

Marion Belanger

FALL 2025 Arts 624

CT State Parks: A Collaborative Photographic Project

Mondays. 6-8:30pm, In Person Location TBA

Syllabus (subject to change)

This class requires students to work at one state park or forest of their choice for the entire semester. While a state park will be the site of your study, your work will not be limited to nature or the environment. Portraiture, self-portraiture, performance, fictional narratives, and archival research-based work are all viable and exciting possibilities for study. In addition to your personal photographic work, you are expected to collaborate with your classmates on a final group project. This might be a collection of postcards, or the publishing of a digital on-demand book.

This seminar attempts to do several things at once: we will develop a visual astuteness by which we make and speak about pictures, and we will further our awareness of contemporary photographers. We will explore contemporary dialogues regarding public land use with particular emphasis upon diversity and access, and we will also develop our own photographic competence. Finally, this class is collaborative in nature. As such, group participation and a generous understanding of what each individual can bring to the class is a requirement for a successful collaborative outcome.

I have assigned weekly photographic and reading assignments along with the viewing of movies and videos. A wonderful resource are the many virtual artist talks that have arisen during the pandemic. We will be taking advantage of them throughout the class. Class participation is very important, especially as this course has a collaborative component. I also expect everyone to research the history and origin of your park. A portfolio of 10 images, made in your park and high-quality printed, is due on the final class, as is your collaborative project. A list of photographic printing labs will be provided. Students must provide their own camera. Recommended is a high-quality digital camera with a manual control option, but a phone camera is an additional option.

Additional course cost (for printing final collaborative project): approx. \$75, as well as fees for viewing online movies.

Objectives

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Required Texts

Rebecca Solnit, Wanderlust: A History of Walking

Viking Books

ISBN: 0-670-88209-7

David Company, On Photographs

Publisher: MIT Press

ISBN: 9780262044240

Weekly Assignments

Students will be expected to produce photographic responses to class issues pertaining to “landscape”.

Each person will present his or her images to the class for critique. Weekly readings will inform our visual investigations and provide a context for dialogue.

Papers

One paper pertaining to the history and function of your park, your relationship to the park, and how your work in the park evolved - 3-4 pages.

Presentation on a Contemporary Landscape Photographer

Students will present on the work of a landscape photographer selected from a provided list. Presentations should be approximately 20 minutes and include visuals. Information can be obtained from books, reviews, galleries, interviews, video.

Final Project

A photographic project, which may be worked on collaboratively or individually, will be due at the end of class. The project will be informed by the readings and discussions in the course, should be personally meaningful, technically competent, and visually compelling. The project should contain at least ten images per person that form a coherent body of work. Presentation is important, and the work should be in a portfolio or book format. A short written statement regarding the project must be included.

Class Participation: This is a seminar/studio class. You are expected to do the weekly readings and to contribute to discussions regarding the readings and to be active participants in weekly critiques.

Attendance: Required, unless I am notified, and for good reason, ahead of time. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to make up the work. It will be a challenge to pass the course if 2 classes are missed.

Evaluation:

| | |
|---------------------|-----|
| Visual assignments | 50% |
| Paper | 10% |
| Class participation | 20% |
| Class presentation | 20% |

USEFUL PHOTOGRAPHY LINKS

<http://www.artphotoindex.com/api/>
<http://www.americansuburbx.com/>
<http://www.icp.org/>
<http://www.photography-guide.com/>
<http://www.aperture.org/>
<http://www.photoeye.com/>
<http://zonezero.com/>
<http://www.flakphoto.com/>
<http://www.jmcolberg.com/weblog/>
<http://www.luminous-lint.com/app/home/>
<http://www.lensculture.com/webloglc/index.html>
<http://5b4.blogspot.com/>
<http://www.photography-guide.com/index2.php>
<http://seesawmagazine.com/>

STATE PARK LINKS

<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/StateParks/Connecticut-State-Parks-and-Forests>
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/stateparks/history/ParksHistoryBooklet2014pdf.pdf>

Week 1

Introduction & The Idea of the Landscape

Tod Papageorge – Passing Through Eden: Photographs of Central Park

<http://www.seesawmagazine.com/papageorgepages/papageorgeinterview.html>

<http://bombsite.com/issues/97/articles/2844>

Visit:

<https://mocact.org/exhibitions/>

Cristian Cooper

<https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/10000007159234/amy-cooper-dog-central-park-police-video.html>

Racism Outdoors (Audubon)

<https://www.audubon.org/news/watch-conversation-about-racism-outdoors>

Justin Kimball – Where We Find Ourselves

<http://www.justinkimballphotography.com/>

Reading:

Jackson, John Brinckerhoff: *The Word Itself; Beyond Wilderness; In Favor of Trees; The Past and Future Park; Roads Belong in the Landscape*

Callicott, J. Baird: *The Puritan Origins of the American Wilderness*

Burke, Edmund: *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Idea on the Sublime and the Beautiful*

Price, Uvedale, *A Essay on the Picturesque*

Barrell, John: *The Idea of the Landscape in the Eighteenth Century*

Freidman, Kenneth: *Words on the Environment*

On reserve: 14 American Photographers
Viewing Olmstead

Assignment: Photograph LIGHT at a CT State Park of your choosing. By next week you should determine the park that you will be working in. Bring 4 of these images to the next class.

Week 2 CLASS WIDE CRITIQUE

The Garden

Determine choice of photographer for presentation by today

Critique of images from last week.

Reading: Feinberg, Jean E: *Wave Hill Pictured: The Landscape, The Garden, and Photography*
Solnit, Chapter 6

Szarkowski, John: *The Photographer in the Garden*

On reserve: Wave Hill Pictured
Ocean Flowers

Assignment: Photograph the garden (or a cultivated area) in the park. Make self portraits and pay attention to depth of field.

Week 3 (Date to be confirmed)

Introduction to Book Art & Library Field Trip

Special Collections & Archives,

Olin Library (1st floor east, behind the glass door next to the stairs)

Links

<https://pier24.org/exhibition/turning-the-page/educational-materials/>

[MACK BOOKS](#)

[RADIUS BOOKS](#)

Assignment: Photograph people in your park.

Week 4

PRESENTATIONS 1,2, (CRITIQUES A)

Walking Art –Reading:

Joel Sternfeld - Walking the Highline

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INzr7g8FQgk>

<http://www.thehighline.org/galleries/images/joel-sternfeld>

Reading:

Solnit: Chapters 1,2,7,8

Fulton, Hamish: *Into a Walk Into Nature*

On reserve: Walking Artist: Selected Walks 1969-1989

Week 5 (CRITIQUES B)

PRESENTATIONS 3,4

Photographic Collaborations

On reserve:

Becher: Industrial Landscape

Gossage/Weifenbach: Snake Eyes

Assignment: Begin to explore and photograph your final project subject

Week 6 (CRITIQUES A)

PRESENTATIONS 5,6

Tourism

Critique and discussion of final project

Reading: Packet: Alexander Wilson, *The View from the Road:*

Recreation and Tourism

Wilson, *From Reserve to Microenvironment: Nature Parks and Zoos*

Lucy Lippard, *On Rubbernecking*

Assignment: Final Project

Week 7 (CRITIQUES B)

PRESENTATIONS 6,7

On reserve:

Freidus: *Typologies: Nine Contemporary Photographers*

Week 8 (CRITIQUES A)

PRESENTATIONS 8,9

Seriality and Repetition

<http://tanyamarcuse.com>

<http://www.amburkedaly.net>

<http://pier24.org/exhibitions/>

Assignment: Final Project

Week 9 (CRITIQUES B)
PRESENTATIONS 10,11
SEQUENCING & EDITING
Assignment: Final Project

Week 10 BREAK
Assignment: Final Project

Week 11
Response Paper to an exhibition is due by today.
SEQUENCING & EDITING,

Week 12
PRE-CRITIQUE WORK DAY

Week 13
Final Critique