

# *Cognition in the Wild*



*Psychology 4130-01/02  
Spring 2018 (T, Th 9:10 – 10:30)  
Professor David Strayer*

*"Wilderness reminds us what it means to be human, what we are connected to rather than what we are separate from. ... Perhaps that is why every pilgrimage to the desert is a pilgrimage to the self. There is no place to hide and so we are found."*

*Terry Tempest Williams*

## **Overview**

*This seminar focuses on how our mental experience is connected to the environment. We will use Southern Utah as a case study in exploring this phenomenon. As part of the course, we will take a 5-day field trip to Southern Utah. We will hike the slickrock, explore slot canyons, study pictographs and petroglyphs, and visit several Anasazi dwellings. The course is a seminar format in which we will collectively read papers, chapters, or books on various topics and then have class discussions about the readings. The class is designed to be a collaborative experience, where we learn from each other. Students will also keep a journal where they write short thought papers based on the readings, discussions, and experiences. Grading will be based on participation in class, participation in the field trip, journals, a class presentation, and a larger paper due at the end of class that ties everything together. We will sample quite broadly from the literature. Some readings will be from Psychology, but we will also read papers from Anthropology, Geology, Environmental Studies, Ecology, etc. The class should be fun and thought provoking, but it does require reading, writing, and field experience*

*Note:* *Many of the sites that we will be exploring are ecologically and archeologically sensitive. The ethos of this class is to leave no trace of our visit to this fragile ecosystem.*



### ***Class Schedule and Readings***

(Readings on-line at <http://www.psych.utah.edu/psych4130>)

- Jan 9***      *Class Overview & Introductions*
- Jan 11***      ***Readings*** from *Desert Solitaire* by E. Abbey  
                 *Author Introduction*  
                 *The First Morning*  
                 *Solitaire*
- Jan 16***      ***Readings*** from *Desert Solitaire* by E. Abbey  
                 *The Serpents of Paradise*  
                 *Cliffrose and Bayonets*  
                 *Polemic: Industrial Tourism and National Parks*
- Jan 18***      Guest lecture by **Ken Sanders** of Ken Sanders rare and used books  
                 ***Readings*** from *Desert Solitaire* by E. Abbey  
                 *Water*  
                 *The Heat of Noon: Rock and Tree and Cloud*  
                 *The Moon-Eyed Horse*
- Jan 23***      ***Readings*** from *Desert Solitaire* by E. Abbey  
                 *Havas*  
                 *The Dead Man at Grandview Point*  
                 *Episodes and Visions*
- Jan 25***      ***Reading*** *The End of Nature* by B. McBidden
- Jan 30***      Presentation by Olivia Juarez from the ***Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance***  
                 ***Reading*** *The Wilderness Letter* by W. Stegner  
                 ***Reading*** from *Cadillac Desert* by M. Reisner (Introduction)
- Feb 1***      ***Reading from*** *the Third Chimpanzee* by J. Diamond (Chapter 17 & 18)
- Feb 6***      ***Reading from*** *the Third Chimpanzee* by J. Diamond (Chapters 2 & 14)



- Feb 8***      ***Reading from*** *Collapse* by J. Diamond (Chapter 4)



- Feb 13* Guest lecture by **Glenna Nielsen-Grimm**, collections manager for the UNHM
- Feb 15* **Reading** *Third Nature...* by W. Johnston
- Feb 20* **Reading** from *House of Rain* by C. Childs (pp. 11-52)
- Feb 22* **Reading** from *Cadillac Desert* by M. Reisner (Chapter 1)
- Feb 27* **Reading** from *Cadillac Desert* by M. Reisner (Chapters 3 & 4)
- Mar 1* **Reading** *The Restorative Benefits of Nature...* by S. Kaplan  
**Reading** *The Cognitive Benefits of Interacting with Nature* by M. Berman et al.
- Mar 6* **The Andean Cosmvision (Guest Lecture by Oakley Gordon)**  
**Reading** from *House of Rain* by C. Childs (pp. 55-104)
- Mar 8* **Nature, Affect, & Stress (Guest Lecture by Emily Scott)**  
**Reading** *Creativity in the Wild...* by R. Atchley et al.  
**Reading** *Stress Recovery ...* by Ulrich et al.,
- Mar 13* **Reading: The Nature Fix** by Florence Williams
- Mar 15* **Guest lecturer Florence Williams**  
**Reading: The Nature Fix** by Florence Williams
- Mar 18-25* **Spring Break**
- Mar 27* **Nature and the Brain (Guest Lecture by Rachel Hopman)**  
**Reading: The Nature Fix** by Florence Williams
- Mar 29* **Reading** from *House of Rain* by C. Childs (pp. 107-175)
- Apr 3* **Nature and Cognition (Guest Lecture by Sara Lotemphio)**  
**Reading: The Nature Fix** by Florence Williams
- Apr 5* **Reading** from *House of Rain* by C. Childs (pp. 179-231)
- Apr 10* **Preparation for field trip to Bluff/Comb Ridge**  
**Reading** from *Cowboys and Cave Dwellers* by Blackburn & Williamson (Ch 1)



*Apr 11-15      Field trip to Bluff/Comb Ridge*

*Apr 17            Reflections on the trip to Bluff/Comb Ridge*

*Apr 19            Reading from Desert Solitaire by E. Abbey  
                         Down the River  
                         Reading from House of Rain by C. Childs (pp. 235-283)*

*Apr 24            No Class!!!*

*May 2             Term papers are due by today*

**Required Books** Find them at **Ken Sanders Rare and Used Books** (268 S. 200 E.)

- *Desert Solitaire: A season in the Wilderness* by E. Abbey
- *House of Rain: Tracking a Vanished Civilization across the American Southwest* by C. Childs
- *The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier, and More Creative* by F. Williams

### **Optional Books**

- *Cadillac Desert: The American West and its Disappearing Water* by M. Reisner
- *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* by J. Diamond
- *The Third Chimpanzee: The Evolution and Future of the Human Animal* by J. Diamond

### **Writing Mode**

Students wishing to receive credit for a writing mode of learning can register for Psych 3905-01. Note that registering for the writing mode is not required for Psych 4130-1; however, participation in the writing process is a required element for both sections of the class. That is, you will need to do the writing element regardless of whether or not you sign up for Psych 3905-01.

### **Collaborative Learning Mode**

Students wishing to receive credit for a collaborative learning mode can register for psych 3903-01. Note that registering for the collaborative learning mode is not required for Psych 4130; however, participation in the collaborative learning process is a required element of the class. That is, you will need to participate in the collaborative learning process regardless of whether or not you sign up for Psych 3903-01.

### **Class Presentation and Term Paper**

Each student will give a short presentation to the class. The presentations will be made during the field trip. Students should select their presentation topic to fit with one of the general themes of the course. In addition, students will write an end-of-term paper that reflects the topic of their class presentation. The paper will be written in APA style (approximately 10-15 pages, typed, double-spaced, etc.). The paper is due on by April 30th

### **Journals**

Students are required to maintain a journal of their thoughts and reflections concerning the readings, class discussion, field trip, etc. You should expect to make regular entries in your journal (e.g., 2-3 times per week). From time to time, you will be asked to turn in your journals for grading. The journals count for 20% of your course grade.

### **Grading**

Participation in Class (including quizzes)	20%
Journals	20%
Field Trip (required)	30%
Class Presentation & Term Paper	30%

## ***Learning Objectives and Assessment***

### ***1. Knowledge Base in Psychology***

- *This learning objective will be acquired through course readings, guest lectures, class discussion, class presentations, and a final term paper. Students will learn how the information applies to various aspects of psychology and living a well-balanced life.*

### ***2. Scientific Inquiries and Critical Thinking***

- *This class will help to foster critical thinking skills and use the natural environment to facilitate innovative and integrative thinking and problem solving.*

### ***3. Ethical and Social Responsibility in a Diverse World***

- *This class will apply ethical principals for interacting with others and interacting with and protecting the natural environment. This will be established with in-class discussions, and the field trip where students will interact with others who may have a different worldview. The class will facilitate social responsibility in how humans interact in the natural world, including the principle of leaving no trace on the landscapes that we visit.*

### ***4. Communication.***

- *This learning objective will be demonstrated in the thought papers, participation in class discussions, journals, class presentation, the field trip and the final term paper.*

### ***5. Professional Development.***

- *This learning objective will foster an appreciation of a socially responsible, well-balanced approach to life. The lessons learned in the course are life-skills that will improve the quality of daily living and help to develop a meaningful professional direction in life.*

## ***More on the Readings***

*The readings that are assigned for each class are classics that have been selected to facilitate class discussion on the various topics of the course. **It is expected that you will have read the material before class so that you can participate fully in class discussion.** Note that 20% of your course grade will be determined by class participation. On occasion, brief quizzes will be given to ensure that you have done the assigned reading.*



## ***Field Trip***

*We will take one field trip to southern Utah. There will be a modest cost associated with the trip, covering travel, food, and camping/lodging. Last year the combined cost of the field trip was approximately \$75 for each student. We will attempt to keep expenses to a minimum, but be prepared to cover the associated costs. Sorry, neither pets nor additional family members are allowed on the field trips. In accordance with University policy, neither illegal drugs nor alcohol are permitted on the field trips.*

***Trip to Comb Ridge (Depart Wed, Apr 11 Return Su Apr 15)***

*Monarch Cave, Moon House Ruin, Citadel Ruin,  
Eagle's Nest, 16 Room Ruin, River House Ruin  
Wolfman Panel, Procession Panel, Sand Island Panel*

*Plan: The field trip is an essential component of the class. Make the commitment to participate (start coordinating your schedule now) – remember that 30% of your course grade is based on the field trip. We will depart Wednesday morning (around 9:00) and return Sunday evening (around 5:00). On the trip we will self-organize into small groups based on interest and ability. Each group will explore a facet of the area that interests them and then report their experiences back to the group in the evening.*



*Rev: March 6th, 2018*