

**Inquiry into the Wild:
Wilderness and Self in American Culture**

English 102
Beth Keefauver

Calling all Wild Women and Grizzly Men: get in touch with your wild side! Ever since Thoreau retreated to his cabin in the woods to “live deliberately,” Americans have journeyed into the wild to gain a deeper understanding of the self and our place in the world. We will first investigate how wilderness has shaped American ideals of masculinity and individuality in texts such as John Krakauer’s *Into the Wild*, Elizabeth Gilbert’s *The Last American Man*, and Werner Herzog’s film *Grizzly Man*. We will then explore the historical development of the American environmental movement from John Muir’s essays to Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* to *Erin Brockovich*. Finally, we will explore contemporary wilderness narratives that shape ongoing conversations of the “green” movement. This course emphasizes field experience as much as traditional research; students will write two papers, complete a final wilderness project, keep a nature journal, participate in an outdoor adventure, and organize an Earth Day event.

For more information, email keef@utk.edu.