Concern and controversy over the environment constitutes one of the dominant issues in public life. How is religion implicated in this debate? The seminar examines religious attitudes to nature and it examines nature as an object of religious veneration. We analyze what religious communities have been saying in recent decades with regard to environmental conditions and we trace the development of religious environmental ethics. The seminar is also concerned with debates over environmentalism itself construed as a form of religion. In short we are concerned with three distinct but overlapping phenomena: 1) nature religion; 2) religious environmentalism; 3) environmentalism attacked (by its detractors) as a form of implicit (and bogus) religion.

Required text:


RELI 4850A/5850F Coursepack  
[available at Octopus Books, 116 Third Ave (at Bank)]

Additional readings may be provided as links and PDFs through the ARES system of the Carleton library

**REQUIREMENTS**

**Reading Responses 20%**  
A one to two page (double-spaced) response due at class each week on the assigned readings. These should also be sent to me electronically. These responses should include a question you would like to see addressed by the group. Eleven are required, the best ten will be counted, at 2 points each. These are to be handed in at the beginning of class, late responses are graded down 50%, i.e., they are graded out of 1 instead of 2. These responses are also a measure of attendance and participation designed to promote informed engagement at the weekly meeting which is the *sine qua non* of success in this course. Note: *to miss more than three of the weekly meetings (which would mean, in effect, you had missed a third of the class) is to forfeit credit for the course.*

**Seminar Presentation and Participation 15%**  
Beyond engaging in discussion in the weekly session, each student will be responsible for presenting on one of the readings for the week once in the semester.

**Essay Proposal 10%**  
Suggested topics will be provided. The proposal indicates your choice from among the topics. It is to consist of a working title, a working bibliography, and a preliminary abstract that details a preliminary thesis statement. The tentative thesis statement should indicate how you intend to focus the chosen topic and the argument to be developed. **Due Oct. 25.** Note: This proposal is an absolutely essential feature of the course. Decisions have to be made early on your topic as your research essay will probably necessitate using inter-library loan and other research avenues that necessitate being well underway early in the semester.
Take-home Examination  15% Due Dec. 6

Research Essay 40%
A research essay of (20 + typed, double-spaced pages). Topics must be approved by the instructor. The original copy of your proposal must be resubmitted with the paper, essays will not be marked without it. Essays must have a clearly articulated thesis. Essays must also include an abstract. Due Dec. 2. Note: late papers (except with medical documentation) are docked 4 percentage points per day.

Note: All course requirements listed above must be fulfilled to gain credit for this course

RESOURCES
Serials:
Worldviews: Environment, Culture, Religion  Floor 5 BL65.N35 W675 (also online)
Environmental Ethics  Floor 4 Serial GF 80 A. 1E6
Environmental Values (online)
Environmental History (online)
Ethics and the Environment (online)

Reference:
The Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature (2 vols.) BL31.E467 2005 (available also as an electronic resource)
note: it is instructive to compare this with the first edition of 1987 to see the great increase in material related to religion and ecology

On Reserve for RELI 3100A:
Harvard World Religions and Ecology Series:


*Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-being of Earth and Humans* / edited by Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether. BT695.5 C49 2000


*Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust* / edited by Richard Foltz, Frederick Denny, and Azizan Baharuddin. BP 190.5 N38 186 2003


[For the Forum on Religion and Ecology see  [http://fore.research.yale.edu](http://fore.research.yale.edu) . Hyperlinks to other internet resources will be provided on the course website]

**Schedule**

**Week 1. Sept. 6**

Introduction. Resources. The themes of the seminar.

A lexicon: nature, ecology, nature religion, religious environmentalism

Readings:

Dunlap: Forward and Introduction

**2. Sept. 13**

Readings:

Dunlap, ch. 1 “Newton’s Disciples”

Lynn White Jr. “The Historical Roots of our Ecologic Crisis”

Michael Crichton, “Environmentalism as Religion”

**3. Sept. 20**

Readings:

Dunlap, “Conclusion”


4. Sept. 27  
Readings:  
Dunlap, ch. 2 “Emerson’s Children”  

Bron Taylor, “From the Ground Up: Dark Green Religion and the Environmental Future”  


5. Oct. 4  
Readings:  
Dunlap, ch. 3 “Journey into Sacred Space”  

Aldo Leopold, “The Land Ethic” from A Sand County Almanac  

The Earth Charter

6. Oct. 11  
Readings:  
The Rights of Mother Earth  


7. Oct. 18  
Readings:  
Letter of Chief Seattle  


Presentation: Grey Owl at Lake Ajawaan

8. Oct. 25  
[essay proposals due]  
Algonquins of Barriere lake  
Readings: Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples


9. Nov. 1  
Conservative Evangelical Christianity and Environmentalism  
Readings:  
The Cornwall Declaration  
from Resisting the Green Dragon
10. Nov. 8  Roman Catholic Christianity and Environmentalism
Readings:

11. Nov. 15  Religious Naturalism: Is it an Oxymoron?
Readings:
Dunlap, ch. 4 “Sacred Nature Enters Daily Life”


12. Nov. 22  Canadian Ecological Icon: David Suzuki
Readings:
Dunlap, ch. 5 “In for the Long Haul: Living in the World”

Suzuki, from The Legacy

13. Nov. 29  M.A. student paper presentations. Review
REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

PRESENTING, WHETHER
VALUES ASSIGNED IN THIS COURSE WILL HAVE THE FOLLOWING

STANDING IN A COURSE IS DETERMINED BY THE INSTRUCTOR SUBJECT TO

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

PETITIONS FOR DEFER

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a final assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply for a deferral of examination/assignment. If you are applying for a deferral due to illness you will be required to see a physician in order to confirm illness and obtain a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or assignment deadline. This supporting documentation must specify the date of onset of the illness, the degree of incapacitation, and the expected date of recovery. If you are applying for a deferral for reasons other than personal illness, please contact the Registrar’s Office directly for information on other forms of documentation that we accept. Deferrals of assignments must be supported by confirmation of the assignment due date, for example a copy of the course outline specifying the due date and any documented extensions from the course instructor. Deferral applications for examination or assignments must be submitted within 5 working days of the original final exam.

ADDRESSSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809 300 Paterson
Greek and Roman Studies Office 520-2809 300 Paterson
Religion Office 520-2100 2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500 300 Tory
Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850 302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937 501 Uni-Centre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-2600 Ext. 1125 4th Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125 4th Floor Library