

A Breath of Fresh Air

Acclaimed works of nature writing

Purpose: In this seminar, we will read and discuss seven acclaimed works of American and British nature writing and explore their unique and varied perspectives on the impact of the natural world on humans.

Moderator:	Jonathan Jay
Co-moderator:	Eve Endicott
Date and Time:	Wednesday morning, 10:00-Noon 10 weeks, starting September 26
Format:	Seminar
Location:	UMass University Without Walls, room 113

Description: Nature writing has evolved into a distinctive form of literary expression. While always acutely observant of landscape and wildlife and sometimes bordering on the scientific, it is often highly personal, philosophical, and with a spiritual dimension. We will look at several accomplished female and male writers, American and British, from the early 20th Century to the present, who explore, contemplate, and frequently rhapsodize about a diverse group of landscapes and ecosystems – from Atlantic seashores to the Southwest desert, from the English Fens to the Lake District.

This is a sequel to the “Classics of American Nature Writing” seminar offered in 2015. All the readings in this seminar are different, and participation in the earlier seminar is not expected.

Role of participants: All will read the same seven books listed below (beginning in the summer – recommended), and each participant will co-lead the discussion of one of these books. The moderators will provide sample discussion questions.

Resources: *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place*, Terry Tempest Williams; *The Edge of the Sea*, Rachel Carson; *The Outer Beach: A Thousand Mile Walk on Cape Cod's Atlantic Shore*, Robert Finch; *The Peregrine*, J. A. Baker; *The Land of Little Rain*, Mary Austin; *The Wild Places*, Robert Macfarlane; *New and Selected Poems, Volume Two*, Mary Oliver.

About the Moderators: Jonathan Jay, a retired attorney and mediator, has moderated two previous 5CLIR seminars, including “Classics of American Nature Writing”. Eve Endicott spent a 43-year career in land conservation with The Nature Conservancy and other groups and has written on land conservation. She has taken several LIR seminars, including the predecessor of this one. They both enjoy a lifelong appreciation of the outdoors and are avid hikers.

Maximum number of participants: 16

Auditors accepted: yes, up to 2

Course # 18FBF