pp. 49-85.

Whitman, Walt, "Song of the Redwood Tree," (1874), collected in *Selected Poems: Walt Whitman*

Alinder, James and J. Szarkowski, "Ansel Adams, American Artist," from *Ansel Adams: Classic Images* (Boston, 1992), pp. 7-23.

Frost, Robert, selected poems, from *Complete Poems of Robert Frost* (N.Y., 1961), pp. 37, 126-27, 131-34, 152-53, 176-77, 228-30, 275.

Teale, Edwin Way, "The Lost Woods," from *The Lost Woods: Adventures of a Naturalist* (N. Y., 1945).

***Saturday and Sunday, April 21 and 22 – Field Trip to Yosemite**

Week 15

- A. Tues. Apr. 24: The Forest on Film--Vertigo's redwoods and other strategically-placed forests scenes. Guest lecture by Kathleen Moran, Associate Director, American Studies Program
- B. Thurs. Apr. 26: American Forest Management and Policy in the Second Half of the 20th Century

Section:

term project mini-presentations.

Readings:

- Nash, R. 1968. *The American Environment: Readings in the History of Conservation* (Ridd, Carson,). Pp. 178-183, 197-201.
- Robinson, G. 1988. *The Forest and the Trees*. Island Press, Covelo, CA. pp. 9-55.
- Williams, M. 1989. *Americans and their Forests*. pp. 446-94; 539-42 (Chap 14 - The Rebirth of the Forest, 1933 and After).

Week 16

- C. Tues. May 1: Art, propaganda, and the American forest. The employment of art in support of different views of forest conservation.
- D. Thurs. May 3: Abstraction, Sofa Art, Everybody's Favorite Painting, and the End of Landscape

Section:

Tree Trail exercise: meet in ground floor hallway of Mulford hall

Readings:

- Limerick, P. M. 2002. Forestry and Modern Environmentalism: Ending the Cold War.” Pinchot Lecture Series. Pinchot institute for Conservation., D. C., 25 p.
- Nelson, R. 1999. The religion of forestry: Scientific management. *J. Forestry* 97 (11): 4-8.
- Thomas, J. W. and J. Burchfield. 1999. Comments of the Religion of Forestry: Scientific Management. *J. Forestry* 97 (11): 10-13.

Week 17

- E. Tues. May 8: Conclusions: The American Forest Today The present condition and future of the American forest

Section:

Review and Recap Yosemite trip