CLCS 6900_001/EHUM 6900_003
Ecocriticism - Interdisciplinary Perspectives
Spring 2020
T 6:00-9:00 p.m.
BU C 204

Professor: Katharina Gerstenberger
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Required Texts

All other texts are available through Reserves, e-Reserves or as e-book through Marriott Library.

This seminar offers an introduction to the growing field of ecocriticism. Going back to the 1970s, ecocriticism is typically defined as the literary engagement with questions of the environment. While classic texts include Thoreau’s Walden (1854) and, importantly, Rachel Carson’s Silent Spring (1962), ecocriticism as an academic discipline begins to gain prominence in the 1990s with Cheryll Glotfelty’s Ecocriticism Reader (1996). Drawing on Feminist but also Marxist theory, the field has since grown to include historical perspectives, economic considerations, anthropological inquiries, and philosophy. Of central concern to many thinkers is the relationship between humans and nature, with some scholars calling for the abandonment of the dichotomy altogether. More recently, the growing popularity of the Anthropocene, a term that comes from geology and refers to the human impact on the fossil record, has triggered considerable discussion and controversy about the relationship between humans and the environment. In this class, we will familiarize ourselves with the field of ecocriticism as a response to environmental crisis. In addition to a range of theoretical texts, we will also read a selection of literary texts that address environmental issues.

Each student will be responsible for leading class discussion at least once (depending on the number of participants). Students will also be asked to produce a 12-15-page research paper on a topic of their choice. The paper can be based on a topic and text discussed in class, it can also go beyond works discussed in class. During the final class sessions, participants will present their work in progress to their peers. As a joint project, we will compile a bibliography of ecocriticism.

Course Requirements & Grading
Research Paper (12-15 pages) 30%
Presentation of paper at student mini-conference 20%
Lead class discussion 15%
Paper proposal/abstract 7.5%
Working bibliography/MLA style 7.5%
Participation 20%
Total 100%
Weekly Schedule

Week 1—Tuesday, January 7
Introduction

Week 2—Tuesday, January 14
Definitions

Week 3—Tuesday, January 21
How to Tell the Story?
Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement*.

Week 4—Tuesday, January 28
Nature Writing/New Nature Writing

Week 5—Tuesday, February 4
 Toxic Discourse

Week 6—Tuesday, February, 11
Literary Text I

Week 7—Tuesday, February 18
Popular Ecocriticism

Week 8— Tuesday, February, 25
Material Ecocriticism
Week 9—Tuesday, March 3
Taking Stock
ABSTRACT DUE

Spring Break
March 8-15

Week 10—Tuesday, March 17
Literary Text II
Barbara Kingsolver, *Flight Behavior*, 1-245.

Week 11—Tuesday, March 24
Literary Text II-continued
BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

Week 12—Tuesday, March 31
Anthropocene

Week 13—Tuesday, April 7
Entanglements

Week 14—Tuesday, April 14
Literary Text III

Week 15—Tuesday, April 21
Student Presentations

Final Papers are due on Friday, May 1, at 5pm.

**POLICIES and RESOURCES**

**Safety Statement:** The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus
safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit https://safeu.utah.edu/.

**Diversity & Equity Statement:** The Department of World Languages and Cultures values students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. We fully endorse university policies prohibiting sexual harassment as well as discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, immigration status, color, disability, religion, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, and/or socio-economic status. It is our intent that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. To that end, we expect that all students treat each other with dignity and respect.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 801-581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services. For more information see their website at http://disability.utah.edu/

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism represents a serious case of academic misconduct and is defined by the University of Utah Code as follows: “‘Plagiarism’ means the intentional unacknowledged use or incorporation of any other person’s work in, or as a basis for, one’s own work offered for academic consideration or credit or for public presentation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, representing as one’s own, without attribution, any other individual’s words, phrasing, ideas, sequence of ideas, information or any other mode or content of expression” (www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html). Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment or course. If you have any further questions as to what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

**Accommodation:** Some of the writings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include material that conflicts with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience. The University Accommodation Policy may be found at http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php

**Drop/Withdrawal and Other Important Dates to Remember:** https://registrar.utah.edu/academic-calendars/fall2019.php

**Grades:** Grades will be assigned according to the standards reported in the Student Handbook at https://catalog.utah.edu/#/policy/B12v3LX0G?bc=true&bcCurrent=Grading%20Policies&bcGroup=Grade%20Information&bcItemType=policies

**University Writing Center:** http://www.writingcenter.utah.edu/
The Campus Wellness Connection helps students find, access, and utilize campus resources and services they may need in relation to physical, mental, intellectual, social, and spiritual wellness: http://www.wellness.utah.edu