**Special Topics in Psychology: Environmental Psychology (Cr.3)**  
50:830:461:Sec.W3:00171 **BSB 118**  
M 12/23/13, Th-F 1/2/14-1/3/14, M,Tu,W,Th 1/6/14-1/16/14 1:00pm-4:40pm  
**Duffy, Sean**  
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*Pre-requisite: 50:830:101 or 135.* In this course we will examine philosophical and psychological literature regarding the relationship between humans and natural and built environments. Topics addressed include the psychology underlying environmental concerns about issues such as climate change and recycling, our interactions with animals (including pets and the use of "therapy pets" in clinical settings such as hospitals and nursing homes), and the role of natural and urban settings on health, well-being, and thought. Other topics such as the design of objects (ergonomics) and the psychology of architecture and landscaping will be addressed as well.

**Course components**

1. Attendance is mandatory (100%)

2. Being a discussion leader for a day, coming up with a presentation (20%)

3. Reading review and discussion question every day (20%)

4. Homework assignments and projects (20%)

5. Assignment associated with Jan 8 experiential learning assignment (20%)

6. Final exam (20%)

**Course Schedule**

**12/23/13: Intro to the course / Film / Discussion**

Readings: none, come ready to discuss

*Documentary: Samsara (2012)*

**1/2/13: What can Environmental Psychology do and how do we think about space?**

Readings:

Making a difference: Some ways that Environmental Psychology has improved the World (Ch. 21)

Bridging the Gap: How Scientists can make a difference (ch. 22)

Thinking About Space (Newcombe and Huttenlocher ch 2 Making Space)

*Documentary: Ten buildings that changed America (2013)*

**1/3/13: Spaces we design and build: Architecture as Cultural Transmission**

Readings:

Junichiro Tanazaki – In praise of Shadows

Brad Shore – Interior furnishings: Scenes from an American Foundational Schema

Goldberger: Meaning, Culture, Symbol

*Documentary: John Portman (2012)*

HOMEWORK 1: Analyze an environment

**1/6/13: Art, Architecture, Aesthetics, and Environment**

Readings:

Don Norman: The psychopathology of everyday things

Goldberger: Architecture and memory

Another reading to be determined.

*Documentary: How much does your building weigh, Mr. Foster (2012)*

Homework 2: Norman object competition and show and tell

**1/7/13: The urban revolution: From cities to suburbs and back to cities.**

Readings:

David Owen - More like Manhattan

Goldberger: Buildings and the making of place

Another reading to be determined

*Documentary: Urbanized (2011)*

**1/8/13 – Dr. Duffy will be at National Science Foundation**

**Experiential Learning Assignment / Several Readings to be determined**

**1/9/13: Exploring our implicit connections with the natural world**

Readings:

Wilson – Biophilia excerpts

Schultz, W. Implicit connection with nature

Verges & Duffy (2008) Connected to birds but not bees: Valence moderates implicit connection to nature

Schultz, Bees sting article…

Duffy & Verges (2010) Forces of nature affect implicit connection with nature.

*Documentary: Alone in the wilderness*

Homework 3: Create a Gallsworthy Sculpture

**1/13/13: From places and spaces to saving the world**

Readings:

Environmental Psychology: From Spatial-Physical Environments to Sustainable Development

The challenge of increasing pro-environmental behavior

Todd and Gigerenzer: Environments that make us smart

Duffy & Verges (2008). It matters a hole lot: Environmental Affordances

*Documentary: Objectified*

Jan 8 experiential learning assignment due (TBA)

**1/14/14: Helpful Environments for living and healing: Focus on the role of animals**

Readings:

Healthy Residential Environments (ch 26)

Occupational Therapy Incorporating Animals with Children with Autism

Pet therapy and institutionalized elderly: A study on 144 cognitively unimpaired subjects

Play and pets: The Physical and Emotional Impact of Child Life and Pet Therapy in Hospitalized Children

*Documentary: Olmstead and America’s Parks*

We will be visited by a therapy dog, Aimee, and a therapy dog trainer.

**1/15/15: Harmful Environments: Crime, Noise, Disaster, and Pollution**

Readings:

Climate, Weather, and Crime (ch. 31)

The History and Future of Disaster Research (ch. 33)

Noise Pollution: A hazard to physical and mental well-being (ch. 32)

Contamination: The Invisible Built Environment (ch. 36)

Homework 4: Scarlet Raptors? No GREEN raptors.

**1/16/16: The Future of Environmental Psychology – Digital worlds and other worlds**

Readings:

Personal Space in the Digital Age (Ch. 40)

Toward an Environmental Psychology of the Internet (Ch. 41)

On to Mars! (Ch. 42)

**Final Exam**

Great documentaries:

Alone in the wilderness

John Portman

10 buildings changed America

Olmstead

How much does your building weigh, Mr. Foster? (Netflix)

Urbanized (Netflix)

Objectified(Netflix)

10 buildings that changed America

Science of Dogs (Netflix)

Vanishing of the bees (Netflix)

Inconvenient truth (Netflix)

John Portman

Carbon Nation (Netflix 80 min)

Betty White: Champion of Animals

**Homework 1: Analyze an environment**

Identify an environment you would be interested in analyzing. It could be a mall, a home, a park, a church. I want you to reflect upon the psychology of the space. Was it designed minding human action, perception, and cognition? What sort of human activities was this space designed to afford? Do human activities occur that go contrary to the intentions of the designers? How does this space make you feel? What emotions – positive or negative - does this space elicit? What cognitions come up – does this space make you think about something. Please document your ideas with photographic evidence. 2-3 pages

**Homework 2: Norman object competition**

In the Psychopathology of everyday things article, we learn about Norman Objects. Objects that frustrate us in the poor psychology of their design. For this assignment, I want you to identify a norman object in your world and to also go beyond that and CREATE a norman object! Bonus points to those who bring in a physical object, but a drawing will suffice (see page 13 of the Norman assignment for the bicycle example). You need to write a page each about the characteristics of the objects that make them norman objects and discuss how the objects could be modified to improve their affordances to make them “smart” objects. We will have a Norman object show and tell.

**Homework 3: Create a Goldsworthy Sculpture.**

Andy Goldsworthy is a British environmental sculptor who does environmental art. He will find a remote location, collect objects, and arrange them in a particular fashion and photograph it and leave it as it is. So he will arrange a circle of stones in a forest in such a way that plays with color and form and photographs it and leaves it. You can read about him here but also do a google image search for his work to get inspiration.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andy_Goldsworthy>

I would like you to create your own earth sculpture by going to some kind of natural location, collect natural objects, arrange them in a particular way, photograph it, and write an essay of about 2-3 pages about why you chose that location and those objects, why you arranged them the way you did, and reflect upon the experience. You can also elect to find a built environment and unnatural objects and do a similar thing.

**Homework 4: Scarlet Raptors? No GREEN raptors!**

I would like you to reflect upon how we could make Rutgers more GREEN. (Getting Rutgers Environmentally Empowered NOW!) How could we change policies to increase the number of students who ride public transportation, walk, or bike to campus? How could we better reduce our carbon footprint? How could we improve recycling compliance? What changes need to occur on campus in order to afford more efficient and mindful behavior that would improve the well-being of the users – students, faculty, staff, administrators. Your answers can be in words and images, 2-3 pages.