

The Conservation of Natural Resources  
~ Your Cargo Cult College ~  
Dr. Walt Aikman

**Home Essay Project: Language, Intimacy, and Land**

**Project Description:**

The Home Essay project is designed to foster a sense of place. Part of this is knowing something about the geography and the natural environment of where we grew up and where we live, but it is also about recognizing and accounting for the ways in which the landscapes, communities, and relationships around us makes us who we are.

The main idea in this project is to think beyond the physical confines of the structure where you dwell, and consider where you live in time and space.

**Principle Tasks:**

Begin in light of the ideas in Barry Lopez's essay from the Good Oak assignment and the paragraph on relationships (quoted below) from a book by Laura Sewall. Connect what Lopez says about vulnerability to the ideas in Sewall's paragraph. Be sure to bear two things in mind: how do these ideas relate to what Aldo Leopold writes in his essay, "The Land Ethic", starting on page 237 of the Sand County Almanac, and to your own experience? You are wise to cite, reference and quote these authors.

**Project Format:**

1. Typed biographical essay 3 to 5 pages in length. Writing in the first person is acceptable. eMail OK.
2. Video or audio Public Service Announcement (PSA) not more than 5 minutes in length, addressing a pressing natural resource conservation challenge that has a local dimension. Team work OK.
3. Conceive and demonstrate an outdoor art project that connects community and environment. Team work OK.

**Project Resources:**

Additional project design resources are available to those who email me with a rough idea of what they have in mind. These include: clarification, suggestions and contacts for applicable PSA projects, examples of art efforts that embody the best of this kind of work.

This project is due by the midterm exam.

“Robert Greenway carefully defines relationships as “any exchange in which both or all participants are changed in at least one way.” By definition, being in relationship changes us. Do we fear the change that is inevitably part of engaging in an honest relationships with the Others, the world, with the earth processes upon which we are inescapably reliant? Are we fearful of confronting the fact of our own collusion in the destruction of our planet, the ground of our being? If we look at the world with an honest eye, will we have to step out of our comfortable cocoons in order to be in relationship with the world as it truly is? At the core, is our fear about being in an honest, deeper relationship? Is our fear a fear of depth, the very dimension we most hunger for?”

From: Sight and Sensibility, by Laura Sewall, 1999, NY, Putnam.