

ENGL 782, Current Directions: Ecocriticism

Spring 2024 Thursdays 4:00-6:50 223 Colson

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Office Hours: 213 Colson Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:00-4:00 & by appointment

Overview

We will begin with overviews of issues and methods (Heise, Garrard) so you can start thinking about final projects early on. We'll build a foundation with two works central to the consolidation of ecocriticism as a field in the 1990s (Plumwood, Buell). We'll build on that by examining recent work on environmental justice (Nixon, Huggan and Tiffin part I, Whyte); agency (Latour, Chakrabarty, Kimmerer, de la Cadena); climate (Ghosh, Streeby, Song, Magnason); cross-species relations (Huggan and Tiffin part II, Haraway, Sweet).

Readings – I've ordered these three titles through the WVU bookstore. Everything else is available through the WVU library or a PDF linked to the syllabus.

Greg Garrard, *Ecocriticism*, 3rd ed. (Routledge 2023)

Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin, *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment*, 2nd ed. (Routledge 2015)

Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination* (Harvard 1995) – recommended but not required

Graded Work



- **Ten** weekly response papers (minimum 500 words each) in which you synthesize the readings and then critique or extend a particular argument. (Beginning 1/18, there are eleven weeks of readings for response, so you can skip one week.) Together these are worth 30% of your final grade. **Due at noon on the day of class.**
- **Lead class discussion** one week. 10% of final grade.
- A **final project** including prospectus, rough draft, final presentation, and article-length final paper (~20 pp. double spaced). Presentation = 10% of your final grade; Final paper = 50%.

Land Acknowledgement Statement (from WVU NAS program)

WVU, with its statewide institutional presence, resides on land that includes ancestral territories of the Shawnee, Lenape (Delaware), Haudenosaunee (Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Mohawk, Tuscarora), Cherokee, and other Indigenous peoples.

In acknowledging this, we recognize and appreciate those Indigenous nations whose territories we are living on and working in. Indigenous peoples have been in the land currently known as West Virginia since time immemorial. It is important that we understand both the context that has brought our university community to reside on this land, and our place within this long history.

We also recognize that colonialism is a current ongoing process, and as scholars seeking truth and understanding, we need to be mindful of our present participation in this process.

Policies

Late work will not be accepted. If you have to miss class for any reason, including illness, and a paper is due that day, email me the paper ahead of time. In cases of debilitating illness, we will work together to devise a schedule for the completion of course work.

Inclusivity. The WVU community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. For more information on WVU's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see the DEI website <https://diversity.wvu.edu> (304-293-5600).

Accessibility. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in your classes, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with Accessibility Services <https://accessibilityservices.wvu.edu> (304-293-6700).

Sexual Misconduct. WVU does not tolerate sexual misconduct, including harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, or relationship violence. (BOG Rule 1.6) It is important for you to know that there are resources available through the Title IX office if you or someone you know needs assistance: <https://diversity.wvu.edu/equity-assurance/title-ix> (304-293-5600). You may speak to a member of university administration, faculty, or staff; keep in mind that they have an obligation to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator. If you want to speak to someone who is permitted to keep your disclosure confidential, please seek assistance from the [Carruth Center](#), 304-293-9355 or 304-293-4431 (24-hour hotline), and locally within the community at the [Rape and Domestic Violence Information Center](#) (RDVIC), 304- 292-5100 or 304-292-4431 (24-hour hotline).

Mental health concerns or stressful events can adversely affect your academic performance and social relationships. WVU offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns that you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at the Carruth Center for Psychological and Psychiatric Services (CCPPS) website: <https://carruth.wvu.edu/>. If you are in need of crisis services, call the CCPPS main number 24/7: (304) 293-4431. Crisis services are also available through text: Text WVU to 741741 for support 24/7 from a trained Crisis Counselor.

AI. I expect that the assignments you submit to me will represent your own thinking and your own writing. If you do use a generative AI tool as part of your writing for an assignment (e.g., as a way to brainstorm or as a way to refine a research question), I expect you to cite the tool used and to attach a cover memo explaining how and why you used the tool. Failure to do so is an academic integrity violation.

Schedule

Response papers are due at noon each Thursday.

1/11	Ursula Heise, "Hitchhiker's Guide to Ecocriticism," <i>PMLA</i> 121.2 (2006): 503-16.
1/18	Greg Garrard, <i>Ecocriticism</i> 3 rd ed. (Routledge 2023).
1/25	Val Plumwood, <i>Feminism and the Mastery of Nature</i> (Routledge 1993). PDF
2/1	Lawrence Buell, "Forms of Literary Ecocentrism," Part II of <i>The Environmental Imagination</i> (Harvard 1995), 143-308. Rob Nixon, <i>Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor</i> (Harvard 2011), Introduction and chapters 2 & 3. WVU library
2/8	Part 1 of Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin, <i>Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment</i> , 2 nd ed. (Routledge 2015) Kyle Powys Whyte, "Our Ancestors' Dystopia Now: Indigenous Conservation and the Anthropocene," <i>Routledge Companion to the Environmental Humanities</i> , ed. Heise, Christensen, and Niemann (Routledge 2017), 206-15. PDF
2/15	Bruno Latour, "Will Non-Humans be Saved? An Argument in Ecotheology," <i>Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute</i> 15 (2009): 459-75. Latour, "An Attempt at a Compositionist Manifesto," <i>New Literary History</i> 41 (2010): 471-90. Latour, "Agency and the Time of the Anthropocene" <i>New Literary History</i> 45 (2014): 1-18. John Asafu-Adjaye et al., " An Ecomodernist Manifesto "
2/22	Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The Climate of History: Four Theses." <i>Critical Inquiry</i> 35 (2009): 197-222. Marisol de la Cadena, "Indigenous Cosmopolitics in the Andes: Conceptual Reflections beyond 'Politics.'" <i>Cultural Anthropology</i> 25.2 (2010): 334-70. <add Idelber Avelar, "Amerindian Perspectivism and Non-Human Rights," <i>alter/natives</i> 2021 https://alternativas.osu.edu/en/issues/autumn-2013/essays/avelar.html > Robin Wall Kimmerer, "Learning the Grammar of Animacy," from <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i> (Milkweed 2013), 48-59. PDF
2/29	Amitav Ghosh, "Stories," <i>The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable</i> (Chicago 2016), 1-84. WVU Library Stephanie Bernhard, " Amitav Ghosh on Literature and Climate Coincidence ," <i>Orion</i> , 27 November 2019. Shelley Streeby, <i>Imagining the Future of Climate Change: World Making through Science Fiction and Activism</i> (California 2018), Introduction and chapter 1. WVU Library Min Hyoung Song, <i>Climate Lyricism</i> (Duke 2022), Introduction and chapters 2 and 5. WVU Library <pair w/ Song for contrast: Isabelle Galleymore, "Perspective Taking," in Johns-Putra and Sultzbach, <i>Cambridge Companion to Literature and Climate</i> >

3/7	Prospectus due - presentations
3/14	Spring break
3/21	Andri Snaer Magnason, <i>On Time and Water</i> (Open Letter 2022). PDF
3/28	Part 2 of Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin, <i>Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment</i> , 2 nd ed. (Routledge 2015)
4/4	Brandon Keim, " If We Could Talk to the Animals: Do Our Politics Have Room for Nonhumans Too? " <i>Breakthrough</i> 25 June 2018. Amitav Ghosh, " Brutes: Meditations on the myth of the voiceless ," <i>Orion</i> , 1 Sept. 2021. Catronia Mortimer-Sandilands, "Melancholy Natures, Queer Ecologies," <i>Queer Ecologies</i> , ed. Mortimer-Sandilands and Bruce Erickson (Indiana 2010), chapter 12. WVU Library Donna Haraway, "The Camille Stories," <i>Staying with the Trouble</i> (Duke 2016), chapter 8. WVU Library
4/11	Timothy Sweet, <i>Extinction and the Human: Four American Encounters</i> (Pennsylvania 2021), Introduction, chapter 3, and Reprise. Page proof PDF Index PDF
4/18	Draft due 4/15. Peer conferences on draft in class 4/18.
4/25	Presentations. Course evaluations.

Final paper due Monday April 29.