

Humanity and the Natural World

Humanities 325

Section: D100

Term: 1999 Fall

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Discussion Topics: The relationship of human beings to the natural environment has long been one of the central subjects of humanistic discourse. Likewise, the position of homo sapiens within the ecosystem is a central concern within the discourse of science. More recently, popular concern for a seemingly deteriorating natural environment has made the interactions of humans with the other-than-human natural world a central topic of political discourse. In seeking some understanding of how humans do 'fit' within the natural environment, we will explore issues of perception, perspective, thought, imagination and feeling as manifested in a series of core texts from the ancient world to the modern. This exploration is based on the assumption that how we think about and describe the natural world has a powerful impact upon how we act toward it.

Grading: Humanities 325 is a seminar and hence active and informed participation in discussion is required.

Seminar participation 20%

First essay 30%

Second essay 30%

Final essay 20%

Required Texts: Lucretius, *On the Nature of the Universe*, Penguin, 1994.

Rene Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations*, Penguin, 1968.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, Penguin, 1979.

Dorothy & William Wordsworth

Recommended Texts: N/A

Materials/Supplies: N/A

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Prerequisite/Corequisite: 45 credit hours.

Notes: HUM 325-4 may be applied towards the Certificate in Liberal Arts.

Visit our Humanities website

For inquiries contact wendy_sjolin@sfu.ca

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