CITY, LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

City, Landscape, Ecology is a thematically driven course which centers on issues and polemics related to landscape, land settlement and ecology over the past two centuries. The course interrogates our changing attitudes of nature from the 18th century to the present, focusing on the artistic and architectural responses to these perceptions. It aims to demonstrate the important role that artists and architects have played, and are to play, in making visible the sources of environmental degradation and in developing new means of mitigating anthropogenic ecological change.

City, Landscape, Ecology is divided into three parts:

Part 1, explores important episodes in the history of landscape: picturesque garden theory, notions of “wilderness” as epitomized in national and state parks in the United States, Modern and Postmodern garden practices, and the prevalence of landscape in the work of artists in the 1960s and 70s. The purpose here is to better understand the role that territorial organization plays in the construction of social practices, human subjectivities, and technologies of power.

We then turn to ecology and related issues of climate, urbanization and sustainability in Part II. Here we will examine the rise of ecological thinking in the 1960s; approaches to the environment that were based on the systems-thinking approach of the era. We look at the work and theories of John McHale, Buckminster Fuller and Stewart Brand and situate these approaches within a larger context of environmental awareness advanced by such pioneers as Rachel Carson and David Brower. In the session “A Commons for Whom” we examine the history of the “crisis” of scarcity and population growth from Thomas Robert Malthus, to Paul R. Ehrlich (The Population Bomb, 1968) to today and look more critically at questions of environmental violence and equity. Part II concludes with architectural responses to energy scarcity in the 1970s in the form of off the grid, low-tech, and passive climate control solutions and looks at the key theorists (E.F. Schumacher, Herman E. Daly, Murray Bookchin) of the era.

The course concludes with Part III (Hybrid Natures). At this important juncture in the course, we will ask the timely question: What is to be done today? We’ll examine the work of contemporary theorists, architects, landscape architects, policy makers and environmentalists who have channeled some of the lessons of the past in proposing lasting solutions to our land management and ecological crises of the present and future.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites
This class is open to students at all levels. There are no prerequisites for the class.

Attendance
Attendance to all course meetings is mandatory. An attendance sheet will be distributed at each meeting. Unexcused absences, late arrivals, or early departures from class will reduce your course grade. Three non-consecutive absences will result in a grade reduction by one-third (1/3) of one letter grade (e.g., A- to B+). Three consecutive absences or four non-consecutive absences will adversely affect your final grade.

Absences due to acute illness, a personal crisis (e.g., a death in the family), religious observance, or for other reasons of comparable gravity may be excused. In all such cases, students must promptly email their instructor to communicate the reason for their absence and to arrange an opportunity to review any important information they may have missed. Students who know they will miss one or more scheduled classes due to a religious holiday should contact their instructor during the first week of classes to discuss their anticipated absences.

Readings
There are no textbooks in this class. There will be approximately 50-80 pages of reading a week. The readings will be posted online. All readings must be completed the night before the relevant lecture on Tuesday.

Course Assessment and Grading
 participation and Attendance ............................................................................................................ = 10%
Weekly Reading Responses ............................................................................................................. = 20%
Term Paper Presentation ................................................................................................................... = 20%

Term Paper Midterm Submission (1000 words) ........................................................................... = 15%
• Deadline: Tues. Oct. 9: 1 paper copy to the writing fellow. 1.5 line spacing.
• Deadline: Thurs. Oct. 18: Revised copy to me. Emailed as MAC pages or MS Word document.

Term Paper Final Submission (~3000 words) ............................................................................. = 35%
• Deadline for final paper. Submission to writing fellows: Nov. 15.
• Deadline for final revised paper (approx. 3000 words) submission to me: Dec. 14.

Discussion Participation
Students are expected to attend all Tuesday lectures and Thursday seminars, to do all seminar readings, to wisely and consistently contribute to the weekly seminar discussions. Discussions will cover explicit and implicit questions concerning landscape and ecology in modern culture, and should be used as an open forum for questioning. The discussions are also intended to foster student responsibility for self-directed learning.

Weekly Reading Responses
Weekly Reading Responses are due Wednesday nights at midnight. I will set up online discussion boards for each week on canvas. You will be able to see your classmates’ responses only once you have added your own response to the forum. Once you have added your response, I recommend that you read some of the other responses on the forum. Reading responses in note form will not be accepted.

For each of the 10 weeks of the course, you are asked to:
• write a 200-300 word response (no less, no more) to issues and polemics encountered in the readings for that week. In responding to the readings, you will need to briefly summarize the arguments in the readings that you feel are central to the week’s theme.
• End your response with one question. The question should not seek a factual answer (how much..., when did..., etc.) but should address what you see as the main points of debate in the readings.

The purpose of weekly responses is three-fold:
• to demonstrate that you’ve read the assigned readings for the week.
• To show that, beyond simply reading the texts, you’ve thought about the central arguments and themes, that you’ve been able to draw connections between that week’s various readings (and possibly, the
readings from previous weeks), and finally, that you’ve been able to scale-up your thinking and consider some of the larger social / political / personal … stakes involved.

• To prepare you for the Thursday seminar discussions. This is especially the case for the questions that I’m asking you to include at the end of your reading response. In seminar, I may ask you to read your questions to the class.

The responses will be graded on a total of 2 point. In order to get a full 2 points, your response needs to demonstrate that you’ve read the readings and been able to focus on the main issues and arguments they present. For summaries that are poorly written, incomplete or do not demonstrate an adequate grasp of the material, students will get an R for the first couple of weeks, meaning that they’ll need to resubmit the response within a week’s time. Late responses cannot be accepted.

Term Paper and Term Paper Presentations
Each student will prepare a 12 page term paper (approx. 3000 words) based on the theme or topic of the student’s choice. You must use footnotes following the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition. You must all set up an individual appointment with Nicholas or I to discuss your paper topic ideas before Sept. 27.

Term Papers and Term Paper Midterm Drafts will be graded qualitatively according to this set of criteria:

• 1/3 of the grade will be based on the strength of the writing (grammar, sentence structure, spelling, proper citation format etc.)
• 1/3 on the paper structure: Clear thesis statement / thesis argument, clear flow of argumentation from one paragraph to another.
• 1/3 of the grade will be based on strength and persuasiveness of argumentation, originality of topic, originality of introduction and conclusion.

Some writing problems to avoid:
1. Use of Quotations: The most common issue has to do with the use of quotations. Students often use quotations in order to avoid explaining a point or making an argument themselves. They often will insert a quotation directly into a paragraph without context and without mentioning the source. Many students will use quotations that are two to three sentences long without any analysis. As a general rule, quotations should be used sparingly and need to be explained and discussed by the student. It is often preferable to paraphrase a quotation in the student’s own words and add a footnote citing the source.
2. Thesis Statement: All final papers must have a clearly articulated thesis statement (1-2 sentences long). Your thesis statement should focus on the larger stakes (why is this important? How does it add to or dispel some of our assumptions about subject X) and connect it to an existing discourse (this can be a discourse that we’ve examined in class or not…). A strong thesis statement will help structure your essay and give the reader a better sense of the purpose of each paragraph in the overall argument.
3. Run-On Sentences: Often, students will try and cram too many ideas into one sentence. This tends to lead to grammatical problems. Good writing often alternates between a short, declarative sentence, and longer descriptive sentences.

Writing Center
I strongly recommend that students with even minor difficulties with writing set up an appointment with the Barnard Writing Center before handing in assignments. http://writing.barnard.edu

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
Upon successful completion of this reading and writing intensive course, the student will be able to:
1. Develop a critical understanding and awareness of some of the decisive ideas, theories and debates relating to landscape and ecology over the past two centuries.
2. Understand the role that territorial, landscape and ecological organization play in the construction of social practices, human subjectivities and political awareness.
3. Understand the way that discourses traditionally seen as external to the discipline of architecture inform and elucidate its practice and production.
4. To understand the ideological shifts in history that have shaped our notions of nature, landscape, and ecology.
5. Demonstrate the ability to read texts critically and to relate issues encountered in these texts to contemporary architectural discourse and practice.
6. Develop research, writing, and critical thinking skills through the research and writing of a series of reading summaries and a term paper that use textual and visual evidence to state a meaningful thesis.
FILMS ON LANDSCAPE, ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY AND ECOLOGY


On Netflix:
- Eco-Pirate: The Story of Paul Watson. Directed by Trish Dolman, USA, 2011

On Vimeo:

On Amazon Prime:
- DamNation. Directed by Ben Knight and Travil Rummel. USA, 2014.

RELEVANT MUSEUMS, VISITS AND EXHIBITIONS

- Storm King Art Center, New Windsor, NY
- Dia Beacon, Beacon NY
- Ford Foundation Atrium. Design by Daniel Urban Kiley. 320 East 43rd Street, NY, NY.

RELEVANT EVENTS AND LECTURES THIS SEMESTER

TBA

INFORMATION ABOUT THE WRITING FELLOWS PROGRAM

One of the requirements of this course is working with a Barnard Writing Fellow. The Barnard Writing Fellows Program (founded in 1991) is designed to help students strengthen their writing in all disciplines. We believe that writing is a process; it happens in stages, in different drafts. Often the most fruitful dialogues about your writing occur with your peers, and the Writing Fellows are just that. They are not tutors or TAs; they are Barnard undergraduates who participate in a semester-long workshop in the teaching of writing and, having finished their training, staff the Barnard Writing Center and work in courses across the disciplines. It is not their role to comment on the accuracy of the content of your papers, nor to grade your work. They are not enrolled in your course. You will probably know more about the course’s specific material than they do, and your papers must therefore be written clearly enough so that the non-expert can understand them.

Two dates are listed for each piece of writing assigned. You will hand in your first draft to your instructor on the first date, who will pass it on to your Writing Fellow. The Writing Fellow will read it, write comments, and conference with you on it for half an hour, after which you will have a week to revise the paper and hand in a final version on the second date.

Sign up for your Writing Fellow conference in class when you first hand in your paper. Conference locations will be indicated on the sign-up sheet. Please make a note of when and where you have scheduled your conference. Also, please make sure to record your Writing Fellow’s email and phone number when you sign up for your conference in case you need to contact her.

The Head Writing Fellow for your course is TBA
POLICIES AND STATEMENTS

The Barnard Honor Code:
The Barnard Honor Code applies to all students in this class regardless of academic affiliation. Approved by the student body in 1912 and updated in 2016, the Code states:

We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by engaging with integrity in all of our academic pursuits. We affirm that academic integrity is the honorable creation and presentation of our own work. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to seek clarification of proper forms of collaboration and use of academic resources in all assignments or exams. We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources. We will respect the rights of others to engage in pursuit of learning in order to uphold our commitment to honor. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.
The Columbia College Honor Code and the Columbia College Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity can be viewed here:
https://www.college.columbia.edu/honorcode
https://www.college.columbia.edu/faculty/resourcesforinstructors/academicintegrity/statement

Barnard Wellness Statement:
It is important for undergraduates to recognize and identify the different pressures, burdens, and stressors you may be facing, whether personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. We as a community urge you to make yourself—your own health, sanity, and wellness—your priority throughout this term and your career here. Sleep, exercise, and eating well can all be a part of a healthy regimen to cope with stress. Resources exist to support you in several sectors of your life, and we encourage you to make use of them. Should you have any questions about navigating these resources, please visit these sites:
Barnard Students: https://barnard.edu/wellwoman/about
Columbia Students: http://www.college.columbia.edu/resources Click on Health-Wellness
Columbia GS Students: https://gs.columbia.edu/health-and-wellness
Columbia SEAS Students: http://gradengineering.columbia.edu/campus-resources

Academic Accommodations:
If you are a student with a documented disability and require academic accommodations in this course, you must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for assistance. Students requesting accommodations will need to first meet with an ODS staff member. Once registered, students are required to request accommodation letters each semester to notify faculty. Accommodations are not retroactive, so it is best to contact ODS early each semester to access your accommodations. If you are registered with ODS, please see me to schedule a meeting outside of class in which you can bring me your faculty notification letter and we can discuss your accommodations for this course. Students are not eligible to use their accommodations in this course until they have met with me. ODS is located in Milbank Hall, Room 009/008. Columbia ODS is located in Wien Hall, Suite 108A.

Affordable Access to Course Texts:
All students deserve to be able to access course texts. The high costs of textbooks and other course materials prohibit access and perpetuate inequity, and Barnard librarians are partnering with students, faculty, and staff to increase access. By the first day of advance registration for each term, you should be able to view on Canvas information provided by your faculty about required texts (including ISBN or author, title, publisher and copyright date) and their prices. Once you have selected your classes, here are some cost-free methods for accessing course texts, recommended by the Barnard Library: find out if your faculty has placed the texts on reserve at Barnard Library or another Columbia library, and look for course texts using CLIO (library catalog), Borrow Direct (request books from partner libraries), Interlibrary Loan (request book chapters from any library), and NYPL. Students with financial need or insecurity can check items out from the FLIP lending libraries in the Barnard Library and Butler Library and can consult with the Dean of Studies and Financial Aid about additional affordable alternatives for getting access to course texts. Talk with your librarian and visit the Barnard Library Textbook Affordability Guide ((library.barnard.edu/textbook-affordability) for more details.

- = required reading
- = recommended reading
# Part I: Landscapes

## Week 1

**The Invention of Wilderness**

- **Tues. 9/4**

- **Thurs. 9/6**

## Week 2

**Modern and Postmodern Landscapes**

- **Tues. 9/11**

- **Thurs. 9/13**

## Week 3

**Land Art and Environmental Sculpture**

- **Tues. 9/18**

- **Thurs. 9/20**

## Week 4

**Technology, Territory and Power**

- **Tues. 9/25**

- **Thurs. 10/27**
  - *DEADLINE*: You must have met with me or Nicholas to discuss your essay topic.
## PART II: **ECOLOGIES**

### WEEK 5

**Tues. 10/2**  
**GUEST LECTURE:** Nicolas Renaud, Concordia University, 6-7:30pm.

**Thurs. 10/4**

### WEEK 6

**Tues. 10/9**  
**DEADLINE:** Draft version of first 1000 words of your term paper to your writing fellow.

**Thurs. 10/11**

### WEEK 7

**Tues. 10/16**

### WEEK 8

**Tues. 10/23**

**Thurs. 10/25**  
**GUEST LECTURE:** Todd Rouhe + Maria Ibañez de Sendadiano, IdS/R architecture, 6-7:30pm.  
**DEADLINE:** Revised version of first 1000 words of your term paper to me.
# PART III: HYBRID NATURES

## WEEK 9

**Tues. 10/30**

**Thurs. 11/1**

## WEEK 10

**Tues. 11/6**
- No Classes / Election Day

**Thurs. 11/8**
- **FILM SCREENING:** Darwin’s Nightmare. Directed by Hubert Sauper, (2004)

## WEEK 11

**Tues. 11/3**

**Thurs. 11/15**
- **DEADLINE:** complete version of the term paper submitted to your writing fellow

## WEEK 12

**Tues. 11/20**
- TBA

**Thurs. 11/22**
- No Classes / Thanksgiving Holiday

## WEEK 13

**Tues. 11/27**
- TERM PAPER PRESENTATIONS

**Thurs. 11/29**
- TERM PAPER PRESENTATIONS

## WEEK 14

**Tues. 12/4**
- TERM PAPER PRESENTATIONS

**Thurs. 12/6**
- TERM PAPER PRESENTATIONS

**Thurs. 12/14**
- **DEADLINE:** Final version of the term paper submitted to your instructor.
ADDITIONAL READINGS

PART I: LANDSCAPES

THE INVENTION OF WILDERNESS

- Simon Schama, Landscape and Memory (Vintage Books, 1995).

MODERN AND POSTMODERN LANDSCAPES


LAND ART AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCULPTURE

[ György Kepes; Robert Smithson; Nancy Holt; Michael Heizer; Walter De Maria; Dennis Oppenheim; Richard Serra; Christo and Jeanne Claude; Richard Long; Maya Lin; Alice Aycock, James Turrell, Agnes Denes, Audrey Hemenway ]

• Rosalind Krauss, “Sculpture in the Expanded Field,” October 8 (Spring 1979), 30-44.
• Imre Szeman and Petrocultures Research Group, “The Arts, Humanities, and Energy (or, What Can Art tell us about Oil?),” in After Oil (Edmonton, AB: Petrocultures Research Group, 2016).
• Documentary Film: Smithson and Serra: Beyond Modernism? 24 minutes. https://vimeo.com/28727127

TECHNOLOGY, TERRITORY AND POWER

[ Dams, Canals, Mines, Quarries, Nuclear Power Plants, Territorial Walls and Boundaries, Geoengineering . . . ]

• Neeraj Bhatia and Mary Casper, eds., The Petropolis of Tomorrow (Actar, 2013).
• Edward Burtynsky, Manufactured Landscapes: The Photographs of Edward Burtynsky (Yale University Press, 2003).
• Kate Orff, Petrochemical America (Aperture, 2012).
• Mike Hodson and Simon Marvin, “Urbanism in the Anthropocene: Ecological Urbanism or Premium Ecological Enclaves?” City: analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action 14, no. 10 (2010).
• Mike Davis, City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles (Vintage, 1992).
FROM CONSERVATION TO ENVIRONMENTALISM

[ National and State Parks; Park Buildings and Infrastructure (such as Shark Valley observation tower in the Everglades, Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite, etc.); Adirondack “Great Camps,” Three Mile Island, Love Canal ]


THE RISE OF ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

[ Buckminster Fuller, John McHale; Reyner Banham; The Ford Foundation, Stewart Brand, Rick Guidice, Biosphere 2, The Eden Project ]

- Peter Sloterdijk, excerpt from “Introduction: The Allies; or, the Breathed Commune,” in *Bubbles: Spheres, volume I: Microspherology* (Semiotext(e) / Foreign Agents, 2011), 17-28.

A COMMONS FOR WHOM? RACE, CAPITALISM AND POPULATION GROWTH


OFF THE GRID: APPROPRIATING TECHNOLOGY
[1970s off-the-grid eco-houses, contemporary eco-experiments, especially those that suggest a new social/political framework, New Alchemy Institute, Sim van der Ryn's Bateson Building, ]

• Peter Kropotkin, Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution (McClure Phillips, 1903).
• E.F. Schumacher, Small Is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered (Harper Perennial; Reprint edition, 2010).
• Stewart Brand, Whole Earth Catalog, published between 1968 and 1972.
• Felicity D. Scott, “Revolutionaries or Dropouts,” in Architecture or Techno-Utopia (MIT Press, 2010), 151-184.
• Lloyd Kahn, Shelter I (1973) and Shelter II (1978).
• Lloyd Kahn, Domebook I (1970), Domebook II (1971).
• Nancy Jack Todd and John Todd, Bioshelters, Ocean Arks, City Farming: Ecology as the Basis of Design (San Francisco, Sierra Club Books, 1984).
• Herman E. Daly, ed., Toward a Steady-State Economy (San Francisco, W. H. Freeman, 1973).

CONTEMPORARY ECOLOGIES
[ Kenneth Yeang; William Macdonough; Passive Houses; MVRDV, Expo 2000 building, Pig City; Philippe Rahm; Francois Roche; Michael Green; Bjarke Ingels ]

• Allenby Braden, “Complexity- the New Frontier,” in Reconstruction Earth: Technology and the Environment in an Age of Humans
• N. Katherine Hayles, “Simulated Nature and Natural Simulations: Rethinking the Relation between the Beholder and the World,” in Uncommon Ground- Rethinking the Human Place in Nature
• Christopher Hight, “The New Somatic Architecture,” Harvard Design Magazine 30

**URBANIZATION AND LANDSCAPE FUTURES**

[ Ian McHarg, Robert Irwin, Field Operations and Diller and Scofidio, the High Line; Downsview Park Competition; Fresh Kills Competition; Weiss/Manfredi]

• Ian L. McHarg, Design with Nature (Doubleday / Natural History Press,1971).
• Neeraj Bhatia and Mary Casper, eds., The Petropolis of Tomorrow (Actar, 2013).
• Craig Morris and Arne Jungjohann, Ch. 1 “Energiewende: The Solution to More Problems Than Climate Change,” in *Energy Democracy: Germany’s Energiewende to Renewables* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 1-14.