

LANGUAGE & LANDSCAPE
AN ANGLO-AMERICAN HERITAGE

9/5/84
Seminar 749b

This seminar will focus on issues of scenic and visual context and emotional and "geographic" content within the form and value of individual poems. It will examine the terms of specific Anglo and American landscapes (including seascapes and cityscapes) and will interrogate the ways in which imagination is inspired by the natural and the man-made as well as the ways in which nature itself is artifice. "Landscape," says naturalist D.E. Cosgrove, "is not merely the world we see, it is a construction, a composition of that world. Landscape is a way of seeing the world." Thus landscape--the "nature" it represents--is at once subject and object, inscape and projection. In this spirit we hope to look at not only poems but whenever possible paintings and drawings--from Capability Brown to Gainsborough to Turner and Constable to the Hudson River School and the Luminists to Whistler and Homer to Eakins and Hopper.

The poetry chronology suggests the range and implicit narrative regarding the ways attitudes toward similar landscapes have changed. It also highlights the ways landscapes become figure-ground arrangements looking for the right vision to bring them into focus--or, which comes first, the vision or the view? In addition, the chronology suggests a reading of the various weights and measures that make up a landscape--for a snowflake to the sublime--and of the different sizes and shapes of poems required to meet the subject. The tone of Shakespeare's autumnal sonnet #73 is almost stark compared to the richness of the harvest in Keats's "To Autumn." Look at the different autumn months referred to and the differences are clear, even though the settings of the poems are only miles apart. Wordsworth makes the view from Westminster Bridge seem part of nature; Blake sees the world around the Thames as plagued. Frost and Stevens, two New Englanders, each publish a famous snow poem in 1923; yet no two poems of sonnet-size could be more unlike. Perhaps, indeed, it was the same snowfall that produced a stopping by woods and a snowman. *grow*

The method of the class, therefore, will be to continually cross-reference the poems in comparisons and contrasts and to juxtapose landscapes and scenes across time; certainly across landscapes of mind. All the while we will try to maintain historical perspective and not lose our sense of time to our need to see parallels. Every poem in the chronology has its counterpart.

Presentations and one long paper.

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Cross Reference : With the Understanding That These
Suggested, and Suggestive, Units
Are Only Starting Points, Including
the Schedule

Sept 5	sonnets 18 and 73 Stopping By Woods... The Snow Man Poem Large Bad Painting	<u>Introductory</u>
Sept 12	Readings	
Sept 19	Two-Part Prelude Preludes Composed Upon Westminster Bridge London Wasteland ls. 60-75	<u>City/Country</u>
Sept 26	Crossing Brklyn Ferry To Brklyn Bridge Whitsun Weddings	<u>Transition</u>
Oct 3	This Lime-Tree Bower... Ode to a Nightingale In Memoriam #95 Inscription in a Beautiful Retreat...	<u>Bower</u>
Oct 10	The Garden The Garden Mending Wall Ode on a Grecian Urn Church Going	<u>Civilizing</u>
Oct 17	Lines Dry Salvages In Praise of Limestone Directive	<u>Ruins</u>

Oct 24

Neutral Tones
Spring and All
For the Union Dead
Degrees of Gray...
Day Lady Died

Localized

Oct 31

Dove^rBeach
Elegiac Stanzas
Written near a port...
Carmel Point
The Purse-Seine
A Grave
At the Fishhouses
Corson's Inlet
Blackberrying

Edge of the Water

Nov 7

#258
Wild Swans at Coole
Thirteen Ways/Blackbird
Far Field
A Hill

Interior

Nov 14

The Draft Horse
At Pasture
A Blessing
Ariel
The Horses

Organizing the Space

Nov 21

Lycidas
When Lilacs Last...
Elegy/Country Churchyard
In Nunhead Cemetery

Pastoral Elegy

Nov 28

Ode
Mont Blanc
To Autumn
#1540
Road Not Taken
Fern Hill
Pied Beauty

Perfected Landscapes

Dec 5

Dec 12

run-overs

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4th Edition: The Norton Anthology of Poetry
(eds. Ferguson, Salter, Stallworthy)

Chronology

- Sidney (1554) The Nightingale; p. 191
Shakespeare (1564) Sonnets 18, 73; 235, 238
Carew (1598) The Spring; 348
Milton (1608) Lycidas; ls. 132-151; 354
Marvell (1621) The Garden; 442
Traherne (1637) Shadows in the Water; 489
Swift (1667) A Description of the Morning; 526
A Description of a City Shower; 526
Thomson (1700) Winter, ls. 223-358; 585
Dyer (1700) Grongar Hill; 592
Gray (1716) Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard; 612
Moore (1745) Inscription in a Beautiful Retreat Called Fairy
Bower; 649
Smith (1749) Written near a port on a dark evening; 653
Blake (1757) London; 681
H. M. Williams (1761) To the Moon; 695
Wordsworth (1770) Lines; 699
Two-Part Prelude (Part I)
Composed Upon Westminster Bridge,
September 3, 1802; 727
Ode; 728
Elegiac Stanzas; 734
Coleridge (1722) This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison!;
Shelley (1792) Mont Blanc; 796
Clare (1793) Farewell; 824
Keats (1795) Ode to a Nightingale; 845
Ode on a Grecian Urn; 848
To Autumn; 849
Tennyson (1809) In Memoriam #95; 904

- Whitman (1819) Crossing Brklyn Ferry; 965
When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer; 969
When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd; 979
- Arnold (1822) Dover Beach; 999
- D. G. Rossetti (1828) Silent Noon; 1005
- Dickinson (1830) #258; 1013
#1540; 1025
- Hardy (1840) Neutral Tones; 1049
- Hopkins (1844) Pied Beauty; 1063
- Yeats (1865) The Wild Swans at Coole; 1087
- Mew (1869) In Nunhead Cemetery; 1113
- Dunbar (1872) A Summer's Night; 1117
- Frost (1874) Mending Wall; 1121
The Road Not Taken; 1127
Stopping By Woods...; 1131
Directive; 1138
The Draft Horse
- Stevens (1879) The Snow Man; 1150
Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird; 1155
Poems of Our Climate; 1160
- W. C. Williams (1883) Spring and All
- Lawrence (1885) Trees in the Garden; 1181
- Pound (1885) The Garden; 1189
- Jeffers (1887) The Purse-Seine; 1212
Carmel Point
- M. Moore (1887) A Grave; 1223
- Eliot (1888) Preludes; 1233
The Wasteland (ls. 60-75); 1236
The Dry Salvages; 1249
- Toomer (1894) Georgia Dusk; 1289
- H. Crane (1899) To Brklyn Bridge; 1307
- Auden (1907) In Praise of Limestone; 1370
- Roethke (1908) The Far Field
- Bishop (1911) At the Fishhouses
Poem
Large Bad Painting
- R. S. Thomas (1913) Welsh Landscape; 1437
- D. Thomas (1914) Fern Hill; 1464

R. Lowell (1917) For the Union Dead; 1496
 Clampitt (1920) Beach Glass; 1503
 Larkin (1922) The Whitsun Weddings; 1544
 Church Going; 1541
 At Pasture
 Hecht (1923) A Hill; 1561
 Hugo (1923) Degrees of Gray in Philipsburg : 1561
 Ammons (1926) Corsons Inlet; 1587
 Bly (1926) Hunting Pheasants in a Cornfield -----
 O'Hara (1926) The Day Lady Died; 1617
 Wright (1927) A Blessing; 1639
 Rich (1929) Orion; 1683
 Hughes (1930) Relic; 1698
 The Horses
 Plath (1932) Ariel; 1734
 Blackberrying

six shapes in nature:
 the egg
 the spiral
 the circle
 the meander
 the branch
 the hexagon

street
 avenue
 boulevard
 drive
 lane
 road
 place
 terrace
 court
 close
 way
 mews

perspective

location
 topography
 terrain
 setting
 frame
 weather
 season
 density
 sparsity
 figure-ground
 foreground/background

Preliminary Thinking

urban : isolation ("city pent")

suburban : intimate ("tranquil restoration")

rural : solitude ("mending walls")

wild : sublime ("all finite things reveal infinite")

moral landscape

tundra

interior landscape

imaginative landscape

pastoral landscape

urban landscape

street

avenue

boulevard

drive

lane

road

place

terrace

court

close

way

mews

six shapes in nature:

the egg

the spiral

the circle

the meander

the branch

the hexagon

location

topography

terrain

setting

frame

weather

season

density

sparsity

figure-ground

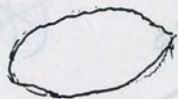
foreground/background

perspective

THE SIX SHAPES IN NATURE

LANDSCAPE/SOME VOCABULARY

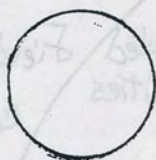
the egg



the spiral



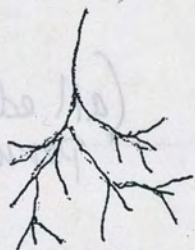
the circle



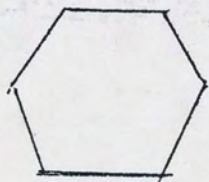
the meander



the branch



the hexagon



location

setting

frame

topography/terrain

weather/seasons

density/sparsity

natural/man-made

figure/ground

foreground/background

perspective

pastoral

urban

suburban

garden

View Pt.
Vision

URBAN & COUNTRY PASSAGES

sidewalk/walkway

street

avenue

boulevard

parade

drive

lane

road

place

terrace

court

close

way

mews



(all edges permeable)

ENGL 749b

Language & Landscape

Final Paper Thinking

Some ideas or clusters around or through which you might develop a thesis for a paper. "Might" here is understated.

frame

setting

figure/ground relations

perspective

pastoral/industrial

the garden

the meander

the mist

spots of time

view/vision

city/country

transitional spaces

the bower

the abrupt edge

ruins

interior landscapes

perfected landscapes

Dominic Alavez