

Environmental Criticism: More-than-human Worlds

ENGL 338
Prof. Farina

While some may think that study of the environment is the business of science, our experience of the world around us is equally a product of cultural history, including literary writings. This course is an introduction to a particular way of reading literary works, a way that considers how those works condition our experience of “environments” and their inhabitants. Understanding that conditioning is essential for rethinking our environmental and social practices, from our relations with companion animals to our responsibility for climate change. Following the theme of “more-than-human worlds,” we will discuss such topics as human exceptionalism, the classification of life forms, animal and vegetal worlds, inanimate being, non-human persons, and ecological citizenship.

We will be reading quite a few works of cultural criticism (analysis) that will be available through e-campus. You will, however, need to purchase 4-5 books for the class.

Possible readings include:

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*
Mary Shelly, *Frankenstein*
Jeff Vandermeer, *The Strange Bird*
Yoko Tawada, *Memoirs of a Polar Bear*
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
Alan Moore, *Swamp Thing*
Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*
Juliana Spahr, *This Connection of Everyone with Lungs*