

Nature & Adventure Journalism
from Bartram to Blackfish
University of Florida College of Journalism & Communications, Fall 2016
Undergraduates: JOU 4930-0029
Graduate students: MMC 6936-2569
Tuesdays, Periods 3, 4 & 5 (9:35 a.m. to 12:35 p.m.)
Weimer Hall Room 3024

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I am frequently traveling on a story so best to make an appointment

Nature and Adventure Journalism, the idea: Living in an era of climate change and ecological collapse, “Nature Writing” has become an antiquated literary genre; a nostalgic luxury we can’t afford. Who could vanish into the woods like Henry David Thoreau to contemplate nature for a few years, after all, when the world is losing upwards of 80,000 acres of rainforest a day? But this century, exponential losses of natural places and wildlife, along with climate change and the growing understanding that our own health and survival are tied to the Earth’s, have popularized a dynamic new form. Magazines and publishing houses call it “the New Nature Writing,” but it is broader: Writing, photography, videography and internet creations that blend keen environmental observation and storytelling with science and natural history. Adventure and travel may also drive the stories, which often lay out a call to action or path toward solutions. These techniques are familiar to journalists, and our course is devoted to studying – and practicing – the form as journalism.

Nature and Adventure Journalism, the course: This course will frame contemporary nonfiction nature and adventure storytelling within a historic tradition from Bartram to Thoreau to John Muir, whose foundational *1,000 Mile Walk to the Gulf* was published 100 years ago and ended in the Cedar Keys west of Gainesville, where our class will share an overnight adventure on an uninhabited barrier island. As we study historic and current narrative nonfiction, photography and film, we’ll seek out the most compelling work, particularly that which draws audiences and engages them in environmental and social problems. Weekly readings and viewings will take us from the deepest oceans with *National Geographic* underwater explorers to the highest mountain peaks, where some of the world’s top climbers and skiers have also become raconteurs warning of the end of snow. The course’s guest authors, editors, filmmakers and photographers are professionals in the field who are also making a difference in the world. Ultimately, this is a practical class with a focus on publishing. Each student will finish the semester with a compelling work of nature or adventure writing, photo story, or video short that is relevant for your audiences – and, I hope, a gem for your portfolio. This work may be published on the College of Journalism’s website devoted to Environmental Journalism: stateofwater.org, or even better, in the popular media.

Readings, Participation, Assignments, Midterm, Final & Grades:

Readings: We become better storytellers by reading great stories, and part of the fun of this class will be reading some memorable nature/adventure/travel writing together and chewing on what works – and what doesn't. Please make time to read/view the assigned works each week, and be prepared to discuss them. The readings will be available in the public domain online, through UF's electronic databases, or via email from me. Core readings are on the syllabus below, but I may revise or add material based on our class discussion, progress and newly published work, so **please be sure to check email Thursday evenings before Tuesday class for any updates.**

Textbook: We'll read one book together as a class, *Satellites in the High Country: Searching for the Wild in the Age of Man* (Island Press, 2015), by Jason Mark. Jason is editor of *Sierra Magazine* and our guest speaker Nov. 15th. Please also mark your calendars to attend his campus lecture that evening if you are able. Grad students will read and review a second book of your choice and report on it in class. (See "Midterm" below.)

Participation: Engagement with our class, in person and online, is an important part of your grade. Class attendance and social media are mandatory, with a minimum of one Twitter post a week. (Through the semester; not 16 Tweets in the final week.) I will tweet (from @cynthiabarnett) about Nature and Adventure Journalism with our class hashtag, #UFNatureJOU. If you're not yet on Twitter, don't worry, we'll set you up the first day of class so you can give it a try for the semester.

Class Project: Participation and your project – which encompasses the last three of your six assignments – are more important than the midterm and final. Each student will develop a nature, adventure or travel journalism project to work on through the semester that is professional and publishable. It can be a work of narrative writing, a photo story or a video short. A written story should be around 1,200 compelling words. Photo stories should include 12-15 aesthetically impactful and technically accomplished images, shot from at least three separate locations, with extended captions. A video project should be 3-6 minutes, with at least two on-camera interviews and visuals from at least three separate locations. We'll talk these out from the first day, so that you'll leave with a strong project on the last day.

Assignment 1: A Biography of Place: A 500-word narrative of a place – anywhere in the world. Your storyline could involve anything from an iconic food (the oysters of Apalachicola, the tropical fruits of Costa Rica) to an environmental issue (sea-level rise on Florida's Nature Coast, coral bleaching on your favorite Caribbean reef), or a travel feature. I will accept a personal biography of place, if the place has an important meaning for you **that would also be of interest to readers**. Most important here is to capture a **memorable sense of place**, with observations and descriptions that make your reader think, "Wow, I felt like I was there!" **Due: Fri Sept 2nd**

Assignment 2: Writing on the Profession: Undergrads: A 300- to 500-word written critique of a Nature/Adventure Journalism film or story you choose (run it by me), followed-up in class with an informal presentation. **Grad students:** A 500-word Q&A with or mini-profile of a contemporary nature writer, author, photographer, filmmaker or editor. You'll give an informal presentation on your subject in class. Your Q&As will run as a series on CJC's Environmental Journalism blog, stateofwater.org (if you can publish elsewhere, even better!), so please shoot or

request a photo of your subject. (Undergrads can choose the profile instead of the critique if you'd like. This is an excellent way to connect with a professional you admire.) **Due: Fri Sept. 23rd**

Assignment 3: Field Work: A 500-word (longer is OK but not shorter) descriptive report on a topic you choose from our field trip to Seahorse Key, part of the Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge an hour west of Gainesville in the Gulf of Mexico. The best journalism requires muddy boots – in this case, sandy/wet ones. You'll take what you've learned about observation/detail/sense of place and blend it with science or natural-history reporting during our overnight on Seahorse Key. While on the island, you'll take detailed notes and have the opportunity to interview experts on science, ecology, environmental and cultural history. You may pick any topic – from the 1854 lighthouse to the population of cottonmouths on the island (don't worry – we're sleeping in the lighthouse!), and craft a tightly written, descriptive piece on that single subject, using any sources you wish to consult after we return. Consider this practice for your class project. And if your island topic turns out to be newsworthy enough to be your class project, you are welcome to pursue it. **Due: Fri Oct. 7th**

Assignment 4: Class Project, the Pitch: A 300- to 500-word, reported and outlined plan for your class project. This is known as a pitch, ie, a story pitch to an editor. It should include a description of the story, video or photo essay, the elements that make it compelling and timely, the sources you plan to interview (or photo shoot list), the adventure you plan to take, etc. **Due Fri Oct. 14th**

Assignment 5: Class Project, First Draft: A first draft of your project. Note that a first draft is not a "rough draft." A first draft means your best effort by deadline, and it's the first impression you make on an editor. I will get this back to you with feedback and any requirements for additional reporting or rewriting in time for you to make revisions for your final draft. **Due Fri Nov. 4th**

Assignment 6: Class Project, Final Draft: The final draft means "publishable." This draft should be in the shape that you're crazy-proud to see published – with compelling storytelling, no parts that don't make sense or drag, no fact-errors, etc. The final draft should include all elements – any photos if it's a written story, any captions if it's a photo essay, ready to post if it's a video project. **Due Fri Dec. 2nd**

Midterm: For undergrads, the midterm is a short-answer written exam on Canvas, based on our readings, lectures and discussions from the first nine weeks. **Grad students:** Your midterm is a 500-word book review of a work of Nature or Adventure Journalism. Please meet w/ me early in the semester to choose your book; my library of recent nature writing is extensive and you are welcome to check one out from me if it's not available in the library. **Midterm posted Sun Oct. 16th to finish by Fri Oct. 21st. Grad students' book review due Fri Oct. 21st.**

Final: For undergraduates, the final is a short-answer written exam on Canvas, based on our readings, lectures and discussions from the second nine weeks. **Grad students only:** For your final, you will research, assign readings and lead a class discussion on one of the Special Topics in Nature and Adventure Journalism outlined below in November. **Final posted Sunday Dec. 4th to finish by Fri Dec. 9th. Grad students' special topics have rolling due dates.**

GRADES

Your grade is based on the six individual assignments, a midterm, a final, and participation, **with your project (300 points) and participation (200) the most important:**

- Assignment 1: Biography of Place, **100 points possible**
- Assignment 2: Writing on the Profession, **100 points possible**
- Assignment 3: Field Work, **100 points possible**
- Assignment 4: Class Project Pitch, **100 points possible**
- Assignment 4: Class Project First Draft, **100 points possible**
- Assignment 5: Class Project Final Draft, **100 points possible**
- Midterm, **100 points possible**
- Final, **100 points possible**
- Class attendance and participation, **200 points possible.**

ATTENDANCE: Each class missed for reasons outside those listed in the UF attendance policy (the link is on the last page of this syllabus), will result in automatic deduction of 20 points per absence. If you come to class all 16 times, contribute to our discussion and engage each week with your classmates on social media, you'll earn all 200 points for participation.

FIELD WORK PERK: Everyone who comes on the field trip can miss one class, any time after the field trip, with no questions asked. If you miss the field trip, you'll also miss this free pass and the 100-point field work assignment.

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE: 1,000

GRADING SCALE:

930-1,000 points: A

900-929: A-

880-899: B+

830-879: B

800-829: B-

780-799: C+

730-779: C

700-729: C-

680-699: D+

630-679: D

600-629: D-

599 or below: E

Course schedule and readings (Again, please look for my Thursday evening email prior to our Tuesday class for any updates/substitutions, or articles being critiqued by your classmates.)

Week 1, Tuesday, August 23rd

Introductions: To each other, including your interests in nature, the environment and the place(s) most important to you; to the idea of Nature and Adventure Journalism; and to this course, the syllabus and the semester ahead.

Read Ahead for Class:

- 1) The syllabus.
- 2) “Dead Forests and Living Memories,” by Helen Macdonald, from the On Nature column in the *New York Times Magazine*, September 17th 2015.
- 3) “You Are Brilliant, and the Earth is Hiring,” the 2009 commencement address by Paul Hawken. (Not really a work of nature writing, but a good way to start the semester, and a look at speechwriting as an important form for both the journalists and non-journalists among you. The more successful you become in your field, the more you’ll be asked to share your expertise and ideas. Doing it well is a unique and valuable skill.)

Week 2, Tuesday August 30th

History of the Tradition: Author/activist Bill McKibben calls environmental writing “America’s single-most distinctive contribution to the world’s literature.” While other cultures were observing nature longer, McKibben writes, “only on this continent was Culture fully conscious while Economy went about the business of knocking down Nature.” This week we’ll consider Nature & Adventure writing as it took root in U.S. soils.

Read Ahead for Class:

- 1) Excerpts from America’s first best-selling nature writer, William Bartram, whose 18th Century *Travels* include descriptions of our region’s springs so dreamy they helped inspire Kubla Kahn. In the electronic edition of travels, UNC Chapel Hill, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/bartram/bartram.html>, read from the opening of the Introduction, Page xiii, “*The attention of a traveller, should be particularly turned, in the first place, to the various works of Nature ...*” to the top of Page Xxvii, “*he fired, and laid it dead, upon the body of the dam.*”

Next, from the bottom of Page 79, “*Bidding adieu to my obliging friend, I spread my sail to the favourable breeze,*” to ... the middle of Page 95, “*... fled the dreaded place, betaking themselves for subsistence, to the more fruitful and populous regions of Georgia and Carolina.*”

And finally, on some places I hope you'll find familiar, including the watery expanse south of Gainesville we now call Paynes Prairie: From the bottom of page 165, "*I now directed my steps towards my encampment,*" to 189 at, "*On the first view of such an amazing display of the wisdom and power of the supreme author of nature*"

- 2) Excerpts from the opening chapters of *Walden*, by Henry David Thoreau, published 1854. From in the Thoreau Society's annotated *Walden* reader at <http://thoreau.eserver.org/>, read Chapter 1, "Economy," from Part C Note 19 that begins, *Near the end of March, 1845, I borrowed an axe and went down to the woods by Walden Pond ...* through Part D Note 10 that ends: *you could have spent your time better than digging in this dirt.* Then, all of Chapter 2: "Where I lived and what I lived for."
- 3) "Pond Scum: Henry David Thoreau's moral myopia," by Kathryn Schultz, *The New Yorker*, October 19th 2015.
- 4) "The Scavengers" from the 1903 book *Land of Little Rain* by Mary Austin, among the first writers to capture the beauty of the desert. The chapter is available at the Library of America Story of the Week program: storyoftheweek.loa.org/2011/09/scavengers.html

Week 3, Tuesday, September 6th:

Making a Difference: To a remarkable extent and like few other major issues in U.S. history, progress in American environmental protection often turned on evocative writing and photography. William Henry Jackson's photographs helped cinch Yellowstone; John Muir's writing did the same for Yosemite; Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* created widespread awareness of the danger of synthetic pesticides and led to the U.S. banning DDT.

View/Read Ahead for Class:

- 1) Chapter 5, "The Yosemite," from John Muir's *My First Summer in the Sierra*, available from the Sierra Club's collected writings of Muir:
vault.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/writings/my_first_summer_in_the_sierra/
- 2) Spend some time with the editorial cartoons of J.N. "Ding" Darling, particularly on the topics of ducks, hunting and conservation. **Choose your favorite Darling cartoon & email me the link by Monday night so we can view and discuss some of the best:**
digital.lib.uiowa.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/ding
Darling was a syndicated cartoonist whose work appeared in more than 200 newspapers in the 20s and 30s. F.D.R. convinced him to leave his job to lead what is now the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
He drew the famous blue goose of U.S. Wildlife Refuges:



- 3) In Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, read Chapter 1, "A Fable for Tomorrow," and Chapter 8, "And No Birds Sing."
- 4) "It All Began with Conservation" by Wallace Stegner, *Smithsonian* magazine, v. 21 n1, p. 35-43, April 1990.

Week 4, Tuesday, September 13th

Modern Nature & Adventure Journalism: An Introduction

Read Ahead for Class:

- 1) "America's National Parks, By definition," the first essay in Terry Tempest Williams's new book, *The House of Land: A personal topography of America's national parks*. (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016). The excerpt is on the publisher's website at: us.macmillan.com/excerpt?isbn=9780374712266
- 2) Jon Krakauer's original *Outside* magazine article, "Death of an Innocent," from January 1993. This story led to Krakauer's bestselling book, *Into the Wild*; the film of the same name directed by Sean Penn; and the unfortunate phenomenon of copycats who now follow Christopher McCandless's journey into the Alaskan wilds.
- 3) "The Chris McCandless Obsession Problem," by Diana Saverin, *Outside* magazine, December 18th 2013.
- 4) "How climate change makes Everest an even deadlier game," by the American mountain climber Samantha Larson, *Grist*, April 25th 2014.

Week 5, Tuesday September 20th

Nature Filmmaking: An introduction (w/ a primer on drones in Environmental Journalism).

View Ahead for Class:

Blackfish, the 2013 documentary film directed by Gabriela Cowperthwaite that brought such public outrage over orcas in captivity that SeaWorld's revenues plummeted, and the company eventually announced that it will end its orca breeding program and orca shows. This widespread moral impact has become known as "The Blackfish Effect." 1 hr 23 mins, available for check out at the UF and Alachua County libraries, or via Netflix and other subscription services.

(We will be watching our guest speaker's *Gimme Green* and some other shorts in class.)

Guest speaker: Filmmaker Eric Flagg, a former wetlands scientist who left his career to make a bigger difference doing environmental documentary work. Eric has co-produced films including *Terra Blight*, which traces the lifecycle of computers from creation to disposal and *Gimme Green*, a humorous look at America's obsession with the lawn.

Week 6, Tuesday, September 27th

Environmental History: Our stories are enriched by natural history, too often left out of both science and journalism. Just as much as the history of people or politics, the history of our relationship with land, water and wildlife helps us understand our place in the world, avoid past mistakes and confront modern challenges with context and wisdom.

Guest speaker: UF environmental historian Jack E. Davis, author of books including *An Everglades Providence: Marjory Stoneman Douglas and the American Environmental Century* (University of Georgia Press, 2009), and the forthcoming *Gulf: The Making of an American Sea* (WW Norton, 2017).

Read ahead for class: Chapter 12 of *Gulf*: "Islands, Shifting Sands of Time," by Davis. (I will email the chapter to everyone. In exchange for this free sneak peek, let's become Dr. Davis's 20-person social media team when the book publishes in 2017).

Read Chapter 6, "Cedar Keys," in John Muir's *1,000 Mile Walk to the Gulf*.
vault.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/writings/a_thousand_mile_walk_to_the_gulf

{Saturday October 1st: Overnight field trip to Seahorse Key!}

Week 7, Tuesday October 4th

Whose Vision of Nature? American interaction with nature is inseparable from race, as well as from economic inequities.

Read ahead for class:

"9 Rules for the Black Birdwatcher," by J. Drew Lanham, *Orion* magazine, 2013.

"Hiking While Black: The Untold Story," Q&A with Carolyn Finney by Francie Latour, *The Boston Globe*, June 20th 2014.

"The Miseducation of John Muir," by Justin Nobel, *Atlas Obscura*, July 2016,
<https://blog.longreads.com/2016/07/26/the-miseducation-of-john-muir/>

"The Last Florida Indians Will Now Die," by Justin Nobel, *Oxford American*, Summer 2016.

Week 8, Tuesday October 11th

Gender and Environmental Writing (or, the Three Marjories) Florida's Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Marjory Stoneman Douglas and Marjorie Harris Carr make a good prism through which to view the influence of women on environmental writing and activism: Rawlings the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer, Carr the activist and Douglas, who balanced those two worlds to save the Everglades.

Guest speaker: Historian, author, journalist (and CJC alumnus) Leslie Kemp Poole, assistant professor of environmental studies at Rollins College in Winter Park and the author of *Saving Florida: Women's Fight for the Environment in the Twentieth Century*.

Read ahead for class:

"Trees for Tomorrow," by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, *Collier's* magazine, May 8th 1943.

Chapter 5, "The Three Marjories, Rachel and the Rise of Ecology," pp 83 to 103 in Dr. Poole's *Saving Florida: Women's Fight for the Environment in the Twentieth Century*.

Week 9, Tuesday October 18th

Nature photography: An introduction

Guest speaker: Environmental photographer (and CJC alumnus) John Moran has been called Florida's "Photographer Laureate." His work has appeared in *National Geographic*, *The New York Times* magazine, *Smithsonian*, and many other publications, and he is author of the book *Journal of Light*. But, watching the decline of his beloved springs in recent years, all of this has become less important to him than saving the waters that inspired his career.

Read/View ahead for class:

"Photographer laureate," by Jeff Klinkenberg, April 5th 2005, *The Tampa Bay Times*.

View John's nature photographs on his website: <http://www.johnmoranphoto.com>

View the panels of John's project, Springs Eternal, a before-and-after look at Florida's springs: [wwwhttp://springseternalproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Panels_small.pdf](http://springseternalproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Panels_small.pdf)

"It's our water, and we need to take ownership," by Moran, *The Tampa Bay Times*, July 2016.

Week 10, Tuesday October 25th

Are We Witnessing the End of Nature? Journalism to Race Extinction: We'll watch the film *Racing Extinction* together in class. Oscar winner Louie Psihoyos blends investigative reporting and state-of-the-art technology to tell the staggering story of species extinction. We'll look at the

film's broad social-media campaign and begin to ponder the question that Jason Mark raises in *Satellites in the High Country*: Is there such a thing as wild, anymore? And if not, why go on with our work?

Read ahead for class:

(with apologies) "End of the Wild: The extinction crisis is over. We lost." By Stephen M. Meyer, *Boston Review*, V. 29(3-4), Summer 2004.

Week 11, Tuesday November 1st

Special Topics in Nature and Adventure Journalism, Part 1 (Led by our grad students):

The New British Nature Writing: Pining for the countryside and amid skepticism about material wealth, British readers have rekindled a wildfire of interest in the genre, led by writers like Helen Macdonald and Robert Macfarlane. Who are the most interesting nature writers coming out of the UK and what is behind the trend?

Environmental Stories and People of Color: Minority interest in environmental literature is not limited to environmental justice as some journalists assume. Scholars like Carolyn Finney and Lauret Savoy have uncovered troves of untold stories and uncredited heroes in the narrative of American conservation. "Reclaiming those stories," contends Finney, "could have huge implications for protecting our wilderness in the future." What are those implications, and the obligations of modern storytellers?

Urban Nature Writing: We think of nature writing as about wilderness or pastoral areas. But city wilds are an important part of the genre – the flora, fauna, parks, gardens and weather that enrich and shape urban life. Report on the city wilds trend and why it matters.

Read ahead for class:

- 1) Prologue and Chapters 1 and 2, *Satellites in the High Country*.
- 2) Check email for graduate student-assigned readings on this week's Special Topics in Nature and Adventure Journalism.

Week 12, Tuesday November 8th

Special Topics in Nature and Adventure Journalism, Part 2 (Led by our grad students):

The Great Firsts: Why are the "Great Firsts" – conquering the tallest peaks, running the most remote rivers of the world – so important to humans, and what are some of the last, wild firsts remaining in the age of Google Maps?

Macho Culture in Adventure Sports & Journalism: From sexism in scuba to a new federal report on a plague of sexual harassment on Grand Canyon river-rafting trips, the macho culture of adventure sports and the conquest metaphors of adventure journalism leave these professions behind others on gender equity. Can journalism be part of the change?

Fatal Attraction: Beyond Chris McCandless and his followers into the wild, adventure sports and journalism can be extraordinarily dangerous, as well told in the *New York Times*'s avalanche multimedia project, "Snow Fall." Can we draw adventure audiences without mortal danger?

Read ahead for class:

- 1) Chapters 3, 4 and 5, *Satellites in the High Country*.
- 2) Check email for graduate student-assigned readings on this week's Special Topics in Nature and Adventure Journalism.

Week 13, Tuesday November 15th

Guest speaker: *Sierra* magazine editor Jason Mark, author, *Satellites in the High Country: Searching for the Wild in the Age of Man* (Island Press, 2015).

Read ahead for class: Chapters 6, 7 and Epilogue, *Satellites in the High Country*. Be sure to have finished the book, and have some good questions for Jason.

6:30 p.m.: We'll have a special reception for Jason at Smathers Library East, Room 100, followed by his community talk and a book-signing.

Week 14, Tuesday November 22nd

Adventure Journalism: Travel

Read/View Ahead for Class

- 1) Read your choice of one of these three travel essays by David Foster Wallace; so good I can't choose one. Either *Ticket to the Fair*, *Consider the Lobster* or *Shipping Out*.
- 2) "How to use a squat toilet," by Frank Bures, WorldHum, September 25th 2006. (A taboo topic, yes, but important for the many of you who will travel to far-flung places.)
- 3) "Heart of Dark Chocolate," by Rowan Jacobsen, *Outside* magazine, September 13th 2010.
- 4) View, *Melting: Last Race to the Pole*, the Animal Planet special that featured North Pole explorers Eric Larsen and Ryan Waters in what could be the last unassisted trek to the pole given Arctic ice melt.

Week 15, Tuesday November 29th

Adventure Journalism: The Frontier of the Sea (With a special case study on sharks)

View/Read Ahead for Class

- 1) “Can Sylvia Earle Save the Oceans?” by Ian Frazier, *Outside Magazine*, Nov. 12th 2015.
- 2) “Through a Photographer’s Lens, Sharks Get a Makeover,” story and photography by Brian Skerry, National Geographic.Com, June 9th 2016.
- 3) “He Went Face to Face with Tiger Sharks,” read the story by Glenn Hodges and check out the photos by Brian Skerry, *National Geographic* magazine, June 2016.
- 4) “Heart of Sharkness,” by Bucky McMahon, *GQ*, April 3rd 2013.
- 5) “George Burgess on the Science of Shark Attacks,” by Joe Spring, *Outside* magazine, December 18th 2012.

Special guest: George Burgess, curator of the world’s clearinghouse of shark-attack data at the Florida Museum of Natural History here at UF, has lots of media experience, having been quoted on sharks from the *Discovery Channel* to the *New York Times*. He’ll visit with us to discuss some of his experiences, Shark Week vs. the science and how important it is to help improve public understanding of the seas.

Week 16, Tuesday December 6th, last day of class

Nature and Adventure Journalism and Climate Change: Social science research shows the percentage of people who do not believe in human-caused global warming is increasing. We also know that what people believe about climate change has less to do with science presented in the media, and more with their own, personal framework. In this way, journalists who are good at telling stories of place, nature, adventure and travel – all topics that touch audiences personally – can have a profound impact in helping people understand climate change and other threats to the natural world.

The better stories we craft today, the better stories we create for tomorrow.

Read Ahead for Class:

- 1) “Aspen and the End of Snow,” by Nathaniel Rich, *Men’s Journal*, January 2014.
- 2) “The Great Oasis: Can a wall of trees stop the Sahara from Spreading?” by Burkhard Bilger, *The New Yorker*, December 19th and 26th 2011.

NATURE AND ADVENTURE JOURNALISM CLASS POLICIES

Academic Honesty is expected at all times. As a UF student, you've agreed to comply with the University Honor Code. Please make sure you understand the code and consequences, here: www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/. Any violations in our class will be reported to the Dean of Students. You must also pay special attention to journalistic ethics, plagiarism and copyright. Please also understand the College of Journalism's statement, here: www.jou.ufl.edu/academics/bachelors/journalism/academic-honesty/.

Class attendance and make-up work: Requirements for class attendance and other work fall under UF policies: catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx. Any reason for absence from regular class that does not appear on this list of excused absences will result in an automatic 20-point deduction per missed class.

Late assignments/quizzes policy: Meeting deadline is crucial to your future success and relationship with bosses/editors, in journalism or any other field. On all assignments, your grade will drop one full letter grade for each day overdue.

Students with disabilities: All reasonable accommodations will be made. Should you need them, please register first with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) and provide documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter you'll provide to me. Please do this as early in the semester as possible.

Course and instructor evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Please do so; as a new teacher, I've found student feedback really helpful for improving my classes. Evaluations are typically open during the last weeks of the semester; I'll let you know when they open. Summary results of these assessments are available at: evaluations.ufl.edu/results/

Sustainability in class: Please, no bottled water or any beverages in throw-away bottles. Beverages in durable, reusable containers are fine. I try not to print paper and we'll share work electronically, with one exception. On the first day of class, I print the syllabus for everyone so we can go through it together, make notes and keep it as a road map. If you prefer that I not print this copy for you, and you'll have a device in class to easily read along, please email or text me.

Your instructor: Cynthia Barnett is Environmental Journalist in Residence at the UF College of Journalism and Communications. She is author of the water books *Mirage: Florida and the Vanishing Water of the Eastern U.S.* (2007); *Blue Revolution: Unmaking America's Water Crisis* (2011); and *Rain: A Natural and Cultural History* (2015), long-listed for the National Book Award and a finalist for the PEN/E.O. Wilson Award for Literary Science Writing. She's written on the environment for *National Geographic*, the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, the *Atlantic*, *Discover*, *Salon*, *Politico*, *Orion*, *Ensaia* and many other publications. She earned her bachelor's in journalism and master's in environmental history, both from UF, and spent a year as a Knight-Wallace Fellow at the University of Michigan specializing in freshwater.