

TOURISM AND NATURE: FROM THE “SUBLIME” TO SHAMU

HIST 385 / AMST 385

Dr. William D. Bryan

From antebellum travelers in search of sublime landscapes to contemporary ecotourists, the American tourist industry has always been intertwined with the natural world. This course will explore how tourism has shaped the ways that Americans have thought about and used the nation’s natural resources from the early nineteenth century to the present. As we consider the different meanings that tourists have invested in nature, we will look at a variety of attractions, from Niagara Falls to Sea World. Over the two centuries spanned by this class, popular tourist activities changed drastically as the decreasing cost of transportation opened travel up to new groups of people. We will consider how these changes altered the ways that tourists interacted with their surroundings, as well as what tourists have hoped to gain from their travels. We will not simply look through the eyes of tourists, however, but will also consider how industry promoters manipulated the natural world to appeal to different kinds of travelers—often with unanticipated consequences. This course will be structured around a series of primary and secondary source readings, including travel narratives, guidebooks, films, advertisements for popular attractions, and histories of tourist sites. Although most of us have first-hand experience as tourists, we rarely give much thought to how these experiences have been shaped by our perceptions of nature. I hope that this course will shed new light on the history of an industry that is an important part of our lives.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- ❖ John Sears, *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century* (ISBN#: 978-1558491625)
- ❖ Paul Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight Against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* (ISBN#: 978-0295982205)
- ❖ Boyd Gibbons, *Wye Island: Insiders, Outsiders, and Change in a Chesapeake Community* (ISBN#: 978-1933115405)

*All other required materials will be placed on electronic course reserve and Blackboard.

GRADING POLICY

This class satisfies Emory’s writing requirement, and your grade will be made up of two short primary source analysis papers, a mapping project that uses travel narratives to trace environmental change, a final research paper, and class participation (see below for more information). The grade breakdown and due dates are listed below:

Class Participation (40%)

Primary Source Analysis Paper 1 (10%): due **February 10**

Primary Source Analysis Paper 2 (10%): due **March 5**

Travel Writer Mapping Project (15%): due **April 9**

Research Paper (25%): due **May 8**

You will write two short primary source analysis papers, which will each analyze a single primary source that you will be responsible for finding. The first paper should use a travel narrative, while the second should examine an advertisement or piece of promotional material created to appeal to tourists. We will talk more about these papers in class.

You will also contribute to a GIS-based mapping project. This project will use travel narratives to document perceptions of nature among travelers as well as ecological change in the South for more than three centuries. You will each be assigned a different travel narrative, and will track the locations that each writer passed through during their travels and their perceptions of/descriptions of the natural world in these places. We will plot each point onto a web-based GIS map, which will help us to see popular travel routes (and how these changed over time), what natural elements travelers discussed most often, and how their perceptions of nature varied by time and location. I will provide you with a detailed overview of this project in class.

Your final paper will be a short research paper on a topic of your own choosing that relates to tourism and the environment. We will talk more about this in class, but your paper should be based on original primary source research, and it can explore topics like environmental change at a particular tourist site or how promoters packaged nature to sell to tourists, among many other topics. Your final paper will be due on **May 8**, and will not be accepted late.

For all other papers, ten points will be deducted for each day an assignment is late. Assignments more than four days late will not be accepted.

All grades will be calculated using Emory's grading scale.

ATTENDANCE

Because this class will be mostly discussion-based, attendance is required. You are allowed one unexcused absence for the term. Excused absences—such as illness, family emergencies, religious observances, and university-approved curricular and extra-curricular activities—must be cleared by me beforehand and should be properly documented.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Honor Code is in effect throughout the semester. By taking this course, you affirm that it is a violation of the code to cheat on exams, to plagiarize, to deviate from the teacher's instructions about collaboration on work that is submitted for grades, to give false information to a faculty member, and to undertake any other form of academic misconduct. You also affirm that if you witness others violating the code you have a duty to report them to the honor council.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Emory University to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. All students with special requests or need for accommodations should make this request in person as soon as possible.

COURSE SCHEDULE*

*subject to change

WEEK 1: WHAT IS TOURISM?

January 13: Introduction to the Course

January 15: What is tourism? Who are tourists? What is nature?

- ❖ John A. Jakle, Introduction to *The Tourist* (1985)
- ❖ William Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness: Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature” in *Environmental History* (1996)*

*All required readings available on Blackboard/course reserves.

WEEK 2: WEALTHY TOURISTS AND “SUBLIME” SCENES

January 20: Early Travelers and the Evolution of the “Sublime”

- ❖ John Sears, *Sacred Places* (Introduction & Chapter 2)

January 22: Niagara Falls: America’s First Tourist Trap

- ❖ John Sears, *Sacred Places* (Chapter 1)
- ❖ Basil Hall, *The Niagara Falls Companion, and Fashionable Miscellany* (1834)

WEEK 3: ANTEBELLUM TRAVEL BEYOND THE “SUBLIME”

January 27: Climate, Health, and High Society at Antebellum Spas

- ❖ John Sears, *Sacred Places* (Chapters 3 & 4)
- ❖ Greg Mitman, “Hay Fever Holiday: Health, Leisure, and Place in Gilded Age America,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* (2003)

January 29: Urban and Unusual Sites

- ❖ John Sears, *Sacred Places* (Chapters 5 & 8)

WEEK 4: THE SOUTH AND THE WEST

February 3: Touring a “Ruined Nation”: Landscapes of the American Civil War

- ❖ Selections from J. T. Trowbridge, *The South* (1866)
- ❖ Selections from Russell H. Conwell, *Magnolia Journey* (1869)
- ❖ Harriet Beecher Stowe, “Florida for Invalids” and “The Grand Tour Up River,” in *Palmetto Leaves* (1873)
- ❖ Louisville & Nashville Railway, “Mobile, the Heart of the Storied South,” in *Romances of Mobile* (1921)

February 5: Yellowstone and Yosemite

- ❖ John Sears, *Sacred Places* (Chapters 6 & 7)
- ❖ Selections from Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” (1890)
- ❖ Bills Creating Yellowstone National Park and Yosemite National Park (1871, 1890)
- ❖ Letter from Franklin Lane to Steven Mather (1918)

WEEK 5: AMERICA’S NATIONAL PARKS

February 10: Dispossessing the Wilderness for America’s National Parks (PAPER 1 DUE)

- ❖ Watch excerpts from *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea* (**in class**)
- ❖ Mark David Spence, “Dispossessing the Wilderness: Yosemite Indians and the National Park Ideal, 1860-1930,” *Pacific Historical Review* (1996)

February 12: Conservation and Preservation Clash at Hetch Hetchy

- ❖ John Muir, “The Hetch Hetchy Valley,” *Sierra Club Bulletin* (1908)
- ❖ E. T. Parsons, “Proposed Destruction of Hetch-Hetchy,” in *Out West* (1909)
- ❖ Gifford Pinchot, “Principles of Conservation,” in *The Fight for Conservation* (1910)

WEEK 6: IS WILDERNESS FOR TOURISTS?

February 17: Wilderness Preservation and Auto Tourists

- ❖ Paul Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight Against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* (2005)

February 19: Coney Island: The Antithesis of Wilderness

- ❖ Watch *Coney Island* (**in class**)
- ❖ José Martí, “Coney Island,” in *La Pluma* (1881)
- ❖ Julian Ralph, “Coney Island,” in *Scribner’s* (1896)
- ❖ Frederic Thompson, “Amusing the Million,” in *Everybody’s Magazine* (1908)
- ❖ Reginald Wright Kauffman, “Why is Coney?,” in *Hampton’s Magazine* (1909)
- ❖ James Huneker, “New Cosmopolis” (1915)

WEEK 7: TOURISM AND RACE IN TWENTIETH CENTURY

February 24: The Sporting Ideal and the Privatization of Hunting and Fishing

- ❖ Selections from William Hornaday, *Our Vanishing Wildlife* (1913)
- ❖ Archibald Rutledge, “Waste Land” in *Children of Swamp and Wood* (1927)

February 26: Tourism and Empire

- ❖ Selections from John L. Stevens and W. B. Oleson, *Picturesque Hawaii* (1894)
- ❖ Selections from Pulaski F. Hyatt and John T. Hyatt, *Cuba: Its Resources and Opportunities* (1898)
- ❖ Selections from Charles Pepper, *To-Morrow in Cuba* (1899)
- ❖ Vernadette Vicuña Gonzalez, “Scenic Highways, Masculinity, Modernity, and Mobility,” in *Securing Paradise* (2013)

WEEK 8: TOURISTS AS CONSUMERS

March 3: From Arcadia to REI: Outdoor Recreation in a Mass Consumer Society

- ❖ James Morton Turner, “From Woodcraft to ‘Leave No Trace’: Wilderness, Consumerism, and Environmentalism in Twentieth-Century America,” in *Environmental History* (2002)

March 5: How Many Tourists is too Many? (PAPER 2 DUE)

- ❖ Roderick Nash, “The Irony of Victory” in *Wilderness and the American Mind* (1967)
- ❖ Edward Abbey, “Polemic: Industrial Tourism and the National Parks” in *Desert Solitaire* (1968)

WEEK 9: SPRING BREAK

No class (March 9-13)

WEEK 10: GOING TO THE BEACH

March 17: Coastal Capitalism in the Sunbelt

- ❖ Watch *The Beaches are Moving* (in class)

March 19: Developers as Environmentalists?: The Vision of Hilton Head's Charles Fraser

- ❖ John McPhee, "An Island," from *Encounters with the Archdruid* (1971)

WEEK 11: TOURISM IN AN ENVIRONMENTAL AGE

March 24: The Fate of Tourism in a New Environmental Era

- ❖ Watch *Monumental: David Brower's Fight for Wild America* (in class)
- ❖ Gerald M. Weinberg, "The Nation as a Park," in *National Parks and Conservation Magazine* (1970)

March 26: Restricting Tourism through Environmental Regulation: *Lucas v. South Carolina Coastal Commission*

- ❖ Documents from *Lucas v. South Carolina Coastal Commission* (David Lucas's Complaint; Lucas's Trial Testimony; Chris Jones's Expert Testimony; Lucas Trial Court's Ruling; U.S. Supreme Court Ruling-*Lucas*)
- ❖ *New York Times* Roundtable on Privatizing the Beach

WEEK 12: PLANNED RESORT COMMUNITIES – A SUSTAINABLE CHOICE?

March 31: The Politics of Planned Development at Wye Island

- ❖ Boyd Gibbons, *Wye Island* (1977)

April 2: Jack Nicklaus's Nature: Tourists and Golf

- ❖ Ted Steinberg, "The Augusta Syndrome" in *American Green: The Obsessive Quest for the Perfect Lawn* (2006)
- ❖ John Barton, "How Green is Golf?," in *Golf Digest* (2008)

WEEK 13: TOURISM AND NATURAL DISASTERS

April 7: Tourism and “Unnatural” Disasters

- ❖ Ted Steinberg, “Do-It-Yourself Deathscape,” and “Building for Apocalypse,” both in *Acts of God: The Unnatural History of Natural Disaster in America* (2000)

April 9: Discuss Topics for Final Research Paper (MAPPING PROJECT DUE)

WEEK 14: BON VOYAGE!

April 14: Exporting American Tourists

- ❖ Watch *Gringo Trails* (in class)

April 16: Ecotourism: A Panacea for the Developing World?

- ❖ “Green Fork in the Road,” in *Outside* (2003)
- ❖ Mimi Sheller, “Iconic Islands: Nature, Landscape, and the Tropical Tourist Gaze” in *Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies* (2003)
- ❖ Lynn R. Horton, “Buying Up Nature: Economic and Social Impacts of Costa Rica’s Ecotourism Boom,” *Latin American Perspectives* (2009)

WEEK 15: THEME PARK NATURE

April 21: Watch *Blackfish* (in class)

April 23: What Nature Can We Find at Sea World?

- ❖ The Truth About Blackfish?: <http://seaworld.com/truth/truth-about-blackfish/>
- ❖ Susan G. Davis, “Touch the Magic,” from *Uncommon Ground*, p. 204-217 (1996)

***FINAL RESEARCH PAPERS DUE: MAY 8, 2015**