

ENVIRONMENTAL LITERATURE, ARTS, & MEDIA



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Office hours	Mondays & Fridays 10:30-12:00 by appointment (e-mail or via Teams or Outlook calendar)
Class meetings	Thursdays 1:15-4:15 pm, MS Teams
Course modality	Remote
Technical support	https://www.uvm.edu/it/kb/student-technology-resources/ or call Helpline 802-656-2604

BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the environmental humanities through exploring and assessing a broad range of values and cultural expressions of the human-nature relationship. We will examine contemporary and historical works of literary, visual, musical, performative, and media arts to see the role the expressive humanities have played and are playing today in shaping social-cultural attitudes toward nature and the human dilemma of depending on nature as source and sustenance. Through readings, discussion, class presentations, and written and creative work, students will gain exposure to artists and movements in the environmental arts and to pressing themes in environmental communication and expression.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students will gain exposure to creative work and key themes and debates in the environmental arts and humanities, including environmentally themed literature, visual art, music, and film and media production.
2. Students will be introduced to conceptual and analytical tools for understanding contemporary cultural practices through an ecocritical lens, as these are found within such fields as environmental communication, environmental cultural and media studies, ecocritical literary studies, ecomusicology, ecomedia studies, and environmental humanities writ large; and will be given opportunities to use these tools in analyses of representations of humans and nature, experiences intended and elicited, and materiality in the production of creative and communicative works of art and literature.
3. Students will gain experience in personally and/or collectively engaging the creative process to produce a work of eco-art, literature, music, or media, to be shared with others and in the UVM community.

TEXTS

1. Most required readings will be made available electronically via Blackboard. Please stay up-to-date with these readings by checking the Blackboard course page regularly.
2. Greg Garrard, **Ecocriticism**, 2nd edition (Routledge, 2012). This will be our key theoretical text in the course. It is strongly recommended that you have your own copy of the **2012 edition**, which should be available at the UVM Bookstore, on library reserve, and from online booksellers.
3. Alexis Pauline Gumbs, **Dub: Finding Ceremony** (Duke U. Press, 2020). We will read this later in the course.
4. Recommended, not required: Linda Weintraub, **To Life! Eco-Art in Pursuit of a Sustainable Planet** (Univ. of California Press, 2013). See also the author's web site, <http://lindaweintraub.com/> and esp. [/teaching-guides/20th-century-ecoart-pioneers](#) and [/teaching-guides/21st-century-ecoart-explorers](#). While we will be consulting this work, only a small proportion of it will be required reading and those sections will be made available online. Artist-specific sections will be recommended for specific topics in the course. The book will also be available on 2-hour reserve at Bailey Howe Library.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS & ACTIVITIES

Students will be evaluated according to the following grading breakdown. Exceptions may be requested in writing to account for different learning styles; any such requests should be submitted by the end of the second week of classes. Please also see Course Policy #1 on Grading.

1. Reading responses & class participation	25%
2. Artist profile	25%
3. Take-home exam	20%
4. Creative project	30%
Total:	100%

1. READING RESPONSES & CLASS PARTICIPATION (25 pts.)

Readings play a central role in this class, and you are expected to have read **all** required readings for a given class **before** the relevant class. Guidelines and discussion prompts will sometimes be provided. Your participation grade will be broken down as follows:

- **Reading responses** (6 x 2 + 3 = 15 pts.): You are expected to respond to Blackboard reading questions/prompts **six times** over the course of the class (out of 9 or 10 weeks in total; see Schedule for details). These responses should be roughly **250-300** words in length. Responses should be uploaded to the appropriate place in Blackboard **by 12 noon on the Monday** before class. These will be graded at 2 grade points per response submitted on time (times 6), plus 3 points in total for the overall quality of your responses (graded at the end of the semester). The qualitative grade will be out of 3, with A=3, B=2, C=1, and D or less=0. These responses are intended to help generate discussion points for our class discussions. Note that if you are not submitting a reading response in a given week, you should still do the readings, as they will be the basis for discussions, class exercises, and exams. It is recommended that you find a regular weekly time soon after Tuesday's class to do your readings and responses.
- **Class participation** (10 pts.): You are expected to attend **all** classes, unless you have an excused absence. (Absences are not excused unless they are personally cleared with me by phone or email.) If you miss a class, please ask another student for assistance in catching up on the material. Attendance and participation grades are given as a small incentive for you; they will be based on your presence and participation in Teams meetings, breakout groups, **responses to other students' reading responses**, etc. Since there is a subjective element to this, it is to your benefit to ensure that I get to know you.

2. ARTIST PROFILE (conducted in pairs or individually; 25 pts.)

You will be required to prepare a **presentation** on, and produce a **written analysis** of, the work of an artist relevant to the course. Your chosen artist could be one that works in any medium, but there must be some relevance in their work to contemporary environmental problems. Presentations and analyses can be done individually or (preferably) in pairs of students.

The goal of the Artist Profile is to allow you to explore new ideas and perspectives from class readings, and to share them effectively with others. You will be expected to sign up for topics early in the course and to arrange with the instructor on specific artists and foci in advance of the presentation. Presentations will be scheduled for a date in **late March or early April**, depending on the topic (see Schedule of Classes). If you are proposing to present (in depth) on an artist that is already in the syllabus, then it would be more appropriate for you to present on the day that we cover that artist. Other dates may be possible, but please consult with me about the final presentation date.

Components & Due Dates:

- **Proposal** (3 pts.), due **Feb. 19**. This 1-page proposal should include: (a) name of artist or group, (b) specific work(s) to be examined, (c) analytic approach (i.e., what you will focus on, how it relates to the class), (d) proposed date for your presentations (see note above), and (e) full bibliographic details on at least 5 additional print or online information sources. See Appendix for lists of some possible artists. If you would like to request more than 5-6 minutes of class time (e.g., because you would like to share duration-based musical or media works with the class), please request this in your proposal.
- **Presentation** (10 pts.): Presentations should be well-crafted, well-researched, and aesthetically considered, roughly **5 to 6 minutes** in duration (unless you have arranged for more time), and responding to class discussion topics. Given their brevity, you should aim to present material **visually**, for instance through a Power Point, Prezi, et al., in addition to speaking. Presentations will be graded on the following criteria:
 - **Research and substance:** topic well researched, demonstrating a good understanding of biographical context, insight into the artist's goals and methods; selection of materials well chosen (highlighting one or two key themes); topic effectively connected to class themes; sources well selected and appropriately attributed.
 - **Organization and delivery:** clear structure, well planned, good use of time; good group dynamics; clear and effective vocal delivery (confident, eye contact, etc.), good effort at engaging class.
 - **Visuals and other materials:** Good quality, selection, and use of visuals and/or audio or other media.
- **Written artist profile/analysis** (12 pts.): This should analyze at least one work by the artist (e.g., a novel, a poetry collection, an art project, a musical album, etc.) and discuss its success (and/or failure) in terms of topics from the course: e.g., the "experience-materiality-representation triad," the artist's use of one or more of the 7 thematic clusters (see Appendix), etc. **Recommended length:** 800-1000 words if you are working individually, 1500-1800 if working in pairs. **Due date:** It is recommended that you submit this **within one week** of your in-class presentation, however due to the timing of other activities (including the exhibition), you can have until **May 11** to submit it without penalty.

3. EXAM (20 pts.)

There will be a final, mostly essay-style **take-home exam** covering all the topics of the course. Questions will be made available in the final class on **May 11**. The completed exam will be due one week later. All written work should be typed, spell-checked and proofread. Other details will be announced.

4. CREATIVE PROJECT (30 pts.)

The personal creative project is an opportunity to conceive, develop, present to the public, and critically reflect on an individual creative/artistic work based on class themes. This may be a work of creative art in any medium or genre, including poetry, literary prose, film/video, music, photo exhibition, art installation, performance, etc.; the sky is the limit on your imagination. Works will be presented at the **Earth Week Eco-Arts Exhibition**, to be organized in conjunction with the course and to be held during Earth Week, April 21-25 (location/venue and exact dates/times to be determined). Due to the pandemic, this year's exhibition will likely be held **online**, but we will explore options as we get closer to the date.

You will need to propose and develop your idea for the project, thinking through what you want to communicate and how you will execute the project. Choose something that draws on your own skills, passions, and environmental interests, and that relates to the themes and discussion points from class. Allow enough

time to see what the obstacles might be, should you need to try another variation on your first idea. You will also need to figure out a way to present your project formally for the public (e.g., thinking about mounting, visual screens, playback, etc., as needed), to be present during the Exhibition to host your work (or documentation of it), and to document your work for presentation/review in class.

Objectives:

- 1) To individually produce a creative cultural or media object, text, performance, event, or production that communicates creatively and effectively your insights and sense of environmental perceptions and concerns; to present your creative work to the public; to reflect on what and how it communicates your message/insights; and to evaluate its success;
- 2) To work collectively with others to produce a public exhibition and evaluate its success.

Components & Due Dates:

- 1) **Initial Draft Proposal** (1 pt.), **due Feb. 26**: This should include a brief, one-paragraph statement of **theme, medium, and format** of your proposed work, plus any **experience, skills** and/or **resources** you will be drawing on for it. If you have two or more options you are considering, please briefly describe each as well as any pros/cons associated with them.
- 2) **Full Proposal** (3 pts.), **due Mar. 12**: This should include the following:
 - a) **Project idea**: Brief description of your idea and tentative design, and inspirations for your work.
 - b) **Medium & background**: Indicate the specific medium/media for your work (e.g., words, watercolor, video, multi-media installation, etc.) and your personal capacity/experience working in this medium. If you require any additional support with the medium or task, indicate where you will get this.
 - c) **Format**: Describe how you will set up and share your project with the public. Indicate any special needs for exhibiting the work (or its documentation) at our Earth Week Eco-Arts Exhibition.
 - d) **Timeline**: Provide a detailed outline and schedule of the steps in producing this work.
 - e) **Rationale**: Indicate why you think this approach will be effective for what you want to express. Refer to artistic models, inspirations, and/or class themes if appropriate.
- 3) **Progress Report** (1 pt.), **due Mar. 30**: This should include the following:
 - a) **Revised proposal**: Include all above information with any revisions made (due to feedback, etc.). If nothing has changed, please simply provide the initial proposal again. If questions were raised in my feedback on your proposal, please provide brief answers addressing them.
 - b) **Status**: Indicate what you have done, obstacles encountered and how you have dealt with them, and any challenges you still foresee.
 - c) **Work plan & timeline**: Indicate what remains to be done and when and how you will do it.
- 4) **Creative project** (20 pts.), **due Apr. 20**, for exhibition during Earth Week (April 19-25), timing details to be determined. The project should include a 100-150 word **Artist Statement**. If the actual project is being exhibited or performed outside of the exhibition, you must include documentation of it (e.g., photographs, video, etc.) for inclusion in the exhibition.

The project will be **evaluated** on the following criteria (valued roughly equally), with the final grade factoring in public and class responses to the work as well as your own personal reflection (see below):

- Quality, depth, and creativity in personal expression
 - Clarity of intention and communication
 - Effective use of materials/media
 - Relationship to class themes
 - Personal effort engaged
- 5) **Personal Reflection** (grade factored into project grade, above); **due April 27**: This should include your 100-150 word **Artist's Statement** from the show, followed by a 300 word **Critical Self-Evaluation** on the successes and challenges of your art work. This might include reference to execution, intention, clarity, appropriateness of medium, ideas for improvement, unexpected challenges (physical, emotional, intellectual, etc). Review your objectives and how these were met. Include any documentation, such as photographs, recordings, links, etc. Indicate your criteria for assessing effectiveness for the project. (Note: Please feel free to add any **self-evaluatory comments** on your performance in the course

following this personal project reflection. They should be in addition to what's expected above.)

- 6) **Exhibition Review** (5 pts.), **due May 4**: This should be a 500-word critical review of the class show based on your observations of displayed works, public response, discussions with artists, and your critical evaluation of the quality of the show. Focus on works that struck you as most successful or interesting.

5. **EXTRA CREDIT** (up to 1 pt. per review, for a maximum of 3 pts.; these are added to your class grade out of 100)

You may attend extracurricular events and speakers related to environmental literature/arts/media topics or view related videos for extra credit. These may be announced over the course of the semester. For unannounced events, please clear it with me first and then write up a 1.5 to 2 single-spaced page paper summarizing (a) what the event was about (one page), and (b) your critical response to it (one page).

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS, & ASSIGNMENTS

This schedule is **tentative and subject to change**. Not all readings listed will be required; others may be added. **Please consult BlackBoard for up-to-date list of topics and assignments.**

Please note that the topics listed below are the topics that will be **introduced** in a given class. The class structure will be “straddled” between topics, as follows:

- (1) In the first part of a 3-hour class, we will **review** and **discuss** materials from the previous class, engaging them to make sure they have been fully understood and assessed.
- (2) In the second part, I will **introduce new materials** (from the topics listed below), which we will then discuss and work with.
- (3) In the time **between** classes, it will be your responsibility to read all required materials and to upload your reading response (which you must do at least six over the semester) to Blackboard by Monday at 12 noon.

It is **recommended** that you do readings in advance of the week in which they are introduced—that is, for the class in which they are listed below. But it is **required** that you do them by the beginning of the **following** week's class.

<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READINGS</u> for this topic (introduced this week and to be discussed in class the following week)	<u>ASSIGNMENTS & ACTIVITIES</u>
Feb 2 <u>Introduction to the Environmental Humanities, Eco-Arts, & Eco-Critique</u> Introduction to the ERM (Experience-Materiality-Representation) triad Student introductions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ivakhiv (with Abatemarco), “Introduction,” from <i>Ecocritique Across the Arts</i> 2. Garrard, <i>Ecocriticism</i>, ch. 1-2 	1-minute place/identity talk (accompanied by one image, to be shared on BB)
Feb 9 <u>Theme #1: ANIMACY</u> Life Force, Instinct, Elementality, Animality, Metamorphosis, the Hunt	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whitman, “I think I could turn and live with animals” 2. Killingsworth, “‘As if the beasts spoke’: The animal/animist/animated Walt Whitman” 3. Plumwood, “Being Prey” 4. Garrard, <i>Ecocriticism</i>, ch. 7 5. Poems by Ross Gay and others; details TBA. 	Reading response 1 Artist profile ideas/suggestions

<p>Feb 16 Theme #2: GROUND Roots, Fertility, Mother Earth, Land, Tree of Life, Women/Weaving</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Merchant, "Eve as Nature" 2. Roach, "Loving Your Mother" 3. Griffin, "Woman and Nature" 4. "Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth" 5. Rogers, "Knot" 	<p>Reading response 2</p> <p>Artist Profile proposal due on Fri. Feb. 19</p>
<p>Feb 23 Theme #3: HARMONY Pastoral, Beauty, Balance of Nature, Homeland, Rurality, Nation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Garrard, <i>Ecocriticism</i>, ch. 3 & 6 2. Wordsworth, "Poems on the Naming of Places" 3. Dissanayake, "Komar and Melamid Discover Pleistocene Taste" 4. Berry, "Stay Home" 5. hooks, "Touching the Earth" 6. Anzaldua, "Towards a New Consciousness" 7. Anthes, "Home Place" and "Landscapes" 8. Edgar Heap of Birds, "Life as Art" introduction 	<p>Reading response 3</p> <p>Initial draft of Creative Project proposal due Fri. Feb. 26</p>
<p>Mar 2 Town Meeting Day Recess</p>	<p>No class</p>	
<p>Mar 9 Theme #4: CRISIS/ COLLAPSE Pollution, Corruption, Monstrosity, Apocalypse, Entropy</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Garrard, <i>Ecocriticism</i>, ch. 5, selections 2. Carson, "A Fable for Tomorrow" 3. Killian, "Welcome to the Anthropocene" 4. Haraway, "Carrier Bags for Critical Zones" 5. Onion, "Why So Many Readers are Turning to Octavia Butler" 6. Whyte, "Indigenous Science (Fiction) for the Anthropocene" 7. Hope, "Reporting the Future" 8. Deillo, "The Airborne Toxic Event" 9. Poems by Ed Roberson and others 	<p>Reading response 4</p> <p>Full Creative Project proposal due Fri. Mar. 12</p>
<p>Mar 16 Theme #5: PROTEST Witnessing, Jeremiad, Resistance, Renewal, Heroism, Revolution</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. McKee, "Art After Occupy" 2. Delaure & Fink, "Introduction," <i>Culture Jamming</i> 3. <i>Beautiful Trouble</i> (excerpts) 4. Klein, "Blockadia" 5. Demos, "Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chthulucene" 	<p>Reading response 5</p> <p>Artist profile presentations</p>
<p>Mar 23 Theme #6: SYSTEM Management, Database, Conservation, Whole Systems, Globality, Spaceship Earth</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Garrard, <i>Ecocriticism</i>, ch. 8 2. Seed & Macy, "Gaia Meditations" 3. Cosgrove, "Images & Imagination," pp. 1873-9 4. Boes, "Beyond Whole Earth" 5. Gabrys, "Sensing a Moving Planet" 6. Guinard & Korintenberg, "Observatories for Terrestrial Politics: Sensing the Critical Zones" 	<p>Reading response 6</p> <p>Artist profile presentations</p>

<p>Mar 30 Theme #7: SUBLIME Wilderness, Epiphany, Revelation, Deep Time/Space, Unknowability, Open Futurity</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Garrard, <i>Ecocriticism</i>, ch. 4, pp. 66-79. 2. Thoreau, "Ktaadn" 3. Sweeney, "'An Indomitable Explorative Enterprise,'" pp. 131-139 and 148-153 4. Poetry by Charles Wright, Robinson Jeffers, and others 	<p>Reading response 7 Artist profile presentations</p> <p>Creative Project progress report due Mar. 30</p>
<p>Apr 6 Visual Art, Film/Media, & Ecology</p> <p>Student presentations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Weintraub, <i>To Life!</i>: pp. 5-16 ("Eco Art Is," "Eco Art Is Not"), 43-50 ("Eco Art Materials") 2. Katherine Brooks, "18 Green Artists" 3. Ingram, "Melodrama, Realism, and Environmental Crisis" 4. Ivakhiv, "What Can A Film Do" 	<p>Reading response 8 Artist profile presentations</p>
<p>Apr 13 Music, Theatre/Performance, & Ecology</p> <p>Student presentations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pedelty, <i>Ecomusicology</i>, "Introduction" (pp. 1-12), "The Musical Nation" (ch. 2), and "Regional Geography in Song" (ch. 3), <i>Ecomusicology</i> 2. Wrightson, "An introduction to acoustic ecology" 3. Titon, "A Sound Commons for All Living Creatures" 4. "Sustainable Futures for Music Cultures" 5. Others TBA 	<p>Reading response 9</p> <p>Project & exhibition preparation</p>
<p>Apr 20 Earth Week Eco-Arts Exhibition</p>	<p>No assigned readings</p>	<p>Creative projects due by Apr. 20.</p> <p>Projects to be presented & exhibited in class & online/publicly</p>
<p>Apr 27 Exhibition Reflections</p>	<p>Reading TBA</p>	<p>Personal Reflection & Critical Self-Evaluation due on Apr. 27</p>
<p>May 4 Current Themes: The Poetics of Racial Justice & Climate Change</p>	<p>Gumbs, <i>Dub: Finding Ceremony</i> (sections to focus on will be specified) Additional reading TBA</p>	<p>Reading response 10 Exhibition Review due on May 4</p>
<p>May 11 Conclusions</p>	<p>Readings TBA</p>	<p>Written Artist Profile due on May 11 (final deadline) Take-Home Exam distributed</p>
<p>Exam Week (no class)</p>		<p>Take-Home Exam due on May 18 by 4:15 pm</p>

COURSE POLICIES

1. GRADING

Grades in this course will follow the **standard model**, i.e., A=90's, B=80's, C=70's, D=60's, F=below 60, with minus ("-") grades for the low end in each (i.e. 70-72.9, 80-82.9, et al) and plus ("+") grades for the high end (x7-x9.9), with the exception of A+ being 98 and up. That said, with the goal of providing you with an easily understandable assessment of your performance in the class, my overall grading policy is fairly simple: **If you do all the things you're asked to do in the course, you will normally get a B. If you do them especially well—with rigor, insight, and effective expression—you will get an A.** (Exceptions to this rule will be noted.)

- **Regarding what you're "asked to do":** The expectations are outlined either in the syllabus or in assignment instructions. If you mess up on a few little things (e.g., miss a class, hand in a couple of assignments late, do poorly on a quiz or written assignment) and this appears to be inordinately affecting your grade, let me know and I will adjust it. (You can let me know these things in your final self-evaluation, which should be submitted with your Project Self-Evaluation; see above.) But if these appear to be a pattern, then your grade will be affected negatively.
- **Regarding how these qualitative criteria of "rigor, insight, and effective expression" will be assessed:** I will be using models I have developed over 25+ years of grading student work as well as reading, writing, editing, and reviewing scholarly and professional writing. I will provide feedback where possible, but given the size of the class, this will not always be feasible. If you need clarity on anything in particular, please talk to me about it. Note that These *qualitative* criteria do not directly extend to *quantitatively* work such as quizzes, correct-answer exams, et al., but I will attempt to follow them in the design of such work.

2. RESPECTFUL CLASS CONDUCT

The mission of the University of Vermont includes two components: the creation, evaluation, sharing, and application of knowledge; and the preparation of students "to be accountable leaders who will bring to their work dedication to the global community, a grasp of complexity, effective problem-solving and communication skills, and an enduring commitment to learning and ethical conduct" (see <http://www.uvm.edu/president/?Page=mission.html>).

Since environmental issues and personal creative work both often elicit deeply personal feelings, it is important that students feel welcome and safe in this class to express their views on the subjects of our study. Respectful treatment of others and their views is key to this (and not only because it is consistent with the "ethical conduct" aimed for in the University mission). I will do my best to uphold it in my own behavior, and will expect a similar effort from each student. My goal is for the classroom to be a space where differences of perspective and differences of identity, including those of ethnic, racial, cultural, economic, religious, gender, and other identifiers, are respected and appreciated. I recognize that this is not always easy. I myself hold strong moral and ethical convictions and commitments that inform my teaching and scholarship, and I try to acknowledge these commitments even as I work to respect others' freedom to arrive at their own. I believe in and uphold the value of the university as a space to support critical and creative thinking, not to impose any particular forms of it.

As a public university, UVM is also committed to the protection of free speech (which is guaranteed by the First Amendment, except in instances of defamation, obscenity, criminal conduct, or a "clear and present danger" to incitement of harm, injury, and violence). The classroom, however, is not a forum for the airing of any views whatsoever. It is a forum for learning about specific topics, and this is best done within a respectful and open-minded setting in which divergent views can be discussed, critically considered, clarified, and evaluated. In seeking a balance between freedom of expression and respect for difference, I have found the following guidelines to be most helpful, and I suggest that we adopt them in our class:

- (1) Seek to **understand** other points of view, even if you disagree with them;
- (2) Where disagreement or criticism seem warranted, seek to engage **constructively** and to criticize ideas or behaviors (at most) but not the people who hold them;
- (3) When in doubt, **practice kindness and civility.**

Disrespect of individuals or groups, such as would create an atmosphere of hostility or fear, should not be tolerated in a classroom seminar. On the contrary, If disrespect arises, students should feel free to "flag" it without fear of retribution. In the end, however, it is in engaging with differences in perspective and expression that we develop our capacity for "ethical conduct" in a "global community" that is complex and deeply heterogeneous in its values, beliefs, and practices. Through practicing kindness with each other, we learn how to engage in civil conversation with our peers and to model such conversation in our country and in the world.

3. WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS & LATENESS

Since this class is taught remotely, all written work will be submitted electronically. Please **include your name** on all work submitted. Please spell-check and proofread your work, and use inclusive language (i.e. be conscious of your use of gendered pronouns and referents, using "people" or "humanity" instead of "man", "he or she" or "they" instead of simply "he," and so on). All written work should normally be turned in **on time**, i.e. at the beginning of class on the day the assignment is due. Late work is subject to penalties, with grades dropping half a letter grade each day your work is late unless you have a valid medical excuse or receive an extension from me beforehand. I will do my best to read all the assignments soon after they are turned in and try to return them to you within two weeks.

4. RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

UVM supports students' active involvement in their religious/faith communities. Students wishing to be excused from class participation during their religious holidays should **submit a documented list of such holidays by the end of the second week of classes**.

5. COLLABORATION & ACADEMIC HONESTY

You are encouraged to work with others in the class on your assignments, sharing resources and ideas and helping each other with direction, focus, clarity, and personal support. Please make an effort to get to know your peers. Many environmental initiatives have been built on collaborative networking, and such activity is encouraged.

At the same time, UVM's commitment to academic honesty will be followed. This means that unless otherwise stated, **all written and creative assignments should be your own**. If you draw on other sources, they should be **cited properly** to give adequate credit. If you work with other students to prepare for an exam, your written answers should be individually constructed, not copied from each other or shared notes. Work that appears to be plagiarized will be given no credit and students will be asked to meet with me to explain the situation. **Plagiarism can also be of one's own work**, if that work is presented as original for more than one course at a time; therefore any work that duplicates or overlaps with work that you are producing for another course should be clearly defined in terms of its originality and contribution for **this** course. **Plagiarism at UVM is grounds for academic suspension; don't do it**. Further information on plagiarism can be found in UVM's Statement on Academic Integrity; see <http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/acadintegrity.pdf>

6. CONTACTING ME

The best way to get in touch with me is by e-mail (aivakhiv@uvm.edu), with a clear and obvious subject line. If you don't hear back by the next day, it probably means means your message has sunk to the bottom of a deep barrel, so please send a follow-up email with a clear indication ("following up," "2nd attempt," etc.) in the subject line. I get hundreds of emails a day pertaining to multiple classes, research projects, committees, journals, listservs, et al., and on some days I cannot sort through them adequately. If something is urgent, please include "URGENT" in the subject line. Please include all relevant information in the email message, such as anything from past emails that you want me to be aware of when I respond. You could also try contacting me through Teams. During the pandemic I am not regularly visiting my campus office or retrieving messages from my office phone.

It is anticipated that this class will also have an **Undergraduate Teaching Assistant**, who will be available to answer questions; contact info will be provided.

7. OTHER RESOURCES

- UVM policy on academic integrity: <http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/acadintegrity.pdf>
- Grade appeals: <http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/gradeappeals.pdf>
- Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities: www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/studentcode.pdf
- FERPA Rights Disclosure (student records privacy rights): <http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/ferpa.pdf>
- UVM policy on disability certification & student support: www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/disability.pdf
- Center for Health and Wellbeing: <http://www.uvm.edu/~chwb/>
- Counseling & Psychiatry Services (CAPS): (802) 656-3340

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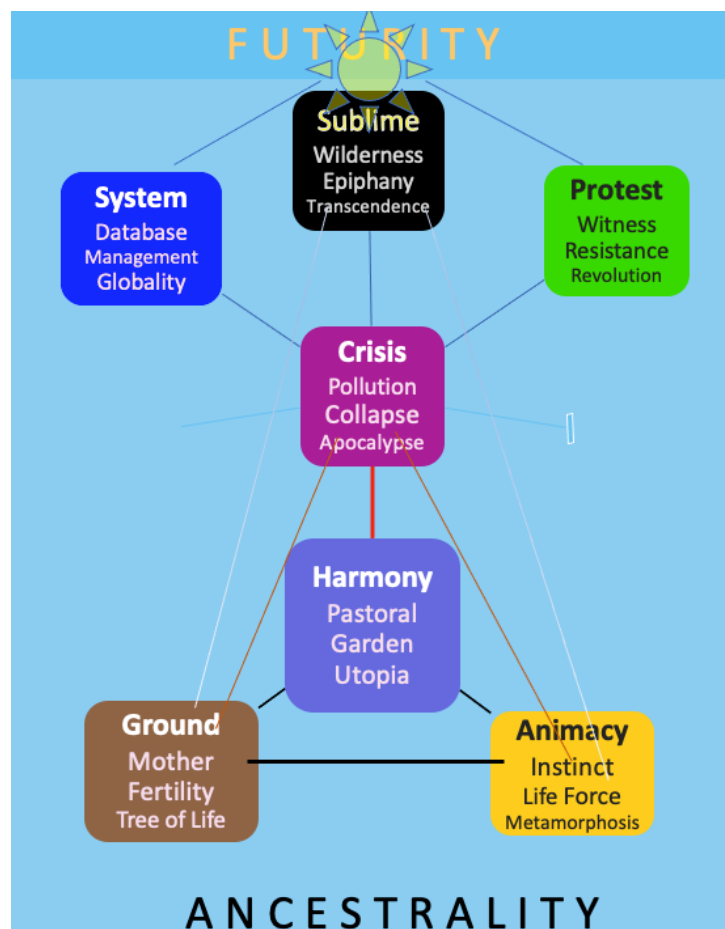
APPENDIX A: THE SEVEN THEMATIC CLUSTERS

Many powerful themes can be found in environmental literature and the eco-arts, today and in the past. Organizing them into a small number of thematic clusters can help us to make sense of that multiplicity, but also to identify relations between them, to understand how they have changed due to critiques emerging within environmental movements and outside of them, and to identify how they work today upon multiple audiences.

Each of these themes has been the focus of intense critical debate. For instance, is the assumption that women are closer to nature than men—as proposed in many forms of eco-maternalist thought (focused on the Mother Nature trope; see theme #2)—a progressive and useful notion, or is it regressive, bound to fail in a world where women and men can hardly revert to “traditional” roles? Can apocalyptic ideas about the ecological future (theme #5) empower people to change things, or do they just leave us feeling helpless? Is it helpful to blame others as being responsible for the ecological crisis, as many eco-protest movements do (theme #6), or does that simply divide humanity into conflicting groups? More generally, what are the more fruitful ways today of engaging with these powerful metaphors: mother Earth, sublime nature, pollution as sin, and so on?

We will deal with these seven thematic clusters in sequence over the semester, but you should familiarize yourself with them in advance in order to inform our discussions in class and to help you decide on your class presentation, project, and analysis topics. We will look at “traditional” or “classical” variants of each of these tropes, and explore the many “revisionist” forms they have taken, especially in recent times. We will also look at each of them through the three perspectives introduced in the first class: those of **experience** (how they are directly experienced—viscerally, affectively, and emotionally), **materiality** (how they are materially shaped and enacted and how they in turn affect the material world), and **representation** (how they contribute to the world of meanings of their audiences, viewers, and participants).

The following is a working “map” of these thematic clusters, illustrating some relationships between them. You can think of them as a “tree” of themes that extends from the ground (the past, “ancestrality”) upward (to the future). What follows is a break-down of sub-themes, with examples of ideas, artists/artworks, and writings. (Those indicated in **bold** will be referred to or read in class; “Weintraub” refers to the Linda Weintraub book *To Life!*)



1. ANIMACY

(a) Life Force, Instinct, Drive, Elementality:

Artistic depictions of animals extend back to the Paleolithic. Interpretations of ancient cave art typically focus on the importance of the hunt in hunter-gatherer lifeways, but are peppered with speculation on “shamanic” modes of consciousness and perceptions of life force, energy, *mana*, *Wakan*, *Orenda*, and the like. Elemental markings are also a feature of art influenced by theories of more primitive modes of thought, unconscious instinctuality (as in the Surrealism of Max Ernst, Joao Miro, Salvador Dali, and others), and the desire to return to the pure expression of fundamentals, as in the works of Symbolists, the writings of H. P. Lovecraft, and the land and earth art of Robert Smithson (“Spiral Jetty”), Nancy Holt, Richard Long, Andy Goldsworthy, and Chris Drury. In less restrained forms, such markings become the artistic free-for-all of abstract expressionists like Jackson Pollock, ecstatic expression within jazz, rock, and musical free improvisation (late John Coltrane, the AACM, Magma, Circle X), the films of Stan Brakhage and Kenneth Anger, the Burning Man Festival, and the energy philosophy of Georges Bataille. In more circumscribed forms, they become references to natural process—as in minimalist music and process-based art.

(b) Animality, Predation, Metamorphosis, Darwinism, Hunting:

Hybrid relations between humans and animals traceable to age-old folk tales, mythic narratives (as that of the Australian Dreamtime), classical myths and divine pantheons, medieval bestiaries, and other narratives of metamorphosis infuse baroque art forms, Art Nouveau, and literary and cinematic forms of “magic realism” in South America, Africa, Australia, and Eastern Europe. In the scientific era, Darwinian struggle-for-life narratives have shaped environmental discourse profoundly, infusing racist and imperial narratives and biological determinisms, but also the many genres of scientific nature writing and eco-poetry, from H. D. Thoreau to Robinson Jeffers. The meaning of the animal, as John Berger and others have argued, changes over time in direct relation to the forms of encounter and relationship with animals extant within a human social order. Even as philosophers like Peter Singer, Tom Regan, and Carol Adams argue for blurring the ethical line between humans and animals, genetic engineering threatens to dissolve boundaries in more radical ways.

READING:

Weintraub, To Life!; Joseph Beuys, Andy Goldsworthy, Tomas Saraceno, Simon Starling

Others: John Berger, “Why Look at Animals?”; Elizabeth Bishop, “The Fish”; Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man* (1871); **Annie Dillard**, “Living Like Weasels”; Susan Griffin, “The Hunt”; Stephen Harrigan, “Swamp Thing”; Hay Hosler, *Clan Apis* (2013); **D. H. Lawrence**, “Snake,” “Fish”; Gretchen Legler, “Wolf”; Les Murray, “Presence,” “Migratory,” “Shoal”; Thomas Nagel, “What Is It Like to Be a Bat?” (1974); Richard K. Nelson, “The Gifts”; Nivakle, “The Jaguar and the Hunt”; Catherine Puckett, “Beauty and the Beast”; **David Rothenberg**, “Making music with birds and whales”; Val Plumwood, “Being prey”; Thomas Seeley, “Swarm as Cognitive Entity” (2010); Gary Snyder, “Migration of Birds, April 1956”; Desmond Stewart, “The Limits of Trooghaft”; **Walt Whitman**, “Song of Myself”; Charles Wright, “A blessing”; Richard White, “Salmon” (1995)

VIEWING: *Bambi* (Disney Studios); *Princess Mononoke* (H. Miyazaki); *Garden of Earthly Delights* (S. Brakhage); *Grizzly Man* (W. Herzog); *Zoo* (R. Devor); The Red Black and Green Revolutionary EcoMusic Tour (video)

LISTENING: Devendra Banhart, “Little Yellow Spider”; Ornette Coleman, *Free Jazz* (1961); Paul Winter, “Wolf Eyes,” *Whales Alive* (1993); David Rothenberg, *Sudden Music* (2002); Art Ensemble of Chicago; Pauline Oliveros

2. GROUND

(a) Soil, Bedrock, Mother Earth, Gaia:

The Mother Earth trope is so prevalent as to be unquestioned, yet it has a history that relates concepts of nature to social constructs of gender, sexuality, activity/passivity, divinity, exploration, conquest, madness, and utopia. Depictions of landscape as maternal extend back to deep antiquity, but find a particular resonance in periods when women’s voices are being reclaimed against an industrial order perceived to be patriarchal and masculinist. References to maternal earth deities are found around the world, from the Russian *Mat’ Syra Zemlya* (literally, “moist mother earth”) to the Aymara and Quechua *Pachamama* (“World Mother”) to ecopolitical invocations of Mother Earth as in the 2010 Cochabamba Declaration on the Rights of Mother Nature. Theories of ancient “Goddess civilization” were revived in the 1970s and 1980s by Gimbutas, Eisler, Starhawk, and others; and the Gaia hypothesis, with its mix of scientific theory, ancient mythology, and popular ecological spirituality, has provided further fuel for depicting (and contesting) nature as female.

(b) Fertility, Verdancy, Flourishing, Tree of Life:

At what point does a flower, tree, vine, or seashell become an object of aesthetic appreciation or artistic craft? Vegetative forms inform age-old traditions of domestic decoration, clothing design, and embroidery; later they appear intermingled with human figures in religious sculpture and iconography, from gargoyles and “green men” to the Hermetic and Kabbalistic “trees of life,” to Baroque and Art Nouveau forms.

(c) Women’s Art, Women’s Work, Weaving, Healing:

With work by Virginia Woolf, Georgia O'Keefe, and others as precursors, the women's art movement of the past half-century—including the body art of Carolee Schneemann, Ana Mendieta, Mary Beth Edelson, and Betsy Damon, the “Sanitation Art Manifesto” of Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Judy Chicago's “The Dinner Party,” and the varied feminist literary interventions of Margaret Atwood, Susan Griffin, Ursula LeGuin, Marge Piercy, Octavia Butler, and Donna Haraway—reveals a diverse set of options for rethinking gender stereotypes while revaluing qualities traditionally associated with women and nature.

READING:

Weintraub: Carolee Schneemann, **Mierle Laderman Ukeles**, Gelitin, Red Earth, Lily Yeh

Others: Lorraine Anderson, ed., *Sisters of the Earth: Women's Prose and Poetry About Nature*; Margaret Atwood, *Surfacing*, *The Handmaid's Tale*; Sam Gill, *Mother Earth: An American Story*; **Susan Griffin**, *Woman and Nature*; Annette Kolodny, *The Land Before Her*; Ursula LeGuin, *Always Coming Home*; Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature*

VIEWING: Full Circle (Dir. Donna Read, 1989)

LISTENING: Bjork, *Biophilia*; Pauline Oliveros

3. HARMONY

(a) Pastoral, Arcadia, Idyll, Beauty, Utopia, Balance of Nature:

From the classical *Idylls* of Theocritus and the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* of Virgil to the romantic pastorals of Wordsworth, Clare, and Thoreau, to the long tradition of idyllic, arcadian, and pastoral references in music and the visual arts (such as Beethoven's and Brahms's “pastoral symphonies”), pastoral tropes have been central to civilized—especially urban—humanity's understandings of nature and our relationship to it. In their connections to ideas of nature, these tropes suggest that beauty itself is natural (inherent and biological) and that the only culture appropriate to it is one that dwells in harmony with it. Critical observers have asked whether this natural harmony might not be a cultural invention; this deconstructive urge has been pushed to the fullest in poststructuralist cultural critique. More complex forms of “neo-pastoral,” “post-pastoral,” and “critical pastoral” can be found in the speculative, futuristic, and queer literary (or cinematic) pastoral works of Ray Bradbury (*The Martian Chronicles*), Ernest Callenbach (*Ecotopia*), Kim Stanley Robinson (the *Mars* trilogy), and Ang Lee (*Brokeback Mountain*).

(b) Rootedness, Locality, Rurality, Nation, Buen Vivir:

Pastoralism has come variously adumbrated with nationalism, rural escapism, and political resistance, in the romantic nationalism of Sibelius, Chopin, Smetana, Elgar, and Vaughan Williams; the national gardening traditions of England, France, and Japan; communalist, back-to-the-land, and Garden Cities movements in architecture and design; and the live-lightly ethics of Wendell Berry, with their resonance in latter-day “slow food” and “locavore” movements. Folk, country, “roots,” and “traditional” musics of many kinds have long served as battlegrounds for rival visions of “small town” or “down home” rurality: from the proletarian anthems of Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger to the patriotic songs of Merle Haggard, Charlie Daniels, and Toby Keith; and from the sunny (if psychedelic) rurality of John Denver, the Byrds, the Incredible String Band, and the Grateful Dead, to the darker, more gothic byways of American and British folk, such as the “Basement Tapes” of Bob Dylan and The Band; the songs of Shirley Collins, Fairport Convention, and films like *The Wicker Man*; and later hybrids of “acid folk,” “psych folk,” “dark folk,” and “freak folk.” Similar struggles have obtained in other national contexts, where the “good life” (or *Buen Vivir*, in Spanish) might be a progressive socio-ecological movement among marginalized classes or, contrarily, a cultural conservatism that would close borders to foreigners and reclaim the “soil” for the land's “true” natives.

(c) Natural Health, Religion of Nature, Healthy Environments, Going Native, the Ecological Indian:

Ideas of nature's healing properties continue to inform American and European traditions of outdoor sport, scouting, “physical religion,” perceptions of indigenous practices, and environmental thought from Emerson, Thoreau, and Muir to their latter-day descendants. Quests for harmony have flirted with exotic and escapist fantasies of Otherness—sought in indigenous cultures (as in the widespread phenomenon of “playing Indian,” or Native cultural appropriation) as well as cultures of the “orientalized” East—but have also been cultivated by specific non-western cultures (as in the Japanese Zen arts of gardening, calligraphy, and archery) and in recent movements of restorative landscape art, New Age music, the soundscape education of R. Murray Schafer, and the “no child left inside” ethic of outdoor educators. The trope of “healing,” “restoring,” or “mending the earth” is also expressed in artistic efforts connected to themes of maternity/fertility, as in the work of women artists like Mary Beth Edelson; pastoral harmony, as in the restoration and reclamation art of Patricia Johansen, Jackie Brookner, and others; and apocalypse, as in the work of Robert and Shana ParkeHarrison.

READING:

Weintraub: Goldsworthy.

Others: Ernest Callenbach, *Ecotopia*; **Phil Deloria**, *Playing Indian*; Joan Didion, “On going home”; Gretel Ehrlich, “The Solace of Open Spaces”; Stephen Halpern, *Sound Health: The Music and Sounds that Make Us Whole*; Linda Hogan, “What holds the water, what holds the light”; bell hooks, “Touching the earth”; **Ursula LeGuin**, *Always Coming Home*; N. Scott Momaday, “Sacred and ancestral ground”; Joyce Carol Oates, “Against nature”; **Mary Oliver**, “The Honey Tree”; Paul

Roquet, “Ambient Landscapes from Brian Eno to Tetsu Inoue”; Scott Russell Sanders, “On settling down”; Henry David Thoreau, “Where I Lived and What I Lived For”; William Wordsworth, “Michael,” “Poems on the Naming of Places,” “Lines Written a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey”; R. Murray Schafer, *The Tuning of the World* (1975)

VIEWING: *An Inconvenient Truth* (D. Guggenheim, 2005); *Daughters of the Dust* (J. Dash, 1991); *Days of Heaven* (T. Malick, 1978)

LISTENING: Pete Seeger, (anything); Woody Guthrie, (anything); Incredible String Band, *The Hangman’s Beautiful Daughter* (1968); Grateful Dead, “Dark Star”; a lot of songs by Neil Young, Van Morrison, and other folk/country rockers; Steve Roach, *Structures from Silence* (1984); Brian Eno and Harold Budd, *Ambient 2: The Plateaux of Mirror* (1980)

4. CRISIS

(a) Pollution, Corruption, Sin, Degeneracy, Monstrosity, Disorder: Awareness of pollution—perhaps the primary impetus for environmental consciousness—shares qualities with age-old calls for moral regeneration from sinfulness and iniquity. Tropes of dirt, waste, toxicity, and abjection are the reverse side of those of purity, stability, harmony, and the “rooted” integrity of “blood and soil” (see Theme #3). Fear of pollution and impurity also marks the modern concern for Promethean overshoot, evident in novels like Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* and resonant in more recent critiques of genetic modification and nuclear mutation. In contrast to these, artists like Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Vic Nunez, and recycled or second-hand artists and filmmakers (like Agnes Varda in *The Gleaners and I*) have sought to dignify the work of trash collection and clean-up so as to make visible their increasing urgency.

(b) Collapse, Entropy, Decline, Ruins, Gothic, Apocalypse: Apocalyptic themes have arisen for millennia, taking religious guises among subaltern groups and secular ones among political revolutionaries. Dystopian tropes have shaped environmental discourse since Malthus’s projections of overpopulation, a theme taken up by neo-Malthusians like Paul Ehrlich and Garrett Hardin and by Transition Town activists and “peak oil” survivalists, as well as in the popular environmental writings of Fairfield Osborn, Rachel Carson, the Club of Rome, and others. Imagery of urban decay and environmental pollution characterize representations of industrialism in genres from social realist novels to science fiction, vampire and zombie films, industrial music, and global warming themed media art (such as Marina Zurkow’s videos of a flooded world). Imagery of death and extinction mixes with tropes of vitality in hybrid forms including Gothic novels and music, the “inhumanist” poetry of Robinson Jeffers, and the “apocalyptic folk” of underground musicians like Current 93. Post-apocalyptic narratives are prominently expressed in science-fiction depictions of ecological collapse (as in John Brunner’s *The Sheep Look Up*), and theorized in terms of their potential for recalibrating societal responses to current trends.

READING:

Weintraub: Ant Farm, HeHe, **Maya Lin**, Tavares Strachan, **Marina Zurkow**

Others: **Sherman Alexie**, “The Powwow at the End of the World,” “Sonnet, Without Salmon”; Margaret Atwood, “Time Capsule Found on the Dead Planet”, *Oryx and Crake*; Mike Davis, “The Dialectic of Ordinary Disaster”; Lance Duerfahrd, “A Scale that Exceeds Us: The BP Gulf Spill Footage and Photographs of Edward Burtynsky”; Ray Gonzalez, “Hazardous Cargo”; Kim Hammond, “Monsters of Modernity: Frankenstein and Modern Environmentalism”; John Opie and Norbert Elliot, “Tracking the Elusive Jeremiad: The Rhetorical Character of American Environmental Discourse”; Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*; Percy B. Shelley, “Ozymandias”; **Leslie Marmon Silko**, *Almanac of the Dead*; Patricia Smith, *Blood Dazzler* (2008); **Robert Smithson**, “The Monuments of Passaic”; Joel Weisman, *The World Without Us*

VIEWING: *Soylent Green*, *Silent Running*, apocalyptic video mash-ups; **WALL-E**; *Lessons of Darkness* (W. Herzog, 1991); Chris Jordan photo series “Midway: Message from the Gyre” (2009-present), *Trouble the Water* (dir. Tia Lessin, Carl Deal, 2008), *Into Eternity: A Film for the Future* (dir. Michael Madsen, 2010), *Darwin’s Nightmare*, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, **Slurb** (dir. Marina Zurkow); *Pumzi* (2010 Kenyan short film); Robert & Shana ParkeHarrison, *The Architect’s Brother*; *The Waste Land* (dir. L. Walker, 2010); *The Gleaners and I* (dir. A. Varda, 1999)

LISTENING: Joni Mitchell, “Big Yellow Taxi” (1970); Marvin Gaye, “Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology)” and title song, *What’s Going On?* (1971); Gorillaz, *Plastic Beach* (2010); Steel Pulse, “Global Warming” (2010); Current 93, “Black Ships Ate the Sky” (2006); Wolves in the Throne Room; doom metal/black metal

5. PROTEST

(a) Witnessing, Estrangement, Irony, Jeremiad, Confrontation: Associated initially with the apocalyptic, protest movements from the Diggers and Ranters of early modern England to today’s eco-activists have cultivated modes of speaking and writing that mix jeremiadic conventions of “truth telling” with direct, stubborn, and sometimes silent physical presence to publicly witness and shame environmental wrongdoers. Since the 1960s, activists led by Greenpeace have added media tools, from cameras to smart phones, while tactical media campaigners and “culture jammers” like the Critical Art Ensemble, the Yes Men, and Rev. Billy Talen’s Church of Stop Shopping question the culture of consumerism as culpable for environmental deterioration and social injustice. Tropes of justice link with narratives of

diversity and indigenous resistance in today's environmental and climate justice movements (like Canada's Idle No More), and in animal rights/liberation discourses.

(b) Heroism, Resistance, Renewal, Resurgence, Reclamation: Perhaps the most popular form of cinematic eco-narrative is one that pits environmentalist heroes against maleficent villains, which may include corporations, governments, or other wrongdoers—a rhetoric of “us and them” found in countless fictional as well as documentary dramatizations of environmental activism, from *The Lorax* to *Silkwood*, *The China Syndrome*, and *The Cove*. The symbology of environmental activism covers a broad range, from the “monkeywrenching” and shadowy “ecotage” of Earth First! and the Earth Liberation Front to the quieter subversion of the “guerilla gardening” movement to the festival-like marches and gatherings marking Earth Day in its several incarnations since 1970. Rather than outright revolution, however, environmentalism more commonly opts for some sort of transformation: a reclamation of what had been sacrificed, a restoration through “re-rooting” in the land, and a regeneration from the ground up. In its most individualized form, this becomes the lone eco-hero, as in *No Impact Man*; in its more mythical form, it becomes the hero-as-everyman, as in the art of Robert and Shana ParkeHarrison; and in its collective form, it is the Earth renewing itself through a groundswell of ecologically awakened humanity.

READING:

Weintraub: Joseph Beuys, Bonnie Ora Sherk, **Beehive Design Collective, Critical Art Ensemble**, Mel Chin, Marjetica Potrc, Michael Mandiberg, SUPERFLEX, **Reverend Billy Talen**

Others: Andrew Boyd, ed., *Beautiful Trouble: A Toolbox for Revolution*; Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, “Blasted Landscapes (and the Gentle Arts of Mushroom Picking)”; Gabriella Giannachi, “Exposing Globalisation: Biopolitics in the Work of Critical Art Ensemble”; Naomi Klein, “Blockadia”; Yates McKee, “Art After Occupy: Climate Justice, BDS, and Beyond”; “The People’s Agreement of Cochabamba” (2010); Politika, “Art and Activism in the Age of the Anthropocene”; Peter Lamborn Wilson, “Avant Gardening”

VIEWING: *Nuage vert* (dir. Evans and Hansen); *Earthlings* (dr. S. Monon, 2005); Streetlight Manifesto, “Would You Be Impressed?” (2007)

LISTENING: Captain Beefheart, “Frownland”; Mos Def, “New World Water” (1999); Michael Franti; Grind for the Green (G4G); Chumbawamba; punk rock

6. SYSTEM

(a) Conservation, Management, Preservation, Documentation, Exhibition, Database, Mapping: Images of the Earth from space shape the iconography of popular environmentalism. Their predecessors can be traced to imperial traditions of documentation, encyclopedism, colonial rule, and the “exhibitionary complex,” alongside related fields of holistic ecology, scientific systems theories, and organismic and cybernetic notions of biospheric self-organization. Following the urge to measure, document, and assess, technocratic environmentalists like Buckminster Fuller and the Worldwatch Institute have striven to eliminate inefficiencies so as to “redesign” human relations with nature—a desire that underpins recent movements toward sustainability in the arts, such as carbon accounting. Postmodern artists like Mark Dion playfully continue such traditions to subvert their premises (that we can know everything), while furthering the archaeological impulse to dig, discover, and order that which is found in the “archaeology” of the contemporary world.

The urge to document is also related to the urge to “bear witness” (see theme #6) and render visible that which would otherwise be silent or unexposed. There are, in this sense, two sides to documentation: a top-down “panoptic” (all-seeing) mode which controls the (literal and figural) movement of subaltern or nomadic subjects, and a bottom-up “reverse panopticism” that “speaks back to power” through hand-held cameras, smart phones, and social media networks. The desire to document, preserve, and protect disappearing species, landscapes, cultures, and experiences has informed the conservation movement for centuries, from imperial (ancient China, colonial Europe) to modern times. It continues to inform the efforts of the Nature Conservancy, the World World Fund for Nature, Cultural Survival, UNESCO (with its World Heritage sites and biosphere reserves), and many movements in the arts and humanities, including R. Murray Schafer’s World Soundscape Project; the work of ethnomusicologists and world music and soundscape recordists; the database visualizations of artists like Maya Lin (“What is Missing?”) and Helen and Newton Mayer Harrison; and, more obliquely (and often ironically), the “appropriation art” of found-footage filmmakers and sonic remixers (such as Bruce Connor, Negativland, and DJ Spooky).

(b) Cosmic Order, Whole Earth, Globality, Whole Systems, Spaceship Earth: The popular cachet of globality, however, has less to do with either efficiency or politics and more with spectacle: images of the Whole Earth, simulated recreations of biospheres (as in Biosphere 2 and The Eden Project), and projections of rainforest loss and climate calamity provide for an “environmental theater” that conjures the proximity of humans with each other and with potential catastrophe. In this sense, the predecessors of the global database are visual depictions of universality, from the medieval Great Chain of Being to the early modern classification systems of Linnaeus and their alter-cultural counterparts. Opposed to the pastoral arcadia of “future primitive” ecotopians (see theme 3) are the more technotopian forms of Spaceship Earth discourse: these include the restraint-focused neo-Malthusianism of Kenneth Boulding, Garrett Hardin, and others (popular in the 1970s), and the “ecomodernism” of the Breakthrough Institute, whose New Jerusalem would harmonize

science with nature through technologies of bio-engineering, biomimicry, an information-rich global systems ecology, and nested forms of liberal governance spanning from bioregional to global scales.

READING:

Weintraub: Hans Haacke, **Helen & Newton Harrison, Natalie Jeremijenko, Maya Lin**

Others: Tobias Boes, “Beyond Whole Earth: Planetary Mediation and the Anthropocene”; Denis Cosgrove, “Contested Global Visions: *One-World, Whole-Earth*, and the Apollo Space Photographs”; Thomas Lekan, “Fractal Earth: Visualizing the Global Environment in the Anthropocene”; R. Murray Schafer, *The Tuning of the World* (1975); John Seed and Joanna Macy, “Gaia meditations”; Kendall Wrightson, “An introduction to acoustic ecology”

VIEWING: Maya Lin, “What is Missing?”, Center for Land Use Interpretation (various videos)

LISTENING: Mickey Hart, *Planet Drum* (1991); Jon Hassell and Brian Eno, *Possible Musics: Fourth World, Vol. 1* (1980); David Dunn; Annea Lockwood, *A Sound Map of the Hudson River*

7. SUBLIME

(b) Wilderness—as Threat, as Domain, and as Spectacle: From being seen as a place of chaos and exile (as far back in history as the *Gilgamesh Epic*), the forested wilderness came to be seen, through Romantic eyes, as a place of sublimity, sacredness, and awe—a theme taken up eagerly by American landscape artists, writers, and photographers from Thomas Cole and the Hudson River School to John Muir and Ansel Adams. The “magisterial gaze” of the late nineteenth century offers up wilderness as a landscape of discovery, identity formation, and national accomplishment. Revisionist historians like William Cronon have questioned the virtues of the wilderness trope or found it to be more ambivalent and multifaceted, appearing in diverse guises from folktale “otherworlds” and heroic mountaineering ventures to eco-horror films. It nevertheless shapes debates about “saving nature” or finding redemption in nature that inform movements in the arts such as the ritualistic “holy theater” of Jerzy Grotowski and Gardzienice, and the “ironic sublime” of artist Anselm Kiefer and filmmaker Werner Herzog. Defenders of wilderness continue to express fears that wilderness has or will be tamed, debased, “emasculated,” or transformed into the merely picturesque and thus commodified (as in the scenic vistas built into the National Park highway driving experience).

(a) Epiphany, Vision, Revelation, Enchantment: The moment of seeing—seeing something new, seeing *anew*, seeing into the heart of things beyond appearances or mundane concerns, witnessing *reality* at its most pure and naked—weaves its way through art and literature concerned with land, new vistas, and new understandings of nature, humanity, and the cosmos. It underlies the impulse to break out of the confines of tamed and commodified life. Writers and poets from Henry Thoreau (“Ktaadn”) to Robinson Jeffers, Jack Kerouac, Annie Dillard, and Charles Wright have attempted to *recreate* such visionary moments; photographers such as Ansel Adams and filmmakers like Stan Brakhage have arguably *captured* them; and composers and improvisational performers, from John Cage and Merce Cunningham to Keith Jarrett and Evan Parker, have variously tried to *produce* such moments through live performances open to the workings of chance and spontaneity.

(c) Deep Time and Space, Uncanny, Oceanic, Return to Zero, Afrofuturism: In its more temporally or spatially transcendent guises, the sublime is the object of various artistic “returns to Zero,” such as those of Kasimir Malevich, Mark Rothko, and Zen-inspired artists; the Land Art of Robert Smithson, and the light and sky based art of James Turrell and Charles Ross; the structural filmmaking of Michael Snow, and the sensorial cinematic experiments of Harvard’s Sensory Ethnography Lab (notably *Leviathan*); the minimalist music of LaMonte Young and William Basinski; and the “dark ecologies” of Paul Kingsnorth, Tim Morton, and others. In “warmer,” more immersive (and arguably pastoral) forms, the sublime finds audiences through popular fascination with cetaceans, and in musical genres such as psychedelic, cosmic space rock, the “oceanic” progressive rock of Yes, and the ambient electronica tradition stretching from Brian Eno and Klaus Schulze to the chill-out rooms of the rave subculture (see Theme #3). And here one also finds the mix of “crisis/collapse” and hopeful transcendence in the genre of Afrofuturist art, which looks both to the pre-modern past (of Africa) and beyond history and beyond Earth for sources of renewal.

READING:

Weintraub: Frans Krajcberg, Alan Sonfist

Others: Edward Abbey, “The Great American Desert”; John Cage, *Silence*; Denis Cosgrove, “Images and Imagination in 20th-Century Environmentalism: From the Sierras to the Poles”; William Cronon, “The Trouble With Wilderness”; Finis Dunaway, “Reframing the Last Frontier: Subhankar Banerjee & the Visual Politics of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge”; Barbara Kingsolver, “New Year’s Day”; Lucy Lippard, “Too Much: The Grand Canyon(s)”; Aldo Leopold, “Thinking Like a Mountain”; Thomas Merton, “Rain and the Rhinoceros”; Christine Oravec, “To Stand Outside Oneself: The Sublime in the Discourse of Natural Scenery”

VIEWING: *Koyaanisqatsi* (G. Reggio, 1983), *Baraka* (R. Fricke, 1993), *Lessons of Darkness* (W. Herzog, 1995), *Manufactured Landscapes* (J. Baichwal, 2006), *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* (W. Herzog, 2010)

LISTENING: Klaus Schulze, “Timewind”; Yes, “Tales from Topographic Oceans,” “Close to the Edge”; LaMonte Young, “The Well Tuned Piano”; John Luther Adams, “Become Ocean”; Sunn O))), “Monoliths and Dimensions”; Sun Ra & His Arkestra; John Coltrane, “Interstellar Space”