

Eng 491B

Midterm Paper & Term Paper

Instructions: Choose one of the options below for your **Midterm and Term Paper**. (For your **Midterm Paper**, you may also choose from the topics offered in each weekly module). Write a well-focused, organized, researched, and developed paper on the topic adhering to the guidelines for each paper (length, outside sources, margins, font etc).

Midterm Paper Guidelines/Specifications

- **Due Dates:** Midterm, End Week 7 (TBA); Term Paper, End Week 13 (TBA)
- **Weight:** Midterm, 200 pts; Term Paper, 300 pts
- **Length:** Midterm, 8-10p; Term Paper, 10-12
- **Outside sources:** Midterm, 4 min; Term Paper, 6 min.
- **Margins:** "1"
- **Font:** 12 pt
- **Spacing:** Double
- **Title Page:** Yes
- **Works cited page:** Yes
- **Block Quote:** at least one

Midterm Paper Writing Themes/ Topics

1. **Literary Analysis:** Choose an author covered in the course readings weeks 1-7 (Yeats, Blakesley, Muir, Leopold) and conduct a close literary analysis/assessment. In your paper, include an assessment of their legacy/impact/influence on the environmental movement. You may choose to focus on one of the eco-debates associated with their work(s). You may conduct a close textual analysis of the defining elements of their style. You may opt to do both. Or you can develop some other critical focus of your choosing.

Term Paper Writing Themes/ Topics

1. **Literary Analysis:** Choose an author from the *second half of the course readings*, and conduct an in-depth literary analysis/assessment, similar to your Midterm Paper.
2. **Comparative Analysis:** conduct an in-depth comparative analysis of *two or more writers* from the course readings, with *at least one* of them being from the second-half of the course. As a *variation of this critical focus*, you may choose a writer from the list of

non-course authors, as part a comparative analysis, with one or more of the authors we have read—as long as one of them is from the second half of the course readings.

3. **Eco-Debate:** Enter a current eco-debate (from the list below) and write an in-depth analysis of its *causes, effects, and solutions*, in which you end by shifting from *analyst to advocate*. As an *alternative* to these debates, you may write on one of your own choosing, with instructor's approval. Effectively and substantively describe the problem; provide a comprehensive analysis of its underlying causes; describe its effects as substantively s you can; document the arguments supporting these problematic practices, then document the counter-arguments to them. Finally, pose solutions to the problem and end with a short emphatic conclusion in which you assume the role of advocate.
4. **Eco Colloquium: Extra Credit (50 pts):** The last week of the course will be devoted to a Zoom Eco Colloquium for those of you choosing to exercise this option. This Colloquium gives the presenter the opportunity to heighten our collective awareness on the critical focus of your Term Paper.

Eco-Debates

1. Species Extinction: Focus on this problem as a whole, or more narrowly on a single species, and the struggle to save it.
2. Habitat Destruction/ Degradation: Focus on this problem as a whole, or more narrowly on a specific habitat, and the efforts to save it: old growth forest, wetlands, a wild river. Wilderness corridors, Bio Diversity, Reclamation and Restoration; Should Hetch Hetchy dam be “decommissioned” and the valley restored? Should wetlands be reclaimed and restored?
3. The Ethics of Eco-Activism: The Tactics of Radical Eco-Groups (Green Peace, Sea Shepherd, Earth First). Question for Critical Inquiry: Is eco-sabotage of property (heavy equipment, whaling ships, spiking of trees) justified to combat the violence done to species by long line fishing, illegal whaling, poaching, clear cutting and deforestation, strip mining, oil drilling, chemical pollution with herbicides/ pesticides? Is it justified to refer to eco-sabotage of industrial property as a form of “terrorism?” Is the term eco-terrorist justified? Should they be tried and punished for their crimes as terrorists, as they currently are? Sources/TV Reality Show, *Whale Wars*; Film, *The Cove*
4. Long-line fishing: the problem? The Impacts? The economic vs the environmental arguments? The solutions?
5. Poaching and The Black Market: The problem, the impacts, the arguments and counter arguments? Solutions?

6. Ocean Pollution: Focus on the problem, its causes and impacts, as a whole, or on a specific aspect of it; Solutions?
7. The Pacific Ocean Garbage Patch (contamination of sea w/ plastics);
8. Coral Reef Extinction'
9. Global Warming and Rising Sea Levels (salt water intrusion, beach erosion)
10. Mercury Poisoning of oceans and freshwater bodies
11. Hypoxic Run Off/ Big Agriculture, Toxic Red Tides etc
12. Invasive Species & the Black Market (flora and/or fauna, the anacondas of the Florida Everglades);
13. Clear Cutting/ Deforestation;
14. Chemical Contamination: Pesticides/ Herbicides;
15. Strip Mining
16. Fracking
17. Deep-Water Oil Drilling (The Gulf oil spill); Big Oil vs the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Should drilling be allowed in it?
16. The National Parks: *Recreation vs Preservation; Public Access vs Conservation*. Choose a side in this debate. Questions for Critical inquiry? Which is more important: public access to national parks/ wildernesses areas or conservation/preservation of them in their natural state?
17. Should snow-mobiles be banned from Yellowstone, wave-runners from coastal areas; ATVs from off-roading in wilderness areas? Analyze/ assess the arguments on both sides, describe the problems associated with this issue, and the effects of it. finally pose some possible solutions to it.
18. The Ethical Treatment of Captive Wildlife. Question for Critical Inquiry: *Should Sea-World and Sea Life Park be shut down due to the unnatural, cruel, unethical, and circus-like conditions to which killer whales and dolphins are subjected?*
Sources/Films: *The Cove, Black Fin*.
19. Nevada Eco-Debates:

- The slaughter/ round up of Nevada's wild horses (film *Cloud*); Big Ranching vs Species Extinction
 - efforts to protect the sage grouse;
 - efforts to protect the desert tortoise,
 - efforts to protect the bighorn sheep;
 - perchlorate contamination of Lake Mead (film *Erin Brokovic*);
 - the clouding of Lake Tahoe from aviation fuel and hypoxic run-off
20. Big Ranching vs The Yellowstone wolves/bison. The reintroduction of wolves into Yellowstone: pros and cons; wildlife biologists vs ranchers; Eco-activism: The Buffalo Commons eco-resistance, should wolves have been removed from the Endangered species list in Yellowstone? The ethics of rancher protests? Poaching? Poisoning? Killing wolves/bison outside park boundaries?
- 21.. An Eco-Debate of your choosing (local, regional, national, or global).

Nature Writers

Choose one of the following naturalists or nature writers, and conduct an in-depth comparative analysis with *one or more of the writers covered in the course readings*. Some themes to consider: Assess the legacy, influence, impact of each; analyze the style of each, analyze any eco-debates associated with their works etc;

- Marjory Stoneman Douglas, *The Everglades: River of Grass*;
- Archie Carr, *A Naturalist in Florida; Windward Passage*
- Farley Mowat, *Never Cry Wolf*;
- Peter Mathiessen, *The Snow Leopard, The Cloud Forest, The Sadness of Marshes*;
- Olaus Murie; *The Wolves of McKinley*, Co-Founder, Wilderness Society, Arctic Wildlife Refuge;
- Adolph Murie; *A Naturalist in Alaska*
- Mardie Murie, *Two in the Far North*, Co-Founder Wilderness Society;
- Terry Tempest Williams (Author), *The Clan of One Breasted Women*
- Louise Erdrich, *Big Grass*
- Gary Snyder (Poet), "Ancient Forests of the Far West"
- William Bartram, *Travels 1739-1823*)
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature, Journals of*
- Rick Bass, *The Nine Mile Wolves*
- Wallace Stegner, "Glen Canyon Submersus"
- John James Audubon, *Ornithological Biography*

- John Wesley Powell, “Exploration of the Colorado River . . .”
- Loren Eisely, *The Judgment of Birds*
- Edwin Way Teale, *The Lost Woods*
- J. W. Krutch, *Love in the Desert*
- Evelyn White, *Black Women and the Wilderness*
- Leslie Marmon Silko,, “Landscape, History, and the Pueblo Imagination,”
- Luther Standing Bear, *Nature*
- Julia Butterfly Hill (redwood tree-sitter)
- Barry Lopez, *Arctic Dreams*
- Anne Dillard, *Living Like Weasels*
- Franklyn Burroughs, “Of Moose and a Moose Hunter.”
- Maxine Hong Kingston, “A City Person Encountering Nature.”
- Edward O. Wilson, “The Bird of Paradise.”
- Vladimir Nabokov, “Butterflies”
- Ernest Thompson Seton, *Wild Animals I Have Known*