



Figure 1 Pt. Reyes National Recreation Area

Americans and the Global Parks and Wilderness ENVI 294-02

Winter 2017 Olin-Rice 301

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Figure 2 The “socio-ecological” landscape in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

To a lover of real wilderness, Alaska is one of the most wonderful countries in the world
–**John Muir 1879**¹

Plans to protect air and water, wilderness and wildlife, are in fact plans to protect man.
– **Stuart Udall, 1971**

When the epidemics came, it became quiet and ghostly, but it was never wild! When our Chiefs and Medicine Men sang to the wind in the great loneliness, it wasn't wild! Then came strangers, and laws, and decades of exploitation and great acts of Congress, soon after it became wild. . .
– **Ahtna Resident of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve 2015**

Course Description:

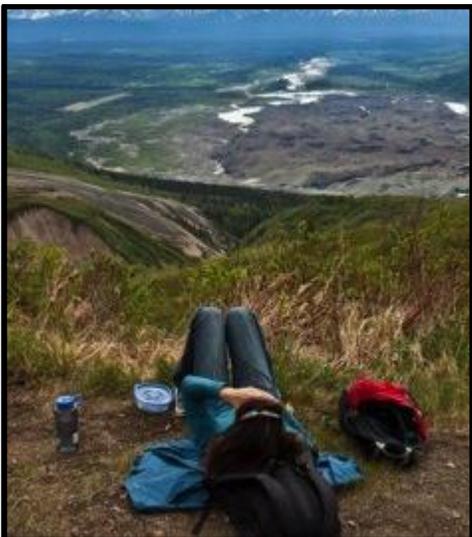
Here in Minnesota, the Boundary Waters is one of the most frequently visited areas in the National Wilderness Preservation System. This wilderness area and others contribute to almost five percent of the land in the United States. The management, funding, use, and access to wilderness areas have created great controversy,

¹ John Muir. 1915. *Travels in Alaska*, Chapter Two, Houghton Mifflin Company
Alexander Archipelago and the Home I found in Alaska

however. These conflicts have arisen between a number of different interest groups, including Native American, African American, Latina/o, handicapped, LGBT, and other under represented populations, loggers, hunters, senior citizens, sport outfitters, loggers, ranchers, and miners, among others.

The timing is ripe to re-evaluate the mission of the conception and establishment of our national parks and wilderness areas. In 2014, the Wilderness Act turned 50 and in 2016, the National Park Service will reach its one hundred year centennial in 2016. This course will examine, how concepts of wilderness have been envisioned historically, the ways in which views about parks and wilderness have evolved and the extent to which these federal acts are still relevant. Students will become familiar with the biophysical, social, and political economic drivers that influence wilderness and national park establishment and management and consider the role of dominant paradigms and social discourses in these processes. We will take into account perspectives from political ecology, environmental history, the biophysical sciences, and non-western science to examine these dynamics.

This course draws on the assertion that “science”, politics, culture, and socio-economic background strongly determine both preservation policy and understanding of the preservation movement. By examining historical and contemporary debates about the establishment of wilderness, national parks, and protected areas, the course will challenge students to critically evaluate land preservation models. We will address recent debates about parks and wilderness, including those that relate to climate change and whether or not people should live in parks or wilderness and contribute to management. During the last part of the semester, we will reflect on the exportation of the U.S. Park model to other parts of the world, and the complications posed by issues such as co-management and fortress conservation.



Office Hours: are by appointment. I teach all day Tuesdays and Thursdays, but we should be able to find a time on Monday, Wednesday, or Friday in a given week. I am committed to identifying ways for students to be successful and engaged in this course. Do not be shy. This is a great way to interact with me, offer me feedback

about how things are going in the class, learn about course related contacts and opportunities, discuss course readings and projects, and share your goals and concerns that might extend beyond our time in class.

E-mail: I will respond to e-mail inquiries or phone calls within 48 hours.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: Reasonable adjustments are available for students with documented disabilities. Students should meet with the Associate Dean of Students, Lisa Landreman, at the start of the term to ensure that your accommodations are approved and in place. You can reach Lisa in the Office of Student Affairs, 119 Weyerhaeuser, at 651-696-6220, or by email at llandrem@macalester.edu

Academic Integrity: The best learning environment is one based on mutual respect and trust. Macalester has established codes concerning proper academic conduct and the consequences resulting from improper behavior. If you are unclear about what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism, please ask me or inquire with a librarian – Ignorance is not an excuse.

Please turn off all electronic devices including laptops, i-pads and cell phones during class time.

Grading (subject to revision)

- Personal wilderness essay (5%)
- Reading responses (20%)
- Participation: (25%) This involves not only attending class and leading discussions, but also preparing readings and contributing thoughtfully.
- Museum assignment and film review (15% each)
- Final papers: (20%)
- On occasion, I will quiz students on the reading assignments. These grades will be counted for extra credit and if they are poor, might also impact your participation grade.

You are responsible to check for assignment revisions and updates on Moodle each week by Sunday

You are allowed one unexcused absence this semester. Any additional unexcused absences (without an official note) will impact your participation grade by a point (for example, an A will be a B).

Field Trips: Students will visit the Minneapolis Art Institute, The Walker Museum, or the Weisman, on their own for a writing assignment. I also hope to take us on a field trip to the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area and National Park.



Figure 3 Boundary Waters Wilderness Preservation Area

Required Readings: these will be available at the bookstore and usually on reserve at the Library

Joseph Sax *Mountains without Handrails: Reflections on the National Parks* (1980)

Carolyn Finney (2014) *Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors*

Terry Tempest Williams (2015) *The Hour of Land*

Mark Dowie (2011) *Conservation Refugees: The Hundred-Year Conflict between Global Conservation and Native Peoples*

Assignments will also involve watching films, visiting a local museum and listening to podcasts.

Class Participation

We will begin each class meeting with a student presentation. Your input is crucial to the course development and to your classmates' learning. You are required to come to class prepared to engage the assigned material at each class meeting. This also means keeping up with the reading, being supportive and considerate of others—I expect you to come to class with a willingness to express your responses to the readings and to your classmates' comments. I also encourage you to add to class discussion even when you are still thinking things through or you are puzzled by something.

To facilitate this process, all students are required to write a short **Typed** response that will also include discussion questions to every class meeting. This should be less than a double spaced page and should be sent to me by e-mail. These responses are due no later than 10 pm on Monday and Wednesday so that I have the time to synthesize them before class. You might start by selecting a short passage from each reading that you feel is important, provocative, inspiring, and/or confusing. You can type the passage or explain the passage in your own words, situating it in the author's main argument, write a reflection that includes a discussion question related to your passage that is designed to prompt intelligent discussion with your peers (avoid simplistic Yes/No or "Do you agree" kinds of questions). Your write-up should demonstrate close, careful reading. Your question must be directly related to the reading assignment in ways you can further

clarify in class. I will call on students during the class to put forth their discussion questions, so be sure to be prepared to engage in meaningful discussion about your passages and questions.

Each student will also take turns summarizing a reading assignment in depth and leading our class discussion. This will involve reading the essay carefully, identifying the thesis and outlining and main points. Synthesize this material in written form (3-4 pages) and present a clear and concise oral version of your synthesis (20 minutes) to the class. Your job is to identify and recap major conceptual themes and arguments. These in depth reading summaries should include at least two quotations from the article, set up and contextualized in your own words.

When you present your reading summary, you will also find and present a media example (video clip, website) that illustrates one or more definitions or arguments presented in the reading assignment. Video clips can be no longer than five minutes. You should explain how this media is relevant to the reading.

Please submit a typed copy of your reading summary to the instructor by 10 pm prior to your oral presentation. The summary should include a description/explanation of your media example, using concrete details. You will then present two discussion questions and/or activities to the class to initiate our class discussion.

Winter 2017 Schedule: Each week's reading assignments will be posted on Moodle

January 24th Introduction and early wilderness conceptualizations
Carolyn Merchant "The New England Wilderness Transformed"
Shepard 1670's Election Speech pp.8-10

January 26th The "Romantic" wilderness
Roderick Nash "The Romantic Wilderness"
Carolyn Merchant "Nature and the Market Economy"

January 31st The "American" Wilderness and the Hudson River School
Roderick Nash "The American Wilderness"
Audubon primary source
Crevecoeur and Jefferson primary source
Essays on the Hudson River School/Emerson (we will not discuss Emerson until Feb 2)

February 2nd Transcendentalism
Roderick Nash "Thoreau"
Thoreau "Why I live and What I live for" and "The Bean Fields"

February 7th
Joseph Sax, *Mountains Without Handrails* pp.1-60

February 9th
Joseph Sax, *Mountains Without Handrails* pp.60-113

February 14th

African American experience and views about nature and wilderness
Carolyn Finney *Black Faces, White Spaces* pp.1-66

February 16th

African American experience and views about nature and wilderness continued
Carolyn Finney *Black Faces, White Spaces* pp. 67-135

February 21st

First Paper Due Museum Reflection

February 23rd

Karl Jacoby *Crimes Against Nature* (Adirondacks)

Homestead Act, George Perkins Marsh

February 28th

Karl Jacoby *Crimes Against Nature* (Yellowstone)

March 2nd

Karl Jacoby *Crimes Against Nature* (Grand Canyon)

March 7th

American Wilderness Chapters 8 and 9

David Louter *Windshield Wilderness*

First half *Monumental: David Brower's Fight for Wild America*

March 9th

American Wilderness Chapters 10 and 11

Second Half *Monumental: David Brower's Fight for Wild America* (students)

SPRING BREAK!



Figure 4 Half Dome, Yosemite National Park 2011