

# EECPerspectives

The Newsletter of the University of Georgia Environmental Ethics Certificate Program

January 2005

## Curt Meine, Aldo Leopold and the Land Ethic: Spring Seminar Series

Conservation biologist Curt Meine brings us an impressive start to our Spring Seminar Series on Tuesday, February 1. Two weeks later, we will award the second annual Feighner Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Paper and Kleiner Award for Outstanding Graduate Paper. Who are the winners? You'll just have to come out on February 15 and find out for yourself!

"[D]o we not already sing our love for and obligation to the land of the free and the home of the brave? Yes, but just what and whom do we love? Certainly not the soil, which we are sending helter-skelter downriver. Certainly not the waters, which we assume have no function except to turn turbines, float barges, and carry off sewage. Certainly not the plants, of which we exterminate whole communities without batting an eye. Certainly not the animals, of which we have already extirpated many of the largest and most beautiful species. A land ethic of course cannot prevent the alteration, management, and use of these 'resources,' but it does affirm their right to continued existence, and, at least in spots, their continued existence in a natural state."

So wrote Aldo Leopold in "The Land Ethic," from *A Sand County Almanac*. That was in 1948; nearly 60 years later his words are still very true. They certainly still ring true to Curt Meine, writer and conservation biologist. Meine is the author of the 1988 biography *Aldo Leopold: His Life and Work*, and the recently released *Correction Lines: Essays on Land, Leopold, and Conservation*. He also co-edited 1999's *The Essential Aldo Leopold*, with Richard Knight.

So it is fitting not only that Curt Meine kick off the Spring EECP Seminar series, but that he start the semester off with a lecture titled, "Emergence of an Idea: Aldo Leopold and the



Conservation of Biological Diversity."

Not simply a chronicler, Meine shares Leopold's desire to foster an ethical relationship between people and the environment. He has served on the board of governors of the Society for Conservation Biology and sits on the editorial boards of the journals *Conservation Biology* and *Environmental Ethics*. Meine also works with the International Crane Foundation. Even in his own backyard, Curt Meine is hard at work: he led the development of a community-driven plan for conserving the now-vacant property of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant, a 7,350-acre World War II munitions factory in his hometown of Sauk Prairie, Wisconsin. In August, 2004, he was one of eight scientists presented with the Biodiversity Leadership Award for their work defending diversity in species-rich and biologically endangered areas. The awards are made by The Bay Foundation and the Josephine Bay Paul and C. Michael Paul Foundation.

Aldo Leopold was a man of varied disciplines: scientist, poet, philosopher; Curt Meine, too, possesses that same type of well-rounded depth. Meine has written: "conservation requires solid science, effective policy, and sound technique; but ultimately conservation is a human activity that is undertaken by people whose commitments are shaped by their culture." Or, in the words of Aldo Leopold: "Acts of creation are ordinarily reserved for gods and poets, but humbler folk may circumvent this restriction if they know how. To plant a pine, for example, one need be neither god nor poet; one need only own a good shovel. By virtue of this curious loophole in the rules, any clodhopper may say: Let there be a tree—and there will be one."

Curt Meine will speak in the Ecology Auditorium at 12:30 pm, Tuesday, Feb. 1

### Spring 2005 Seminar Schedule

Tuesday, Feb. 1: Curt Meine, conservation biologist and author  
Emergence of an Idea: Aldo Leopold and the Conservation of Biological Diversity  
Ecology Auditorium, 12:30 pm

Tuesday, Feb. 15: Kleiner and Feighner Awards Presentation  
Winners and lecture to be announced  
Founders Memorial House, 5:00 pm

Tuesday, March 8: MaryCarol Hunter, UGA  
Trends in Sustainable Design  
Founders Memorial House, 5:00 pm

Tuesday, March 29: Peter Hartel, UGA  
Philosopher's Walk at the Rock and Shoals Outcrop Natural Area  
Meet at Ecology Parking Lot at 5:15 pm for transportation

Thursday & Friday, April 21 & 22: Chattooga Series  
Various lectures and panel discussions

environmental ethics certificate program

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## Apply Yourself! Bringing Your EECF Studies into Real World Situations

As a graduate student of the Historic Preservation program at UGA and part-time executive director of the Madison-Morgan Conservancy (MMC) in Madison, GA, my involvement in the EECF program has proven to be invaluable. The knowledge and technical skills brought into the classroom from the different fields of study involved in the School of Environmental Design (SED) have broadened my knowledge base and provided support for the programs of the MMC.

The mission of the MMC is to provide public education on conservation matters and to protect and enhance the heritage and quality of life of the residents of Morgan County by preserving historic sites, greenspace, farmland, and timberland. Since our inception in 2001, our efforts have been focused on sponsoring educational forums, conservation easements, creating a Greenprint, and aiding Morgan County in their planning efforts.

Morgan County's Greenprint (a map of the county's natural, historic, and cultural resources) will serve as a planning tool for the future development of the county. It has been adopted as part of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan and is the only county-wide Greenprint in Georgia. Using the Greenprint to plan development may result in an enhanced quality of life by: protecting water quality; reducing the county's need to provide public services (water, sewer, fire protection), thus avoiding

raising property taxes; preserving cultural and historic resources; providing recreational opportunities; and protecting, in perpetuity, lands with high conservation value. As you can see, there are many opportunities to incorporate the knowledge provided through the EECF into the programs of the MMC. One such program is our Adopt-A-Stream program, beginning this fall, which will provide an opportunity for volunteers to monitor stream quality in two streams that contribute to Morgan County's drinking water supply. By partnering with the Georgia Wildlife Federation and Georgia Pacific, we will help educate the public on the importance of water quality and the ways in which we all contribute to its degradation.

I am grateful that through my work I am able to disseminate the knowledge I am receiving through the SED. My hope is that the residents of Morgan County will use that knowledge and information in making wise decisions about the future of the county and that they, in turn, will pass along their wisdom to their neighbors and children.

Christine McCauley

*Christine McCauley is a graduate student in the Environmental Ethics Certificate Program. For more information about the Madison-Morgan Conservancy, please contact [eecp@uga.edu](mailto:eecp@uga.edu) and we will forward your questions to Christine.*

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### From Biophilia to Cosmophilia: Critique and Proposal

*Lucas F. Johnston, Certificate Awarded July 2004*

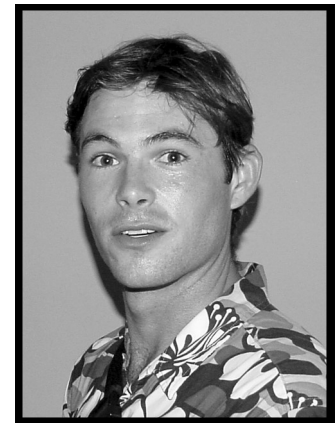
"Biophilia" is a term coined by Edward O. Wilson in his book by the same name. The basic premise of the book is that life exhibits a natural affinity for life. It seeks to evoke a respect for nature and a new foundation for ethics based on the adaptive advantages of ecosystem preservation. The theory has many supporters, as it fits in nicely with evolutionary theory and makes a great deal of common sense. Wilson, Stephen Kellert, and others are driving research on the biophilia hypothesis, demonstrating cross-cultural human affinities for certain types of animals, and for certain types of terrain, among other things. The main crux of the argument is that preservation and appreciation of life and other lifelike processes is a self-serving endeavor. In other words, the primary reason that humans should seek to preserve the environment is that it provides a competitive advantage in the struggle to pass along their own genetic material. Values, in this case, are found in nature only to the extent that nature contributes to human survival.

Richard Dawkins, in discussing the importance of genetic determinants of behavior and cultural development calls this behavior "selfish." As Kellert puts it, biophilia suggests a "self-interested basis for a human ethic of care and conservation of nature, most especially the diversity of life." Moral reasoning,

in this case, is a direct result of evolutionary processes, not some metaphysical formulation of intrinsic worth. Wilson agrees that "the constructs of moral reasoning...are the learning rules, the propensities to acquire or to resist certain emotions and kinds of knowledge. They have evolved genetically because they confer survival and reproduction on human beings."

Ethics is merely the human name for the approach/avoidance responses that are partly inherited, partly learned, and completely biologically based. Kellert claims that there are nine ways of valuing the natural world: utilitarian, naturalistic, ecologicistic-scientific, aesthetic, symbolic, humanistic, moralistic, dominionistic, and negativistic ways of valuing. For example, symbolic value in this case would be described as facilitating imaginative and communicative thought. Naturalistic value would describe the satisfaction derived from exposure to unspoiled wilderness.

Readers: Dorinda Dallmeyer and Will Power



## The Facts and Fiction of a Wild River: Chattooga and the Southern Landscape

*Environmental Dispute Resolution Professor Dorinda Dallmeyer presents information about the upcoming "Chattooga: Wild River, Real and Imagined" conference, to be held from Thursday, April 21 through Saturday, April 23.*

This conference, the second installment of the Southern Nature Project, will combine major lectures from the fields of art history, environmental history, conservation biology, and film criticism to yield an exciting and fascinating exploration of the Chattooga River in all its manifestations.

On the evening of Thursday, April 21, at the Seney-Stovall Chapel, noted environmental historian Jack Temple Kirby will offer the keynote address "Wilderness and the Southern Mind." A nationally recognized scholar, Dr. Kirby's books include *Media-Made Dixie: The South in the American Imagination* (1978); *Rural Worlds Lost: The American South, 1920-1960* (1987); *Poquosin: A Study of Rural Landscape and Society* (1987); and *The Countercultural South* (1995).

The conference continues the following day at The Tate Student Center with the opening lecture "Wildness and the Portrayal of Southern Landscape," delivered by UGA art historian Janice Simon. Buzz Williams of the Chattooga Conservancy will discuss the current environmental challenges the river faces. After lunch we move from the real Chattooga to the imagined Chattooga with a screening of the movie *Deliverance*. The film will be followed by Dickey scholar Bernie Dunlap and nature writer Melissa Walker who will analyze shifting concepts of the importance of wild nature in the lives of men and women.

Friday's events culminate at the Seney-Stovall Chapel with "Reading the River," which will bring together a quartet of Southern nature writers and poets to read from their works inspired by the Chattooga. The evening will feature poet John Lane, essayist Christopher Camuto, novelist Ron Rash, and poet Thorpe Moeckel. These readings will be complemented with interludes of traditional music by the renowned banjo player Art Rosenbaum. We conclude on Saturday with a series of all-day field trips in the Chattooga watershed.

WUGA-FM, the National Public Radio affiliate in Athens, will be involved with broadcasting the Friday evening reading,



either live or on tape. Simultaneous with the conference, photographer Jay Kuhr will have a one-man show of his large-format, black-and-white photos of the Chattooga on exhibit in the Gallery at the Tate Student Center on campus.

Dorinda Dallmeyer

For more information about "Chattooga: Wild River, Real and Imagined," contact [eecp@uga.edu](mailto:eecp@uga.edu)

APRIL 21 - 23, 2005

ATHENS, GEORGIA

REAL AND IMAGINED

Featured speakers:

Jack Temple Kirby · environmental historian

Christopher Camuto · essayist

Bernie Dunlap · critic

Buzz Williams · conservationist

Thorpe Moeckel · poet

Ron Rash · novelist

Janice Simon · art historian

Melissa Walker · essayist

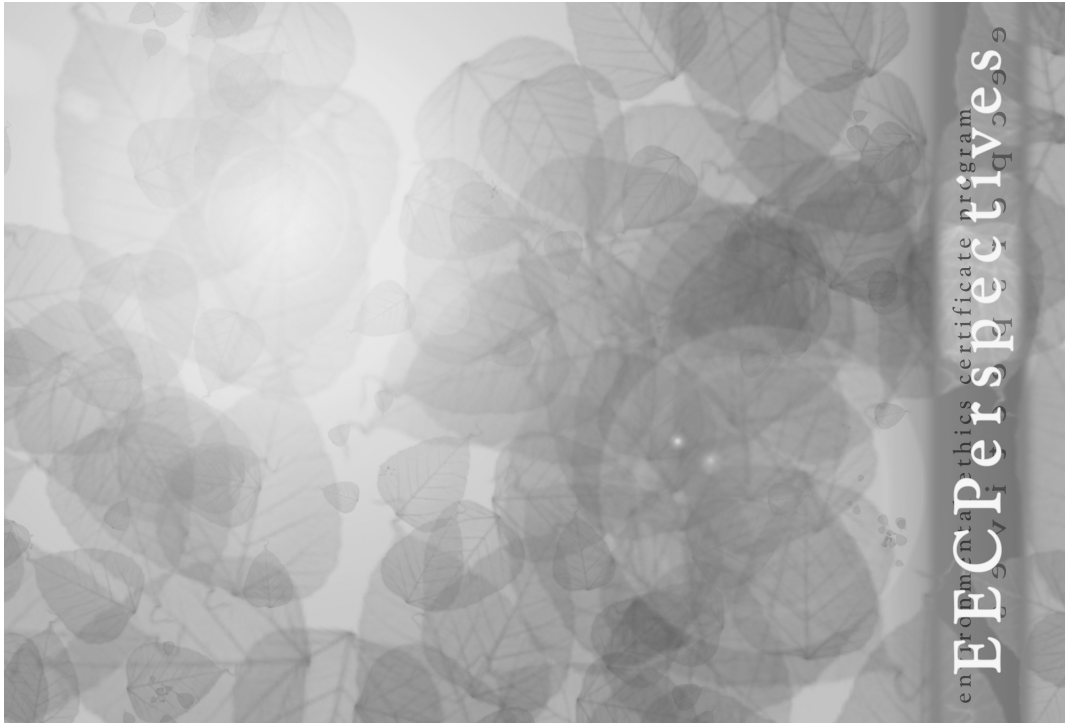
John Lane · poet

The conference  
and events are free  
and open to the public.

For more information call:  
706.543.3141  
or visit our web site:  
<http://www.uga.edu/eecp>  
click on "Chattooga"

CHATTOOGA

WILD RIVER



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Environmental Ethics Certificate Program  
College of Environment and Design  
Founders Memorial House  
325 South Lumpkin St.  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602-1865

