Welcome to
lecture number 11. So we're still in the
early modern period,
and it really is early modern rather
than Renaissance.
I think the best way to characterize it
because you'll see that
the issues we're going to deal with
today like the emergence
of modern consumerism, important issue
environmentally,
this happens in this period. So it's-
you know I know we're spending a
little time sort of hanging down here in
this earlier period, but it's just so
important because if we're really
interested in the modern emergence of
environmental attitudes,
and really admire environmental issues
like we've seen with the burning of you
know large-scale burning of fossil fuels,
you know here's where we're going to see
it. So let's jump right
into that. And here is our prezi,
and here we are. Notice we're getting
closer and closer, and

in a sense that's right because even
though we're in the early modern period,
still we're moving forward in time. So
Shakespeare is at the very beginning of
the 17th century,
we're going to be firmly in the 17th
century with today's writers.
So the first one is Cooper's Hill.
This is sir John Denham. Poem was
published quite a few times actually
from 1642 onward,
so but the version we're reading is
actually 1654, it's a longer version.
Ah the proverbial question that I keep
asking again and again,
did you find this particular text
difficult to read?
I asked because as we're getting
closer and closer to our own period,
especially with someone like Denham, the
language is becoming more and more
accessible,
same words, same meaning, so hopefully
it's not too tough.
It's a poem that we don't really read a
whole lot today, scholars don't even

necessarily read it a lot. So if you're
taking a graduate course in
Renaissance English literature you may
not read it, but it was one of the most
popular poems of its time and it was
reprinted you know
literally dozens of times. And why it was
so important because
it is situated right at a very
historically important
event, which is the
Civil War in England, which comes to
a head in 1649 when
parliament's forces defeat the king, put
him on trial, and ultimately behead him.
So it was- Because it dealt with that
issue,
and I just let you know Denham was sort
of
what's called a royalist, he was in the
pro-king camp
there at the time. So
from our point of view, however, what's
interesting is the first
loco-descriptive poem in English.
And what do I mean by that? Well loco,

you know remember we had you know locale
with the word local before.
In this sense it does mean of course
like a location. So it is local
descriptive means
the description of a locale, and often
lush put descriptions of a locale. That's why
it's sometimes called typographical
poetry because it talks about a
particular place.
It's going to become enormously popular
in upcoming
centuries of people like Wordsworth,
who knew and praised “Cooper's Hill.”
So what we're really seeing here, to put
it in
very you know direct terms, is the
emergence of
modern poetry regarding nature, more
generally modern literature regarding
nature.
So when you find a poem celebrating, I
don't know
Yosemite or any particular place, it's
often going to be loco descriptive.
That didn't exist 500 years ago really

as a genre,
kind of but not really, it is here that
it begins, and many people
trace back the beginning of it to
this particular poem. And I would argue
it is sort of ground zero for
modern loco descriptive poetry, or more
generally
ground zero for modern
nature writing. That's a pretty
remarkable claim, but let's see
what this is all about.
So we know the so-called “country-house”
poems, better called country estate poems,
we've read “Cooper's Hill” and
“To Penshurst”. Let me pop in here.
So the thing about those poems
though is the name suggested,
or the better name you know country
estate poems,
they were moored to the estate. And
why? Because we're still in the patronage
model.
So you needed a patron to fund your art,
and
you know if you wrote a celebration of-

Just like if you
were an artist and you painted you know
a painting of the person, or their
family, or whatever, you know those things
you've seen
you know hanging above fireplaces, you
know
here you have to kind of do the same-
you'd had to do the same thing, but sort
of with words paint a description
of the estate where they lived. So you
were locked into that estate, I mean no
one was going to pay you
to describe you know a property you kno
five houses over or another place,
it was always about that. I mean why
would someone pay you to you know paint
another family to hang above your
fireplace,
this is just not the way it worked. So
you can see
while that allowed you know descriptions
of a place, it was very limited,
but here we are freed of that limit. And
this is because,
and I mentioned that “Cooper's Hill” was

reprinted again and again and again.
Well one of the reasons for that is that
Denham wants to keep making money because
now when you print something you can
sell it, you can sell books, not a whole
lot of money, but some.
Denham is kind of a one-hit wonder in
literature, I mentioned one of the most
popular poems in the 17th century,
but he never really had another very
successful one, so he keeps
changing and printing this one to make
it seem like he's adding more and more.
In truth, kind of on the side, he
really didn't add any more. And
in the later editions, he's actually
increasing- he's having the
printer increase the font size so that
it's longer, to make it appear that
you're getting a new expanded version of
the poem,
presumably better, but really it's not
all that much longer, even that much more
changed,
it's just that he's trying to make it
seem longer. It does change in the sense

that
originally it doesn't deal with the
beheading of the king and the new
version does, but beyond that
all those other versions are really just
him trying to get money.
But from our point of view, if you think
about it then, he can write about
whatever he wants as long as he can make
it interesting for the general public or
his audience to buy it,
that's all that he has to worry about, he
is no longer
moored to a particular place or a state.
Now you can see where this is going to
kind of
crack that nut open, and suddenly writers
are going to be able to write about
anything that they want,
and this sets the stage for like
romantic writers like Wordsworth.
It is, generally speaking, local
descriptive literature form of pastoral.
It's sometimes going to you know do
away with the traditions we're used to, I
mean you're not going to see a lot of

sheep and shepherds necessarily
in this sort of local descriptive poetry.
But it generally you know gestures
toward the environment,
and it generally describes
very pleasant places, and it describes
them
as seeming very pleasant. So yeah kind of
like pastoral,
form of pastoral I would argue. This one in
particular though, “Cooper's Hill,” and
again it's really the first,
it doesn't just celebrate a
particularly pristine what we would
think of as a pastoral
location. So it includes actual
descriptions of London,
Saint Paul's cathedral, Windsor Castle,
Saint Anne's Hill.
These are not pastoral features right,
these are not things
out in the environment. So
that I would attribute to it being a
very early form where that's kind of not
gotten fully worked out yet.
As it gets worked out and later works,

and again I keep mentioning something
like Wordsworth,
you're not going to see descriptions of
the city or you wouldn't see like a
cathedral-
urban cathedral like Saint Paul's being
featured there.
But at this point in time we're still
pretty early in the game,
you know he we have different sorts of
descriptions taking place.
So future local descriptive poets, just
to let you know,
are going to make that sort of signature
move of the romantic poets like
Wordsworth, and completely ignore urban
areas.
In a way, that's what the
difference is going to be like,
and more and more a celebration of
the rural
environs. And that's why this you know
becomes nature writing in
a modern sense because it's going to
be a celebration of
natural places, in some cases the more

natural the better.

When we see “Mont Blanc,” a poem coming up

in Wordsworth's era, you're going to see

that this is very much

a celebration of wilderness and all.

And that's where this genre is going,

but it's not there yet

with Cooper's Hill. So this is

a view from Cooper's Hill, as it would

have appeared to Denham.

Windsor Castle is there in the

background.

London would be very far in the distance,

and

controversial question whether Denham

actually would have been able to see

London. He says he was, was he just sort

of metaphorically throwing that in,

not quite sure. You certainly cannot

see it today,

largely because of modern air pollution.

It inaugurates Cooper's Hill, the

genre of the hill poem.

And here's a traditionally a great

exam question,

you know what is this hill- What is the

you know- What is Cooper's Hill
look like, how can- you know from
Denham's description? Well we really
don't know
because you might think, since it's local
descriptive,
it's about that place. So Penshurst,
Cookham, those are actually the estates
and they're mentioned in the title.
Here you're not looking at the actual
feature talked about,
you're looking from the feature. So the
hill poem becomes this
genre where you get up on a hill, and you
have this sort of panoramic view
below, and what you're describing is the
view,
not the hill itself. So it's local
descriptive, but it's not describing
Cooper's Hill. Kind of tricky, see that’s
a great exam question.
Okay let's look at local descriptive
literature
more generally. It's
often very descriptive. And why
is that? Because you know you really want

to try to
capture between the boards
of a book,
you know what the places looks like.
And to do that, the main thing that
writers have at their disposal
is description of representation.
And to do that, they have to lay on more
and more and more
description, and that will
define this as the title, and it is a
good name local descriptive,
as loco-descriptive. So local descriptive
becomes more and more descriptive
because that's the main tool they have. If a
writer wants you to you know
think about it, look at it and all, they
have to use description as
their thing. Becomes more
representational
and less gestural. This will be what
defines nature writing as we go on.
You know if you look at “To Penshurst”
for example, you know
there's not a lot of description there
of the place.

And because it doesn't extensively
employ mimesis, and that's just the
Greek word, often a technical word
the scholars use to talk about
representation.
So these works gesture to
the environment that they're writing
about rather than actually describe it,
and as a consequence, there's not
a lot of use for representation of those
works. Let me explain what I mean.
If you can actually visit a locale
right, so I'll explain in a minute, but
let's say Penshurst estate,
well you don't really need a whole lot
of description at that point, right?
Because you know you know what it's like,
and if I
mention a tree that's there you know
sort of a big tree that everyone knows,
well
you don't need me to describe that,
you've seen that tree, if you actually
lived in the estate
you've seen it a lot. So let's explain
how this works.

In this sense, “To Penshurst” works like
a nature guide; and I'm talking like a
human guy, like a docent in a
park or something,
walking beside you, making gestures all
at the time. So in other words, you're
walking to the Penshurst estate, and
you know the Penshurst estate, but the
nature guy walking with you is going to
tell you about it. “Look, ‘the broad beech
and the chestnut,’” these are lines from
the Penshurst.
“Look, ‘the purple pheasant with the
speckled sides.’” “Look,
‘the painted partridge lies in every
field.’” Well
you know these are not very descriptive
things here, right? “Purple pheasant,” I
mean there's
a one word description. What kind of
partridge? It's a painted
a pheasant- a partridge rather. What
kind of
beech tree? It's a broad beach. Not a
lot of description,
but hey why do you need description

because you know this place, you've seen
this
tree, you've seen the pheasant, you've
seen the partridge.
Social work works best if it does not
overly draw attention to itself and it's
from representational images,
and that makes sense, right? Why would you
need a whole lot of description again if
you
already know it? What you really
need is someone
you know drawing attention to it,
it's almost like a
you know like a meditation guy, you know
someone who's
you know helping you learn meditation.
And
you know what would do there
would be just saying you know
focus on what your mind's thinking, you
know you're not telling the person
anything, you're actually just telling
them to focus on something. And in
this case you're focusing on things,
focus on that partridge over there, focus

on that
pheasant, that's all, but you're not
actually
you know trying to emulate
the active vision by telling them to
focus on it, you're just telling them to
look at it.
Yup. And if you think about it, if that
nature guide, a person next to you,
actually succumb to the temptation
of representation by describing the
countryside in detail.
First, it would be superfluous right
because look at the pheasant, and you
went into like
you know description in the
description in the description, it'd be
kind of counterproductive because you
know if you
really- If
there was an you know an interesting
looking pheasant and someone drew your
attention to it,
well you would want to have a direct
experience of that, right? You wouldn't
want someone look at this, look at that,

look at that. I mean maybe it would be a
little helpful, but after a while would
be a real pain right because you
know you just
you know it would detract from it. I mean
you really want to look at it, and
because it's beautiful, and
that's the real point you know, you want
to focus on this beautiful
you know thing that's happening, this
pheasant crossing your path.
You want someone to just basically shut
up and let you experience it,
and that's what these writers do. And
again,
going back to the patronage model and
all, this makes sense because if
someone's telling you about your own
yard right, which basically this
is,
yeah you don't need a whole lot of
description there, at least
that was not perceived as a necessity at
the time.
Yup. Loco-descriptive poems however
do something completely different

because they attempt to describe what
you may never visit. And that's a
difference right
because suddenly if this is a locale
you've never been- Let's say you're doing
a local descriptive poem
of a region on earth that you've
never visited, somewhere entirely
different, some you know
other country halfway across the planet,
well you're going to need a lot of
description because you don't know what
the plants look like there, you don't
know what the animals look like there. If
we were talking about I don't know New
Zealand where
they're animals like you've never seen,
other than in books,
you're gonna want some description. I
mean if you just have a poem
right, if that's all the
the author has- the writer has at their
disposal,
his description, well you know lay on
some description you know, we need
that.

So because this is going to happen more
and more
as we move forward, description is going
to get more
and more too, you're going to see more
and more of it. So let me
explain that, but first
underscore this. It's attempting to
create an
environment in the text, I don't think
that's too strong of a thing to say.
You know it's at least you know a hope
at emulating the environment in the
text.
Whether they succeed at this is you know
debatable or not,
but really you know what the argument is
here
is to you know create-
If you close your eyes and you listen to
the poem,
you should be able to imagine that place,
if they're doing-
the writer's doing their job and you're
paying attention, and I think that's the
idea.

You don't have to have ever visited
because the environment
is going to be made in your mind, and
it's going to be made through the act of
representation.
That's a big challenge for writers, and
we're going to see writers you know will
approach it a variety of different ways
you know try to achieve this, but that's
the basic goal.
Yup. And you could see by the way
that the same project happens
with not just writers, but with painters
too in essence,
because painters become increasingly
interested in representing
the landscape during the 17th century.
And you know our word landscape, we talk
about landscapes in the sense of a
painting.
What kind of painting is that? Is it a
portrait? No, it's a landscape, so that's a
type of painting.
Right around the time Shakespeare is
writing, near 1600,
landscape comes into the English

language,
and it's increasingly going to be-
landscapes are increasingly going to be
a subject for
painters too. And we can see
what they're doing as sort of a parallel
to what writers are doing.
I'm just curious, do you enjoy-
Well this is actually asking a general
question here, is that do you enjoy
nature
poetry? I'm not sure why you know
everyone would take this class, maybe
you're just doing it to fulfill
you know a general requirement,
maybe you have a broader interest in
environmental issues,
but maybe you have an interest in
like nature writing, and nature poetry,
and enjoy it. And I'm just curious,
you know I can't see the
results here, but
it is a question I would ask, and
if not maybe
you should be looking at more
nature poetry so.

Let's look at artwork as a way of
further understanding this- what- how this
you know local descriptive
tradition is unfolding.
So prior to the Renaissance, painters
made
little effort to accurately represent
landscapes. So here's an example, this is
The Hunt of the Unicorn from the year
1500,
a pretty representative
piece of art from the time. Notice here
that this is a tree, notice that there
are trees here. And in fact, this is meant
to be in a forest where they're hunting
this unicorn,
but it's all about the human presence.
The human presence,
human figures here, human action, well and
the unicorn,
they dominate the scene. So this is a
tree, sure, but
is that tree you know literal? That tree
is being more representational than
anything right I mean
more oh sorry more figurative than

anything
because that's splitting the scene right
down the middle, there's
a reason for that, these are the kind of
things that artists wanted to do with
features of the environment.
They didn't really care a whole lot
of like representing a forest the way a
forest would look.
This is another one, “Crucifixion of Saint
Peter.”
Again, notice you have here a landscape,
there are features of the landscape here,
but for the most part they're
you know
they are dwarfed by the human figures
here.
You know you have city and church in the
background,
they're what's important, not a lot of-
You know I mean it's
meant to be clear that you know you're
outside, you're actually in the landscape,
but
not a lot of effort. And so again, this is
1650, so we're

beginning you know we're rather
before
the English Renaissance anyhow, which is
you know roughly from 1500 to 1700.
However, the first landscapes, and I
mentioned the word landscape comes into
English around Shakespeare's time,
it comes out of Dutch. And you have
people like Pieter Bruegel,
and he's doing some of the first true
landscapes.
So 1565, so we're really contemporary to
what we just looked at, but take a look
at this painting. First,
the landscape dominates the scene here
right.
There are human beings, but look how
they've diminished proportionately. So
remember back with that
you know “The Hunt of the Unicorn,” you
know if you were to actually
you know figure out what percentage of
the whole scene were people, it was a
lot, and the forest was very small.
Here, the people are becoming a smaller
and smaller proportion, and look for that

more generally.
And why is that? Because the emphasis is
switching away from people
toward the landscape, toward the
environment.
So arguably both of these are
anthropocentric
in the sense that it's sort of centered
on human action, it's foregrounded here
and all.
True enough, but the human presence that
is centered on
is becoming smaller and smaller. And also
you know things are beginning to look
right here right, the proportion is
looking right,
perspective is looking right, color is
looking right.
This person obviously cared about the
you know representing the environment as
accurately as
possible. Yup.
And just to put that in a nice little
package, the goal of the
these works is to accurately represent
an environment on

canvas. So
this is moving forward a little, 1640,
1650,
this is Claude Lorrain. And this is,
I would argue, approaching near
photographic fidelity,
so this is looking like a photograph. Is
there anything like metaphorical here
thrown in? Well
subject matter sure, that's a human
building in the background.
But for the most part, this is focusing
on an environment. Human presence
relatively small,
although arguably still anthropocentric
because you know if you draw
lines across here, what's the very center
of the
the scene, that's a human thing, but
it is more and more like a photograph
of a natural scene. And that's a
remarkable transformation to have
happened
here in the couple hundred years we've
been looking at.
More and more photographic. Here's

another Claude Lorrain.
There is a human being in this scene,
so it's kind of anthropocentric, but
gee this looks like you know if you
had
gone to some locale- If you'd gone to
this locale, and there's a local you
know store
selling postcards photographs of the
place, yeah you might want to buy this
one, this probably would be-
have been a great photograph if it had
actually been you know a picture someone
snapped.
But in a way that's what Lorrain is
doing here, he's sort of snapping a
picture for you
by way of a painting.
He's a very important figure Lorraine in
this sense. So
you know human presence in these works
is going, it's getting smaller and
smaller. Here,
huge humans here, smaller here, you have
this tiny human in the scene.
Anthropocentric, all three? Yeah, but

human presence is diminishing and
the converse is then true, you know
and you can see it
right through these three works you know,
the focus is
more and more and more on the
environment.
And again, you can see the same with “The
Hunt of the Unicorn” there.
You know compare these two, and even
though we're just looking at 150 to 200
years separating them,
an enormous amount of difference.
Yup. And with this something big
is happening, and that is you know human
beings
are questioning the role of
human beings. Or how
you know this anthropocentric focus that
we've had for so long,
if that's valid. And more and more
you're going to see, and this is just
a very early modern beginning of it, but
people are going to conceptually start
working on this.
You know what should the role of human

beings be in the planet? Should we have
smaller- much smaller roles? Should
we
be actually not just taking you know a
virtual snapshot by way of a painting
with something like Claude Lorrain did,
but should we be preserving those places?
Are those things
important? So not just as a again a
painting or a scene,
but an actual place. I mean you get to
someone like John Muir
in the late 19th century and the
emergence of the national park system in
the United States,
people are going to actually try not
just to
paint those realistically, but to
actually make sure that those places
exist
somewhere. But to do that, there has to be
a shift away from anthropocentrism.
So to put this- bring this back to our
discussion
of local descriptive literature, what
Denham is beginning to do

here, and what we're going to be seeing
more and more, is
like what these artists are doing.
Imagine you know
the first works that we looked at,
someone
that- We didn't really pay it- look at
a great
deal of those actually, I could have
given you works of literature that would
have been sort of the literary parallel of
“The Hunt of the Unicorn.”
And in that case there would be very
little nature, there may be some
description of it if it said in the
forest
you know, but beyond that, not. But
what we're having with people like Denham
is a real focus
again and again and again on the
environment.
You know and two, what these writers are
going to be doing is like what Claude
Lorrain was doing,
is going for a lack of a better way of
putting, photographic

realism, to try to make the scene as
accurate as possible. And
you know descriptions will become more
precise of the environment, and they're
going to be a heck of a lot
more of them. So the goal would be,
well you know if you're
totally a visual artist
you know, what's the goal? Well do what
Lorrain is doing, try to paint something
that looks like a photograph so you
could hand it to the person.
If you're a literary person, you know
the goal is the same, but it's not visual.
So close your eyes
and I will now describe this place, it
may take me hundreds of lines of poetry,
but I'm going to try to describe it in
as much detail, as much precision as
necessary.
So the end will be the same, that you
will have an image in your mind of what
the place looks like
that will be kind of similar to Claude
Lorrain's
work.

The interesting thing is, and it's
something to think about, and
Thoreau is going to think about when
get a couple hundred years in the future
here,
is that it's going to seem kind of more
and more like scientific writing. And
at this period, the 17th century, I don't
know that the two were- well the two were
not as separated as
they are today, so like poetry and nature
writing. Even with Thoreau they're not
because you could see, you know if you're
accurately describing a bird you might
start
talking about features that would sound
a lot
like you know why scientists might talk
about
you know how their head is shaped or
something. So
the idea of being a naturalist and a
writer, or a
writer who is a naturalist, are kind of
blurring together, and a naturalist
sort of a science person looking at the

world sort of scientific
precision. So it is an interesting thing
to think about,
we have moved away from that. And I'm-
kind of a spoiler as you get to a
more modern nature writing and all,
we expect
not like a cool detached objective thing,
but rather a subjective experience of it.
So you know what
that bird looked like in the particular
light, or how it seemed to you, or what it
made you feel or something.
But as people are beginning to work out
how to do this
nature writing, in the sense of you know
description of nature,
things are going to be tried and
experimented with,
and part of that will be like scientific
precision.
So Jonson's “Praises of a Country Life”
and Philips’ “A Country Life,” but
the title here you'll see both of these
have country life, country life, or a
country life.

And that's not coincidental that these
two works do.
So both of these poems, and both of them
are in the reader, are
translation of Horace's second Epode. I
didn't give you Horace to read back when
we had Roman writers, even though he's a
contemporary of Virgil Navid,
because I knew I had him coming up in
the 17th century.
So we're going to look at this poem, and
how it was translated differently by
these two writers.
And you know we're really talking about
a difference here of just a few decades,
but it'll show you what's
happening in the period I think.
So contemporary of Virgil.
Seemingly, Horace begins the second
Epode with the celebration of country
life
imagined as a golden age. So this is
going to read like-
you know intended to be classical
pastoral.
You know “Happy the man who, far from

business care, is like the pristine race
of mortals," i.e like the Golden Age from
Hesiod,
"works his ancestral acres with his
steers, from
all money-lending free." So
you know Happy is the person living a
pastoral life,
although it's a little georgic
right, you know he's working the
acres with his steer, so he's plowing and
all. But still,
free of debt and things like that
from the view of
the city, or Horace is writing from
like nearly all pastoral writers,
this life there looks pretty darn good
out in the countryside.
The ending however, so I give you the
first few lines, here are the last four.
"When the money-lender Alfius had
uttered this..." So
you don't learn until the very end, when
Horace pulls the
rug out from under you, that this had
all- has all been

told by a money-lender who lives in
the city
you know. And he “uttered this, one on the
very point of beginning the farmer's
life.” So
he's actually so enamored by the vision
of the countryside,
that he wants to you know call in all
his money and go
live there. “He called on all his funds
by the end of the month…” So in other
words, he
cashed out on everything, he got all
his cash together, and he's ready to
leave and go to the country.
But all of a sudden, at the very last
line, but you know the next month he
seeks to put them out again. So he's
going to stay in the city and stay doing
what he does, which is being a money
lender,
and that's the sort of joke of it.
And
what's really being made fun of here in
the joke is
pastoral poetry. So Horace has a pretty

clear view of
a number of features of pastoral, and he
can emulate it. So one,
he knows this is an urban form, he knows
that it is an idealized form, and the
kind of people who would you know
imagine
this wonderful pastoral country life are
people
like business people in the city like
Alfius and all.
And you know it's a celebration of
country life, and
you know you've read the whole poem, so
you know in the middle there's all that
celebration of country life.
But you know as far as Horace is
concerned, this is just
an urban idealization. And even though
people might want to live that life, say
they want to live it, talk about it and
all, when push comes to shove,
they decide to keep living their urban
lives. So
we're going to see with, for example
Wordsworth, where there's the celebration

of pastoral, and he then
actually does go move out there, and
Thoreau does the same.
But for most of the people writing it,
and this is another conspicuous feature
that you know Horace wants to draw
attention to. Yeah yeah they love
the countryside, they write about the
countryside, they're adoring the
countryside,
they don't go to the countryside, they
you know
their view of it is a city thing.
Now many of
these writers actually did have country
homes, but it's not like they fully
retired there,
that idea will only kind of emerge right
around the time- well right around
our time in the middle of the 17th
century. But for the most part, people
stayed living in the country-
in the city, and Horace wants to draw
attention to that.
And as a consequence, Horace is really
revealing something about pastoral, that

it's a constructed ideal.
So we saw on Shakespeare you know the
duke who believed in the pastoral idea,
believed that that's what
the countryside was really like.
Well Horace knows that this is just
written by people like Alfius,
business people, wealthy people, in the
city.
Yup. He talks about the golden age right,
but he's fully aware that the rural
countryside is not a locus amoenus,
and that it was culturally constructed,
and specifically from the vantage point
of the city.
And of course Horace is you know not
buying into pastoral, but
making a parody of it, making fun of
it. So
it's revealing however that even
though
we see the really emergence of the
pastoral tradition where it gets worked
out in detail by Virgil,
at the very same time, in the very same
place, Rome,

you have someone like- Or about the same
time, you have someone like Horace
also critiquing it as well, letting us
know that you know
it's really not what country
life is like
at all, and it is idealized from the
point of view of the city.
So Jonson, this is our friend Ben
Jonson again, who
does a translation of Horace's second
Epode in the beginning of the 17th
century.
He understands Horace, he understands the
meaning of Horace of course,
and he ensures that that gets passed
through because he does a line-by-line
translation,
and it is very very literal that
translation.
So if you read it, kind of
like reading it in the original Latin,
you would have gotten the full meaning
of it
conveyed to you by Jonson. And Jonson-
that's what Jonson wants to do,

and again remember this is the beginning
of the 17th century.
By the time you get to 1667, this is by
Katherine Philips, I'm going to get to
her in a minute,
she does a translation of Horace's second
Epode that actually leaves off the
ending.
Now remember the ending is so important
because you know
right up to those last four lines, you
buy into the view of pastoral, that's
kind of the joke and the joke's kind of
on you.
You think this is like traditional
pastoral, this is great, this guy is going
to leave everything and go there,
and then at the end you realize that
it's a parody of pastoral.
Well Katherine Philips doesn't want it
to be a parody, she wants it to be
literal pastoral,
and to do that she leaves off the
last lines.
And that- If you've read her version, if
you knew nothing about what you now know

and the tradition or
other translations like Jonson, let
alone read the original,
you would just assume that Horace, like
so many other writers,
wrote a celebration of country life in
his second Epode, which is called “A
Country Life.”
And that's an interesting maneuver, and we’re
gonna talk about you know why that
happens.
But to do so, you have to know
something about Katherine Philips. So
we had Emilia Lanier, who
people would argue, I would argue, the
first professional writer in
England, maybe one of the first
professional writers in
Europe, one of the first professional
writers in the western tradition.
We have Katherine Philips, who is
clearly
one of the most popular women writers in
the 17th century.
She is the most popular woman writer in
the 17th century.

And remember this is an important
century right, this is the you know the
full-blown Renaissance in England with
Shakespeare, and Milton, and all.
Here you have a woman writer who comes
to the scene
in a big way. And you know she knows
just what to say and what not to say,
this is what characterizes Katherine
Philips.
So she constructs herself as
a sort of non-threatening, as a
non-threatening person,
and this is very different than a
contemporary like someone like Margaret
Cavendish.
And let me, before I get to the
environment part,
Margaret Cavendish is an outlandish
character in the 17th century, she's
very interesting. A room of one's own,
you may know that work
references her. She was, yeah I want to
call her like a proto-feminist, she
certainly was in your face
in a way you know. She was

wealthy enough because she had a wealthy
husband who died, which left her with a
fortune and could do whatever she wanted.
She published tons of books, and
she you know was really into clothing,
she dressed in men's clothing.
The Royal Society, which is the first in
in England,
arguably in the West, major scientific
organization, it's an all-male
group. Margaret Cavendish forces her
way into the Royal Society
to be heard and all, she's just outlandish,
in your face,
gender problem person for the period,
and people don't quite know what to make
of her. She's a great character
from like a 21st century point of view, I
mean you gotta love Margaret Cavendish.
But
Katherine Philips is different,
Katherine Philips in a way is just the
opposite. She doesn't want to threaten
anybody, so she writes poems about women
as mothers, as wonderful mothers, that's
the epitome of being a woman

is to be a mother. Not criticizing this
at all, but
I am saying that you know there are
certain perceptions of what a woman was
at the time,
Katherine Philips knows them, she gives
you what you want,
she gives that to you. She's
not going to ruffle any feathers, she's
not challenging anything.
Cavendish kind of challenging
everything,
she writes a book and she
declares herself the empress of the
universe,
and then builds the universe around it.
Yeah again, you gotta love
Cavendish.
But Philips wants
to give you what you want, and turning
back to the environment, she knows that
attitudes toward the environment
are changing. And what that means is,
people are caring more and more about
the environment- interested more about
the environment,

interested in literal pastoral,
interested in the countryside itself,
so she gives you what you want, she gives
you a pastoral view of countryside, even
if she has to modify a poem- an existing
poem to do it.
And what that is is unequivocal praise
of the countryside,
life there is great you
know.
And Philips by the way and you
know
she's a smart person, she's a
well-read person,
she knew what Horace was up to, and
she knew
what the poem was about. But she
decides to
you know give
people what they wanted, which is this
imagined view of the country
as pastoral and perfect. And why do
that? Well because you know,
again London we had the whole air
pollution thing for example,
not very pleasant, people are not really

interested in cities, this is for an
urban audience and they want to imagine
like a better,
kinder, gentler life, and it's out on the
countryside.
And we're going to see this now as
we go roaring forward into modernity,
people want a welcoming, beautiful,
special
nature, and Katherine Philips is one
of the first people to really give it to
them.
Again, using our touchstone person, by the
time you get to Wordsworth and the
romantic poets,
that's going to be a thriving industry
of giving people what they want as a
view of the countryside is wonderful and
beautiful.
Philips is the beginning of that, and
she even you know goes so far as to
hijacking this poem, and not just by
cutting the ending off.
So she actually
adds you know, I note here, over 20 lines
of her

own in translating Horace's text. So
you know she globs off four lines, but
she still makes the thing
16 lines longer by adding 20 lines of
her own.
And these are things that Horace didn't
put in at all,
but Philips knowing her audience,
knowing what they wanted,
thought well this is the kind of stuff
people like so I'll put it in.
You know that it's a very socially
wonderful ideal right, so you know
these country folk they don't rule over
anyone, nor do they envy wealth, so these
people aren't about money. So
we sold this before in imagining
the pastoral places being sort of this
economic ideal where there's no
capitalism and money
being an issue, so that's
happening here already. And
you know they don't eat animals. Well hey
what, that's pretty interesting, and
that's because in this period
there's a growing- it really emerges here

in England at this time
a growing vegetarian movement. And it's
coming, I think I may have mentioned
before in the earlier lecture, out of the
encounter in part with the eastern
culture. And it's actually the vegetarian
diet is often called the Hindu diet
because it was
realized that there were these people
that didn't eat meat and they were
perfectly healthy,
so people started doing that.
Going through the poem: like Thoreau “they
live in simple cottages.”
So we're kind of going back to Ben
Jonson now, this idea that you know
you don't have to
live in a lavish house, the goal would be
to live in something much simpler.
And I mentioned that you know, even
the Penshurst is describing simple,
and it's
not really ultimately a simple place, but
Thoreau gets that final you know end
game with this little baby cottage.
Well you know what's being suggested

here is that Katherine Philips
is also suggesting you live in a simple
cottage.
They are in every way you know
opposed to the city and the state, so
these people they like their simple life,
their way of life, and they're not about
the city, or even the state like you
know big government and all that
you know. And to do all this, all these
descriptions, and notice I
gave you the line numbers here,
these are all just
inner spurs throughout the poem. So it's
not like she leaves off the last four
lines and attacks on 20 at the end,
she just sort of you know puts
it in
throughout the poem. And that's really
interesting because
it just wherever she thought well Horace,
yeah he needs a little embellishment
here, I mean people want to hear
more about what life was like, and they
should know
that you know this is almost like a

socialist thing there. By the way,
by this point in time, we don't- this
course isn't
covering it, but the earliest experiments
with actual
socialism had taken place right about
the time that Denham is chronicling.
When the king is killed in like 1840s
and all,
people are beginning to think well if we
get rid of monarchy, what kind of
government could we get in its place,
and socialism is being experimented with
so.
All sorts of things are happening now,
all sorts of ideals are being put
forward,
and Katherine Philips for her part
wants to
incorporate ideas that she thinks would
intrigue people,
or ways of life that would
intrigue people. You may not want to
become a vegetarian, but you may be
finding intriguing and you may want to
hear about it, and that's what she's

giving you in this poem.
She is clearly, Katherine Philips, a
harbinger
of generations of poets coming after
her,
that will fetishize the environment. What
I mean by that
is, they will just celebrate the
environment, tell you how wonderful
nature is, and nature poetry in a modern
sense
is a genre of doing that.
You know you're going to get people,
and again Wordsworth is our go-to
example, who not only
just celebrate it, but to make sure that
you don't
you know that this isn't just a you know
some sort of allegorical metaphorical
thing.
They actually move to the countryside
themselves.
The irony is, and Wordsworth is a great
example,
Wordsworth actually writes like a tour
guide early in the 19th century to the

lake district where he moves, he moves to
a little town called Grasmere.
And that tour guide, and the whole
tourism industry that Wordsworth helped
promote and bring into being, becomes so
successful that
decades later, you know four decades-
three decades later
in his life, Wordsworth is going to be
mortified that you have all these people
coming out there.
And they're coming out there through
mass transit, so it's not
cars, but the railroad is now
on the scene by the middle of the 19th
century. And one of the first things you
get
are trains coming out to this very rural
area because everybody wanted to go
there,
and you know the ride was kind of hard
before, but now you can hop in a train
and
you know at the time you really zipped
out there. And you know so
you go out there for a week or

so.
Wordsworth actually writes in an
impassioned
you know commentary in the local
newspaper about
you know don't do this, don't do this, but
the cat's out of the bag then, and
tourism of
the environment and all is now going
to be a big thing.
So Philips is part of that, Philips
is early on, and you can see where- now
that we're
you know we're again freed of writing
about
you know like a local estate or
something like we have with Lanier or
Jonson.
Now you can write about everything and
people are going to be celebrating
everything,
and it's going to be the beginning of
something big, which is nature
poetry.
So let's get to John Milton. Did you find
Milton difficult to read?

Well Milton- This poem,
“Paradise Lost,” some people would argue
the greatest poem in the English
language, the greatest long poem in
the English language.
I should note I've written a book on
Milton,
‘Milton in the Environment,’ which had that
very clever title of
Milton and ecology, just what it was
about.
But it is a difficult poem, it is
you know highly layered film covering a
lot of materials sort of film-
poem covering a lot of material. So if
you had difficulty with it, I'm
just kind of telling you don't
feel bad, even people
you know who work a lot with it like me,
you really have to
sit down and study it.
So it's a reinscription
of the opening three books of Genesis,
which you've now read.
So if you recall you know there's you
may- If you hadn’t read

Genesis before, and you know things like
the controversy over
you know evolution and creationism and
all,
you might have assumed that the Bible
covers- you know takes
a big part of the Bible is taken up with
this. You know
creationism, people who believe in it, look
at other parts of the Bible, but really
it comes down to these opening books.
And they're very very short, I mean as
you know they're just a few pages.
But what Milton does, he takes that brief
story of Adam and Eve in the garden of
Eden, and he
expands it into over ten thousand words
of poetry.
And in so doing, Milton provides a really
radical,
and in some cases actually heretical,
interpretation of the scripture.
All those things that we talked about:
you know the Trinity, free will, the
nature of God, the nature of women, the
nature of sin,

and all these other topics, and including
some that are environmental,
Milton takes up here. And he's also
an interesting person to think about in
terms of what we have.
I'll pop back on screen since presumably
you've read this.
He's an interesting person to think
about because
Milton is at the end of what we would
call the reformation,
it's a period of time,
could have done a whole course on it
easily,
where Christianity is being reformed,
that's why it's called the reformation.
And you know when that happens,
one of the chief things that happens, and
Martin Luther is an
early reformation thinker in Germany, he
turns over the question of
interpretation of the Bible,
and more generally Christianity, to the
individual.
Prior to this, questions of dogma,
how you interpret the Bible, how you

interpret Christianity,
were taken up by the church, by the
Catholic church.
And to make that extra
clear,
principally this is done by Catholic
scholars working with the
vulgate Bible, which is a Latin Bible.
Most people didn't read Latin at the
time,
speak Latin. So even if you would have
you know gotten up in church,
which priests- Catholic priests did, and
read a passage of the Bible,
no one would know what you're talking
about because it's in a foreign
language
that you don't read, this
language that couldn't seem more odd,
distant, or foreign. That suited the
Catholic church just fine because
well you shouldn't be trying to figure
this stuff out, but there's a question
regarding free will,
the church will come to that position
for you.

Okay. Well Martin Luther said no,
everybody should figure this out
themselves. So what is one of the first
things Luther does?
He writes a Bible- he translates the
Bible into German,
which was a feat in itself, German is
sort of like a bunch of different kind
of like languages, and dialects, and
regional versions, and Luther puts
it all together in
a way sort of creates the beginning
of modern German in the Bible.
But the idea is that everyone should
interpret the Bible for themselves,
that's a key reformation idea.
Go forward to Milton now, sort of at the
end of the reformation,
he becomes almost the epitome of this
ideal.
Milton you know probably learns and
probably knows seven different languages;
he knows Greek, he learns Latin,
he knows New Testament Greek.
And he is in a wonderful position, he’s a
very bright guy to interpret the Bible

for himself,
and he writes that down as a poem here,
his interpretation of the first three
books of “Paradise Lost,” which is a
remarkable achievement.
But you can see how this is a
fundamental shift in the way
Christianity works
because you know on the one hand you
could say
you know read the Bible literally, why do
you have to interpret anything? So
story of creation happened 6000 years
ago, that's literally what it says,
that's literally what happened, case
closed. Milton doesn't think the case is
closed on anything,
even you know conventional things that
were passed down,
belief about it, he wants to rethink it
all.
And so he very much is part and
parcel with a
modern group of Christian
thinkers, and I given the example
environmentally of Al Gore

or Pope Francis, who want to interpret
that text,
and want to take up the job of
interpreting it and not reading it
literally.
So let's jump forward and see how this
works.
You know Milton's Eden, what he's
describing-
Sorry we're a little cropped here, I
was trying to get a lot on, see if I can
move this down a little. Milton's Eden is
a locus amoenus,
even though you know Adam and Eve garden
there.
So you remember that you know
after the fall, in the account that of
Genesis that we read, 3.17 and 19,
georgic labor is a punishment. But
Milton has
them gardening, and the reason
arguably is what I mentioned here at the
end,
is like Al Gore he's a proponent of
Christian stewardship
that's approaching the planet. So

there's a question that people have you know
throughout the West, and that is what is
the proper relationship that human beings should have
to the planet as far as laid out in Genesis?
Well after the fall thing shift and
it's kind of confusing, but Milton says
well let's not make it confusing.
We don't know that Adam and Eve weren't
doing labor before the fall,
maybe they were, maybe afterwards it
becomes a punishment and changes a little,
but you know maybe they had to tend the
garden to take care of the garden.
Now why is that important? Well because
maybe that's what God
wanted us all to do as human beings,
maybe he put us here on the planet
to take care of the planet, to lovingly
tend it and make sure that it was okay.
So you know if trees get- If you
have vines wrapping around trees and
they're choking out the trees,

which you have in “Paradise Lost,” you know
Adam and Eve have to pull those vines
off because they have to care for the
trees to make the garden healthy, and
that wouldn't have been a very healthy
thing for a tree. In fact, if you've ever
seen
trees killed by vines, they use
tree as the superstructure and they grow
up on it,
and they compete with the tree, and
sometimes they they win and the tree
loses.
So this- Remember we had Emilia Lanier,
this whole view of human beings taking
care of the planet and being
you know important, and why you know she
was so worried about Margaret Clifford
and her entourage leaving the Cookham
estate. Milton
takes that view and builds it into
Christianity itself
by arguing that that was the original
state that human beings were supposed to
occupy,
that human beings were supposed to be

caring
for the planet, that was our job was to
take care of it,
and that's what God put us here to do.
That's a remarkable interpretation,
right? And from our point of view,
environmentally,
that's well that's a great
interpretation, and that's why
you can have people born into that
tradition like Al Gore and Pope Francis
coming on the scene.
Milton isn't just saying this as
you know an ideal the way
Emilia Lanier would be doing a few
decades before,
he's making a stronger claim that this
is a reading of the Bible, that this
is actually the way God wanted it.
Read your Bible the way Milton wants you
to read it,
and you'll come to that conclusion.
So Milton,
in his portrayal of like Eve, has her
actually functioning like a genius
loci. So notice why I keep coming back-

Notice I keep coming back to the genius
loci, and to give you a clue as to why I
included genius loci figure like Humbaba
early in the course, because it becomes
so important.
And you know how does Eve do that? Well
in taking care of the planet,
and you know Eve is actually
functioning as a gardener.
She takes care of her domain and she
sees to
you know protecting the place from
nightly ills, animals that would harm
things you know,
every morning she gets up early, she
visits all the plants, she takes care of
them.
And Milton in general has her as an
interesting character,
she's very spiritual in a way, she's very
concerned about
the creation in God and these lessons
that
she and Adam are learning from Raphael,
who's an angel who walks around Eden.
But as much as she's concerned with that,

she's also concerned with the garden
itself. So remember we had,
way back when we had that dualism split
between the physical and metaphysical,
and we noted that human beings are sort
of
on that boundary line. Well many people
interpreted Christianity is, like the
proper human position,
is to be turned away from the earthy,
which has all sorts of problems like sex
and all,
and toward the spiritual. So you know
even though you have a split nature,
you should do everything to go up
toward the spiritual nature. Well
you know Adam and Eve aren't like that
here, they are as much physical as they
are spiritual.
And from our environmental point of view,
that physicality in part plays out
by their love of the garden and they're
caring for it.
Plays out in other ways too, and this
is why Milton weighs in on
other issues. For example, most people

assumed, and we had this back in Genesis,
that the fall occurred
through sort of a sexual seduction. So there's
Eve's fall
sort of being drawn in by the sort of
phallic
snake, but it becomes very explicit in
Adam's fall
because Eve is this sort of sexual snare,
she seduces Adam, they have sex, that's
the fall. So what's the problem- What
brings about the fall?
One woman. So women are seen as bad in
this view.
But why are they bad? Sexual temptation,
and sex is the problem,
sex is the original sin then. Milton will
have none of that, and that's what's so
interesting here.
And because he's reading the Bible,
and he reads Genesis
and says you know I don't see
that there, I don't see where
the fall is explicitly because of sex. So
he offers up his interpretation of it,
which is different. And

I won't get into what causes the fall,
but I will tell you it’s not sex, and
we know that
and very clearly, because Adam and Eve
have sex before the fall.
Milton has them having sex, they have
lots of sex,
the way he describes it very
good rewarding sex
and they get to know each other better
because of it.
So Milton wants to completely rethink
lots of things, and one of them is sex.
And then
of course you know, what is the actual
sin and how are women, this view-
in this you know traditional view, this
sort of sexual temptation? Well
they're not in this view, so you have to
reassess
women as well by way of Milton.
So what Milton is doing is just that,
he's reassessing all this
in a way that it's pretty shocking at
the time.
You can imagine just giving that reading

of sex that people at the time would have
thought that's just
heretical, that's wrong, that's a problem,
but
Milton you know barrels
through it here.
And from an environmental point of view,
it's important that you know this
earthiness, this preoccupation with
the body,
and the sex is a preoccupation, but it
also plays out as a
an interest in the physical realm.
From our point of view, an interest in
the environment.
You remember we had from the very
beginning,
I'll stay off of here, that notion that
Christianity was inherently dualistic.
And when we did that whole
big dividing line between the
metaphysical and the physical,
you know Christianity worked into that
pretty well because
it was traditionally often interpreted
dualistically.

Milton is a monist, it's the opposite of
a duelist. So
he agrees that humans have a physical
and a spiritual
aspect, but he doesn't think that they
are separate.
You know he doesn't think that we are
composed of spirit and flesh,
or that Heaven and earth
are fundamentally different, and that's a
remarkable thing to say as well.
He believes that everything is composed
of one matter, one matter
all, and this
is everything in the universe with the
exception of God.
And what that means is, that Heaven and
Hell
are not in some way like alternate
universes, and like a multiverse where we
have Heaven and Hell and are different,
they are the same, they are the same stuff. And the human
beings aren't composed of two things, the
spirit
and flesh, that they are all the same
thing. So

for Milton to believe that- And by
the way,
you know other Christian thinkers before
Milton believed it, it's been argued that
the apostle Paul,
who's actually of course in the New
Testament- the Christian Testament of the
Bible,
believe that as well. What it
would have to mean
is that when you die, after
you're dead and the pericy of the second
coming happens,
that your body will get resurrected
along with
your soul because they're the same thing.
So that
you know yes they knew that- You know
people knew that the body decayed and
all, but also
there's sort of a conservation of matter,
the matter you were made of is still in
existence here
on the planet. And you know miraculously
this is all going to be reconstituted
and your physical body you know, or

modern terms the matter that you're made
of,
is going to get reconstituted too. So
not saying you have to buy into it, but
Milton did, and Milton believed then that
to talk about you know Christianity
dualistically, whether it's about the
human body or even about the universe in
Heaven and Hell. And by the way,
Hell's in there, earth's in there, they're
all the same matter
throughout, remarkable statement you
know.
So Milton erases
the boundary between the physical and
metaphysical.
And interestingly, remember that one of
the reasons I was able to align this up
as a western tradition because
you know that belief is coming out of
the Greco-Roman tradition,
we saw it was Plato and all as well. And
I noted that
in the medieval period, we didn't spend
time with it, but scholastic philosophers
were able to merge them two together.

Milton says yeah that's not right.
Again,
Milton could say what he wants, this is
his interpretation of the Bible, and
as a reformation thinker, you're supposed
to interpret the Bible yourself. And
again, Milton gives a tour to force
interpretation of the Bible and
Christianity,
and he says yeah that dualism that we've
assumed was an integral part of
Christianity
isn't at all, that actually comes from
Greek and Roman thinkers like Plato. And
even though Milton knows like Plato very
well and he talks about him,
he ultimately concludes, certainly the
the end of his career,
that for lack of a better way of
putting it,
Christianity has been poisoned by this
tradition.
And you can find a no better example
than with dualism,
that dualism has crept into Christianity
because of the Greco-Roman tradition you

know over the centuries.
But if you actually look carefully at
the Bible and read it carefully, which
Milton has, he comes to the conclusion
dualism is not inherently in
Christianity,
it's just been grafted on there by
a whole range of Christian thinkers
who
were also reading you know Greco-Roman
literature.
It's a remarkable statement on Milton's
part. But also it's a remarkable
reinterpretation of Christianity because
if you get to this notion of
where Milton has gotten to at this point
in 1667,
or 74 when it's republished in the
form that you have that we read.
And by the time you get here and you
have Christian stewardship saying you
should take care of the planet,
well this is the only matter that
there is. We
should revere and care about this
because it's the same thing as

Heaven, Christianity has the potential
to be- that earth in this Christian
view,
monist view, the flavor of the Milton is
propounding,
the earth has the actual potential
to have become Heaven.
Milton says this explicitly. But
first
you know you have dualistic thinking
on display in “Paradise Lost.” But again, if
Milton thinks that you know
this is poison Christianity, he's
going to characterize it as pretty
bad. And in fact, the person-
the character in “Paradise Lost” who is a
proponent of it,
is Satan.
So Satan now is going to
offer dualistic thinking here for us.
And arguably the most famous line, or one
of the most famous lines, of “Paradise
Lost”: “The mind is its own place, and in
it self/ Can make a Heav’n of Hell, a Hell of
Heav’n.”
Well the idea here is that the

mind, or the soul, is separate from
body and place, and it doesn't really
matter where you are because your mind
can imagine
a wonderful place. And why Satan
finds that comforting because he's been
thrown into Hell with the rest of the
rebellion angels, who are now devils. And
he's saying well this place could be
just as good as Heaven, the mind can make
its own place.
And dualistic thinking would
believe that right because if you're a
soul, you can sort of you know
pull yourself free of the reality of
your surroundings, and
Satan certainly wants to do that.
Well that's Satan's boast, but
it turns out he realizes later in book
four, which we didn't read,
that in fact he can escape Hell because
he carries Hell
with him. So what Milton is doing here
really
is taking exception to people like René
Descartes.

And what Descartes is doing is just sort
of updating Christianity in a way,
except not just spirit flesh dualism, but
arguing
in kind of like a proto-scientific way
that the-
there's a body and a mind, and that they
are separated. He actually figures out
there's a
little part of your brain that actually
serves as the connection point for
the body. So like how does the body and
the mind work? You must need like a
little like
connecting point, and he figures that
you know what part of the brain
does that
yeah. Incidentally, modern
neuroscience doesn't acknowledge that
that exists.
But the notion that the body can pull
free-
the mind can pull free of the body, the
soul free of the spirit,
is one that Milton doesn't think can
happen. Satan boasts that it can, but then

he suddenly realizes that you know
he's carrying this around with him.
So
yes he can change places, but the place
where he was, and the reality of that
situation, will always sort of follow him.
So Milton- I mean the big takeaway here
for us is that Milton just doesn't buy
into this idea
that you can pull free of the-
this spirit- full free of the body
with your spirit.
And so if you think about this, some
interesting implications pop up. And that
is
one, that you do not reside in your body.
So you might think that this is
my body and I'm sort of separate from it,
you are
your body in this view. And when we get
to Buddhism we're going to see that that
religion was always, from the
very beginning,
a monastic religion, and that you are
your body.
And Milton goes even further here though

because he says you don't just live in a

place, you

are your place, you are

physically-

you are just a physical body and

you're physically connected to the place

where you live,

the food you eat, the connection, the things

you feel and all,

are all there. So he doesn't want to just

erase this

distinction between mind and body, and

Manas would want to do that,

but between mind and place

too you know. The mind is its own place,

be it Hell,

Heaven, you know.

That notion here is that you know,

and Milton's Eve becomes the clearest

expression of it,

is you know you don't live in a place,

you don't reside in a body,

you are that body, that's who you are,

the place is integrally connected with

who you are.

And why not? Because just because you

have physical relationship only- you have
a physical-
You are the body, you are physically
connected in it,
you are physicality, you are body. But why
wouldn't that include
the place where you are as well? Why
wouldn't you be connected?
Again, with Buddhism, we're going to see
this
integral to it, the notion that
everything and everyone is connected
like a deep vast inner ecology.
So why I settled on that particular
tradition to not put an opposition to
this one, but to show
how different thinking can result in
different environmental postures.
Anyhow jumping way ahead, let's stay with
Milton here.
Milton then interprets the
Judeo-Christian Bible different than
Donne, Donne is just a few- What we read have
Donne, where he says
“The world is but a carcass...scarce think
of it” like of old clothes cast off a

year ago,
that's written just a couple decades
apart from Milton.
But Milton you know because he doesn't
buy into mind body, or even you know
in a bigger way spirit- physical
metaphysical dualism.
Milton argues, and this is important,
that there could be a possible
regenerative Christian era
here and now on earth, he was not alone
on this belief. So what do I mean by that?
We saw with the fall you know not only do
Adam and Eve fall, but all of the
creation falls, and
after that tipping point, and it was kind
of a tipping point.
After that tipping point, you know 6000
years ago if you buy the chronology-
literal chronology of the Bible,
everything has been in decay, and the
earth cannot be saved, it's doomed, it
will end in fire and destruction with
the second coming.
The only thing that can be saved in this
view is, we

noted, is human beings because they have
this split nature.
Yeah Milton doesn't buy into that, and he
actually says:
okay let's assume, like everybody's been
doing in this
Judeo-Christian Greco-Roman tradition,
that there was a wonderful age, whether
you call it Eden or the Golden Age or
whatever,
and that that's gone, and the life has
gone downhill.
But why can't we regenerate it now? Why
can't we make
life better? Why can't we take it upon
ourselves to improve
the condition of the world, not just
human condition,
but with respect to nature
as well? Why can't we you know use Eden,
not as a
lost point in the past, but almost
like a point in the future,
a goal for us to go to? And
that is so radically different right
than our friend John Donne because

Donne says you know forget that idea,
don't think about the
you know the resurrection of the planet.
But that's exactly what Milton's talking
about,
not resurrection in the sense of you
know it'll
re-emerge after the- get
resurrected after
Christ comes back and you know. But in
another way, it's just
that it will you know we can
regenerate it and make it better now,
we can move toward a more edenic
relationship with the planet.
Yup. So this debate,
which we saw playing out with Donne and
Milton, continues today.
And oh sorry, a little too much on
this slide.
It continues today. And
important thing to note here is that,
hold on and see if I can get this
up here.
Here we are, sorry. That in 2007,
a number of prominent Christian

activists led by a guy named James C Dobson, he's the founder of an organization called Focus on the Family. You may know him as a very popular, at least I assume it's still a very popular, radio show, and I presume podcast. But he called on the national association of Evangelicals, which is a major group in the United States, major Christian group, to dismiss an individual who urged the global warming be taken seriously. So you had this official in the national association of Evangelicals saying you know we really need to take global warming seriously as a group, and more importantly and deeply Christianity needs to take it, this is an issue. And Dobson of course called on this guy to be fired. And you know in the view that Dobson has, you know the earth's reached this “tipping point” 6000 years ago,

and is now in a state of decay, this is
basically Donne's position: why are you
worried about the future of the planet?
In fact, in the most radical version of
this, and I don't think Dobson believes
this, but
people have. You know read the closing
book of the Christian Testament of the
Bible, John's revelation,
the earth is going to burn anyhow. Well
gee if the earth is heating up, and we
have all these wildfires, like we've been
having in California as a result of
global warming,
maybe this is all just bringing about
the end that's been prophesied.
Yeah other people however completely
reject that, and I give the example- gave
the example of Al Gore and of course
Pope Francis
as well. They actually want us
following Milton, and you can see why
Milton is such a milestone thinker here
in Christian thinking. They want us to
actually
regenerate the planet, they want us to

make the planet better.
They are in the Christian stewardship
tradition,
we are stewards of the planet, we are put
here by God to take care of his creation,
let's do what we can. And
it's an interesting debate
going on. And you know with many of these
debates, if you're you know you're not
Christian or you're
not deeply invested in this, you might
say oh they debate all sorts of things;
debate evolution, debate creationism, and
all.
But this one really matters to us from
an environmental point of view, and it
matters
regarding climate crisis because you
know
do we engage with this crisis and try to
to pull back,
and make the earth a better place, or do
we just say ah this is it,
the earth is of course going to burn,
it's been prophesied,
let's not worry about it. So

even though you may think someone like
Milton is sort of this you know
rusty thinker from a long time ago-
Finishing number 11 here.
Even though you may think that he's you
know sort of unimportant,
he's very important. And all these
writers I would argue are important,
hopefully I'm convincing you that they
are,
because the 17th century,
like in a number of centuries, but this
one in particular is really important.
You know we
enter it with someone like Emilia
Lanier introducing this idea of
Christian stewardship, and Milton
you know taking the ball and running
with it, and arguing
that is integral to Christianity, at
least that's his interpretation.
So if you
know- Why we're doing this, why
we're talking about all this,
is to give us a clear understanding of
where we are

today. So if you you know, and
it's important in the United States,
you know in the political
landscape that we now have, where
Christianity is influential politically.
It's important to understand you know
where these attitudes
come from. And in part you know if
you know climate change is not being
taken
seriously, by say for example
certain Christian groups, why isn't it?
And why is it taken very very seriously
by other Christian sec, like
Catholicism you know led by Pope Francis,
and you know people sympathetic to Al
Gore?
So this is where that happens. And it's
also important
you know in different ways to consider
what we did today, the emergence of true
nature writing, nature art,
because how we imagine the landscape and
the environment is going to be very
important.
And kind of a little spoiler I'll end

on

for the end of the western part

of the tradition with Rachel Carson,

you know before you can get people

concerned about

saving the environment, and taking care

of the environment, and being stewards

for the environment,

they have to care about it to begin with.

You know why save what you don't care

about? And it goes to this debate too,

if you think it's all

you know doomed, and going to decay, and

burn,

don't worry about it. But if you have

generations of poets celebrating the

environment and wilderness, and

and telling us why it's so important,

then

you may well get marshalled to its

defense.

And people like Rachel Carson are really

going to hope that, Al Gore hopes it too.

In other words, the people who are

going to be most concerned about saving

the environment from the climate crisis.

Well you may do it for entirely
anthropocentric reasons right because
you're a human being,
and you know you want the planet to be
saved for human beings and human
interests,
fair enough. But you might also be you
know a real
lover of nature, having been convinced by
these writers, and
and artists, and all the works that
they've given us. That nature is
wonderful,
and beautiful, and valuable, and most
importantly,
worth saving, worth devoting a lot of
your time to save,
a lot of your energy to save.
But if you don't- Again if you don't care
about it, if this project had never
you know taken off a few hundred years
ago and been so influential,
we'd arguably be worse off than we are
today
because you know people. Some of the most
committed environmentalists are also you

know

nature lovers, and we're going to see

as we proceed forward, that

nature loving sort of emerges

as a big thing coming up. But before

that, we're going to stay a little more

in the Renaissance. And we're going to

look

at entirely other things that emerge

here,

and that's something like the growth of

large-scale consumerism,

which will bring us back to our friend

sir John Denham. But that's for next time,

so

thanks a lot and see you next time.