



Cultural Landscapes and Seascapes: A Sense of Place

CAS NS 327 (3 credits)

Course Catalog Description:

Field-intensive analysis and documentation of dynamic relationships between nature and culture in specific coastal, island, and ocean places. Apply cultural landscape and related interdisciplinary bio-cultural approaches to place-based environmental studies.

Instructor(s): Sea Education Association Maritime Studies Faculty

Location: SEA campus in Woods Hole, MA and at sea on board one of SEA's sailing school vessels.

Prerequisites: Admission to SEA Semester. Sophomore standing or consent of instructor.

Course Philosophy and Approach:

We will focus in this course on fiction and creative nonfiction, two novels by Kiwi authors and a range of short stories and essays, in order to begin to understand a human sense of the coast and the ocean off Aotearoa New Zealand, and thus expand this out to human interactions with the global ocean. It is our aim to examine how story reflects, and perhaps shapes, the values and interactions with nonhuman animals and marine ecosystems of those living in Aotearoa New Zealand and those of ours, as visitors and observers.

This course teaches research methods in literary criticism and environmental studies from multiple sources including novels, primary documents, secondary scholarly literature, and the Internet. In our ports of call, we will take what we learn and read and examine it against our observations of natural landscapes, the built environment, and the knowledge and opinions of local people. We stress good communication skills in classroom discussion. Our process is writing intensive, with both tightly constructed critical essays and a more creative expression, exploring sense of place with different methods. As part of the larger *Global Ocean* program, this course provides a humanities perspective for a learning community that takes a multi-disciplinary view of the relationship between people and their environment.

This course consists of at least 22 contact hours (seminar/writing workshop) on shore in Woods Hole and at least 18 course-focused place-based contact hours at sea and in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Development of research methods in environmental studies and literary criticism.
2. Development of place-based observation and analysis using interdisciplinary background research.

3. Introductory knowledge of Aotearoa New Zealand coastal and ocean literature and range and history of voices.
4. Development of writing skills, both critical and creative.
5. Development of thoughtful, productive discussion.

Evaluation:

Class participation in seminar and on shore explorations:	25%
Blue Ecocritical Essay:	45%
Experiential Blue Ecocritical Story/Travel Essay:	30%

Assignments:

Class Participation

Class participation involves good listening, thoughtful contributions, open-minded sharing of ideas, and thorough preparation and reading before coming to class, as well as active listening, careful feedback in writing workshops, and thoughtful examination while on shore visiting cultural sights and with individuals in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Blue Ecocritical Essay (2,500-3,000 words)

Explore some aspect, theme, or question that appears in the works of Aotearoa New Zealand coastal sea literature that we've read so far this semester, with an eye towards exploring how these authors represent and perhaps influence the perception of the coastline and seascape. *Use at least two of our readings.* Aim for great clarity and thorough research—a polished, tight argument. Consider the different ways to examine texts: from close readings of passages to examining the structure of a novel to looking at the historical and cultural and scientific and political context and influences to setting and its effect on our perception of a place. You may bring in other books that you have read outside of class, but they should be as support, not as a primary work. Feel free to use outside critical essays or any other reliable reference materials, and you are highly encouraged to reference papers, studies, podcasts, etc. from other disciplines that inform your exploration. You must illustrate this essay with at least two images, properly credited. Assume your reader has read all the books, so no plot summary is necessary, although a one- to two-word reminder of characters or setting is often good form, e.g.: "Kahu, the protagonist in *Whale Rider* (1987)..." Make certain that your conclusion is not just a summary of your argument/observation, but carries your exploration further, points toward other questions, and tells the reader why your essay is relevant to a Kiwi sense of "blue" place.

Experiential Blue Ecocritical Story (1,000-1,200 words)

Write a creative nonfiction story about how the fiction we read crafted an impression of the Aotearoa New Zealand coast and seas or life at sea, and how this played out when you saw and lived it yourself. Write this for a travel magazine or a literary journal audience. Reference significantly at least one of the stories we've read as a class. Your essay must include at least one image.

Course Readings:

Provided on campus:

Ihimaera, Witi. *Whale Rider*. (1987) New York: Penguin, 2010.

Peat, Neville. *Coasting*. Dunedin: Longacre Press, 2001.

Reader Contents (also provided):

Barrett, Andrea. "The Island." *Salmajundi* (Spring/Summer 2010), 73-113.

Braverman, Blair. "Post-Nature Writing," in *Coming of Age at the End of Nature: A Generation Faces Living on a Changed Planet*, eds. Julie Dunlap and Susan A. Cohen. San Antonio, TX: Trinity University Press, 2016.

Carson, Rachel. "Memo to Mrs. Eales," in *Lost Woods: The Discovered Writing of Rachel Carson*. Lear, Linda, ed. Boston: Beacon Press, 1998.

Collins, Damian, and Robin Kearns. "It's a gestalt experience": Landscape values and development pressure in Hawke's Bay, New Zealand. *Geoforum* 41: 435-446. 2010.

Cranna, John. "Archaeology" in *They Went: The Art and Craft of Travel Writing*, ed. William Zinsser. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1991.

Grace, Patricia. "Journey" in *The Flamingo Anthology of New Zealand Short Stories*, extended ed. Auckland: HarperCollins, 2004.

Gunn, Kirsty. "What Lies Beneath." *The Telegraph*. 28 May 2006. www.telegraph.co.uk.

Lee, Andrea. "Double Lives" in *They Went: The Art and Craft of Travel Writing*, ed. William Zinsser. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1991.

Mansfield, Katherine. "The Stranger" in *The Collected Stories of Katherine Mansfield*. London: Penguin Books, 2001.

Marshall, Owen. "A View of Our Country" in *They Went: The Art and Craft of Travel Writing*, ed. William Zinsser. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1991.

Melville, Herman. "Brit" in *Moby-Dick, or The Whale*. New York: Modern Library, 1982.

Sargeson, Frank. "A Great Day" in *The Flamingo Anthology of New Zealand Short Stories*, extended ed. Auckland: HarperCollins, 2004.

Smith, Alisa. "A Māori Sense of Place? Taranaki Waiata Tangi and Feelings for Place," *New Zealand Geographer* 60 (1): 12-17. 2004.

Walcott, Derek. "The Sea is History." (1987) *The Star-Apple Kingdom*. New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2014.

Wardi, Anissa. "Introduction." *Water and the African American Memory*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida: 2011.

Yaeger, Patricia. "Sea Trash, Dark Pools, and the Tragedy of the Commons," *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association* 125:3 (2010), 523-45.

Look also in the course Google Drive for supplemental essays, podcasts, etc.

Expectations and Requirements:

- Punctual attendance is required at every class meeting.
- Active participation in class discussion is expected.
- Late assignment submissions are not accepted.
- The policy on academic accuracy, quoted below, will be strictly followed in this class.
The papers that you submit in this course are expected to be **your original work**. You must take care to distinguish your own ideas and knowledge from wording or substantive information that you derive from one of your sources. The term "sources" includes not only published primary and secondary material, but also information and opinions gained directly from other people and text that you cut and paste from any site on the Internet.
The responsibility for learning the proper forms of citation lies with you. Quotations must be placed properly within quotation marks and must be cited fully. In addition, all paraphrased material must be acknowledged completely. Whenever ideas or facts are derived from your reading and research, the sources must be indicated. (*Harvard Handbook for Students*, 305)
- Considerations for use of internet sources:
As you browse websites, assess their usefulness very critically. Who posted the information and why? Can you trust them to be correct? Authoritative? Aiming for objectivity? (It's okay to use an especially biased source as long as you incorporate it knowingly and transparently into your own work.) Keep track of good sources that might be useful for subsequent assignments and annotate in your bibliography any sites you cite. Your annotation should include the name of the author or organization originating any material that you reference. If you can't identify the source, don't use it!

Style Guide:

MLA, Chicago, or another standard reference system is fine, as long as you are consistent within your essay.

Course Calendar:

Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
<i>Week 1: Blue Ecocriticism and Sense of Place (5 contact hours) – Ashore in Woods Hole</i>	
Woods Hole field trip	Barrett, Carson
Fiction and reality in Woods Hole and in Hawke’s Bay, NZ	Collins and Kearns
<i>Week 2: Polynesian Navigation and Maori Sense of Place (3 hours) – Ashore in Woods Hole</i>	
A Maori Sense of Place?	Smith
Ihimaera’s <i>Whale Rider</i> , pt. 1	Ihimaera, through Chapter 12
<i>Week 3: Marine Populations: Maori and Pakeha Sense of Place (3 hours) – Ashore in Woods Hole</i>	
Ihimaera’s <i>Whale Rider</i> , pt. 2	Ihimaera, 13-end
NZ short stories	Sargeson, Grace, Cranna, Mansfield
<i>Week 4: Ocean Pollution: Aotearoa New Zealand, Marine Resources and Blue Fiction\$ (3 hours) – Ashore in Woods Hole</i>	
Sea stories, trash, and economics	Yaeger
Peat’s <i>Coasting</i>	
<i>Week 5: Climate Change: Undersea sense of place (5 hours) – Ashore in Woods Hole</i>	
<i>Coasting</i> ; peer workshop	Peat, sections 1 and 2 Due: working draft of ecocritical essay (2 hard copies)
<i>Whale Rider</i> film	
<i>Coasting</i> ; “What Lies Beneath?”	Peat, to end; Gunn
<i>Week 6: Sea as Memory: African American blue ecocriticism (3 hours) – Ashore in Woods Hole</i>	
“Sea is History”	Walcott Due: final draft of ecocritical essay
Race and blue sense of place	Wardi
<i>Week 7 (4 hours) – Aotearoa New Zealand, at sea and in port</i>	
Public Representations of Cultural Landscapes Field Trip and discussion – Auckland Museum Composing your blue ecocritical story	Braverman

Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
<i>Week 8 (3 hours) – Aotearoa New Zealand, at sea and in port</i>	
Field Trip and discussion—Waitangi Treaty Grounds	
<i>Week 9 (1 hour) – Aotearoa New Zealand, at sea and in port</i>	
Workshop on ecocrit story; discussion the ocean as a place on its own	Due: draft blue ecocrit. story Lee; Melville; Marshall
<i>Week 10 (5 hours) – Aotearoa New Zealand, at sea and in port</i>	
Field trip and discussions—Te Papa Museum and Zealandia (Wellington)	
<i>Week 11 (3 hour) – Aotearoa New Zealand, at sea and in port</i>	
Final workshops for ecocrit story	Due: final draft blue ecocrit. story
<i>Week 12 (2 hours) – Aotearoa New Zealand, at sea and in port</i>	
Watching for iconic species (whales, et al) and discussion	