

# Course Description

Eng 491

## *Nature Writing/ Environmental Literature*

This course focuses on Nature Writing & Environmental Eco-Wars (past and present)—with a particular emphasis placed on American Nature Writing. Course readings reflect a sampling of canonical and contemporary works in the genre of Nature Writing/ Env. Literature. We will assess the scientific, literary, and polemical merits of these works, as well as their environmental legacy of each. We will approach the theme of Nature from various perspectives: (Transcendentalist/ Yeats; Native American/ Lame Deer; Naturalist (Muir/ Leopold); Radical Eco-Activist/ Abbey; Investigative Journalism/ Blakesly; Biologist, Carson; Deep Ecology, in which inquiry is situated at the intersection of Nature and the Self, focusing on the dynamics of identity formation. In the course of our exploration we will examine various eco-debates with local, regional, national, and global relevance, focusing on conflicts between the Environment and Big Oil, Big Timber, Big Mining, Big Fishing, and Big Recreation etc.

These readings will be supplemented with course lectures, discussions, and slide shows. The final week will be devoted to an on-line Eco-Colloquium, in which students give a 15 minute Zoom presentation on their Term Paper (voluntary, extra credit, 50 pts).