



Panels Seeking Participants

- All paper proposals must be submitted via the [Submittable](#) (if you do not have an account, you will need to create one before submitting) website by December 15, 2018 at 11:59pm EST. **Please DO NOT submit a paper directly to the panel organizer**; however, prospective panelists are welcome to correspond with the organizer(s) about the panel and their abstract.
- **Only one paper proposal submission is allowed per person**; participants can present only once during the conference (pre-conference workshops and chairing/organizing a panel are not counted as presenting).
- All panel descriptions and direct links to their submission forms are listed below, and posted in [Submittable](#). Links to each of the panels seeking panelists are also listed on the Panel Call for Papers page at <https://www.asle.org/conference/biennial-conference/panel-calls-for-papers/>
- There are separate forms in [Submittable](#) for each panel seeking participants, listed in alphabetical order, as well as an open individual paper submission form.
- In cases in which the online submission requirement poses a significant difficulty, please contact us at ASLEconference2019@gmail.com.
- Proposals for a Traditional Panel (4 presenters) should be papers of approximately 15 minutes-max each, with an approximately 300 word abstract, unless a different length is requested in the specific panel call, in the form of an uploadable .pdf, .docx, or .doc file. Please include your name and contact information in this file.
- Proposals for a Roundtable (5-6 presenters) should be papers of approximately 10 minute-max each, with an approximately 300 word abstract, unless a different length is requested in the specific panel call, in the form of an uploadable .pdf, .docx, or .doc file. Please include your name and contact information in this file.
- Proposals for a Jam Session (7-8 presenters), should be papers of eight minute-maximum presentations plus discussion), with an approximately 200 word abstract, unless a different length is requested in the specific panel call, in the form of an uploadable .pdf, .docx, or .doc file. Please include your name and contact information in this file.
- Individual open call submissions are for 15-minute presentations; potential presenters will be asked to indicate whether they would also be willing to participate in a jam session with a shorter presentation (which will increase chances of acceptance); 300 word abstracts should describe both form and content and will be posted within the Submittable form.
- To encourage institutional diversity and exchange, all panels will include participants from more than one institution and from more than one academic level/sector.
- ASLE policy is currently to discourage virtual participation at our biennial conferences except in extraordinary circumstances.

1819 in 2019: Romantic Bicentennials and Ecocriticism

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126322/1819-in-2019-romantic-bicentennials-and-ecocriticism>

Organizer: William Stroup (wstroup@keene.edu), Keene State College

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Nearly every month for the last several years has provided occasions for scholars of Romanticism to reflect on the movement's ecological and cultural legacies, through a series of 200th anniversary events commemorating the publication of *Frankenstein*, the death of Jane Austen, and the writing and publication of key texts by Keats, the Shelleys, Byron, Hemans, and others. The ASLE conference of late June 2019 continues and expands these opportunities to think about the 200-year legacy of an extraordinary time in the development of proto-ecological themes in British Literature, works at times joyfully optimistic and at others despondent about humanity's place in the patterns of nature and responsibility to its future. As we think about the conference subtheme of "how the past matters to the imagination of a more capacious future" panelists are encouraged to re-approach the imaginative legacies of both canonical works (i.e. Keats's *Spring Odes*, *Hyperion*, or *Lamia*; Byron's opening cantos of *Don Juan*, Percy Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, *The Cenci*, and other poems of 1819) and those works and authors less represented in histories of the period and accounts of Romantic Ecology. The ASLE conference brings together post-humanist ecological theorists with practicing eco-poets and educators, and is both the right place and time to look afresh on the extraordinary literary productions published or begun in 1819.

21st Century Climate Fiction

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126329/21st-century-climate-fiction>

Organizer: Teresa Goddu (teresa.a.goddu@vanderbilt.edu), Vanderbilt University

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

Climate Fiction is a rapidly emerging genre within contemporary literature and film that addresses urgent environmental questions and concerns through the imaginative lens of fiction. Coined as "cli-fi" in the popular press, it has recently become the focus of academic scholarship as well as college courses. The *Chicago Review of Books* has a monthly column dedicated to highlighting recent publications in the genre; Goodreads has a list devoted to clifi; and twitter has a lively feed #clifi. This roundtable seeks to bring together writers, readers, and teachers working in 21st century climate fiction to map this growing field and articulate its role within the broader climate conversation. The roundtable seeks to address two key questions: what is climate fiction? and what are its uses? Each participant will propose a single 21st century fictional text through which to offer a definition of climate fiction, illuminate the field's broader contours, and highlight its central questions and stakes. Texts can be established or unexpected but should signal a significant issue within the field or represent an identifiable node in its larger network. Remarks should be brief (5-8 minutes). Topics participants might address: what are 21st century climate fiction's key themes or motifs? its formal features or generic affiliations? its central methods, meanings, or motives? what role should climate fiction play within academic, activist, or popular discourses of climate change? The roundtable as a whole seeks to provoke lively debate both among its participants and with the audience as we work together to chart the field and identify its important trajectories.

7 Minutes to Make a Better World

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126342/7-minutes-to-make-a-better-world>

Organizer: José Manuel Marrero Henríquez (jose.marrero@ulpgc.es), Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Planned Format: Jam Session (7-8 Presenters)

You have 7 minutes to make this world better. Do it with a theatrical monologue, a short story, a poem, a song, a dance, a performance, or your latest video-clip, whichever you prefer.

Forget paradise; it is gone. And, yes, this is an unfair challenge: God had seven days to create the universe, and we are simple human animals and need time. Yet how many crucial events in life occur in just split-seconds?

Please, try. Send your submission. You have 7 minutes to make this world better.

Active Learning, Climate Change, and Environmental Humanities

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126349/active-learning-climate-change-and-environmental-humanities>

Organizer: Isabel Sobral Campos (icampos@mtech.edu), Montana Tech

Planned Format: Jam Session (7-8 Presenters)

Active learning techniques such as debates, role-playing, field trips, team-work, and problem-solving assignments have enormous potential as tools for helping students to consider problems more deeply and to reflect upon their attitudes and actions in relation to complex subjects. This “Jam Session” roundtable seeks to explore the possibilities for active learning experiences as a method of heightening student awareness of the changing dynamics between environmental conditions and human populations, especially with respect to anthropogenic climate change. U.S. states currently experiencing dramatic escalations of the fire season (California, Washington, Colorado, Montana) as well as those in which flooding and hurricanes have similarly compromised the safety of communities (New York, Texas, Puerto Rico), offer a particularly powerful backdrop against which to explore the potential for applying active learning techniques to the study of environmental humanities. How do we engage organizations and communities charged with confronting the myriad dangers associated with climate change? What challenges, perhaps related to accessibility, arise when attempting to “bring” the landscape into the classroom? For example, Norman Maclean’s unfinished non-fiction work about the 1949 Mann Gulch Fire, *Young Men and Fire* (1992), resonates with Montana students, many of whom are personally familiar with the Gates of the Mountains Wilderness Area in which the events described in the book took place. Others have experienced, either directly or indirectly, three years of devastating fire seasons in Montana, which represent a worrying break with previous fire patterns—a break scientists have linked to climate change. In an environmental literature course, the depth of student engagement with Maclean would increase to the extent the landscape as well as the realities of communities affected by the changing geophysical realities (residents, firefighters, and policy-makers) are vividly integrated alongside the study of literature. In a state like Montana, moreover, in which fossil fuel extraction constitutes a major sector of the economy, such integration is particularly important.

Proposals dealing with all disciplines pertaining to environmental humanities are welcome to this Jam Session roundtable. We will raise questions, share experiences, and brainstorm solutions to our concerns, all in the spirit of collective exploration and endeavor.

Agential Ecoontologies: Revitalizing Folk Magic, Rootwork, and Animism in the Age of the Anthropocene

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126351/agential-ecoontologies-revitalizing-folk-magic-rootwork-and-animism-in-the-age>

Organizer: Christine M. Battista (christinemarielbattista@gmail.com), Johnson & Wales University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Woven into and hidden within the myriad cultural, subaltern crossroads of the United States lies many rich, agential practices known as folk magic. These practices, which have been continually reimagined and reinvented over time, were largely cultivated within the interstices between the comingling of indigenous tribes, African American slaves, poor whites, women, immigrants, and other marginalized populations. Before the onslaught of Western colonization, many Native Americans that populated the Americas relied on their synergistic relationship with the ecos, developing profound intuitive, animistic healing practices. As Elizabeth A. Povinelli describes in *Geoontologies: A Requiem to Late Capitalism*, “the Animist is all those who see an equivalence between all forms of life or who can see life where others would see the lack of life” (18). This animistic ontology was endemic to how many Native American tribes connected with the ecos and the violent decimation of their lands and culture meant the loss of this ontology.

Not unlike these indigenous tribes, many African American slaves who arrived in the Americas between the 1700-1800s brought with them folk practices from their native homelands. Rootworkers in the South, for instance, became known as healers who served as advocates for the most brutally oppressed in their communities. Known for their agential relationship with the ecos and all forms of life, it was believed that rootworkers served as intermediaries between the physical and spiritual world, working on behalf of the poor, the subjugated, the marginalized--the victims of Western colonization. The concomitant evolution of folk practices, known specifically in the South as rootwork or conjure, developed over time as subaltern populations met at the margins, producing a robust unfurling of agential resistances to Western metaphysics. Articulated and reimagined in many forms around the continental United States, folk magic has endured many culturally specific incarnations including Southern hoodoo; paganism; herbalism; shamanism; animism, witchcraft; and other interpretive agential methodologies.

This panel seeks to explore the ecocritical, agential ontologies endemic to the myriad incarnations of folk magic practices that have taken shape in the United States. In keeping with the Biennial ASLE Conference theme “Paradise on Fire,” this panel invites scholars who are examining any aspect of ecocriticism; environmental feminism; vital materialism; material feminism; or other eco-theoretical framework as it pertains to marginalized indigenous, folk, pagan or other folk magic practices that have been used, or are being used, as a means to reconnect with the natural world in an apocalyptic age.

- How has the historic marginalization and erasure of folk practices coincided with the western metaphysical tradition’s violent severing of the self from the natural world?
- How might folk magic practices initiate a modality of radical welcome, creating more humane modes of living together across species, across races and boundaries?
- How might we look to the history of colonization in order to examine how the loss of an ecological principle was connected with the erasure of folk magic practices?
- What literature from the Americas engages with stories of folk magic, hoodoo, indigenous herbalism, and other perspectives?

A Home Away from Home: Imagining Planet B, Here and Elsewhere

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126345/a-home-away-from-home-imagining-planet-b-here-and-elsewhere>

Organizers: Anna-Katharina Laboissière (anna.laboissiere@gmail.com) Ecole Normale Supérieure/Curtin University of Technology, and Ségolène Guinard, University Paris 8

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters) or Jam Session (7-8 Presenters)

Proxima b, Gliese 667 Cc, Ross 128 b; we wear our string of potentially inhabitable exoplanets like a rosary, tightened around a portion of the universe to be appropriated, fingered and counted off again and again in a search for other worlds as pleasurable as it is unsettling. While environmental activists have taken up “there is no Planet B” as their warning litany, part of humanity, like the alien-seduced crew of the Centaur in James Tiptree’s “A Momentary Taste of Being,” feels inexorably compelled to push out and find other lively worlds - and in the process might find itself confronting that which lies at the very limit of the human and the imaginable. And while we are looking to the stars, the notion of what is a planet, and what home and inhabitability on such a planet might look like, are also undergoing transformations that might prove either enriching or unmooring. What does dwelling – home-making, kin-making, including with nonhuman others – become when shaken loose from its earthly bounds, from the naturalisation of oppressive social structures and radically humbling earthboundness both? And how can we start thinking about other inhabitable worlds outside the tired tropes of conquest, colonization and the frontier that still saturate the discourse of outer space exploration and space agencies? This panel seeks to explore these questions through the diffracting lens of storytelling and imaginative speculation as a fruitful ground for theory and action.

We welcome submissions on themes including, but not limited to:

- a rethinking, retooling and discussion of the concept of “planet” in fiction, theory and science
- the multiple imaginaries of exoplanets and inhabitable worlds
- the relationships and affinities between the planetary and other tropes (Gaia, Spaceship Earth, etc.)
- queer, feminist, indigenous, African, Caribbean, Asian, Latinx (re)imaginings of the planetary
- the remaking of kin and home on unfamiliar and ungrounded worlds, and the radical possibilities for re-imagining both
- imagining worlds as multiple and interconnected, especially through more-than-human images and metaphors (fungal, polyphonic and others)
- speculations on networks, circuits and infrastructures
- the transformation of relationships to the Earth through the search for and imagining of exoplanets
- speculations on metabolism and biology, rethinkings of animality, vegetality, minerality
- speculations on disembodied beings, science-fictional accounts of spirituality and spirits on other planets
- the question of time on a planetary level, especially as taken up in fiction (deep time in science-fiction, anti-apocalyptic worldbuilding and storytelling)

This panel will be either a roundtable or a jam session (depending on the number of participants), and we would like to welcome input in different formats, including fiction readings or short movie screenings.

"America's Best Idea" on Fire, on Trial, and on the Syllabus

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126292/americas-best-idea-on-fire-on-trial-and-on-the-syllabus>

Organizer: Allison B. Wallace (allisonw@uca.edu), University of Central Arkansas

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

The national parks – “America’s Best Idea” – pose numerous fascinating questions that can cross academic disciplines, and national borders as well, insofar as US parks inspired the creation of parks around the world. Many parks were originally promoted to tourists and legislators alike by artists, and many continue to inspire new art in various media. Whether considered singly or collectively, the parks often serve as potent symbols, some of them divisive: of national pride, for example; of selfless generosity toward nonhuman nature, with the ideal of leaving it (somewhat) alone; or of “government overreach,” to the extent that parks restrict commercial use.

This panel seeks both scholarly and creative inquiry suited to brief presentations on topics including but not limited to topics mentioned above. Additional possibilities: the parks as either protectors or exploiters of “paradise”; fire management and other forms of resource protection in parks, especially in light of climate change; borderlands and wildlife management; indigenous displacement from and/or control of park sectors; commercial hunger for park lands and monuments; political activism and parks; writing, drawing, painting, composing, and/or sculpting the parks; the parks in pop culture; class divides and the parks; border towns and the economics of parks; special challenges inherent to urban parks; the browning of park visitors and personnel; sustainability initiatives in the parks; service-learning and other experiential-ed opportunities presented by National Park Service units for undergraduate courses and research.

A Long Way from Paradise: Racism, its Intersections, and the Anthropocene

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126347/a-long-way-from-paradise-racism-its-intersections-and-the-anthropocene>

Organizer: Simon C. Estok (estok@skku.edu), Sungkyunkwan University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

In her timely and compelling chapter of *Future Remains* (2018) entitled “Racism and the Anthropocene,” Laura Pulido asks a long overdue question: “To what extent has racism contributed to the Anthropocene?” Work on environmental racism and environmental justice have contributed well to understandings of how racial, ethnic, and power differentials result in radically unequal distributions of burdens and benefits, but, as Françoise Vergès has explained in *Futures of Black Radicalism* (2017), “most theories of the Anthropocene have failed to reckon with the ways in which racism and imperialism structure the uneven distribution of climate catastrophe.” Dipesh Chakrabarty has written that when we talk about humanity, “there is no . . . oneness;” yet, the term “Anthropocene” itself is functionally totalizing, and it obscures the reality of humanity’s multiplicity. How, then, can a theory about “the Anthropocene” address, methodologically and thematically, the multiplicity of humanity’s involvement in the Anthropocene? And in theorizing about this Anthropocene, what is the “role of race in its making” (Vergès)? What are reasons for the neglect of this topic? What are the factors involved in race, ethnicity, and power having been relatively absent from Anthropocene conversations? How are the fear and anti-Asian (and specifically the anti-Chinese) sentiments of Mr. Trump and his administration contributing to the blind spots of Anthropocene discourses, and how is sexism and heterosexism involved? The carbon economy, Amitav Ghosh explains, has worked “to ensure that poor nations remained always at a disadvantage in terms of both wealth and power.” Ghosh goes on to explain “that the universalist premise of industrial civilization was a hoax; that a

consumerist mode of existence, if adopted by a sufficient number of people, would quickly become unsustainable and would lead, literally, to the devouring of the planet.” What are the best ways of addressing this matter, when the two largest of these nations (India and China) rightly take their fair share, each nation with a staggering population of 1.3 billion (and histories of female infanticide)? Geography, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and ecophobia need more attention in Anthropocene discussions. The purpose of this panel is to encourage discussions about the Anthropocene that begin with race and its intersections, to make visible the historical roots and current branches of the Anthropocene, and to understand that the legacies of the inequalities that grew the Anthropocene are found in the violently uneven distributions of current environmental catastrophes.

A (non-contiguous) Week on the Wisconsin and the Fox Rivers

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126343/a-non-contiguous-week-on-the-wisconsin-and-the-fox-rivers>

Organizer: Joshua Mabie (mabiej@uww.edu), University of Wisconsin, Whitewater

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

Just fifteen miles separate Aldo Leopold’s Shack from the farm where John Muir spent his boyhood. Twenty-five miles of Wisconsin and Fox River water (and one mucky canal) connects them. For so important a cultural landscape, this river route is surprisingly unexplored and unremarked upon. This panel aims to bring together scholars, writers, and thinkers to explore this stretch of river and write about it in a compelling way.

All panel participants will make the journey from Leopold’s Shack to Muir’s farm (hopefully by canoe, but perhaps by bike, on foot, or on skis instead) and will write about what they saw, experienced, or discovered. A dream panel would consist of some of the following: an archaeologist, a poet, a hydrologist, an ornithologist, former inhabitants and native peoples, a geographer, a limnologist, an entomologist, a geologist, an historian, Native American studies scholars, visual artists, and photographers. In gathering voices from across the arts, humanities, and sciences, the panel builds upon Scott Slovic and Nalini Nadkarni’s 2017 ASLE seminar “To Feel and To Know: The Art and Science of Environmental Writing” which brought together “thinkers who might not otherwise readily meet each other: ecocritics and environmental artists, academics and public officials, humanists and scientists.”

Approaches to the essays and their emphases will vary (the diversity of writing about a relatively narrowly defined place will be one of the panel’s chief appeals), but hopefully all the authors will “mov[e] through the landscape with wonder, but also with care” and “aspire to see with a scientific eye and write with literary effect” as Jason Cowley has described the best of the New Nature Writing. Collaborations are especially welcome between scientists who are less comfortable writing with literary effect and writers whose scientific eyesight is less sharp than they would hope. The panel organizers are willing to help coordinate these collaborations as well as travel arrangements.

Anthropocene Wilderness

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126354/anthropocene-wilderness>

Organizers: Jesse Oak Taylor (jot8@uw.edu), University of Washington, & Tobias Menely (tmenely@ucdavis.edu), University of California-Davis

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This panel offers an opportunity to think about the role of wilderness, as both an entity and a concept, in the Anthropocene. In the 20-odd years since William Cronon's influential 1995 essay, "The Trouble with Wilderness," its critique of the wilderness ideal—as "pristine" nature in its "true" state—has become familiar, even a baseline assumption of much ecocritical thinking. Similarly, the idea of "pristine" or unchanging nature has little place in the New Ecology, which rejects the human/nature binary, and is rendered nonsensical if anthropogenic climate change indeed marks the "end of nature" as an entity apart from human influence. And yet, even in the Anthropocene, wilderness retains its allure. Not only are wilderness areas themselves vital sources of biodiversity and ecological renewal, they also serve as an important venue for people to experience biophysical processes, and seek contact with the living Earth. Wilderness also retains force as a political concept. The Trump Administration's assault of public lands (and the strident resistance to it) highlights the radical nature, and political efficacy, of placing landscapes outside the logic of capital accumulation and resource extraction. Meanwhile, increased attention to feral ecologies, "toxic" wilderness areas in places like Chernobyl or the Hanford Nuclear Reservation (now managed by the National Park Service), and intentional "re-wilding" schemes (including proposals to bring back long-extinct creatures like the woolly mammoth) all speak to the persistence of wilderness even after the "end" of nature. Indeed, the unsettled, often extreme weather events of the early Anthropocene arguably mark a return to wilderness in its older, more frightening sense: the power of an Earth System that lies beyond, and outweighs, the human. With these provocations in mind, this panel will re-evaluate the wilderness concept in the Anthropocene, whether in terms of refuge and renewal or resurgence. We particularly invite presentations that draw on fieldwork, and/or demonstrate substantive engagement with the Anthropocene concept.

Anthropomorphism in Hell

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126367/anthropomorphism-in-hell>

Organizer: Adela Ramos (ramosam@plu.edu), Pacific Lutheran University

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

On July 24, 2018, Tahlequah, an orca also known as J-35, gave birth. Her calf was the first of her pod to live birth since 2015. But thirty minutes later, the calf died due to nutritional deficiencies caused by overfishing and pollution. Rather than abandon her dead offspring, Tahlequah carried her across the Salish Sea for seventeen days, capturing global attention. Anthropomorphic responses dubbed this unprecedented event "a protest" and a "tour of grief," mothers and grandmothers compared Tahlequa's refusal to relinquish her calf to their own experiences grieving during miscarriages or after the premature death of a child. Environmentalists and scientists engaged an old debate about the uses and ethics of anthropomorphism: some celebrated the promise of anthropomorphism to spur public action; others warned about the fleeting nature of such responses, pointing to decades-long inaction. In literature and the arts, anthropomorphism has historically provided a means to imagine the cognitive and emotional lives of other animals and, in many cultures, has always been an essential mode of cross-species communion. As we determine how to write, teach, live, protest, and act in the midst of environmental disaster, how does anthropomorphism provide a means to find, build, and dream the contours of paradise? How do literary and artistic works

wield anthropomorphism to do so? How did anthropomorphism allow writers and artists in the past to help their audiences imagine or act? Has anthropomorphism reached a limit in hell? This roundtable seeks ten-minute presentations that respond to one of these questions.

Arctic Art and Climate Change

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126368/arctic-art-and-climate-change>

Organizer: Debbie Lee (deblee@wsu.edu), Washington State University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

When I visited the Art Museum in Ilulissat, West Greenland in April, which features a good deal of Inuit art, the curator told me that he has seen more visitors in the last years than ever before. He speculated the increased interest was a direct result of the melting ice sheet. Arctic art is also at the heart of an international artist residency called The Arctic Circle. Every year the residency sponsors sixty artists from all disciplines to make art aboard a traditionally rigged tall ship sailing up the west coast of Svalbard. Productions and collaborations from this residency have been featured on almost every continent over the past ten years.

In their book *Art in the Anthropocene*, Heather Davis and Etienne Turpin argue that art is vitally important in today's warming world. Art provides a site of experimentation for living in a damaged world because it can use a range of discursive, visual, and sensual strategies to communicate its message and is not confined by regimes of scientific objectivity, political moralism, or psychological depression.

The Arctic, which is warming at twice the rate of other places on the planet, is one version of "Paradise on Fire." How can art help people see the Arctic region in ways that move beyond scientific objectivity, political moralism, psychological depression, or other responses to which many have become numb? Papers and presentations welcome from artists, writers, and scholars.

Artistic Witnessing: Earth's Edenic Fall

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126372/artistic-witnessing-earths-edenic-fall>

Organizer: Sophie Christman (drsophiechristman@gmail.com), Independent

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

This roundtable extends Bill McKibben's philosophy that "What the Warming World Needs Now is Art, Sweet Art" (*Grist* 2005). It seeks to investigate the following two questions: what are some ways in which the artistic modes of theatre, music, dance, and art aestheticize Earth's Edenic fall? How do the arts transmit this failed ideal through modes of public witness that re-value ecological systems?

The roundtable explores how ecocriticism of the arts can provide public interventions for acknowledging, enduring, and remediating climate change. The fine and performing arts have seen major exhibitions mounted on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the United States that address the issues of global warming, including Storm King's 2018 "Indicators: Artists on Climate Change" and Lucy Holtsnider's 2017 UC Santa Barbara climate change exhibition. While environmental humanities' scholars such as Stephanie LeMenager are beginning to address how artistic production intersects with the theoretical, economic, and material realities of global warming, much research remains to be done on how artistic agency can help remedy global warming (*Resilience* 1.2, 2014); my roundtable addresses this under researched area by utilizing the skills and expertise of the ASLE scholarly community.

The roundtable, comprised of artists and scholars, will be guided by the notion that global responses to the science of climate change can derive, in part, from cultural revolutions; just as Kwame Anthony Appiah has urged that moral revolutions must “...involve a rapid transformation in moral behaviour...,” the remediation of global warming necessitates rapid transformations in society’s current unethical behaviors that contribute to climate change. One way in which to rapidly achieve transformative moral behaviors, I argue, is through artistic imaginaries.

For instance, in presenting their case studies, roundtable participants may spark lively discussions on the following topics: How can the arts help us enact cultural revolutions that value the planet’s ecological systems? How can they help us witness and take responsibility for the coming mass extinctions? What moral thresholds are observed in emphasizing ecological approaches to visual perceptions that portray cognitive dissonances of “paradise on fire” such as J. Henry Fair’s photography of the toxic sublime? How does Oleg Kulik’s philosophy of zoophrenia, embodied through the ‘artist-animal’ and his visual projects such as New Paradise and Artificial Paradise address and destabilize “ideological walls” across species boundaries? How can traditional and new forms of music bear witness to climate change, from Stravinsky’s Rite of Spring to Baba Brinkman’s climate chaos rap? How can modes of musical theatre or dance, such as Ken Fine’s Endangered: The Musical and K.T. Nelson’s “Dead Reckoning” enable transformative behaviors? Finally, how do modes of public and participatory art such as Chaudhuri, Ertl, Kellhammer and Zurkow’s “Dear Climate” project create polemical acts of agency and resistance during the long durée of global warming?

Art|Science|Activism

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126370/artscienceactivism>

Organizer: Sharon L. Kunde (skunde@uci.edu), University of California, Irvine

Planned Format: Jam Session (7-8 Presenters)

After a summer of record-breaking heat across the globe, firenados in California and Montana, drought in Australia, and plentiful reporting on climate change that has ranged from Nathaniel Rich’s elegiac “Losing Earth” to the PNAS Scientific Journal’s panic-inducing report on the “hothouse earth” threshold, “Paradise on Fire” seems less like a possible future and more like an unfolding present. Following up on our experiences in ASLE 2017’s “To Feel and To Know” workshop, which brought together scientists and writers to discuss and collaborate in the production of expressive writing about scientific research, this jam session, Art|Science|Activism will give the audience a chance to discuss the ways in which scholars can intersect science and art to further the activism so desperately needed in our burning world. Participants may, for example, practice art as a way to explain and disseminate scientific knowledge with the intention of inspiring the political engagement of people who come in contact with their art. The jam session will also raise the question of how humanistic values organize and delimit the parameters of scientific inquiry and the ways in which issues of genre structure the dissemination and reception of scientific knowledge. What activist science are jam session participants practicing? What science-inflected art? Together with audience members, jam session participants will discuss the advantages and pitfalls of cross-pollinating artistic/humanistic and scientific discourses in the context of a progressive and activist political agenda.

Participants will have a chance briefly to describe, present on, and/or display work that engages with the concerns of the session, after which the panel moderator will facilitate discussion amongst participants and audience members. At the session’s close, panelists and audience will brainstorm collaborative, interdisciplinary projects and possible venues for them.

At the Intersection of Broadway and Main Street: Suburban and Urban Farms

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126379/at-the-intersection-of-broadway-and-main-street-suburban-and-urban-farms>

Organizer: Susan Cohen (sacohen3@aacc.edu), Anne Arundel Community College

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Wendell Berry writes, “The ecological principle in agriculture is to connect the genius of the place, to fit the farming to the farm.” This panel will explore the urban and suburban farming revolution that has creatively fit itself into the patchwork of vacant lots, suburban lawns, rooftops, common spaces in housing developments, vertical farming and indoor spaces. Urban and suburban farms, for the purposes of this panel, will be differentiated from community gardens, in that these farm spaces are designed to bring a significant percentage of the food they produce to market and to fulfil the USDA definition of an urban/suburban farm in that \$1,000 or more of the agricultural products produced would have been sold during the census year. Key issues that might be considered by panelists are the ways urban and suburban farms link food production with local politics, environmental stewardship, environmental justice, food insecurity, intergenerational connections, improved health and nutrition, and community engagement.

This panel seeks to include nonfiction, poetry, and/or fiction.

Before the Anthropocene? Placing Early America in Environmental Humanities (SEA Sponsored Panel)

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126380/before-the-anthropocene-placing-early-america-in-environmental-humanities-sea-s>

Organizer: Lauren LaFauci (lauren.e.lafauci@liu.se), Linköping University

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

This panel is sponsored by the Society of Early Americanists.

When “ecocriticism” began to emerge as a consolidated field of study in the 1990s, many of its practitioners focused on the “nature writing” or poetry of the Anglo-American Romantic tradition. As Ursula Heise, Lawrence Buell, and others have argued, this focus was itself a response to the dominance of poststructuralist theory within literary studies in the 1960s-’90s: reacting to the idea that “nature” might be socially constructed, ecocritics sought to ground (pun intended) our literary analyses in the “solid earth” and “the actual world.” (Indeed this reference to Thoreau’s *The Maine Woods* served as the theme for ASLE’s 2003 conference in Boston.) A “second wave” of ecocritical scholars subsequently pushed to expand the boundaries of ecocritical analysis beyond nature writing and to theorize its critical projects more deliberately; these scholars have expanded the field’s temporal and theoretical orientations significantly, such that the transdisciplinary “environmental humanities” (EH) has become the more frequent moniker for what it is environmentally inflected literary critics do.

This new work of EH has in turn shifted the field to a more presentist focus. Amidst the daily barrage of environmental crises (and, when we can find them, the narratives of the slower violences taking place), such a presentist focus is understandable. After all, our field’s methods, subjects, and extrapolations make academic work—specifically humanities work—relevant to the wider public and to students, who implicitly seem to know that new epistemologies and ontologies will be necessary for survival in the broken world they have inherited. A focus on current texts, and current environmental problems, seems most

appropriate in these contexts. But where does this focus leave those of us who spend our days teaching and researching early America?

This roundtable asks what an EH of early America might look like. Some questions we might consider include but are not limited to the following:

- What does/can early American studies contribute to environmental humanities?
- What theoretical concepts, empirical materials, or historiographical interventions are most significant to EH research and teaching today?
- How can attention to the past inform our present environmental crises? Must it inform the present in order to be “environmental humanities”?
- What role do we have as early Americanists in the EH and ASLE communities?
- How has the concept of the Anthropocene impacted the fields of early American studies and of EH?
- As early Americanists, we have always faced the challenge of making this time and place come alive to our students; as EH scholars, we now face a second challenge of making it come alive to our peers in environmentalist contexts. What strategies, techniques, and practices have you developed to meet these twin challenges?

This roundtable will ask its participants to submit a short position paper ahead of the conference; we will read one another’s position papers and use the conference session to foster an open conversation among ourselves and with the audience on the state of the field of EH within early American studies today.

Beyond Extinction: Species, Metaphor, Language

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126381/beyond-extinction-species-metaphor-language>

Organizers: Hande Gurses (hande.gurses@utoronto.ca), University of Toronto, and Kaushik Ramu (kaushikr@sas.upenn.edu), University of Pennsylvania

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

“To me, it's a sign of a deeply disturbed civilization,” says Werner Herzog, “where tree huggers and whale huggers in their weirdness [?] are acceptable, but no one embraces the last speakers of a language”. How might biology and language illuminate each other as metaphors, and with what implications for the imperative to preserve under the sign of extinction? What optics for the environmental humanities await us at sites of political and ecological catastrophe? In the spirit of the Indian critic G. N. Devy, who describes near-extinct languages as “the avant-garde margins of experience” at which knowledge is truly possible, we invite papers that engage with the inseparability of ecology and culture, and that reflect on the imperative to erase, mass-produce, or let live entire life-worlds of experience. By what politics of cuteness, function, or cadence have we held out against the loss of diversity? How might the units we assume in speaking of extinction — the species, the culture — have denied us other, intricate links between bodies and languages?

Beyond Retreat: (Re)thinking Pastoral Landscape in the Posthuman Turn

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126303/beyond-retreat-rethinking-pastoral-landscape-in-the-posthuman-turn>

Organizer: Stefano Rozzoni (stefano.rozzoni@unibg.it), University of Bergamo

Planned Format: Jam Session (7-8 Presenters)

The longstanding tradition of pastoral poetry (and pastoral critical studies) in Western literature has created a significant amount of materials, which have turned the genre into one of the most iconic, popular and perhaps controversial writing practices of our culture.

The literary, visual and cultural identity of the pastoral ideal has been consistently influenced by the dominant critical interpretation of the natural landscape as an idealized, ahistorical and imaginary construction translated into an escapist practice from the threats and crisis of the physical world. This assumption summarises the existence of a dominant dualistic conception in literary pastoral criticism, as well as a strong dependence on anthropocentrism in the study of the genre.

Through the adoption of a Posthuman perspective - as a way to rethink the "human/non-human/inhuman" relationship - this panel aims to foster new critical perspectives and alternative interpretations of the natural landscape within the pastoral genre. The intent is to deconstruct the most popular (and problematic) critical labels affecting the pastoral poetry studies like "bucolic", "idyllic", "nostalgic" and "Arcadian" to enhance new narratives in interpreting the role of nature and its representational strategies, in line with the latest scholarship on New Materialism. In particular, this panel encourages the adoption of a New-Spinozist perspective in relation to the subjectivities involved in the depiction of the traditional pastoral landscape, as a way to de-territorialize and re-territorialize the still dominant critical reading of the genre.

Questions to address, therefore, might include the following (although this list represents only a starting point):

- How has the concept of "idealisation" influenced the interpretation/creation of the landscape in the pastoral literary production?
- Can idealisation be subverted in the interpretation of the pastoral genre?
- What definition of pastoral poetry can account for a wide range of ecological alternatives, ideologies or perspectives?
- What are the implications of the representational strategies of nature in the pastoral genre?
- Does the adoption of a Posthuman perspective affect the traditional interpretation of the pastoral genre?

In order to assure high level of confrontation and give chances to different people to share ideas, an interactive and highly involving jam session in the ignite talks style will be proposed.

Studies on postcolonial pastoralism are particularly welcome, as well as New Materialism and Posthuman studies on pastoral landscape.

If you wish to participate, please send your paper title, a 250 word abstract and a 2-3 sentences bio.

Breaking Down the Walls: New Directions in Environmental Thinking for the Anthropocene

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126411/breaking-down-the-walls-new-directions-in-environmental-thinking-for-the-anthrop>

Organizer: Ron Milland (ron2154@gmail.com), Independent Scholar

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Paradise is burning - or melting, flooding, or otherwise collapsing. In actuality, these collapses are simultaneous, or convergent as Christian Parenti has termed it. Or, as a recent article states, "when the Arctic melts, the West burns."

However imminent the collapse of paradise may be, systemic efforts are underway to forestall the inevitable and sustain its fleeting vestiges. The security and defense branches of numerous governments acknowledge climate change as a threat to both economic and national security. Beyond this, even the notion of paradise is being defended. If "paradise" is, in some sense, a world in which we can 'have our cake and eat it, too', then this would seem the goal of sustainability, promises of a kind of techno-utopia, and most mass-marketing through which trans-national corporations advertise seductively and we consume willingly. The underlying idea is simple enough: if we can fix the world - or feel less guilty about breaking it - then we can (more or less) enjoy business as usual. Paradise, in this sense, is a salve for the psyche - one that absolves us of responsibility - ensuring that we don't feel bad even as things get worse.

Despite the existential nature of the problem, many are hard at work fighting the more deleterious elements of the system. However, the systems that are rendering damage do so through various means of exploitation - and operate in ways that are intricately interconnected. Countering such systems first requires that we recognize these crucial interconnecting elements, and doing this requires that we move beyond traditional compartmentalized thinking ourselves - as instructors, students, and citizens. Taking as its inspiration Paulo Freire's notions of interdisciplinary thinking and eco-pedagogy, this panel seeks to serve as a check on standardized thinking by actively defying it. Can we collaborate with colleagues across - and beyond - the humanities to perforate traditional disciplinary thinking? Can students find new pathways to discovery while remaining hopeful that the world may not be beyond repair? This panel invites innovative thinking (tested or not) in the realm of critical pedagogy, with special attention to new methods of teaching about the environment across the disciplines.

Burning Waters, Quenching Fires

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126413/burning-waters-quenching-fires>

Organizers: Serena Ferrando (serena.ferrando@colby.edu), Colby College, and Paolo Chirumbolo (chirumbo@lsu.edu), Louisiana State University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This panel session welcomes contributions that reflect on water as a material element, as a concept, and as a mode of inquiry into the world. Opening up the conference theme "Paradise on Fire" to that of water and its literal and metaphorical declinations (quenching wild fires, stopping destruction, reducing arousal), possible contributions will consider the redemptive power of water and/or reflect on the changing quantity and quality of the planet's water supply, focus on one geographical instance (such as but not limited to Italy's changing hydrography, the L.A. and Mississippi rivers, the city of Flint, Michigan, California's

droughts, India's floods), an historical instance, a political one, or tackle the topic from a more creative angle (experimental literature and cinema or postmodern literature in general).

We are hoping to bring together presenters from different languages and/or disciplines.

Challenging the Paradises of the Anthropocene: Mines, Plantations, Resorts

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126420/challenging-the-paradises-of-the-anthropocene-mines-plantations-resorts>

Organizer: José Manuel Marrero Henríquez (jose.marrero@ulpgc.es), Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

The Garden of Eden is one of the most relevant myths in Western culture. It has served not only as inspiration for a vast array of cultural works across countries and languages (from Cervantes to Milton, Bello, and H. Bosch) but also has acted as a foundation from which to envision the welfare of nations and establish a common ideal of every political constitution. But just like any other plot of land, Eden has been subjected to the poor practice of being evaluated by quantifiable units and immediate profits. Solitude, clear waters, reflection, adequate work, and healthy feeding have given way to masses, chlorinated pools, data, febrile production and insane consumption to the point that paradisiac lands are now those able to quickly produce immense economic richness: mines, plantations, tourist resorts, cattle industries, and real estate developments. As a myth and a literary and artistic motif, the Garden of Eden is a moldable topic that, in the circumstances of the Anthropocene era, has great potential to unveil and question the cultural ideals that have led to the ecological crisis. It also offers the possibility of freeing millions of individuals from the life of competition, rivalry and compulsory market consumption that they have incorporated in the personal attitudes of their everyday lives (B-C Han.)

This panel seeks papers that study cultural works that present the myth of paradise to challenge the status quo and contribute positively not only by criticizing ideological values behind the ecological crisis, but also envisioning ways of living the transition to a post-carbon and a post-growth society.

Cherríe Moraga: Loving in the Years of Climate Disaster

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126421/cherrie-moraga-loving-in-the-years-of-climate-disaster>

Organizer: Priscilla Solis Ybarra (priscilla.ybarra@unt.edu), University of North Texas

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This panel takes up the work of Cherríe Moraga, one of the most influential Chicana writers publishing today. As one of the plenary speakers for the 2019 ASLE meeting, Moraga offers a great deal of insight about how to live, love, and thrive in the shadow of violence and disaster. Her classic text from 1983, *Loving in the War Years*, is but one example of her fearless writing. Her tradition of engaging difficult questions in an achingly self-revelatory voice continues up to her early twenty-first century plays and essay collections. One question posed by this conference's call for papers is, "what might life in catastrophic times entail for the environmental humanities?" Moraga's work poses a related question: "how does one make a life in catastrophic times?" Her work has always addressed the idea of living under assault. With a depth of

creativity that speaks to surviving and thriving in the ongoing coloniality of our times—what Gerald Vizenor calls “survivance”—Moraga’s works can prompt a wide-ranging and instructive discussion of strategies, activism, affirmation, and reinforcement for today and into the future. As one of the Chicana feminist writers who most explicitly engages questions of environmental justice and traditional ecological knowledge, her work calls for more ecocritical engagement. Please submit an abstract of a presentation that will engage with one or more of Moraga’s works in the context of one or more of the following: environmental humanities, climate change, Latinx studies, queer studies, decolonial theory, indigenous studies, feminist thought.

Communal Futures: Generative Responses to Ecological Cataclysm in Science Fiction Texts

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126422/communal-futures-generative-responses-to-ecological-cataclysm-in-science-fiction>

Organizer: Zainab Younus (ppmw@iup.edu), Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Goal: This panel seeks to present research on science fiction texts that address social upheaval due to environmental cataclysm and unique communities that create symbiotic change (between environment and people) through social balance.

Proposal: While the link between society and natural sciences goes back to the 19th century, in the past few decades, the social effects of environmental cataclysm have become the primary concern on a global scale. Narratives in literature--both as a result of these environmental shifts and as catalysts for real world change--have addressed these issues: climate change due to global warming, impact of energy sources, extinction of species, genetic manipulation, and the subsequent social upheaval. The relationship between technology, nature, and the natural world has become a key study under ecocriticism, which analyzes how these issues are depicted in works of literature. The genre of science fiction, especially--as the main thrust of the genre has always been to provide a glimpse into the future of what might be awaiting us--provides possible sources of stability, such as finding refuge in each other and in scientific fact, for those facing real world environmental crisis. Likewise, in a conversation across texts and time, many ecocritical science fiction works propose a healing solution to these seemingly un-savable worlds: community by symbiosis. The disruptions which became the cause for humanity to separate and focus on individual survival, resorting to violence, and fracturing societies under pressure from environmental disasters are healed and generated by communities contingent on symbiotic support and a reverence for knowledge. This panel seeks papers in any genre of SF that addresses questions of ecological futures and the community response to the natural/utopian world facing, recovering or heading towards a fiery cataclysm. Based on the level/volume of interest; this can be organized as both a paper presentation or a roundtable.

Constructing Readers and Theorizing Action in Environmental Justice Narratives

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126423/constructing-readers-and-theorizing-action-in-environmental-justice-narratives>

Organizer: Jill Gatlin (jill.gatlin@necmusic.edu), New England Conservatory

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

While ecocritics often celebrate literature's activist agendas and presuppose that reading inspires extratextual action, scholars of minority literature and cognitive narratologists remain more skeptical, delineating limitations of readerly identification and empathy in prompting social change (e.g., Lesley Larkin 2015, Suzanne Keen 2007). Offering additional entry points into these debates, Dana Phillips argues that "the perusal of environmental literature would seem to be a roundabout way for us to secure a bond with the earth" (2003) whereas Bruno Latour, often cited by ecocritics, insists that "[d]iscourse is not a world unto itself but a population of actants that mix with things as well as with societies. . . . Interest in texts does not distance us from reality" (1993). This session focuses and extends these conversations by theorizing reading through narratological, formalist, and reception analysis.

Participants might address how literatures of environmental justice or postcolonial environmentalism imagine reading subjects and their potential for transformation or action; construct and position narratees amongst other textual agents; employ Brechtian "alienation effects" (1936), direct address, metafictional methods, or other narratological elements to confront readers; articulate the potential or limitations of identificatory or empathic reading in contexts of privilege and power; engage audiences affectively, psychologically, epistemologically, or sensorially; or depict reading and literacy as environmental problems. How does literature reinforce or resist conventional forms of subjectivity established via reading? What kinds of transactions between literature, readers, publics, and worlds do these texts envision? How do human and nonhuman agents shape these relationships?

Works Cited:

- Brecht, Bertolt. "Alienation Effects in Chinese Acting." 1936. *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*, edited and translated by John Willett, Hill and Wang, 1992, 91-99.
- Keen, Suzanne. *Empathy and the Novel*. Oxford UP, 2007.
- Larkin, Lesley. *Race and the Literary Encounter: Black Literature from James Weldon Johnson to Percival Everett*. Indiana UP, 2015.
- Latour, Bruno. *We Have Never Been Modern*. Translated by Catherine Porter, Harvard UP, 1993.
- Phillips, Dana. *The Truth of Ecology: Nature, Culture, and Literature in America*. Oxford UP, 2003.

Contemplating Qi: Epistemologies of Fire in Personal Narrative

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126425/contemplating-qi-epistemologies-of-fire-in-personal-narrative>

Organizers: Courtney Kersten (ckersten@ucsc.edu), University of California, Santa Cruz, and Anna Banks (annab@uidaho.edu), University of Idaho

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

This creative nonfiction roundtable investigates the multifaceted ways in which fire energetically and conceptually circulates in different forms of knowledge such as astrology, Ayurveda, energy healing, and

traditional Chinese medicine, among other epistemologies. This panel, and each presentation within it, identifies and explores the ways in which fire informs our ways of knowing and, possibly, how the element itself can inform and transform the human and more-than-human experience. Given the dynamic ways in which fire can operate in such epistemologies, participants' creative nonfiction works will likewise represent the great diversity of modes available within the creative nonfiction genre. Looking at fire as an element calls upon the diverse human and non-human experience and participants papers may focus on and include their direct experience with such epistemologies in relationship to transformation, crisis, rebirth, desire, destruction, and healing, among other topics. Furthermore, such epistemologies often operate in resistance or counter to patriarchal or dominant forms of knowledge that do not embrace elemental forms of knowledge. Given this, papers may also address epistemologies of fire as a source of personal and political revolution and resistance. We invite four more panelists to join us in this roundtable.

Contemplative Pedagogies for the Environmental Humanities: Mindfully Cooling the Fires of Craving, Aversion, and Delusion

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126111/contemplative-pedagogies-for-the-environmental-humanities-mindfully-cooling-the>

Organizer: Greta Gaard (greta.gaard@uwrf.edu), University of Wisconsin, River Falls

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

Environmental humanities (EH) scholar-educators are passionate about educating and activating our students to address climate justice and mitigate the projected apocalyptic scenarios of incendiary climate futures. In this process, we design courses that focus on narratives and texts, service learning and digital media, but overlook the mental and somatic narratives our students bring into the classroom. Contemplative pedagogies bridge course content with students' embodied content through practices such as poetry-writing, qigong, yoga, art-making, walking meditation, compassion practice, and mindfulness of breath, sounds, thoughts, sensations. Mindfulness practices in particular are shown to enhance concentration and memory, reduce anxiety and depression, and improve general health and well-being. Mindfulness is also used as an anti-oppression pedagogy (Berila 2015), strategic in helping students expose and examine deeply-held prejudices around race, gender, sexuality, species, and more. This panel explores contemplative pedagogies and their uses for the environmental humanities.

Proposals should address the following:

- What specific contemplative practices are best suited to environmental humanities (EH) course content, objectives, and pedagogies? Why so?
- What pedagogical research are you undertaking in your EH course(s) to examine this approach?
- What assessment tools are available to measure the success of your chosen pedagogy?
- What strategies have you used to ensure a "fit" between the contemplative pedagogy and your course content (i.e., readings, films, assignments, tests, class activities, course objectives)?
- How might contemplative pedagogies achieve EH goals of Affect Studies, Postcolonial, Feminist, Indigenous, Asian, Cosmopolitan, Latinx, Material, Narrative, Queer, Vegan/Animal, or other ecocriticism in facilitating students' awareness of their affective, embodied responses to course content?

Resources:

Barbezat, Daniel & Mirabai Bush. (2014). *Contemplative Practices in Higher Education: Powerful Methods to Transform Teaching and Learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Berila, Beth. (2016). *Integrating Mindfulness into Anti-Oppression Pedagogy: Social Justice in Higher Education*. New York: Routledge.

Brown, K.W. & Ryan, R.M. (2003). "The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 822-848.

Davidson, Richard J. and Alfred W. Kaszniak. (2015). "Conceptual and Methodological Issues in Research on Mindfulness and Meditation." *American Psychologist* 70:7, 581-592.

Hanh, Thich Nhat, and Katherine Weare. (2017). *Happy Teachers Change the World: A Guide for Cultivating Mindfulness in Education*. Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.

Hanson, Rick. (2009). *Buddha's Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of Happiness, Love and Wisdom*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, Inc.

James, Erin. (2015). *The Storyworld Accord: Econarratology and Postcolonial Narratives*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Moore, Kathleen Dean and Scott Slovic. (2014). "A Call to Writers." *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 21.1, 5-8.

Ray, Sarah Jaquette. "The Affective Arc of Undergraduate Environmental Studies Curricula." In Jennifer Ladino and Kyle Bladow, eds. *Affective Ecocriticism*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press (forthcoming).

Slovic, Scott, and Paul Slovic. (2015). "The Arithmetic of Compassion." *The New York Times*, Dec. 6.

Weik von Mossner, Alexa. (2017). *Affective Ecologies: Empathy, Emotion, and Environmental Narrative*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press.

Dark Ecologies: Grounds of Trauma in 21st-Century Horror Films

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126426/dark-ecologies-grounds-of-trauma-in-21st-century-horror-films>

Organizers: Eric Gary Anderson (eandersd@gmu.edu) and Sheri Nicole Sorvillo (ssorvill@gmu.edu), George Mason University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

21st century horror films seem to raise the stakes not only by depicting catastrophic planetary ecohorrors but also by so frequently zeroing in on more specific personal and familial traumas that become apparent in, or through, or by way of, dark ecologies such as dark woods, dark waters, dark mountains, dark swamps, dark basements, dark caverns and crevices, the dark web, etc. This panel sets out to map, theorize, and read these dark ecologies/ecologies of darkness as both physical and imagined, both "natural" and supernatural, both human and non-human terrains. How do these grounds of trauma work? And what, if anything, do such ecologically charged representations of personal and domestic trauma have to do with planet-threatening ecohorrors—paradises on fire?

Deep Waters

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126427/deep-waters>

Organizer: Ned Schaumberg (edward.schaumberg@uta.edu), University of Texas at Arlington, Seedbox Collaboratory

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

While water's importance to human life and culture is clear, discussing that importance presents temporal and spatial challenges. Even if the absence or excessive presence of water are experienced acutely, it also slowly impacts individuals and societies across decades and centuries, while circulating around the globe across geological epochs. Inspired by the Seedbox research cluster of the same name, "Deep Waters" examines how human relationships with water and the literature showcasing them can offer insight into water and its flow across time. The papers on this panel will connect the myriad (and often contradictory) experiences of water to the intersectional cultural and social forces at the heart of water issues, and to the stories that connect these social forces to a diverse array of environmental experiences.

In keeping with the conference theme, this panel considers how a "Paradise on Fire" can simultaneously include droughts and floods, long-standing traditions and startling new pollutants, local creeks and global climates. How can these contradictions help us imagine an understanding of "paradise" that accounts for the range of experiences water necessitates? How can attending to water and its flow—and the wealth of literature about it—help create new paradises?

Potential Paper Topics could include:

- Transpacific seafaring and coastal literature
- Dams in literature
- Indigenous water stories
- Drought narratives
- Water pollution narratives/nonfiction
- Fiction and non-fiction of watery disaster (flood, hurricane, etc.)
- Cli-fi
- Cultural conflicts over water's status as "resource" or "life"

Disidentifications with the Human

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126433/disidentifications-with-the-human>

Organizers: Lindsay Garcia (ldgarcia@email.wm.edu), College of William and Mary, and Daniel Lanza Rivers (riversdr@miamioh.edu), Miami University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Jose Esteban Muñoz described "disidentification" as a way of reading that "scrambles" the intended meanings of a given text, exposing its racialized, classed, gendered, and hegemonic limitations of scope while also enabling alternative forms of representation and meaning-making. For Muñoz, disidentification transforms the encoded meanings of a given text into the "raw material for representing a disempowered politics or positionality that has been rendered unthinkable by the dominant culture" (31). Working in the spirit of this intervention and hybridizing it with an ecocritical approach to the human, this panel seeks presentations that "disidentify with the human." Drawing upon (eco)feminist, queer, decolonial, new

materialist, and critical-race approaches to animal studies and the environment, this panel will explore the limits of a human-centered worldview while also attending to the intersections of identity, society, dispossession, speciesism, ability, and/or racialized capitalism. Projects of interest could model disidentification with the human along various axes:

- Through creative and analytical explorations of other-than-human life.
- Through engagement with genealogies of the human that have excluded nonwhite, indigenous, queer, disabled, and otherwise marginalized individuals by framing them as not-fully-human, inhuman, parahuman, etc.
- Through activist postures of more-than-human alliance and environmental justice.
- Through practices of radical empathy across species.
- Through re-imaginings of kinship and embodiment that hybridize-with or extend-beyond the human.
- And through narratives of trans- or post-humanity.

Though this panel takes the format of a traditional 4-human panel, it is particularly interested in creative, hybrid, and nontraditional approaches to knowledge production, including but not limited to performance art, film, poetry, and other forms of artistic expression.

Diversity and Perenniality in Contemporary Agroecological Storytelling

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126434/diversity-and-perenniality-in-contemporary-agroecological-storytelling>

Organizer: Aubrey Streit Krug (streitkrug@landinstitute.org), The Land Institute

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This panel invites participants to investigate the narrative dimensions of recent agroecological literature.

Like ecocriticism, agroecology takes interdisciplinary approaches. Fusing ecology and agriculture, agroecological studies reach beyond the natural sciences to engage the social sciences, arts, humanities, and the public—leading to definitions of agroecology as “a science, a movement, and a practice” (Wezel et al. 2009). Agroecological stories tell of disturbance and change as well as continuity and renewal when it comes to the energy and nutrient flows and dynamic relationships between humans, plants, animals, microbes, soils, rocks, waters, airs, and the sun that are all necessary for nourishment.

Our ecocritical inquiry into agroecology focuses on two questions: 1) Why might diversity and perenniality be vital aspects of transformative agroecological and agricultural changes that could make longer term nourishment possible, in contrast to the more precarious annual monocultures that currently characterize many food systems and communities? and 2) How might storytelling practices help imagine and enact such meaningful and necessary changes in this era of emergency?

Topics and texts for consideration might include:

- Indigenous knowledge and native & immigrant food sovereignty narratives (like Enrique Salmón’s *Eating the Landscape* and Devon Peña et al.’s collection *Mexican-Origin Foods, Food Ways, and Social Movements*)
- Antiracist educational sites and guides (like Soul Fire Farm and Leah Penniman’s *Farming While Black*)

- Contemporary agroecological nonfiction and memoirs (like Liz Carlisle's *Lentil Underground* and Brent Preston's *The New Farm*)
- Networked stories of community action and collective engagement (like student farms, regional food hubs, and the Community Agroecology Network)
- Theories and practices of narrative emerging from agroecological academic scholarship and non-profit projects (like the Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems at the University of California-Santa Cruz and The Land Institute in Kansas)

Presenters offering ecocritical analysis, narrative scholarship, creative storytelling, and more are all welcome.

Ecocritical Border Studies: Current and Future Directions

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126435/ecocritical-border-studies-current-and-future-directions>

Organizer: Jenny Kerber (jkerber@wlu.ca), Wilfrid Laurier University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This traditional paper session invites presentations that investigate some aspect of border studies in tandem with current and emerging work in the environmental humanities. In particular, scholars might consider where they see the field of border studies heading in light of heightened awareness of environmental problems that exceed or otherwise challenge national boundaries. How are confrontations with borders imagined by writers, artists, and creative thinkers in ways that test the self containment of bodies and nations? How might border zones themselves be considered unique environmental spaces? What difference do ecocritical approaches make to border studies, and vice versa?

Topics for discussion may include:

- organic histories of national borders
- the overlap of literary studies and discourses of biosecurity, quarantine, or pandemics in other fields
- climate change and shifting borders
- redrawing borders in speculative modes of writing
- writing about transboundary species
- the limits and benefits of national literary frameworks for examining border-straddling texts and ecosystems
- writing about transboundary infrastructure projects (eg. pipelines, highways, railroads, etc.)
- Indigenous writing in relation to borders of the settler-colonial nation state
- writing border environments in the Trump era
- migration across borders and experiences of stalled transit
- national borders as enabling or inhibiting forms of ecological conservation
- environments of temporary migrant camps; stateless ecologies

Ecofeminism, Science-Fiction, and Vitality of Fire

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126455/ecofeminism-science-fiction-and-vitality-of-fire>

Organizer: Başak Ağin (bashak@gmail.com), Middle East Technical University

Planned Format: Jam Session (7-8 Presenters)

Traditionally dominated by a white-male group of writers and audience, science-fiction, be it in the visual or the literary form, has habitually had phobic relations* with femininity and diversity. And such phobic relations constitute the problematic patterns of control over all the Others, including women, nature, ethnic minorities, children, and nonhuman animals, as Irene Sanz Alonso also notes in her chapter in Douglas Vakoch's forthcoming edited volume *Ecofeminist Science Fiction*. While science-fiction could have been a viable tool – if not a paradise – for inventing alternate conducts of story-telling (where no form of oppression is replicated), the mainstream tendencies among science-fiction fans and writers may unfortunately show otherwise. In a way, such tendencies burn down the possibility of building a paradise of diverse narratives. Recently, for instance, during the Hugo Awards, the proponents of a more conventional and mainstream science-fiction have propelled a 'burning' discussion. Their arguments 'burst into flames' with their complaints on the publication of "left-wing diversity lectures" under science-fiction label, and about "soft science majors (lit and humanities degrees) using SF/F as a tool to critically examine and vivisection 21st century Western society" (Lovell 2016). Needless to mention, what they decried as "left-wing diversity lectures" and "critical examination of Western society by lit and humanities majors" had mostly been penned by female and/or non-white authors. In view of this conflict, is it possible to be "free to live and act another way," as Rebecca Solnit contends? Does any part of this scenario allow seeking new paradises through eco-feminist narratives of science-fiction? Can eco-feminism build a paradise of science-fiction by evolving into a more matter-oriented form, focusing on vitality of matter and material-feminist relations within narratives? If so, can we think of fire as a symbol for Phoenix, the bird that is reborn from its own ashes: As a metaphor to connote both an eco-feminist change towards materiality and a more diversity-based science-fiction? After all, if it was the "environmental feminists" who "have long insisted that feminism needs to take the materiality of the more-than-human world seriously" (Alaimo and Hekman 2008), can science-fiction narratives that embrace diversity (ecological or otherwise) bring a balance to the clash between paradise and hell? Bearing these questions (and many other alternative ones) in mind, this panel seeks participants who wish to discuss eco-feminism, science-fiction, and vitality of fire as a means of re-creating narratives within ecological contexts. All literary and cultural formats of science-fiction are welcome as long as they address these questions from eco-feminist, material feminist, material-ecocritical, and/or posthumanist perspectives.

*This phrase is an allusion to Serpil Oppermann's article "Ecocriticism's Phobic Relations with Theory," published in *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Autumn 2010), pp. 768-770.

Ecological Erotics (sponsored by the Thoreau Society)

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126468/ecological-erotics-sponsored-by-the-thoreau-society>

Organizer: Cristin Ellis (cristinellis@gmail.com), University of Mississippi

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

“My body is all sentient. As I go here or there I am tickled by this or that I come in contact with—as if I touched the wires of a battery.” -- Thoreau, Journal (1/11/1855)

“Eroticism, being in relation, calls the inner life into play. No longer numb, we feel the magnetic pull of our bodies toward something stronger, more vital than simply ourselves.” --Terry Tempest Williams, “The Erotic Landscape”

In the Old Testament story, sexuality originates in an exile from Eden. If environmental thought must now inhabit a post-paradisiacal age, how might an engagement with ecological erotics form part of our efforts to theorize the present moment? This panel will explore the libidinal, sensual, and pleasurable dimensions of ecological encounters and relationships. Topics might include:

- The erotics of natural history
- The natural history of erotics (eg. the role of biological, ecological, and/or environmental thought in the construction of modern discourses of sexuality)
- The role of sensuality in nature writing
- The role of sensuality in environmentalist rhetoric
- The eroticism of the ecological body in contemporary theory (eg. the pleasures of “transcorporeality,” porosity to “vibrant matter,” the indeterminacy of “the flesh,” the loss of bodily boundaries and/or selfhood).

This panel will be traditionally formatted with 4 papers and a respondent. It is sponsored by the Thoreau Society, so preference will be given to papers which engage the writings of Thoreau and/or his contemporaries, but all submissions relevant to the theme of ecological erotics will be considered for inclusion.

Ecologies of Desire: Science and Love in the Anthropocene

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126469/ecologies-of-desire-science-and-love-in-the-anthropocene>

Organizer: Katie Piper Greulich (greulich4@msu.edu), Michigan State University

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

Andreas Weber’s recently translated *Matter and Desire: An Erotic Ecology* (2017), argues that “From an ecological perspective, love is a practice of balancing interests that lead to a state of greater aliveness while also accepting failure in advance. A successful attachment always has two sides: living without fear, and learning to die courageously.” In Weber’s scientifically-trained hands, ecology becomes an erotic encounter that blooms into the pleasures of a garden paradise, as his many beautifully wrought passages suggest. But an erotic ecology also teaches us how to let go of that pleasure, to be destroyed in the act, to learn to die in the fire of passion. Written in response to a planet that is quivering under our touch, Weber forms his theory of erotic ecology as a model for thinking and living in the Anthropocene.

Weber draws on many moments in laboratories to explicate his theory, moments that reveal the particularly moving quality of life forms on our planet. And yet ecological eros, a twining that moves across various environmental romanticisms, has not often associated science with the facilitation of erotic ecological encounters; indeed, for Herbert Marcuse, modern technoscience has prevented eros from engendering a new environmental activism. To be sure, throughout Weber's text, the author relies on a literary tradition that evokes a particularly European romanticism, a revenant of Goethe himself. The form of Weber's text--the only recent examination of eros from a scientist--forges some interesting cross-disciplinary questions: is science a source of eros? If so, how does science structure its eros? What kind of epistemological or ontological positions are nestled within this eros? What kind of aesthetics, gender roles, or racial politics? Cross-species attachments? Political and imperial histories? How do science and art diverge and intersect in framing ecology as eroticism?

This panel calls for papers that explore this question historically, theoretically, and aesthetically. Panelists might examine how science has been written into and out of theories of eroticism, how the erotic has been figured within scientific theories and practices, and how disciplinary histories have obscured the relationship among the sciences, the humanities, and the erotic. Panelists might also address how to read scientific prose and image as eros, how aesthetic traditions vivify scientific representation, or how scientific images structure desire, attachment, even love. In turning to science, can Anthropocene humans find a kind of paradise that sets our bodies, minds, and world on fire?

The panel encourages participants working across disciplines, literary, media and art historical traditions, from science studies and histories of science. Papers that explore the notions of eroticism and/or science from non-Western traditions are encouraged. And of course, papers from scientists are very welcome.

Ecologies of the Commons

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126470/ecologies-of-the-commons>

Organizer: Katey Castellano (castelkm@jmu.edu), James Madison University

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

This roundtable will explore how "the commons" or practices of "commoning" resist the privatization and individualization of air, water, land, knowledge, and the building blocks of life itself. In accordance with the conference theme, presentations should consider how various groups of people, particularly marginalized people, are reinventing or reclaiming the commons to remove the walls from "paradise" and facilitate more equitable, sustainable distribution of resources in the Anthropocene.

This roundtable seeks to create a lively exchange of ideas about cultural or material commons from any period or place. Topics might include:

- Air or water as commons
- Commons and decolonization
- Feminist commons
- Food commons such as community gardens or seed banks
- Fugitive commons or undercommons in Black Studies
- More-than-human or animal commons
- Public lands and the commons
- Religious traditions as commons

- Sharing economies
- Traditional ecological knowledge/Indigenous commons
- Urban commons
- Limits or tragedies of the commons
- Theories of the commons as articulated by Anne-Lise Francois, Hardt and Negri, Peter Linebaugh, Marie Mies, Fred Moten, and Anna Tsing.

Submit an abstract of 250-300 words.

Eco-pedagogies in Modern Languages & Literatures Programs: From Theory to Practice

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126474/eco-pedagogies-in-modern-languages-literatures-programs-from-theory-to-practic>

Organizer: Laura Barbas-Rhoden (barbasrhodenlh@wofford.edu), Wofford College, and Jeremy Larochelle (jlroche@umw.edu), University of Mary Washington

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

What does it look like to teach the environmental humanities in Modern Languages programs, and what is the promise and potential of the environmental humanities in Modern Languages curricula? Modern Languages departments commonly teach a rich variety of courses —language acquisition, cultural studies, literary and film studies—, and these courses offer the possibility for students to build and deepen their understanding of the diverse ways humans imagine, inhabit, and explain the material world of which we are a part. How do Modern Languages instructors foster such learning? And in what ways can Modern Languages faculty and programs be part of a transformation of curricula and institutions, at multiple levels of scale (from assignment to institutional structures), to both decolonize and “green” curricula?

This roundtable asks each presenter to take one or two “big ideas” from theories (eco, decolonial, cognitive, pedagogical) that have been influential in their thinking and to draw a clear line of sight from theory to practice in one of the following categories of work: teaching, curricular design, or assessment. The panel aims to create a generative space that sparks new ideas, practices, and strategies that attendees and participants can take back to their departments, programs, and institutions.

To propose a contribution to the roundtable (in which each of 6 total participants will have 10 minutes to share their thoughts, to be followed by 30 minutes of discussion among attendees and roundtable participants), please submit a 150-200 word abstract.

Eco-Philology: Textual Studies and Environmental History

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126478/eco-philology-textual-studies-and-environmental-history>

Organizer: Eric Gidal (eric-gidal@uiowa.edu), University of Iowa

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This panel will explore connections between traditional philological practices – textual criticism, book history, historical grammar, reception history, and corpus linguistics – and environmental history. As Sheldon Pollock, Benjamin A. Elman, and Ku-ming Kevin Chang have argued, philology, at its base simply

“the discipline of making sense of texts,” offers a historical and material means of triangulating between rhetoric and philosophy, argument and truth. At the same time, Jerome McGann, Franco Moretti, and others working at the forefront of the digital humanities have revived philology as “the science of archival memory,” concerned not with normative value judgments, but a capacious description of the textual record and a systematic accounting of its structural and historical patterns. Following Jesse Oak Taylor’s recent call for an ecological philology “that acknowledges language’s active role in affecting the workings of nature,” but also Kent Ryden’s recent notes for an ecocritical print culture studies that emphasizes nature’s imprint on textual records, this panel invites projects that reflect on how philology, as distinct from rhetoric or philosophy, may be pursued in relation to an oikos undergoing rapid and precipitous change; how literary archives, in libraries, private collections, and digital databases, may be re-conceived as environmental records; how insights and methods of environmental historians and earth scientists may be transferred to archival research in the literary and cultural domains; how biogeography, human ecology, and literary history may meet in the records of the collection, the database, and the museum.

Emerging Biosocialities: Latent Potentials in a Dystopic Present

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126497/emerging-biosocialities-latent-potentials-in-a-dystopic-present>

Organizer: Kathryn Cai (kathryn.cai@gmail.com), UCLA

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Despite technological progress narratives that promise security and prosperity, the acceleration of environmental degradation and technological intervention has inaugurated a state of planetary emergency wherein the relationship between humans and the environment is now characterized by harm and precarity. This panel takes up the dystopian faces of utopian technoscientific promises to consider, firstly, the narratives of degradation, sickness, toxicity, and resource extraction selectively endured by some bodies that attend utopian promises and, secondly, imaginations of solidarities and different presents and futures rooted in particularities of race, gender, sexuality, and dis/ability that emerge from the “ruin that has become our collective home,” in the words of Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing. While traditional narratives of ecological crisis highlight the perils of climate change or species loss, these alternative stories coalesce around the ruined landscapes of former U.S. colonies and sites of war, derive from exposure to environmental toxicants and endocrine-disrupting chemicals, and expose intimacies between multinational corporations and the biological sciences. By exploring the lived subjectivities, human and nonhuman, that attend these forms of degradation and exploitation, they also alter the terms of and blur the boundaries between dystopian and utopian; reckoning with the dystopia of the world as it is, they also imagine possibilities for contestation and difference that are emerging from this same present. We seek papers that foreground lenses of indigeneity, (post)coloniality, gender, sexuality, and race. Papers should address artistic and narrative engagements with the intertwined biosocial human and more-than-human worlds that live the ongoing aftermaths of utopian technoscientific promises and alternative ways of being that can emerge from these same conditions.

Enclaves, Environment, and Exploitation in Latin America & The Caribbean

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126499/enclaves-environment-and-exploitation-in-latin-america-the-caribbean>

Organizers: Elizabeth Barrios (ebarrios@albion.edu), Albion College, and Paige Andersson (prafoth@umich.edu), University of Michigan

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Latin American narrative has long depicted enclaves as either elite spaces of protection or as spaces of resistance and refuge from which to project a new world vision. Notably, these visions of the future have material roots in colonial and capitalist relationships to nature and society that continue to shape contemporary social orders. The creation of enclaves, broadly conceived, has long been a part of Latin America's history and political ecology as both a utopian project and as a response to crises.

This panel is interested in the exchange between the planning (either fictive or real) and the creation of enclaves in Latin America and the Caribbean. The region's enclaves have taken numerous shapes: free trade, tourist, and extraction zones, poles of development, environmentally protected areas (PAs), model villages, quilombos, regiones de refugio, campos caucheros, monterías, misiones, financial enclaves, shelters from disaster, etc.

Some potential points of inquiry might be: What role do notions of risk and safety play in creating enclaves? How do race and social reproduction factor into the creation of boundaries and the organization of daily life? What is the relation between fiction and the speculation of disaster (in finance and in narrative), rooted in specific spaces and destinations?

We welcome papers that engage a broad scope of cultural objects. We are particularly interested in papers that are in conversation with current debates in the environmental humanities, ecocriticism, or theoretical concepts that lend insight into exploitation, expropriation, and accumulation under colonial and/or capitalist regimes.

Energy Futures between Surplus and Scarcity

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126542/energy-futures-between-surplus-and-scarcity>

Organizers: Reuben Martens, (reuben.martens@kuleuven.be), KU Leuven, and Brent Ryan Bellamy (bbellamy@trentu.ca), Trent University

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

If there is a "Paradise on Fire," then it is quite likely due to an excessive use of fossil fuels—when has there ever been an explosion (in Hollywood) that did not evoke some form of petro-aesthetics? Many imagined futures, be they utopian or apocalyptic in nature, seldom contend with the contemporary issue of looming energy scarcity; on the contrary, most appear to rely on infinite energy resources. When one of these paradises is 'on fire,' either literally or metaphorically, the cause is nearly always human, or at least anthropocentric; a social uprising or unrest of native populations, transgression of ethical beliefs with regards to terraforming or genetic manipulation, overcrossing boundaries between human and machine where the two become almost indistinguishable, and so on. In much science fiction, taking extreme measures for energy needs passes as a conceit, rather than a critique. The future appears to be one where issues of sustainable energy production, consumption, and distribution are things of the past—even though

they are very much the present too. While innocent on the surface, such constructed futures pose significant problems that reframe our extreme dependency on fossil fuels and its deeply rooted entanglement with capitalism, extending as it does through our bodies, ways of living, narratives, aesthetics, and ideologies. If we want to prevent our future lighting on fire, then we need to challenge the narratives of complete reliance on fossil fuels, and, crucially, as Lynn Badia argues in the book manuscript *Imagining Free Energy: Fantasies, Utopias, and Critiques of America*, of free, clean, and inexhaustible energy resources as well. Through the framework of the energy humanities, it is possible to interrogate such futures, questioning how they function and what they can tell and possibly teach us about the cultural problems that surround contemporary energy use, reliance, and dependence.

This panel seeks provocations that work through the way energy overdetermines the shape of the future, both imagined and real. Such critical presentations might ruminate on how specific texts, subgenre subcurrents, or particular modes of science fiction feature, represent, or subvert energy's potential reinventions. Whether catastrophic or utopian, our intuition is that science-fictional futures are always bound up with energy concerns. We seek papers that argue for or against such an assessment, including papers that take up energy and science fiction as central vectors of their environmental critique. We are especially interested in a roundtable format model, including 5 or 6 short (5-10 minute) presentations and followed up with a discussion.

Topics might include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Representation and role of fossil fuels in future narratives
- Aesthetics of fossil fuel futures
- Emancipation and clean energy
- Resource aesthetics
- The social politics of surplus and scarcity
- Energy and genre

Environmental Politics after Humanism

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126545/environmental-politics-after-humanism>

Organizers: Stefanie Fishel (srfishel@ua.edu) University of Alabama, and Andrew Rose (andrew.rose@cnu.edu), Christopher Newport University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This panel aims to ignite an interdisciplinary conversation between political science and new materialist literary and cultural studies scholarship. One of the most intriguing ideas within new materialist and posthuman theory is undoubtedly the concept of postanthropocentric, or distributed, agency. The work of Karen Barad, Jane Bennett, Stacy Alaimo, to name just a few influential scholars, has produced a definitive critique of humanist models of subjectivity, agency and anthropocentrism. These postanthropocentric frameworks will also have a profound impact, however, upon how we conceive of social movement organizing and political efficacy. It seems recognizing agency, or actancy in Latourian terms, as a co-production of forces spanning the human and non-human worlds will also entail reimagining political subjectivity and activism in fundamental ways.

We invite paper proposals that engage with the complex relations between theories of posthuman subjectivity, distributed agency and actancy, contemporary theories of the State and citizenship,

environmental justice, and/or climate activism. Papers might engage with some of the following questions: how does one recognize and empower the political actor, and the political 'act' or 'event,' in a posthuman context? What do effective postanthropocentric organizing strategies look like? Which theories of national and international politics are best positioned to help us navigate environmental politics after liberal humanism and political 'realism'? And, finally, what might new materialist theory mean for the conventional "targets" of environmental activism? In what ways, for instance, are the institutions of the neoliberal State and/or transnational corporations unsettled, threatened or fortified by the decentering of the human political subject?

Papers might take up one or more of these questions via engagement with contemporary environmental issues and campaigns, posthuman or new materialist scholarship, political theory, environmental literature, speculative or science fiction, environmental non-fiction, or other related sources of interest.

Environmentalism and Class Consciousness

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126546/environmentalism-and-class-consciousness>

Organizers: Elizabeth Mazzolini (mazz@buffalo.edu), University at Buffalo, SUNY and Raymond Malewitz (raymond.malewitz@oregonstate.edu), Oregon State University

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

Since their emergence in the 1980s, American environmental justice movements have attempted to integrate previously marginalized socioeconomic groups into contemporary environmental discussions. These movements are somewhat in contradiction with mainstream environmentalism, which tends to focus on the aspects of the environment that are related to bourgeois consumption and leisure time. While environmental justice tends to focus on "acting locally" in order to protect life and health, mainstream environmentalism is often relegated to "thinking globally," relating purchasing choices made possible via global corporate activity to a consciousness that transcends emplacement. While both strains of effort have borne significant fruit, questions remain as to the roles that working-class communities might play in efforts to "think globally," in other words, to establish a pro-active collective political will to mitigate the present planetary environmental disaster. Indeed, questions posed by Richard's White's still-salient 1995 essay, "'Are you an Environmentalist, or Do You Work for a Living?': Work and Nature" have only become more complicated since the essay first appeared. Work, class and environmentalism in the U.S. have yet to be thoroughly treated in light of each other. This gap is particularly troubling, given the dominant contemporary narrative linking the white working-class to Trumpian politics and climate denial.

Judging from these reports, from accounts such as Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway's book (and the film by the same name) *Merchants of Doubt*, and from parodies of politicians bringing snowballs to the Senate floor, working-class communities are often faulted for thinking too locally—for ignoring broader planetary trends in favor of local economic conditions. In keeping with the theme of the conference, we seek papers that explore aspects of this divisive and disastrous characterization. Possible questions to consider include:

How do working-class communities relate to global networks? What imaginative or creative work is required to reveal such relationships? How have environmental movements historically excluded the working class? How do victims of environmental disasters within the United States view similar disasters in other parts of the country or the world? How do working-class communities move from rhetorics of survival to national or international advocacy? How does recognition of working-class contributions to a global (or national) environmental movements change our understanding of the class-based encodings of such

movements, particularly when bourgeois manifestations of such movements are often reducible to green consumerism?

If you have questions, please contact Raymond Malewitz at Raymond.Malewitz@oregonstate.edu or Elizabeth Mazzolini at mazz@buffalo.edu.

“Environment at the Margins” and Global Anglophone and/or Postcolonial African Novels

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126319/environment-at-the-margins-and-global-anglophone-and-or-postcolonial-african-no>

Organizer: Arun Kumar Pokhrel (apokhre@okstate.edu), Oklahoma State University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Byron Caminero-Santangelo and Garth A. Myers describe peripheral African environments as “Environment at the Margins” in the book of the same title. The field of postcolonial ecocriticism, which has been flourishing over the past one decade, is now widely perceived to be an interdisciplinary, transnational, and comparative field of inquiry as it recognizes the complexities of interdisciplinary dialogues and critiques a universalizing or homogenizing impulse of capitalism, colonialism, and imperialism. In “Situating Ecology,” Anthony Vital notes that the ethics of place and the experience of displacement are “two sources of tension [that] can be considered definitive of any postcolonial understanding of ecology and crucial to any ecocriticism alert to postcolonial conditions” (298-99). Postcolonial environmentalism/ecocriticism is “unrepentantly anthropocentric,” posits Vital, thereby generating “inevitable friction between the tendency to value human need and the recognition (supplied by ecology) that the natural world has its own value” (299). Colonialism had a complicated relationship with nature in colonies; it exploited nature in various forms and instilled the fear of untamable wilderness, primitiveness, and barbarism, while instituting policies of conservation to protect the native flora and fauna. The ideas of conservation are historically linked to empire as much as environmental exploitations are linked to ecological imperialism and are replicated in contemporary forms of capitalist modernity, modernization, and development.

In this regard, the novel form remains a productive way of imagining the nation and thinking about complex formations of culture both within the boundaries of nation and beyond. While the novel’s imaginative power is crucial to understand entangled social and environmental problems, novelistic representation is always fraught with ideological ambiguities in postcolonial contexts. The novel form, because of its European origin, is ideologically and formally associated with empire, as Edward Said bears out in *Culture and Imperialism*, and becomes a site of political and ideological contestation. In postcolonial contexts, writers from formerly colonized regions write back to empire, employing counter-discursive narrative strategies to construct new ideas of national identity, local culture, and history. In the current situation of despair and “imaginative failure,” to use Rob Nixon’s phrase, the possibilities of telling stories of all kinds are, however, increasingly being foreclosed.

Given the complexity of environmental problems we face today, this panel then seeks to respond to the following questions, among others: How do contemporary African novels inform us about the cultural formations and emerging global realities in the post-1960 world and help us reimagine African environments at the margins? In what ways postcolonial ecocritical engagements with African fictional narratives are crucial to open up the imaginative horizon of non-Western environmental epistemologies and ontologies? Why is the novel form significant in invoking both the place-based and the planetary sense of environmental imagination? And finally, how are comparative literary and environmental approaches

effective means of making sense of our being in a globalized world, and articulating the visions of more just societies and sustainable futures in the age of Anthropocene?

Experimental Ecologies

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126556/experimental-ecologies>

Organizers: Christopher Walker (cawalker@colby.edu), Colby College, and Teresa Shewry (tshewry@english.ucsb.edu), UC Santa Barbara

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

For this panel, we invite papers that explore the intersections of environmental thinking and experimentation. From Thomas Moore's *Utopia* (1516) to Charles Darwin's studies on the Galápagos in the nineteenth century, places such as islands, as well as human and nonhuman bodies, have been figured as sites of aesthetic, political, and scientific experimentation. The concept of experimentation orients us into hundreds of years of highly violent experiments, as evidenced by plantations, nuclear testing, lab animals, and political discourse that frames low-lying atolls as the proverbial canary in the coal mine for the cosmopolitan testing of planetary boundaries. And yet, the cultivation of experimental practices, places, and imaginaries has also been important in diverse projects of ecological regeneration and decolonization.

In keeping with the conference theme, "Paradise on Fire," this panel will examine how experimentation contributes to both utopian and dystopian imaginaries. Topics may include, but are by no means limited to: Concepts/forms of experimentation in environmental theory and arts; Islands as sites that both invite and resist experimentation, including the philosophical and literary history of islands as spaces of isolation and the role that islands have played in scientific articulations of ecosystems (such as MacArthur and Wilson's "Island Biogeography"); Adaptation to sea-level rise and other climate-related processes; Narratives of laboratories, farms, and ecological restoration; Geo- and environmental engineering; Experimental extractivisms, such as deep ocean mining.

Feeding the Fire as the World Burns: Rethinking Food and Sustenance in the Anthropocene

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126557/feeding-the-fire-as-the-world-burns-rethinking-food-and-sustenance-in-the-anthro>

Organizer: Sabhia Khan (skhan2@utep.edu), The University of Texas at El Paso

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Fire is a technology that emblematically has ushered in the Anthropocene by underwriting the production of food for humans, whether it be through slash-and-burn farming, cooking, fertilizer production, or the internal combustive processes of digestion. As the world burns in the self-immolating bonfire of human-generated extinction, how might a strategy of "counter-visibility," in the words of Nicholas Mirzoeff, reveal a new "politics of eating," one that is not necessarily reliant on fire?

What if, instead of as a passive and inert bolus for human consumption, food were seen as, in the words of Jane Bennett, a vital actor in the public sphere? Such a view means revisiting eating, the primary site of human consumption, in new ways by considering: inversions of the prey-predator relation, particularly the edibility of humans, by other animals, worms, etc.; the sensory, prosopopoetic appeal of plant- and animal-

based ingredients; indigenous approaches to food acquisition; cannibalistic tendencies in rituals such as the Eucharist; lab-cultured meat products; AI-generated recipes; and the autonomy of plants in providing their own food through the process of photosynthesis, which essentially is combustion in reverse.

When life itself is at stake, what does it mean to take seriously food's status as the enabling condition of life? What are the paradoxes and contradictions of the enabling medium of food, fire? What opportunities does food provide for the more-than-human world to make itself known?

This panel invites traditional papers covering any genre, medium or period.

Fire and Rain: An Eco-poetry Reading

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126558/fire-and-rain-an-ecopoetry-reading>

Organizer: Lucille Lang Day (lucyday@scarlettanager.com), Independent Writer

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

A cornerstone of this event will be a reading and discussion of selections from *Fire and Rain: Eco-poetry of California* (Scarlet Tanager Books, 2018) by coeditor Lucille Lang Day. Fire and rain are two of the most important elements that shape California ecosystems, and the anthology, which is organized by habitat, shows the effects of fire, rain, and drought throughout the state. Day, who worked for many years as a science writer and science educator, brings a scientific perspective to the anthology. Her coeditor, Ruth Nolan, is a former wildland firefighter for the Federal Bureau of Land Management's California Desert District and has had day-to-day experience with the devastation caused by climate change.

Poetry is perhaps uniquely suited to celebrating the extraordinary beauty and diversity of ecosystems: coast and ocean, woodland and forest, field and meadow, mountain and desert. But poetry can do much more: it can also alert us to environmental destruction and change through such natural phenomena as fires, floods, and earthquakes as well as such human impacts as pollution, logging, climate change, and loss of species and habitat. *Fire and Rain* addresses all of these issues, with a special focus on fire and rain in the ecology of California.

We are now in the midst of a worldwide environmental crisis. For the past fifty years, global temperatures have been increasing faster than at any other time in human history; dozens of species are going extinct every day. Poetry cannot solve these problems, but it can illuminate them and generate discussion.

In addition to celebrating nature and calling attention to environmental issues, eco-poetry can reveal ways of thinking about interaction and interdependence—essential aspects of ecosystems. Syntax, line breaks, and the appearance of the poem on the page can become metaphors for the elements of an ecosystem and vehicles for the investigation of interrelatedness.

This reading will reflect all of these purposes and possibilities of eco-poetry: celebration of beauty (from mites to mountains!), examination of the causes and aftermath of environmental damage and disasters, and interrogation of interconnection in poetry and ecosystems.

Fire in Western Literature: WLA Sponsored Panel

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126782/fire-in-western-literature-wla-sponsored-panel>

Organizer: Daniel Clausen (danielclausen.unl@gmail.com), University of Nebraska

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

The North American West, as both a region and idea, has long been shaped by material and symbolic fire-- from prairie fire to gunfire to the combustion that powers air conditioners, irrigation pumps, and automobiles. Every year, western wildfires burn hotter and larger, disasters of the Anthropocene. Yet, ecologists remind us that anthropogenic fire is crucial to maintaining fragile ecosystems such as the grasslands of the Great Plains. This panel considers the ways in which authors have figured fire in the west, especially the ways in which we might consider "Fire as emblematic of the strange agencies and hybrid onto-epistemologies of the Anthropocene, and fire as emblematic of the passion, energy, and incendiary creativity of activism" through examining "storytelling, real and imagined landscapes, future-making, activism, envired spaces, differential exclusions, long histories, and the disaster-prone terrains of the Anthropocene." Sponsored by the Western Literature Association.

French Écocritique and Disaster

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126561/french-ecocritique-and-disaster>

Organizer: Abbey Carrico (carricoab@vmi.edu), Virginia Military Institute, and Karen Quandt (quandtk@wabash.edu) Wabash College

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

In *French Ecocriticism: From the Early Modern Period to the Twenty-First Century* (2017), Daniel A. Finch-Race and Stephanie Posthumus make the case for a French ecocriticism liberated from "a more general suspicion in France about politically driven cultural studies that are perceived as glossing over the aesthetic, formal and stylistic elements of cultural production". Addressing contemporary theory (Félix Guattari, Bruno Latour) alongside contemporary works of literature (Marie Darrieussecq, Michel Houellebecq), Posthumus explains in *French Écocritique* (2017) how a non-reductionist approach to ecological reading leads to "multiple discursive threads" in which "Theory and fiction become sounding boards for new eco-concepts".

Language, culture, methodology, cross-continental and bilingual academia -- all reveal the challenge of defining French ecocriticism. And yet, well before Guattari, back in 1989, viscerally highlighted the tight relationship between capitalism and environmental disaster, and well before Houellebecq became a controversial sensation with his exploration of human animality and its nihilistic implications, French and Francophone writers, whether through narratives or the development of aesthetic forms, have used disaster in its many manifestations (natural, social, political) as an opportunity to reflect on humans and their relationships to nature through lenses such as the environmental and moral implications of colonialization, the ramifications of science and travel, and the critique of the rigidly dualistic relationship between humans and the natural world (in)famously ingrained by Descartes. From Montaigne's deep skepticism regarding European colonization in the New World; from Voltaire's critique of abiding faith in optimism and progress no matter what the toll of natural catastrophe; from George Sand's ecofeminist lamentation of a fading agrarian culture; from Samuel Beckett's nihilistic representation of nature in a nuclear world; to colonial and postcolonial narratives that expose the persistent link between human

subjugation and environmental degradation, French and Francophone writers have long been preoccupied, especially at our most disastrous moments, with our common *écologie*.

This panel seeks papers that address the broad role of disaster, and its ecological implications, in French and Francophone literature. Topics might include, but are not limited to, natural disasters, pollution, industrial accidents, climate change, urbanization, slow violence, science and its ethical implications, war and weapons, treatment or consumption of animals, colonialization and post-colonization and environmental justice. We seek a diverse range of authors and periods, and encourage submission of any paper that can continue to offer new “eco-concepts” to the field of French ecocriticism.

Proposals should be for traditional papers, include a 250-word abstract and contact information (email, affiliation, current academic position). Please contact Abbey Carrico (carricoab@vmi.edu) or Karen Quandt (quandtk@wabash.edu) with any inquiries.

From Monstrosities to Wonders: Ecohorror and Transcorporeality

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126562/from-monstrosities-to-wonders-ecohorror-and-transcorporeality>

Organizers: Christine Peffer (pefferch@msu.edu), Michigan State University, and Nadhia Grewal (n.grewal@gold.ac.uk), Goldsmiths, University of London

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

This roundtable seeks to explore the body as a productive site for interfacing with the nonhuman in the context of ASLE’s conference theme, *Paradise on Fire*. In what ways has the body itself been cast as a “paradise on fire” in the face of Anthropocene-era degradations? Conversely, is it possible to conceive of an ethic of care toward the more-than-human world if the bounded body is viewed as a “paradise” unto itself in the first place? We are interested in tracing irruptions and permeations of the strange, both monstrous and wondrous, into fantasies of neatly bounded bodily subjects. Subgenres like weird fiction, ecohorror, and ecogothic have seen authors explore such intra-actions. Taking our cues from Christy Tidwell’s work on ecohorror and from Stacy Alaimo’s assertion in *Exposed* that we might begin to conceive of a posthuman subjectivity “opening out unto the larger material world and being penetrated by all sorts of substances and material agencies that may or may not be captured,” this panel will seek to explore narratives of bodily intra-actions and entanglements between the human and more-than-human world. Discussions will ideally aim to investigate the role of weird fiction and ecohorror in confronting the fears and subversive pleasures of the nonhuman.

Panelists are invited to present on topics including but not limited to: weird fiction, horror fiction, body horror, ecohorror, transcorporeality, new materialism, ecomaterialism, ecogothic, ecosickness, dark ecology, posthumanism, monstrous natures/bodies, gothic nature, literary ecology, animal horror, horror film, vegan ecocriticism, etc.

If you would like to propose a paper for the panel, please submit a 300-word abstract by December 15.

Future Archives: Queer Poetries in the Anthropocene

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126563/future-archives-queer-poetries-in-the-anthropocene>

Organizers: Julia Bloch (blochj@writing.upenn.edu), University of Pennsylvania, and Brian Teare (tud55899@temple.edu), Temple University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Considered in the global context of rising oceans and climbing temperatures, Lee Edelman's controversial claim in *No Future* that it's "the fate of the queer...to figure the fate that cuts the thread of futurity" strikes a curiously different note than it does in the context of queer theory. As we in the twenty-first century collectively imagine what climate change will bring, as environmental upheaval destabilizes the ways we think of reproduction and networks of kinship and care, and as discourses of the Anthropocene call on us to rethink the conceptual grammars of our relationship to the future and to one another, queers can offer more than cutting the thread of futurity, and instead suggest new ways to figure what comes next. Poetry's literal measures of temporality – in the form of syllable, line, and stanza – make it the ideal genre with which to think through the next, while its self-reflexive deliberations on narrative, teleology, and progression - in the form of collage, fragment, and parataxis - allow it to maintain a skepticism about the values often encoded in "futurity." We invite papers that explore queer poetry and poetics as archives of futurity (how does poetry, for example, catalog queer reconceptions of temporality, cause and effect, and narrativity in the Anthropocene?), as methods for resisting the present and imagining future sociality (how does poetry engage the political, economic, and discursive regimes of power undergirding the lived effects of the Anthropocene? how does poetry suggest new structures of affiliation and coalition?), or as alternatives to futurity (what is the relationship between the temporality of queer poetics and the overdetermined structures of anthropocentric time?). We also welcome critical-creative approaches that use hybrid forms to enact theoretical or conceptual arguments.

Gardens and Crisis

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126629/gardens-and-crisis>

Organizer: Vera Alexander (v.alexander@rug.nl), University of Groningen

Planned Format: Jam Session (7-8 Presenters)

Throughout cultural history, paradise on earth has been imagined as a garden, an enclosed site of beauty and recreation where nature and culture are in harmony. This is not merely a matter of myth but one of material practice, too: around the world, people "let optimism get the better of judgment" (Perényi) and pursue this ideal by cultivating gardens. This is despite the fact that gardens in modernity have been questioned and rethought as ambivalent heterotopias (Foucault) and political sites of defiance and resistance (Helphand, McKay). The role of gardens as signs of power and privilege, their implication in histories of displacement and dispossession, and its doubtful relation to sustainability necessitate a critical interrogation of how the notion of the garden as a good place continues to refashion itself.

These are just some reasons why gardens are 'good to think with'. Viewing the garden as a contact sphere where multiple analytic perspectives and private and public practices intersect, this panel hopes to orchestrate voices, eyes and ears from several disciplines that converge on the garden to examine its relation to crisis.

In view of the fact that crisis and conflict may be motors of change, we may debate such diverse issues as garden writing and identity, the role of austerity and small spaces in gardening broadcasts on radio, Netflix and YouTube, and the decline and fall of the plastic pot. What shape can the garden as sanctuary take in present-day conflagrations? How do gardens and the mediatisation of gardening relate to an emerging environmental stewardship? In what ways are threats to the human body (e.g. toxic food, ageing) addressed by gardens and gardening and representations thereof? Can the garden as contact sphere contribute to more multidirectional discourses to understand the intersections between environmental, political, social, cultural and economic sources of current crises? Does the garden deliver arguments in favour of maintaining belief in the fraught ideal of paradise?

Green Applied Linguistics

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126630/green-applied-linguistics>

Organizer: Alexander Mendes (alexander.jason.mendes@emory.edu), Emory University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Applied linguistics is a subfield of sociolinguistics which takes as a central concern an applied approach to language-related issues such as: language pedagogy/assessment, second language acquisition, curricular design, language policy, language in public space, linguistic rights, translation/interpretation, intercultural communication, and communication in health care/medicine, law, and government, among others. But, how can language save our earthly paradise?

Given the social justice focus of much applied linguistics work (e.g., Piller, 2016), applied linguistics is a prime arena for engagement with questions of environmentalism and environmental justice as they relate to language. What's more, Pennycook's (2018) timely *critical posthumanist applied linguistics* marks a shift in applied linguistics foci to those already central in ecocriticism, including new materialisms and relationships between humans, the environment, and other inhabitants of the planet.

This panel invites submissions on work in applied linguistics-related areas (above) and their intersections with issues including but not limited to: environmental activism; environmental law; ecology, biology, or other "hard" science disciplines; climate change; species endangerment, extinctions, or wildlife conservation; traditional ecological knowledge (TEK); built spaces and natural environments; the languages of animals or plants. Presentations might also focus on a range of topics from "studies of place and semiotics, linguistic landscapes, geosemiotics, nexus analysis and language ecology to sociocultural theory, sociomaterial approaches to literacy and poststructuralist accounts of [sociolinguistic] repertoire" (Pennycook, 2018: 8).

This panel seeks to stoke interdisciplinary conversation to show the potential and "incendiary creativity" of applied language work in response to ongoing environmental crises and planetary degradation.

Hope (or) Otherwise: Affect, Anticipation, Destruction

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126631/hope-or-otherwise-affect-anticipation-destruction>

Organizer: Kali Rubali (kali.rubaii@rice.edu), Rice University

Planned Format: Jam Session (7-8 Presenters)

What is the role of (post)humanistic inquiry in the twilight of anticipated doom? Amid dueling calls for hope's renewal and its abandonment, what do environmental humanities scholars bring to conversations about the afterlife and alter-life of mass destruction? Discourses surrounding the Anthropocene circulate a concern about how we tell stories about declension and collapse. Many scholars point towards narratives of renewed hope as a way to inspire mass emotion and consequent political action. Yet scholars in postcolonial theory and Indigenous studies highlight the existence of an extant post-apocalyptic world for colonized peoples that offers narratives of life in the wake of destruction, narratives of pessoptimism. Embedded in the debates about hope is a deeper sense that to observe mass destruction is insufficient for scholars of our time. Instead, scholars engaged in the "hope debates" are interested in what mass emotions are to be mobilized in order to facilitate the acceleration, preclusion, or prevention of world-ending harm. Given the exploitation of affect by capital and the state, what are the political uses of generating certain affective orientations to the future? What alternatives exist to frameworks of anticipation? This semi-structured panel and audience discussion will examine the ways affect is implicated in the anticipation of the future—as alternately hopeful and hopeless, with a large space in between.

Imagining a More Capacious Future: Multiethnic Voices in Changing Environments

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126632/imagining-a-more-capacious-future-multiethnic-voices-in-changing-environments>

Organizers: Dong Isbister (isbisterd@uwplatt.edu), University of Wisconsin-Platteville; and Xiumei Pu (xpu@westminstercollege.edu) Westminster College

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

This partially pre-formed roundtable is inspired by an edited and translated anthology in progress. The book reflects Chinese ethnic minority women writers' criticism of and reflections on environmental changes and sustainment of their cultural heritage and livelihood in China. Among the roundtable participants are the three editors and a Chinese writer whose original work "Four Generations of Women from a Va Family" is included in the anthology.

The roundtable invites two to three additional participants whose work is related to multiethnic voices in various geographical, cultural, and/or linguistic contexts. They will bring their own projects to engage in a dialogue around the ways in which multiethnic voices matter to a more capacious future that encompasses diverse differences in changing natural and social environments. These differences include, but are not limited to, geographical locations, culture, language, spirituality, gender, and species.

Immolations: Queer Theory and Environmental Destruction

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126655/immolations-queer-theory-and-environmental-destruction>

Organizers: Steven Swarbrick (steven.swarbrick@baruch.cuny.edu), Baruch College (CUNY), and Jean-Thomas Tremblay (tremblay@nmsu.edu), New Mexico State University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

On April 14, 2018, a lawyer and gay rights activist, David S. Bucknel, was found dead, his body burnt, in Prospect Park. In a note, Bucknel draws a parallel between his death and the disastrous impact of fossil fuel dependency. "Pollution," he writes, "ravages our planet, oozing [un]inhabitability via air, soil, water, and weather. Most humans on the planet now breathe air made unhealthy by fossil fuels, and many die early deaths as a result—my early death by fossil fuels reflects what we are doing to ourselves." Bucknell's self-immolation, we propose, accelerates the impossibility of sustained life in toxifying atmospheres as it translates ecological politics into a queer act of self-annihilation, literalized by flames. Not only does Bucknel extinguish life and breath; he interrupts the flow of life with cinder and ash, deoxygenated remains that confront us with the ongoing destruction of our planet. Bucknel's death conjures up the queer traditions of attaching a politics of negativity to the refusal of reproduction and of performing annihilation as direct action (in ACT UP, for example). These traditions gain particular significance under environmental destruction, where the threat of extinction recasts living and thus producing waste as detrimental to species survival. This panel invites scholars to reflect critically, beyond this particular case, on the politics and aesthetics of immolation—as act, as theoretical concept—with respect to environmentalism and queer theory. We are particularly keen to include papers that dynamize the combustibility of these two genealogies and that foreground their potential frictions.

In the Animals' Keeping: Fighting Fires with William Stafford

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126656/in-the-animals-keeping-fighting-fires-with-william-stafford>

Organizer: James Armstrong (jarmstrong@winona.edu), Winona State University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

William Stafford approaches the challenge of a paradise on fire with the practice of "radical welcome." His poems evaporate borders—political, social and epistemological—accepting the agency in all beings: coyotes, people in small towns, storms on western peaks. The air "breathes" into a room, "little bushes nod," rivers revise themselves—the world's beings talk and know—an animistic consciousness honoring otherness. His work never shied away from Armageddon; in "Cro-Magnon," he writes, "these natives build/cities, burn up the forests, civilize/paradise? God will sip them/like little drops of dew when it is time." But he was fierce in his allegiance to capacious acts of ecological imagination, questioning who or what is on the wrong side of the gate; in "At the Un-National Monument Along the Canadian Border," "the only heroic thing is the sky." Stafford was convinced that modern humans are falsely isolating themselves from the rest of the biosphere. His poems assume we are not only part of one humanity, but one animality. As he says in "Outside," "all we have... belongs to a truth/greater than ours, in the animals' keeping." This panel provides an opportunity to assess the current importance of Stafford's work: how does his commitment to radical welcome help us to see our way through the conflicts that inflame our paradise? How does Stafford's resistance to the nature/culture dualities of modernity and the arrogant assumptions of its technology empower us to stand with the world, even as it burns?

Indigenous Ecocriticism: Honoring, Remembering, Imagining

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126657/indigenous-ecocriticism-honoring-remembering-imagining>

Organizers: Abigail Pérez Aguilera (perezagd@newschool.edu), The New School, Kyle Bladow (kbladow@northland.edu), Northland College, and Amy Hamilton (amyhamil@nmu.edu), Northern Michigan University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Cosponsored by the Association for the Study of American Indian Literatures (<https://www.asail.org/>) and the Indigenous Ecocriticism Interest Group (<https://www.asle.org/explore-our-field/interest-groups/>)

This panel invites a broad range of scholarship at the intersection of ecocriticism and Indigenous studies, especially encouraging proposals that engage the work of the conference plenary speakers (Ursula Heise, Cherríe Moraga, Melissa K. Nelson, and Nnedi Okorafor) or the conference theme, “Paradise on Fire.” Melissa K. Nelson writes, “One cannot learn about the history of any place without understanding the First Peoples of the land and their unique cultural and environmental practices, as well as the impacts of conquest, and cultural resilience. Indigenous learning is always contextual, starting with exactly where you are—cosmologically, geographically, ecologically, culturally, and historically. It starts with honoring the local peoples and places where one learns” (“Education for the Eighth Fire,” *EarthEd: Rethinking Education on a Changing Planet*, 56). How do Indigenous studies and environmental humanities work together to promote such understanding of place? What strategies can be used in such endeavors to best face the challenges of ecological destruction and climate destabilization?

Other potential paper topics include

- Indigenous futurisms
- Indigenous peoples, histories, and languages of California (e.g., California Indigenous writers, missionization, the California Language Archive and language revitalization)
- toxicity and environmental justice, resistance against extractivist projects in Indigenous territories
- decolonial ecocriticism, confronting settler colonialism
- gender, race, and ecology in dystopian times (Indigenous feminisms, Two-Spirit and queer ecologies, Chicanismo and Indigeneity)
- Indigenous definitions, examples, or rebuttals of “paradise”
- Indigenous pedagogies and philosophies; teaching Indigenous ecocriticism

Please submit a proposal (including paper title, an abstract of approximately 250 words, and a brief biography) by December 15, 2018.

Interspecies Narration: Incinerating the Human/Animal Binary

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126658/interspecies-narration-incinerating-the-human-animal-binary>

Organizer: Bristin Scalzo Jones (bristin@berkeley.edu), University of California, Berkeley

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

As long as homo sapiens have told stories, we have told them about, through, and with other animals. Literary texts are the imaginative staging ground for complicating and blurring the human/animal divide. They encourage us to pose philosophical and ethical questions such as: What does it mean to be human?

What differentiates humans from other species? Is it possible to access knowledge and to communicate without verbal language? If so, what might that kind of knowledge and that kind of communication look like?

In taking on these questions, scholarship in the fields of animal studies and posthumanist theory inevitably confronts the paradox of anthropomorphism: the term presupposes clear and definite knowledge about what is uniquely human, not only that there is an exclusionary dividing line that separates “human” from “animal” but also that we always already know precisely where it is drawn. However, research on animal behavior and communication in recent decades is putting the very existence of this firm dividing line into question.

Although the term in and of itself is decidedly problematic, Brazilian anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro makes a case for the practice of anthropomorphism in a dangerously anthropocentric world. He argues anthropomorphism, or at least some degree of metaphoric projection, is inevitable if we are going to take seriously the idea that other animals are sentient individuals with their own desires and points of view, while anthropocentrism is restrictive and should be avoided at all costs. With this in mind, this panel invites speakers to discuss the problematization of the human/animal binary and the decentering of the human in literary and artistic texts. Participants may choose to address these or similar lines of inquiry:

- First person narration of / focalization in non-human animals
- Translations of the non-human animal experience
- Depictions of interspecies communication, particularly between humans and other species
- Interspecies dialogues and the fable tradition
- Interspecies metamorphoses
- The literary devices of anthropomorphism and zoomorphism

Invisible Borders, Shifting Borderlands

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126659/invisible-borders-shifting-borderlands>

Organizers: Sarah Dimick (sarah.dimick@northwestern.edu), Northwestern University, and Nicolette Bruner (nibruner@uchicago.edu), University of Chicago

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Despite the attempts by some to impose physical markers of separation, the boundaries delineated so clearly on maps and legal documents have little relevance to the natural landscape. Instead, as Gloria Anzaldúa and other scholars in borderlands theory have long argued, the legal border is an artificial construction that inadequately represents the life of the landscape and its inhabitants, whether human or nonhuman. In this panel, we explore the construction and communication of boundaries and borders, with particular attention to how literature participates in the enactment and/or transgression of those boundaries. How does literature reveal or define borderlands that are otherwise unrecognized? How does it challenge or expand officially sanctioned borders? How might narrative and other forms of representation assist in navigating boundaries that are in a state of flux? We welcome a broad construction of the concept of borders, including political, environmental, linguistic, sexual, economic, species, temporal, and otherwise.

Jesmyn Ward's *Salvage the Bones*

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126660/jesmyn-wards-salvage-the-bones>

Organizer: Karla Armbruster (armbruka@webster.edu), Webster University

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

Jesmyn Ward's 2011 award-winning novel *Salvage the Bones* provides a powerful challenge to stereotyped views of race, class, gender, and even "dangerous" dog breeds and the people who own them, transforming perceptions of objects, animals, and people who might be considered trash by dominant American culture and offering an ethos of salvage in place of an ethos of disposability. This roundtable seeks readings of the novel that connect it to current discussions within any area of ecocriticism/ecofeminism/animal studies/environmental justice, including but not limited to the ways a natural disaster can become the birth of something new as well as the death of old connections and ways of living.

The Limitations and Ecologic Consequences of Paradise

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126729/the-limitations-and-ecologic-consequences-of-paradise>

Organizer: Danielle Fuentes Morgan (dmorgan@scu.edu), Santa Clara University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

The difference between utopia and dystopia is perspective. Paradise, the utopia, is grounded in the threat of dismissal – banishment to dystopia. Behavior, including and especially interactions with people and the surrounding environment, must be modified and constrained to sustain paradise. Indeed, the traditional concept of a prelapsarian world is predicated on restricted movement and delimited engagement with all of the benefits paradise has to offer, even in view of its ecologic excesses and accessibility.

This panel seeks submissions that reckon with the suppression of behavior and identity connected to the environment in depictions of utopia and dystopia in literature, television, and film. Is paradise possible without exclusionary threat? Does the curtailing of ecologic freedom for some in utopia naturally imply dystopia for other participants? And what ecological concerns emerge out of the material or technological excesses of utopia/dystopia meant to appease the natural anxieties surrounding the loss of free will? Is there a human utopia that doesn't ultimately lead to ecologic disaster?

Subjects may include, but are certainly not limited to texts such as Plato's *Republic*, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, H.G. Wells's *Men Like Gods*, Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower*, Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax*, and television and film such as *The Twilight Zone*, *The Hunger Games*, *The Giver*, *The Walking Dead*, *Black Mirror*, *Mad Max*, and *Electric Dreams*.

Literature from Below: Soil as Narrative, Soil as Substance

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126662/literature-from-below-soil-as-narrative-soil-as-substance>

Organizers: Saskia Cornes (saskia.cornes@duke.edu), Duke University, and Matthew Rowney (mrowney@uncc.edu), UNC Charlotte

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

While the current state of the planet is unprecedented, our current era is not the first in which a suspension of the usual order has led to long-lasting and cataclysmic change. Through this roundtable, we hope to bring to light several moments key to the structuring of modernity through a transhistorical approach to a particular substance: soil.

By historicizing a substance that itself is representative of the layers of history, as well as the cyclical temporalities of agricultural labor, we intend to unearth a dialogue between matter, culture, and time neglected in the often ahistorical treatment of the natural world. By examining this substance through a span of several hundred years, we hope to expand the sometimes presentist focus of Anthropocene thinking. And by engaging works of literature, we seek to bring together the unique cultural content that literary work affords with the material qualities that ecological study makes available.

We welcome proposals of 250 words that address soil and/or its associated forms (i.e. mud, clay, compost, manure, dirt) as it is perceived within the literature and culture of a particular period in British or anglophone literature, from the medieval to the Victorian eras. Proposals may address any aspect of soil in its material form, from its formal qualities to the processes in which it is worked, represented, lauded, denigrated or otherwise engaged. Papers will be circulated prior to the conference, and presenters will provide a five minute prepared statement at the roundtable itself.

Living with Animals in the Anthropocene

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126663/living-with-animals-in-the-anthropocene>

Organizer: Karla Armbruster (armbruka@webster.edu), Webster University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

The Edenic notion of paradise as an intact, self-sustaining ecosystem, filled with diverse life forms existing in harmony, haunts Western cultures in many ways, including through our desire to believe that there is some ideal, stable, “climax” version of any natural community of plants and animals that we humans can and should either preserve or restore. Current ecological thinking suggests that this notion has always been a fantasy, since change is always occurring whether humans “interfere” or not (albeit usually more slowly when humans are not involved). In an age of climate change, though, this fantasy is even harder to sustain as natural disasters, rising sea levels, changing weather patterns and the ongoing transformation of wildlife habitat for human uses threatens many wild animal species with extinction.

Given this reality, what kind of a future might we humans expect or imagine with other animals — the domesticated, the feral, the invasive? This traditional panel seeks creative works and/or critical readings of texts that suggest how we might build on or forge relationships with these species that might prove sustainable and mutually beneficial in our unpredictable future.

Margaret Fuller: Preserving Paradise in the 19th Century

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126664/margaret-fuller-preserving-paradise-in-the-19th-century>

Organizer: Nanette R. Hilton (Nanette.hilton@unlv.edu), University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Nineteenth-century American writer and social reformer Margaret Fuller lived in a time of social prescription incongruent with her inquisitive, provocative nature. Yet despite social stigma and her era's ethnocentric and colonial ideologies, Fuller cultivated a multi-ethnic, transclass, transgender, transnational sensibility to the environment and its people. As example, her heterogeneous *Summer on the Lakes* (1843) is loaded with "rich cultural diversity" causing it to "enter into the ecology of the place and form a unique harmony" (Bilbro, 2015). Other evidences include her famous monthly subscription "Conversations" fostering dialogic interchange among women who were normally excluded from intellectual inquiry, her foreign correspondence from Europe including warfront reportage of the 1848 Italian Revolution, and the amalgamated Transcendentalist Dial magazine of which Fuller was editor. Furthermore, Fuller's ground-breaking *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845) employs images of plant life to conceptualize woman's need for intellectual growth—what she also refers to as "expansion" or "unfolding." In what other ways did Fuller champion, appropriate, and interact with ecology in her texts? To what end, then and now? In what ways might Fuller's personal struggles, or the struggles of those she represents in her texts, mirror socio-ecological struggles, past and present? Is Fuller's a universal or microcosmic ecological awareness? How does Fuller resist or cross metaphorical or literal boundaries and in what ways might this impact Earth's environment?

This panel examines Fuller's texts as a dialectical conversation between disparate groups, "one Fuller curates in order to educate readers to be loving interpreters" of their environment and one another. Fuller's writing, only recovered and added to the canon in the last thirty years, amounts to "new poetry" with a postmodern vibe. This panel explores how Fuller was on the vanguard of form and genre hybridization and how she championed inclusivity long before it was politically correct. This panel strives to mine the ecocriticism of Fuller's heterogenous works for models of rhetorical strategy as patterns for us, nearly two centuries later, in our efforts to preserve Paradise.

The Margins of Environmentalism: Examining Narratives of Struggle against Extraction, Resource Grab, and Infrastructure Development

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126730/the-margins-of-environmentalism-examining-narratives-of-struggle-against-extract>

Organizer: Alok Amatya (alok.amatya@lmc.gatech.edu), Georgia Institute of Technology

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

In their co-authored volume *Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South* (1997), Ramachandra Guha and Juan Martinez-Alier envision a theoretical framework for local movements that protect community access to natural resources like forest, river, and land from state-grabs and industrial over-use. Such place-based struggles have shot into American public consciousness since 2015 after widespread media coverage of the Standing Rock Sioux's resistance to the Dakota Access Pipeline. Guha and Martinez-Alier proposed terms like "environmentalism of the poor" and "environmental conflict" to study the confluence – and often, the divergence – of community-driven struggles with the ethos of

environmentalism and nature preservation. Given the role played by literary and media narratives in shaping the discourse on natural-resource conflicts, our efforts as scholars can innovate new critical paradigms for their study. Over the last three decades, representations of environmental conflicts have proliferated across diverse narrative forms, including Arundhati Roy's prose essay on the anti-dam movement in India ("For the Greater Common Good"), Helon Habila's realist novel on the militant oil-rebels in Nigeria (*Oil on Water*), and James Cameron's sci-fi/fantasy film on the fictional Na'vi people's rebellion against mineral-grab by a human mission (*Avatar*). The study of narratives that center non-violent resistance movements or militant indigenous struggles may intersect with dynamic fields of study, such as, environmental humanities, global literature, indigenous studies, transnational feminism, energy and infrastructure studies, and conflict studies. This panel calls for traditional or interactive paper presentations that examine narratives from the 'margins of environmentalism' by from a variety of theoretical and issue-driven perspectives. Topics covered may include – but need not be limited to – digital approaches to environmental justice (such as EJAtlas.org); indigenous agency and representation in literature and film; issues of mediation by authors, filmmakers or scholars; armed violence in the context of natural resource conflicts; fall-from-paradise and popular disaster narratives; the limits of environmental preservation and environmental justice; state-violence and the precarity of environmental activists; et cetera. For consideration, please submit a 350 word paper abstract and contact information below.

Medieval Ecol(Eschat)ologies

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126665/medieval-ecoleschatologies>

Organizer: Rachel S. Anderson (anderach@gvsu.edu), Grand Valley State University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This panel is seeking papers that explore the connections between medieval ecocriticism (broadly defined) and the ease with which the inhabitants of this society lived beyond the limits of the material/temporal world – both on a personal level (cross-species hybrids, afterlives) and on a societal level (saints, apocalypse). In other words, for much of the medieval world, the barriers between life and death were porous; saints and demons (not to mention elves) walked among the living and the end of the world was a frequent theme in literature and art. Thus, the idea of environment, when discussed in a medieval context, must account for these complexities; however, current biopolitical theory often minimizes or ignores this complexity, or worse, posits the complexity of modernity in opposition to a constructed medieval simplicity. This panel invites papers that resist the narrative of medieval ecological simplicity and instead explore and embrace the complexities of medieval social/psychic systems. This panel is especially interested in papers that look at "medieval" from a global, rather than strictly European, perspective.

Paper topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Biopolitical approaches to medieval sanctity and/or demonology
- Species hybridization/the monstrous in medieval literature and art
- Eschatological art and literature
- Soul/body dualism and its complications
- Medieval medical texts and theories of wellness/illness

Medieval Ecomaterialism: Reading Ruins and Landscapes

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126668/medieval-ecomaterialism-reading-ruins-and-landscapes>

Organizer: Joseph Taylor (wjt0003@uah.edu), University of Alabama Huntsville

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Ruins illustrate the complicated entwinement of man-made structures with the environment in a relationship of antagonism and strange harmony. The twelfth-century historiographer William of Malmesbury, for example, reflected on the rubble of classical Rome as vestige of a mighty literary past to which his own England might aspire while, at the same time, Rome's shattered landscapes haunted William's tragic descriptions of his own country in the wake of the Norman Conquest. Medieval writers pondered ruinous sites as remnants of paradisaical or utopian pasts, but they also confronted these same ecomaterial spaces in troubled political presents. This panel seeks 20-minute papers that examine medieval writers' accounts of ruins in order to continue critical conversations on premodern ecomaterialist impulses. Papers might consider, among other topics, ruins as archives for the recovery of social, religious, or political pasts, ruinous landscapes as tabula rasa for propaganda or affirmation of political and legal right, contests over ruins in a medieval theater of land and law, or the emplacement of ruins in a broader medieval environmental consciousness.

Men and Nature

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126669/men-and-nature>

Organizer: Michelle Yates (myates@colum.edu), Columbia College Chicago

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Ecofeminist scholars, like Stacy Alaimo and Kate Soper, among others, point out that Western culture has long framed nature in feminine terms, while women are framed as somehow closer to nature, as the embodiment of nature. By contrast, men, white men in particular, are often framed as closer to culture, as the embodiment of civilization. As Carolyn Merchant points out, the ability to conquer 'wild' nature and turn it into a pristine (feminized) paradise is framed as a mark of masculinity and an important part of the way men embody civilization. Thus, nature is often used, to borrow from Noel Sturgeon, as a 'tool of power,' legitimating social hierarchies and (re)producing a dichotomy in which men, culture, agency, and human subjectivity are aligned on the one hand, while women and nature are aligned on the other hand. Men and male-driven culture act to conquer and control (female) nature. While the relationship between women, femininity and nature has long been a focus within ecocriticism and feminist ecology, this panel aims to examine and critique literary and media representations of men, masculinity and nature as well as the patriarchal power structures (re)producing a binary system which values masculinity and culture over femininity and nature. This is intended as a traditional panel with 4-presenters; however, this could be a roundtable if there is more interest.

Militarized California: Transpacific Flows of Toxicity and Environmental Ruin

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126670/militarized-california-transpacific-flows-of-toxicity-and-environmental-ruin>

Organizer: Danielle Crawford (dbcrawfo@ucsc.edu), University of California, Santa Cruz

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

In the popular imaginary, California is often deemed an idyllic site of sand, surf, and sunny skies. Home to Hollywood, San Francisco, the Silicon Valley, and Yosemite National Park, it is a place of fantasy production, eco-friendly cities, technological innovation, and iconic natural landscapes. However, this “paradise” by the Pacific is also a highly militarized state, one that serves a key role in the environmentally destructive operations of the U.S. military and the violent fortification of U.S. empire.

After its forced incorporation into the United States, California became a transpacific launching pad for military campaigns that created vast socio-environmental ruin across the Pacific. For example, during the bloody Philippine-American War of 1899, San Francisco was a key departure point for American troops travelling to the Philippines. Using scorched earth tactics, these troops burned entire villages to the ground, turning the island of Samar into a “howling wilderness.” While California was a strategic site for imperial warfare in the Pacific, it also played a crucial role in the testing of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles in the Marshall Islands. After Operation Crossroads in 1946, wherein two nuclear bombs were detonated at Bikini Atoll, contaminated U.S. naval aircraft carriers were brought to Hunters Point Naval Shipyard in San Francisco, where they spread radioactive waste to the soil and surrounding water. Starting in the 1960s, just a few years after U.S. nuclear testing at Bikini Atoll, Kwajalein Atoll became a target range for ballistic missiles launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base, located near Santa Barbara, a training practice that displaces Marshallese to this day. Currently, California is home to a staggering 32 military bases and installations and approximately 94 toxic Superfund sites—many of which are themselves former bases.

This panel, which will operate as a traditional paper session, examines California in a transpacific context, exploring the relationship between California, the Pacific, and the U.S. military, and the environmental consequences of these connections. Paper topics can include but are not limited to the following:

- The environmental impact of U.S. militarization in California and the larger Pacific (i.e. warfare, toxic waste, bases, training operations, the militarized California-México border)
- California, the transpacific, and material flows of pollution and toxic waste
- Superfund sites and environmental racism
- The tension between California as “paradise” and California as heavily militarized state

Myths of Return: Homecoming, Paradise, and Perdition

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126671/myths-of-return-homecoming-paradise-and-perdition>

Organizers: Allison Nowak Shelton (alsh@colorado.edu), and T.J. McLemore (theodore.mclemore@colorado.edu), University of Colorado, Boulder

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Theodor Adorno conceived of “homecoming” as a defamiliarizing experience. This concept resonates in the contemporary global moment of massive diasporic migration and accelerating environmental transformation, social and ecological changes that invite intersections between postcolonial studies and

ecocriticism. In narratives of return, characters come home to discover remembered paradises hopelessly altered, just as we know from material evidence that natural resources increasingly cannot return to viable conditions. Both losses—loss of home and loss of nature—tangle with the political and mythological spaces these stories inhabit and reinforce the inadequacy of Edenic imaginings. Jennifer Wenzel has spoken of a “crisis of futurity,” which renders a future that includes a healthy world with us in it unimaginable. Indeed, this dual inability to “return” evokes a conceptual dilemma: How should we approach a changed landscape, knowing that we too have changed? How should we modify our failing environmental modifications? How do myth and memory shape or obscure these approaches? This panel investigates interconnections between return, reimagination, revision, and renewal in depictions of cultural and ecological transformation. We seek traditional or nontraditional papers on topics including but not limited to:

- images of exile, return, memory, nostalgia, disenchantment, and/or renewal;
- environmental recuperation and/or regeneration in homecoming narratives;
- how the Anthropocene shifts understandings of myths of paradise and perdition;
- slow processes of recursivity and revision in imagining the environment;
- colonial and political legacies on real and fictional landscapes;
- images of nature as context, character, or both;
- explorations of linearity, teleology, and/or flux

Natural Disasters and the Sublime

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126672/natural-disasters-and-the-sublime>

Organizer: Damon Franke (Damon.Franke@usm.edu), USM Gulf Coast

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This traditional panel seeks papers that examine the portrayal of natural disasters in literature, film, and media in relation to theories and the experience of the sublime. The panel seeks to generate active and engaged response to natural disasters and their environmental causes and consequences. Papers might discuss fires, earthquakes, landslides, hurricanes, tsunamis, tornadoes, blizzards, floods, droughts, heat waves, or volcanic eruptions. Papers could analyze disasters and the sublime in terms of the terror of uncertainty and self-oblivion drawn by Burke and Schopenhauer, the creation of the psychological dynamic of the experience posed by Kant, or the elaboration of figures of speech to create the aesthetic quality as noted by Longinus. Panelists may also expand the definition of natural disaster to include such events as the Tunguska Event, the oil gusher of the Deepwater Horizon, and the sinking of the Titanic. Panelists might discuss such works as Jesmyn Ward's *Salvage the Bones*, Dave Eggers' *Zeitoun*, John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Fifth Book of Peace*, Thomas Pynchon's *Against the Day*, or Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. The panel certainly invites analyses of other forms of representation including nonfiction, the rich tradition of film on the subject, and media coverage of recent environmental catastrophes. Papers that examine natural disasters in California are especially encouraged. How do characters or witnesses respond to natural disasters? Does terror and awe always produce the sublime? How does reason attend to the power of nature? How does it then attend to environmental loss? Does catastrophe free us to construct utopic or paradisiacal visions in its aftermath?

The Neglected Lives of Micro-Matter

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126731/the-neglected-lives-of-micro-matter>

Organizers: Agnes Malinowska (amalinowska@uchicago.edu), University of Chicago, and Joela Jacobs (joelajacobs@email.arizona.edu), University of Arizona

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

In light of the rising threat of global climate catastrophe, scholars of the nonhuman turn have largely focused their attention on vast environmental processes and forces like global warming and the Anthropocene—on the massive temporal and spatial dimensions of what Timothy Morton calls the “hyperobject.” But the interspecies relations that make up Morton’s hyperobject at the same time always operate on the level of what we call the micro-object—the invisible world of microorganisms and other forms of living matter that permeates every aspect of human and nonhuman life. Our ASLE roundtable seeks to engage these neglected lives that evade human perception, blend object-like into human environments, or exist on the border between life and death—the overlapping worlds of bacteria, fungi, algae, dust, pollen, soil, coral, and plant life that constitute the interspecies social. According to Morton, hyperobjects demand new modes of thinking and living together: We solicit papers in literary and cultural studies that investigate how these lively ‘micro-objects’ implore us to suspend, alter, or reorder our political and cultural systems, habits of thought, and aesthetic or representational modes. Microorganisms like fungi, bacteria, and algae point us to an image of life outside of individuality, life as essentially relational and generative, multiplying: What might a revitalized politics or justice look like when we take on the perspective and the dimensions of these tiny organisms? How does life on the micro-scale compel us to suspend the usual human order, to reconsider our cultural exchanges, or to reorder our (bio)political and ethical systems? At the same time, we seek to uncover in our literary and cultural histories a microbial aesthetics that reckons with the implications of being alive in a wildly diverse network of multispecies relations—relations that operate on multiple scales, diverging temporalities, and according to patterns that cannot be reduced to either harmony or conflict.

Nerds on Fire

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126286/nerds-on-fire>

Organizer: Anthony Lioi (alioi@juilliard.edu), The Juilliard School

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Anglophone popular culture is now saturated with nerd figures, tropes, and narratives. What does this mean for a burning world? In *The Great Derangement*, Amitav Ghosh becomes skeptical of the “outhouse genres” of science fiction, fantasy, and horror, but nerd culture has fashioned utopian environments at unfashionable times. However, it is also a medium for dystopian behaviors, especially online. This panel will examine the pyroclasm of nerd cultures in ecological context. Topics may include:

- The paradise of nerds
- Nerds in/from hell
- Postsecular and sacred nerd environments
- Nerds in nature
- Nerds and ecotopia
- Ecocritical interpretations of canonical nerd texts

- Nerdist interpretations of canonical nature writing and environmental literature
- Nerds and ecomedia
- Toxic nerds
- Staying with the nerd trouble
- Nerds and environmental justice
- Nerds in digital, virtual, and augmented environments
- Materialist approaches to nerd cultural practices such as cosplay, conventions, LARPing, MMORPGs, etc
- Nerds and extinction
- Nerds and eugenics
- Feminist nerdism and ecology
- Blerd ["Black nerd"] ecology
- Indiginerds [Indigenous/digital nerds] and decolonization
- Queer nerd ecology
- Comparative nerd ecology, e.g. nerd versus otaku versus boffin culture

Innovative approaches welcome.

Nineteenth-Century Posthumanisms Today

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126675/nineteenth-century-posthumanisms-today>

Organizer: Scott Hess (hesssc@earlham.edu), Earlham College

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Nature in transatlantic nineteenth-century literature and culture was often valued in anthropocentric ways: in Emerson's claim in 'Nature,' for instance, that "man [...] is placed in the centre of beings, and a ray of relations passes from every other being to him." Yet the nineteenth century also produced many counterdiscourses of distributed agency and value in non-human beings, things, and processes: as in John Clare's paratactic or rhizomatic poetics; the dynamic interdependent networks of Alexander von Humboldt's *Kosmos*; the haunting and invasive materiality of Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market"; the recalcitrant otherness of the Brontës' moors; Charles Chesnutt's conjurings across species lines; and John Muir's insistence that "Nature's object in making animals and plants might possibly be the happiness of each one of them, not the creation of all for the happiness of one," to give just a few examples.

This panel will explore the variety of nineteenth-century posthumanisms and, just as importantly, their relevance for our contemporary twenty-first century world. What models can the nineteenth century offer for the (re)construction of environmental discourses and cultures today? What forms of human cultural imagination and social and material relationships do these posthumanisms suggest or support? How might they help reshape our societies and ecologies? Paper proposals are welcome that engage nineteenth-century literatures and cultures from around the globe, Anglophone and otherwise.

Nonhuman Extinction Fiction: In Print and on Film

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126676/nonhuman-extinction-fiction-in-print-and-on-film>

Organizer: Jennifer Schell (jschell5@alaska.edu), University of Alaska Fairbanks

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Mammoths and megalodons. Auks and aurochs. Pigeons and parakeets. Orchids and otters. Butterflies and bonobos. Extinct and endangered nonhuman organisms have long stoked the imagination of writers and filmmakers around the world. Examples of extinction fiction date back to at least the nineteenth-century and include James Fenimore Cooper's *The Pioneers* (1823), Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851), and Jules Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (1864). Perhaps not surprisingly, interest in extinct and endangered species increased dramatically in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries with the onset of the Sixth Extinction, precipitated by anthropogenic climate change and habitat destruction, among other things. Examples include such novels as Fred Bodsworth's *Last of the Curlews* (1955), Julia Leigh's *The Hunter* (1999), Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* (2004), and Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl* (2009). The list also includes such films as *King Kong* (1933), *Jurassic Park* (1993), *Beasts of the Southern Wild* (2012), and *The Meg* (2018). This traditional panel invites participants to present fully conceived papers, which explore any aspect of nonhuman extinction fiction in print or on film. Papers might focus on scientific subjects, theoretical topics, cultural concerns, global perspectives, generic interchange, narrative strategies, or artistic/aesthetic techniques. They will be chosen for their historical breadth and institutional diversity. Each of the four selected participants will have twenty minutes to present their paper. To allow more time for post-presentation questions and discussion, the panel will not include a respondent.

Oecologies I: Premodern Horizons

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126677/oecologies-i-premodern-horizons>

Organizer: Allan Mitchell (amitch@uvic.ca), University of Victoria

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This is the first of three interlinked sessions proposed by the Oecologies Network.

Horizons indicate apparent boundaries: where earth and sea meet sky, the past borders on the future, and human vision encounters its limit. Horizons also seem relative and recessive, introducing new and unusual perspectives. For this panel we invite speakers to consider premodern moments in which humans are on the verge: contact zones and ecotones where those in the past found themselves situated and across which they desired to move, whether towards remote kingdoms, the Garden of Eden, the Land of Faerie, or through the Sphere of Fire. Presenters are encouraged to address how early literature and culture traversed environmental and ontological boundaries, imagined atmospheric or global phenomena, and took up planetary vistas and scales (physical, conceptual, or fictional). How were distances calculated and charted in the sciences? What is the effect of flying through ethereal realms in dream visions? Other ideas include the development of three-dimensional globes, the mapping of the sky, or the depiction of cityscapes or landscapes in the visual arts. We are interested to discover whether and how premodern pasts open new ecological horizons for the future.

Other questions to consider:

How were new frontiers navigated? What flights of fancy were devised to cross thresholds? Which people, places, or environs are thought to lie over premodern horizons? What are some disanthropocentric effects of going beyond?

If a horizon is a limiter of vision (what scholastics used to call a terminator visus), what views can be taken towards such boundary phenomena? What technological or other relations are enlisted to aid failing human vision?

What takes place in the skies? How was the relation between sky, sea, and earth imagined and mapped? Is a horizon an uninhabitable zone? a portal? other?

How is premodernity itself as a set of shifting foregrounds or graduated chiaroscuro effects of modernity? How do our “horizons of expectation” determine what we see looking back across time and space -- and forward?

On Fire: Pyrocriticism

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126678/on-fire-pyrocriticism>

Organizers: Catriona Sandilands (essandi@yorku.ca), York University, and Joni Adamson (joni.adamson@asu.edu), Arizona State University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

In Summer 2018, the west coast of North America was once again engulfed in flames. As with other massive wildfires in Australia, Europe, and Siberia, these fires were fueled by climate change; drought, high temperatures, and insect infestations have turned living forests into tinder. They were fueled by capitalist extractivism: on top of the obvious role of fossil fuel developments in anthropogenic climate change, large-scale industrial landscape transformations have made many places in the world more very much more vulnerable to megafires. And they were fueled by colonialism: settler regimes have, especially in North America and Australia, extinguished Indigenous pyrotechnologies such as broadcast burning, thereby creating large reserves of fuel just waiting for the right conditions to combust.

As Stephen Pyne, among others, has argued, fire itself is not the problem: the problem is, perhaps ironically, the way that surface fire has been suppressed as an everyday technology of living, driven technologically inside (internal combustion) and underground (fossil fuel extraction). Fire has been socially and culturally transformed in this process; practices of partnership with fire as an agricultural and pastoral technology have been, in the wake of what Pyne calls the pyric transition, suppressed in grasslands and forests, leading materially to erosion and desertification, and culturally to a polarization between imaginaries of controlled domestication on the one hand (a crackling fire in a fireplace), and violent struggle on the other (arson as a tool of oppression or protest). Not surprisingly, then, when fire gets “out of control,” either physically or metaphorically, the only publicly conceivable possibility is: “How do we to put it out?”

Although, as Anne Harris notes, there was no fire in Eden, this panel takes the opportunity of the “Paradise on Fire” conference theme to ask what happens when we reimagine this foundational story. Following Nigel Clark and Katherine Yusoff’s call for a fire-centred history, this panel calls for a fire-centred ecocriticism: what can ecocritics do to repopulate the world with multiple stories about fire that might ignite a more sophisticated array of responses to fire -- and fires -- as fire comes to occupy an ever-more-prominent role in public conversations about climate change? How can we reimagine fire as an element in a

more complex affective constellation, including intimacy, familiarity, respect, and partnership alongside fear and antagonism? How might a more plural understanding of fire help us develop more pyro-sensible relationships?

Papers are invited on any and all pyrocritical topics, including but not limited to:

- fire(s) in literature, art, music, film, games, social media
- fire as a metaphor for, metonym of, or focal practice in, political struggle
- fire as a social, cultural, domestic, ritual, pastoral, or agricultural practice
- cross-cultural understandings of fire
- fire-based arts and technologies (glass blowing, pottery, pyrography, welding)
- alchemy, transformation, purification, spontaneous combustion, cooking
- witchburnings, faggots, torchings, ritual immolation, branding
- Hell, volcanoes, incinerators, crematoria, ovens, pyres
- fire-fighting, fire-setting, fire-watching, fire-fearing, pyromania
- pyrophobic/pyrophilic plant and animal life
- pyropoetics, pyric theory

Other Worlds, Different Humans: Indigenous and Traditional Myths as Ecological Knowledge

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126679/other-worlds-different-humans-indigenous-and-traditional-myths-as-ecological-kn>

Organizer: Moira Marquis (mbradfor@live.unc.edu), University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters) What do you see when you look at the moon?

Ancient Mayans saw a rabbit. Taoists saw a toad. Modern, western cultures saw a man's face. Contemporary science sees clues to the origin of life on earth.

The various ways our closest celestial body has been seen illustrates how cultural stories can literally change the way people see and understand our world. The animals, plants, fungi, and rocks of the earth are understood in vastly different ways but always entangled with and enmeshed in cultural ways of knowing. The way people see our world has profound consequences. Ways of seeing enable and justify human actions from the way we treat each other to the way we treat animals and our ecosystems.

In the contemporary moment, one way of seeing dominates most of the world and has resulted in vast ecological ruination and climate change. This way of seeing is the legacy of the Enlightenment, which sees animals and the living world as resources for the intentionality of humanity. It is the lineage that sees a man in the moon and therefore colonizes the cosmos with man's self-importance. Human beings, in this view, are not only capable of mastering Nature, it is in Human Nature to do so—most of the time with violence and competitive self-interest. This view of humanity was first spread through colonialism and imperialism and subjugated other ways of knowing that offered ways of seeing that did not assert such innate human mastery.

Increasingly decolonial and indigenous scholars have asserted the power and potential of indigenous and alternative myths to articulate an understanding of humanity as interdependent with the earth and other beings, rather than natural masters—seeing the rabbit not the man, in the moon.

This panel is interested in ecological indigenous or traditional myths. These examples should provide a counter-example, to challenge the conception that people are unavoidably environmentally destructive and biologically determined. Proposals are invited on any traditional or indigenous myth that understands human being as different than the biologically determined, self-interested and innately competitive subject the Enlightenment legacy asserts and/or any narrative about other beings or the natural world that challenges conceptions of humanity as capable of mastering other beings or nature.

Out of the Classroom and Into the Wild

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126680/out-of-the-classroom-and-into-the-wild>

Organizer: Ellen Bayer (ebayer05@uw.edu), University of Washington Tacoma

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

"We boast of our system of education, but why stop at schoolmasters and schoolhouses? We are all schoolmasters, and our schoolhouse is the universe. To attend chiefly to the desk or schoolhouse while we neglect the scenery in which it is placed is absurd. If we do not look out we shall find our schoolhouse standing in a cow-yard at last." ---Henry David Thoreau, "Huckleberries"

This panel will use a roundtable format to explore the ways in which we take Thoreau's words to heart and get our students out of the classroom and into the wild. After spending a full term reading and discussing texts in which the authors have engaged with the natural world, it seems only fitting that we give students the opportunity to have their own natural encounters. While we can theorize and analyze human interactions with natural environments, are we not also obligated to create a space and provide resources to aid our students in accessing the natural world themselves?

This panel invites talks that outline logistical, pedagogical, and practical approaches to designing environmental literature courses, assignments, and activities that facilitate student engagement in the natural world. Panelists may use the following prompts as a guide for thinking about potential avenues for inquiry: How might we create a classroom that enables students to leave the confines of its walls and journey out into the natural world? What do these courses, assignments, and activities look like on paper and in practice? What resources can, or should, we provide to help facilitate such assignments? How do we address issues of inclusivity? How do we navigate problems with access? How do we define what constitutes a nature excursion? What are the outcomes we seek to achieve when we send students outside? What challenges might we face in this endeavor, and how might we tackle them? Can a student's experience in the outdoors, in turn, help foster their engagement in discussions about broader environmental concerns?

Panelists will offer brief remarks that speak to one or more of the questions above (or a related question), and a broader conversation will follow. The aim of this panel is to initiate dialogue about a range of creative approaches to helping students access the natural world while they are in our courses, and to provide instructors with new tools and ideas for implementing such pedagogies.

Outside Paradise and The Animals at the End(s) of the World(s)

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126685/outside-paradise-and-the-animals-at-the-ends-of-the-worlds>

Organizers: Jonathan Turnbull (jonnyjt@hotmail.co.uk), University of Cambridge, and Peter Sands (pwsands1@sheffield.ac.uk), University of Sheffield

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

Cultural representations of the end of the world often inscribe 'paradise' within the horizon of 'catastrophe'. While these paradisiacal futures provoke reflection upon the wrongs of the Anthropocene, they also produce formulations of 'the human' allied to the ongoing exploitation of nonhuman animals. As Claire Colebrook argues: 'To think of these 'end of the world' narratives as cautionary tales is to assume the position of [...] those happy few for whom conditions of scarcity, violence, volatility and "existential threat" are not part of day-to-day existence'*

Following Colebrook, this panel proposes to interrogate the ways in which the vulnerability of a collective 'humanity' is figured in climate fiction and science fiction. We seek to understand how nonhumans persistently figure in narratives of apocalypse across cultures and throughout history.

The panel will take the form of a roundtable session, with short (5-10 minute) presentations followed by group discussion. We ask for papers which address, broadly, the following questions: to what extent do commitments to sovereignty over nonhuman animals appear at 'the end of the world'? How can disaster-oriented and (post-)apocalyptic fiction represent worlds that develop outside, after, or in absence of the human? How does nonhuman animal life/death feature in both 'actual' disaster (e.g. contaminated sites, war zones, spaces of weapon testing) as well as in strategies to avoid disaster (e.g. experimentation, research)?

We invite contributions from across the environmental humanities and social sciences including but not limited to: English, Sociology, Geography, Philosophy, Anthropology, Animal Studies, Politics, and History. Both empirical work and speculative pitches are encouraged. Alternative presentation styles including film, art pieces and stories are also welcomed and if appropriate could be incorporated into the session.

* Claire Colebrook, 'Anti-Catastrophic Time', *New Formations*, 92 (2017), 102-119, (p. 106).

Pakistani Writing and the Environment

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126688/pakistani-writing-and-the-environment>

Organizer: Shazia Rahman (s-rahman@wiu.edu), Western Illinois University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Created from the partition of British India in 1947, Pakistan was born as a homeland that would be a paradise for the subcontinent's Muslims. The national narratives that were and still are told contain the many possibilities and alternatives that this new nation was to provide for its citizens. However, the floods of 2010, mass deforestation, and desertification along with high levels of pollution and smog have led to many environmental difficulties. This panel asks how different genres of writing from Pakistan portray the relation between Pakistanis and their nonhuman environment. What are movements for environmental justice doing and how are they writing about it? What relations are there between environmental issues and gender issues in Pakistani literature? What can we learn about the people, animals, and plants of

Pakistan from Pakistani writing? How do Pakistanis create more just ways of living together across species in writing and in life? How do gated communities and forced migrations thwart these efforts? This panel invites literary and film criticism as well as journalism and creative reflections on Pakistan and environmental issues.

Paradise is Drowning: Rising Tides, Breaking Conditions, and Altered Horizons

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126298/paradise-is-drowning-rising-tides-breaking-conditions-and-altered-horizons>

Organizers: Jaimey Hamilton Faris (jhamiltonfaris@gmail.com) and Christina Gerhardt (cg2020@hawaii.edu), University of Hawai'i

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

The flip side of the phrase "paradise is burning" would be, especially for many that live in coastal communities, "paradise is drowning." The two elemental events are interconnected via the extreme weather of climate change. The climate is causing many ocean changes: sea level rise; more extreme hurricane and typhoon seasons; hotter, acidifying and de-oxygenating ocean deserts; depleted fisheries; and ice sheet melt, etc. This panel features eco-critical projects (literature, art, geography, and more) that address the oceanic catastrophes of climate change, the breaking conditions of the present, as well as the potential for altered horizon concepts created in the wake.

How can eco-critical projects help to address the slowly creeping inundations of the present that spell submerged futures for many of the world's most vulnerable coastal, delta, and island populations whose subsistence and survival depend on the ocean? And, complementarily, how can eco-critical projects re-imagine the very position of "submersion" as a critical future horizon imaginary. What could be generative about the position "in" or "under?" Potential orientations could hinge on the work of Stacy Alaimo (*Exposed*, and "New Materialism, Old Humanism, or, Following the Submersible"), Stefano Harney and Fred Moten (*The Undercommons*), and Macarena Gómez-Barris (*The Extractive Zone* and *Beyond the Pink Tide*). Working and living in a condition of being submersed by capital and colonial forces, altered horizons could reference already established island indigenous and communing practices as well as the hydro-futurisms of Drexciya and mer-folk.

We invite papers that include discussions of oceanic, island and coastal situations read through ecological and climate justice, concepts and critiques of "resilience," undercommons "breaking" situations, communing practices, wayfaring, water epistemologies, horizon concepts, and more.

Paradise in Flyover Country: MMLA Sponsored Panel

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126692/paradise-in-flyover-country-mmla-sponsored-panel>

Organizer: Lisa Ottum (ottuml@xavier.edu), Xavier University

Proposed Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

The OED dates the phrase "flyover country" to 1980, a colloquialism whose usage—according to Google Ngram—has increased steadily ever since. Indeed, in our current moment, it is difficult to escape negative media images of the U.S. Midwest. On TV, the Midwest is often portrayed as humorously backward, a place

to “escape” from (as in NBC’s *The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*). In fiction, the region receives similar treatment: consider, for example, the unflattering portrayal of Kansas in Nathaniel Rich’s cli-fi novel *Odds Against Tomorrow*. Bolstered by the opioid crisis, narratives of Midwestern decay and decline proliferate on NPR, in *The New York Times*, online—and, of course, in the rhetoric of President Trump, whose campaign strategically positioned Midwesterners themselves as the victims of environmental regulations and globalized trade.

What if were to imagine the Midwest otherwise—to view “flyover country” as a potential site of renewal in perilous times? As a major farming region, the Midwest presents opportunities to reimagine industrialized agriculture and the pernicious social and ecological relations that surround it. Likewise, the Midwest’s exploited landscapes present new imaginative possibilities: what new attachments and allegiances might be forged among people, plants, animals, microbes, and soil following coal and natural gas extraction?

In keeping with the conference theme, this panel welcomes submissions that explore the Midwest, if not as a “paradise,” then as a site for multispecies flourishing. Papers might apply a theoretical concept, such as Eben Kirksey’s notion of “emergent ecologies,” to real-life developments, or they might explore artistic representations of Midwestern regeneration. Papers focused on any period or genre are welcome, as are papers on pedagogy and/or activism. Creative pieces will also be considered. Please submit a 250-300 word abstract including paper title and a brief bio by December 15th. Queries welcome.

Paradise Rising: Pacific Arts and Climate Activism

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126693/paradise-rising-pacific-arts-and-climate-activism>

Organizers: Rebecca Hogue (rhogue@ucdavis.edu), University of California, Davis, and Anaïs Maurer (anaïs.maurer@colby.edu), Colby College

Proposed Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

Pacific Islanders have fought against the effects of the deterioration of their environments by capitalism and colonialism for well over two hundred years. These environmental devastations are diverse and many: the loss of arable land and sometimes of entire islands to rising sea levels, more than 300 nuclear tests, the spread of coral bleaching endangering entire ecosystems, the depletion of the maritime biosphere through industrial fishing, increasingly frequent and murderous cyclones—all have already made Pacific islands exceptionally challenging environments. Pacific artists and writers, world leaders in climate activism, have shown for decades that the Pacific is one of the bioregions the most impacted by climate change and military destruction. Yet tropical Pacific imagery, popularized in the West by eighteenth century philosophers in search of humanity’s Golden Age, still shapes what the capitalist tourist industry sells to workers of the world as idyllic “paradise.” In Oceania, in the time of climate change, paradise is not “on fire,” but drowning.

While Pacific societies are at the forefront of climate change activism, indigenous Pacific literature and cultural production remains marginalized in mainstream ecocritical studies. This panel invites papers analyzing how environmental issues caused by Militourism and climate change have shaped postcolonial Pacific literature, embodied performances, and visual arts. We seek provocative interventions exploring this question through literary, visual, historical, or social approaches.

Please submit a 200 words abstract, keeping in mind that panelists must limit their interventions to seven minutes in order to leave time for a productive discussion between participants.

Paradoxical Sustainability: Whose Paradise? Whose Hell?

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126694/paradoxical-sustainability-whose-paradise-whose-hell>

Organizers: Arlene Plevin (aplevin@olympic.edu), Olympic College, and Fae Dremock (fdremock@ithaca.edu), Ithaca College

Proposed Format: Nontraditional Format

All over the United States, colleges tout their hyperlocal sustainability and recycling programs. Many do a thoughtful job of introducing students to aspects of sustainability, including the complex, ongoing effort to understand what sustainability might truly look like, at least in a regional context. Many increasingly also link the effects of our lifestyles to increasing carbon emissions and environmental contamination.

Yet for all the discussion and new improved curricula, many institutions still avoid structural critiques that might actually allow the emergence of deeper discussions and explorations of what it might look like to live more lightly on this planet. Such discussions look and sound political even if or perhaps especially if the discussion is backed by science or includes any aspect of environmental justice. In other words, despite good intentions, sustainability courses tend to be sustainability light, remaining silent on the actual challenges of changing Western consumption, minimizing the issues of diverse economic positioning on this planet, failing to see the invisible bodies of others suffering in modern slavery, and failing to acknowledge and assess the unintended consequences of, for example, global recycling, conservation that destroys indigenous rights based in traditional conservation practices, and the closing of U.S. coal plants so that they can be renovated into fracked gas facilities. The need to recognize, assess, and reconstitute effective and just sustainability projects is vital, yet sustainability courses, intended to teach students the how and why of sustainability, tend to teach only, so to speak, the tail of the elephant, not its trunk, or tusks, or hoofs.

Consequently, teaching sustainability has become an extraordinarily limited course. This panel seeks to deconstruct this sustainability light through both brief analysis and active discussion of the complicity such courses give evidence of, ways of working inside the institution, possible ways to teach sustainability as it must be taught on this extraordinarily at risk planet, and ways to bring into focus issues of those in the populations most at risk and/or enslaved by our current focus on sustainability light.

We seek a diverse panel to support a free-flowing discussion of the issue.

Possible topics include:

- Gender and race issues in sustainability
- Modern slavery and sustainability
- The rhetoric of sustainability curricula
- Pedagogical practices and innovation methods
- The problems of pedagogical “activism”
- Relevant service learning
- Public settings as backdrop to courses
- Historical examinations
- ASLE curriculum support
- Theoretical approaches
- Pragmatic and “perfect” sustainability models

Abstracts of 250 words are invited for three twelve-minute papers/presentations that address any of the concepts mentioned above. Both moderators envision a 50-minute presentation/discussion on the part of

the moderators and panel members and then the audience breaking into small groups to discuss concepts and create and then share course activities that would challenge the current light approach to sustainability and create instead a more just sustainability. All audience/panel collaboration will be shared in the 90-minute panel and afterwards through email.

Pedagogy that Tempers the Flames: A Round-table (and Podcast) on Environmental Justice in the Classroom

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126695/pedagogy-that-tempers-the-flames-a-round-table-and-podcast-on-environmental-ju>

Organizer: Brandon Galm (brandonjgalm@gmail.com), Westmoreland County Community College

Proposed Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

This round-table panel seeks presenters who are doing amazing things in their classroom related to the conference theme of “Paradise on Fire.” What are ways that you are engaging your students with the passion required to address the real and pressing issues facing our world, from climate change to the social justice issues facing communities as a result of the warming world? What assignments or activities do you use to get students thinking about environmental justice in their immediate communities? Do you have an interesting or innovative approach to environmental service learning? This panel will be an opportunity for panelists to share their ideas with each other and with the ASLE community at the conference.

The round table format here will be amplified by recording it as a podcast, which will allow these great pedagogies and activities to reach an audience beyond just our conference as well.

Proposals of no more than 250 words should be submitted. By submitting a proposal you agree to have your voice recorded during the panel, should yours be accepted.

Playing With Fire: Gaming and/as Environmental Activism

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126696/playing-with-fire-gaming-and-as-environmental-activism>

Organizer: Brandon Galm (brandonjgalm@gmail.com), Westmoreland County Community College

Proposed Format: Nontraditional Format

This panel seeks paper proposals related to how we interact with environment, space, and place, as well concepts dealing with those themes, through play and games. In keeping with the conference theme, papers that look at games that specifically allow us to address and confront the real and imminent dangers of our “world on fire” take special consideration. The format for this panel will be slightly different than a traditional conference panel to emphasize the aspects of play and interactivity inherent in the theme. The format is as follows:

- The panel will be limited to three participants in total.
- Each participant will share a brief 10-minute presentation on their topic.
- A brief Q & A for all panelists will follow the presentations.
- The remainder of the time will be used to host small play sessions to give attendees an opportunity to engage with the games being presented on.

All game types are welcome, from tabletop to video, including homegrown games that panelists wish to present and/or playtest. There will be two projectors with HDMI hook-up for those with laptops or consoles, and other accommodations can be made with enough notice.

Topics might include, but are not limited to:

- Games/play as experiential education
- Ecocritical and Environmental Justice analysis of particular games
- Critical approaches to digital landscapes
- Games/play as environmental activism
- Games that follow the conference theme of “Paradise on Fire”

Proposals of no more than 250 words should be submitted. In addition to your proposal, please include any additional accommodations you might need for the panel’s play session.

Plots of Paradise: Gardening and the Utopian Impulse

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126697/plots-of-paradise-gardening-and-the-utopian-impulse>

Organizer: Jennifer Atkinson (jenwren@uw.edu), University of Washington, Bothell

Proposed Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Those who garden -- or write about the practice -- are often committed to outcomes that go far beyond a bountiful harvest or decorative border. Gardening is intimately linked to issues of sustainability, community, social justice, creative expression, memory, relations with nonhuman nature, desires for meaningful work, the right to the city, and much more. This panel will explore what gardens and gardening -- past, present, and future -- reveal about the political, cultural, and aesthetic realms of everyday life. In light of our conference theme, "Paradise on Fire," we especially encourage proposals that explore how gardens are imagined/experienced as sanctuaries or utopian enclaves in the midst of social and environmental turmoil.

This panel welcomes proposals that approach gardens through the lens of literary studies and ecocriticism, environmental history, landscape architecture, environmental justice, food studies, cultural studies, horticulture, geography, urban planning, natural sciences, and other fields.

Poets and Writers Speak: Ready for the End of the World

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126698/poets-and-writers-speak-ready-for-the-end-of-the-world>

Organizer: Rebecca Macijeski (macijeskir@nsula.edu), Northwestern State University

Proposed Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Each generation, it seems, has its own threat of a coming apocalypse—whether financial, ecological, social, political, cultural, or some amalgam. In our increasingly global and ever-shrinking modern world, it often feels we’re simultaneously working toward a new artificial conception of what an ideal society might look like while also falling prey to the recurring myth that we exist somehow beyond the plane of our natural environments. As we have seen over and over again in human history, significant problems arise when we do not hold ourselves accountable for our role in the destruction of our world. How can we be both better

stewards of ourselves and of the various landscapes we impact? How might imagining possible end-of-the-world scenarios prepare us for what feels like our eventual reality?

This panel seeks to bring together poets, novelists, short story writers, and/or other types of writers whose work engages directly with these ideas in some way. This panel will explore how creative writers may be uniquely positioned to speak about the social and environmental conditions that could lead to the end of the world. Writing and reading poems, stories, etc. about an imagined end of the world offers us an opportunity for rehearsal, for trying out our possible preparations for and reactions to the real thing. When we're writing and reading these visions, we learn more about our own capabilities as individual persons and as a society. Imagination becomes necessary to bridge the gap between current realities and possible realities. The world is in danger, and we've got to write our way toward a more sustainable future; the consequence of not rising to the challenge of re-imagining our relationship to our world could be the end of everything. If paradise is burning, who will record and sing its story?

Format: Writers will read excerpts from their works, then hold a brief discussion and answer questions.

Prehistoric Creatures and Anthropocene Fears: The Past Comes Back to Bite Us

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126699/prehistoric-creatures-and-anthropocene-fears-the-past-comes-back-to-bite-us>

Organizer: Christy Tidwell (christy.tidwell@gmail.com), South Dakota School of Mines & Technology

Proposed Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

Horror and science fiction have long featured the return of the prehistoric, the monstrous past coming back to intrude upon the present and thereby shape the future. *Jurassic Park* is perhaps the most obvious instance of this return of the prehistoric (thanks to human meddling), but the prehistoric also rises up from the depths of the oceans, is triggered by radiation, or is revealed by the events of climate change.

In "How Death Became Natural" (1960), Loren Eiseley describes the human relationship to the geologic and evolutionary past, writing that "we are linked forever to lost beaches whose sands have long since hardened into stone" (164), and speculative narratives about returning prehistoric creatures emphasize this link, bringing the past into our present and possibly into our future. However, Eiseley also writes that there is "[o]ne thing alone life does not appear to do; it never brings back the past" (165). What then does our speculative, fictionalized insistence on bringing back the past say about our present concerns?

This panel or roundtable (depending on submissions received) seeks to explore the significance of such prehistoric returns during the Anthropocene. How are modern, Anthropocenic fears reflected in such prehistoric creatures? What does the return of the prehistoric indicate about our contemporary anxieties about extinction or about the role of the human in the global ecosystem? And, finally, how does this return – typically figured as a threat – potentially shape our steps into the future?

Reading "The Great Derangement" in Contemporary Climate Literature

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126700/reading-the-great-derangement-in-contemporary-climate-literature>

Organizer: Stephanie Bernhard (srbernhard@salisbury.edu), Salisbury University

Proposed Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

In his slim trio of essays *The Great Derangement* (2016), the novelist, anthropologist, and critic Amitav Ghosh claims that novels are not well equipped to take on the vast problem of climate change. The history of the genre as an enforcer of post-Enlightenment bourgeois values prevents "serious" novels from representing improbable events, stories that unfurl on a grand temporal scale, stories that encompass collective humanity over individuals, and stories that take seriously the lives of nonhumans. Or so Ghosh argues. Is he right? Are non-speculative novels failing to represent one of the most urgent problems of our day? If so, what other forms and genres (if any) are picking up the slack? How are they succeeding where realist or modernist novels are failing? If Ghosh is wrong, and (some) contemporary novels are taking on climate change, what are those novels and how do they overcome the obstacles that Ghosh outlines?

For this roundtable, we seek to enlist a cross-section of critics and creative writers, including novelists and poets and essayists as well as scholars of all these genres. We ask critics to provide short readings of literary texts alongside analyses of Ghosh's literary historical arguments, and we ask creative writers to pair short excerpts of their own recent work that touches on climate change with explanations of the ways in which they encounter--and perhaps overcome--the hurdles that Ghosh enumerates. We anticipate that this sampling of climate literature and analysis thereof will catalyze a lively, trenchant conversation about the potential futures of environmental literature in an era of climate change.

Representing Empire in British Modernism—A Crisis of Environmental Aesthetics

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126701/representing-empire-in-british-modernisma-crisis-of-environmental-aesthetics>

Organizer: Molly Volanth Hall (molly_hall@uri.edu), University of Rhode Island

Proposed Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Social histories of our contemporary climate crisis increasingly emerge alongside the geologic. Though a global phenomenon, recent conversations among historians of Britain have suggested that English culture and history may play a special role in the emergence of the Anthropocene era which we currently inhabit - both as the birth place of the industrial revolution, and because of the British empire's global natural resource extraction networks and the culture and policies which maintained them at home in England. This panel asks how the dominant literary trend of Modernism, which emerges in the decades leading up to the great acceleration of environmental change in the mid-twentieth century, engages with, responds to, perpetuates, resists, constitutes, or otherwise represents community(ies) in response to environmental disaster or devastation in the British empire. The panel hopes to pay particular attention to works by authors from territories other than England proper – those authored by colonial British subjects during the early twentieth century. Four presentations will explore questions related but not limited to: the environmental devastation of the period's colonial and world wars; representations of the changing landscapes and natural spaces of the British empire; the use of environmental aesthetics to mediate and respond to the myriad social, political, and economic upheaval; direct representations of environmental crisis.

Resisting Futurity: Eco-sexual Relations in Nineteenth-Century Literature

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126703/resisting-futurity-eco-sexual-relations-in-nineteenth-century-literature>

Organizers: Rachael DeWitt (radewitt@ucdavis.edu), UC Davis, and Ryan McWilliams (ryanmcw@berkeley.edu), UC Berkeley

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Despite maintaining different kinds of commitments to futurity, both queer theory and the environmental humanities share an interest in questioning what it is we deem to be “natural.” As Lee Edelman observes, making the child bear the weight of futurity causes queer subjects to be treated as disposable bodies. When we think “seven generations” into the future, we risk privileging sexual reproduction’s place in the perpetuation of cultural and biological communities, foreclosing a range of queer possibilities. On the other hand, critics such as Rob Nixon implore us to think about future generations harmed by the “slow violence” of the Anthropocene.

This panel seeks to bring these discourses together and apply them to nineteenth-century literature. Thoreau, for instance, imagined spring as a time when new life emerges out of processes that look more like decomposition and transmutation than heterosexual intercourse. And as early eugenicists attempted to “queer” racial others by positing links between the supposed developmental regression of homosexuality and archaism of “primitive societies,” African- and Native-American writers observed and represented natural phenomena to articulate alternative models of generation and kinship.

Our panel invites papers dealing with ecological alternatives to reproductive futurity and related topics, including (but not limited to): spinster sexuality, reproduction, and kinship; decay and renewal; disruption, fire ecologies, and succession; queer interspecies communication; grafts and transplantation; asexual or eco-sexual practices and orientations; resistance kinship; symbiosis, commensualism, parasitism, adaptation, and mutation.

Resisting Otherwise: Mobilizing Submerged Perspectives in Global Social Ecologies

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126084/resisting-otherwise-mobilizing-submerged-perspectives-in-global-social-ecologies>

Organizers: Katherine Hummel (hummel@umich.edu) and Constanza Contreras (cbcontre@umich.edu), University of Michigan

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

For decades, indigenous-led activist groups in the Américas have challenged extractivist logics and practices of multinational corporations and governments seeking to commodify resource-rich, biodiverse environments. As Macarena Gómez-Barris reminds readers in *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives* (2017), these conflicts are historically rooted in settler colonialist regimes which “normalized an extractive planetary view” at the expense of indigenous epistemologies, territories, and lives (6). To write against these totalizing views of social and material environments, Gómez-Barris advocates shifting our attention to “submerged perspectives”: ways of seeing, knowing, and inhabiting environments that emphasize place-based, non-hierarchical modes of relation. By foregrounding submerged perspectives and subjugated knowledges, Gómez-Barris focuses explicitly on extractive

capitalism's contributions to our current ecological crisis, seeking to "decolonize the Anthropocene by cataloguing life otherwise" (4). Our purpose in this roundtable is to demonstrate how decolonial methodologies move the environmental humanities forward and offer localized strategies for imagining alternative futures to the catastrophic, extractive capitalist present. Drawing, as Gómez-Barris does, from new materialisms, critical indigenous studies, women of color feminisms, and queer of color critique, we raise questions about alternative ways forward, including: How do submerged perspectives reshape our understandings of solidarity, collaboration, and collective resistance? How might submerged perspectives work toward indigenous, multispecies, and planetary justice within extractive zones? What imaginative genres, forms, and modes emerge as particularly effective in decolonizing the Anthropocene and creating space for submerged perspectives in global ecologies? By mobilizing submerged perspectives, how can we re-envision scholarly work to cross borders between academia and activism?

We invite scholars, activists, and artists working at the intersections of these topics to submit 250-word proposals for 10-12 minute roundtable presentations. Additionally, we are thrilled to welcome Macarena Gómez-Barris (Pratt Institute) as our respondent and chair for this roundtable. By taking submerged perspectives as our starting point, we hope this conversation generates productive strategies for imagining alternative futures beyond the extractive zone. Please contact Katherine Hummel (hummel@umich.edu) and Constanza Contreras (cbcontre@umich.edu) with any questions about proposals.

Rewriting Paradise: Caribbean Literary Ecologies

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126705/rewriting-paradise-caribbean-literary-ecologies>

Organizer: Elaine Savory (savory@sisna.com), New School University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Capitalist exploitation of people and place has been particularly historically brutal in the Caribbean, which makes the current selling of the region as a tourist fantasyland especially bitterly ironic. This panel will consider ways in which Caribbean literature has sought to explore and represent the relation between people and place in an ecological frame. It is hoped that tensions, fractures and dialogue between reality and fantasy, human and non-human, global and local, colonial, anticolonial and decolonial might be discussed with reference to particular theory and to literary texts.

The Sanzed Empire on Fire: A Panel on N.K. Jemisin's The Broken Earth Trilogy

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126733/the-sanzed-empire-on-fire-a-panel-on-n-k-jemisins-the-broken-earth-trilogy>

Organizer: Sage Gerson (sgerson@ucsb.edu), University of California, Santa Barbara

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This panel takes ASLE's theme of "Paradise on Fire" to Stillness – the large continent that provides the setting for N.K. Jemisin's The Broken Earth Trilogy. The trilogy begins with the latest end of the world – the Fifth Season. However, this Fifth Season is different from the catastrophes that came before it; it was deliberately induced in one orogene's desperate attempt to change the world. This panel is interested in the possibilities and violences brought about by The Fifth Season. It asks what kinds of communities, and oppressions, the trilogy imagines are borne from disaster.

Jemisin received two Nebula Awards for The Broken Earth Trilogy, and importantly, became the first Black writer to receive the Hugo Award for Best Novel, in addition to the first author to receive the Hugo Award three years in a row. In The Broken Earth Trilogy, orogenes, like protagonist Syenite, have the ability to command geologic energy powered by the fiery tectonics of angry Father Earth. However, the orogenes are also controlled by the fulcrum, forcibly supervised by the Guardians, often reviled by Stills, and derogatorily referred to as 'roggas.' Two of the texts' main themes are discrimination and marginalization. In her 2018 Hugo acceptance speech, Jemisin stated "As this genre finally, however grudgingly, acknowledges that the dreams of the marginalized matter, and that all of us have a future, so will go the world." Taking Jemisin's acceptance speech and the novels' themes seriously this panel is invested in the ways that fiction transforms the world. What is the relationship between the novels' imaginary and transformation? What happens when the dreams of the marginalized are given voice? How does The Broken Earth Trilogy contribute to discussions about discrimination? How does the text represent the experience of being marginalized? What are the effects of the texts' changing narrative perspectives? What do the books have to say about power, systemic oppression, and the possibilities of resistance and/or change?

This panel is particularly interested in papers that examine race, gender, and sexuality in the novel's dystopian Fifth Season. How does Father Earth contribute to conversations about gender and ecology? What kind of environmental futures do the texts imagine? Please submit abstracts of no more than 300 words by December 15, 2018.

Science, Aesthetics, and the Anthropocene: SLSA-Sponsored Panel

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/127138/science-aesthetics-and-the-anthropocene-slsa-sponsored-panel>

Organizer: Helena Feder (federh@ecu.edu), Eastern Carolina University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters). **Note: Seeking a fourth panelist to complete the panel.**

This is the Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts (SLSA) sponsored panel at ASLE. We seek a fourth paper than fits with this theme and the paper topics below.

Alan Rauch, "DIMINISHED BEAUTY, DISAPPEARING HEDGEROWS: RICHARD JEFFERIES AND W. H. HUDSON AT HOME". I want to explore the ecocritical strategies of both Hudson and Jefferies, by looking at aesthetics in their "Selbornian" natural history texts. Their works articulate a remarkable nexus of descriptive beauty tinged with concern for the disappearance of the source of that beauty. I will consider, very briefly, the way in which that mantle has been taken up again by writers such as Helen MacDonald in *H is for Hawk* (2014) and George Monbiot in *Feral* (2013).

Helena Feder, "What To Make of Diminished Subjects: Houellebecq's *Frankenstein*". Michel Houellebecq's *The Possibility of an Island* continues and sharpens Shelley's critique of the erosion of social feeling. And like Frost's oven bird, the question the novel frames in all but words, is what to make of a diminished subject that wishes to become more than a thing?

Justus Berman, "Literary Genres of Human Residue in Bök's *Xenotext* and Vandermeer's *Southern Reach Trilogy*". This paper addresses Jeff Vandermeer's *Southern Reach Trilogy* and Christian Bök's *Xenotext* as works that respond to the threat of extinction by envisioning the total destruction of human bodies and archives--in other words, envisioning the end of the human world and relationality.

Science's Literary Turn

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126709/sciences-literary-turn>

Organizers: Katherine Buse (kebuse@ucdavis.edu), UC Davis, and Priscilla Wald (pwald@duke.edu), Duke University

Planned Format: Nontraditional Format

Fifty-six years ago, Rachel Carson wrote the first chapter of *Silent Spring* as a “fable for tomorrow.” Though the book is a work of science communication, its opening is a fictional narrative, leveraging techniques from myth, fairytale, and fantasy to depict an uncanny ecological blight falling on an unnamed town in America. Elements of the fantastic are shot through the rest of the book in the form of metaphor and storyline, creating a mythic or fabular infrastructure for the book’s ecological message. Carson is not an outlier: just over two decades later, James Lovelock, a prominent environmental scientist famous for developing the Gaia hypothesis, published an article subtitled, “the parable of Daisyworld,” invoking a literary mode to help classify his argument. In the piece, Lovelock claimed that his computational model, which explored the idea that a living planet can work as a self-regulating whole, was “not trying to model the Earth, but rather a fictional world.” In different ways, these environmental scientists—Carson a marine biologist and Lovelock a chemist and Earth scientist—drew on literary techniques and genres in order to convey unfamiliar scientific ideas.

As environmental crisis deepens, the environmental humanities have increasingly converged with science studies in hopes of activating useful methods for making sense of a world that has never been modern. This panel asks, when do scientists turn to the literary as part of their scientific work? What role do fiction, myth, poetry, and genre play in the practice and communication of science? ASLE’s 2019 theme evokes the contemporary reality of California’s tinderbox, terraformed landscape, but in doing so reminds us that a “Paradise on Fire” is already mythic, stylized, and aestheticized, even when it has real world consequences. This panel considers the kinds of mythmaking being done by the scientists who supply evidence for, exacerbations of, and/or solutions to, current ecological issues. At a smaller scale than the mythic, we are also interested in papers concerning the poetics, stylistics, plotting, or characterization found within scientific work. We define environmental science broadly, to encompass all of the (so-called) ‘natural’ sciences, from microbiology to astrophysics. While there are any number of examples of literary techniques used to communicate science to the public, less attention has been paid to the ways in which the literary is more than just packaging, supporting the development of scientific concepts, communities, methods, or models. We are interested in considering the profound role of the literary—and of literary criticism and the humanities broadly—through an attention to this increasingly common turn in environmental scientific writing.

This panel will be composed of two or three papers and two respondents, through which we hope to intensify discussion. The organizers are accordingly seeking both presenters and respondents. Please submit your 250-word abstract (if you would like to present a paper) and a short bio (both respondents and presenters).

Secret Best Friends: Timothy Morton's Dark Ecology and Deconstruction

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126717/secret-best-friends-timothy-mortons-dark-ecology-and-deconstruction>

Organizer: George Hart (George.Hart@csulb.edu), California State University Long Beach

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

The third edition of *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* (2018) includes ecocriticism on its "Twenty-First-Century Theory Map" (34-35) and contains selections by Rob Nixon, Jane Bennett, and Timothy Morton. Does placing ecocriticism in the context of the structuralist and poststructuralist theory that dominates the Norton anthology constitute an advance for the field? Does Morton's assertion that deconstruction is ecology's "secret best friend" inaugurate the theorization that ecocriticism has long resisted? At the beginning of *Of Grammatology*, speaking in the global terms of the Anthropocene, Jacques Derrida observes that "the metaphysics of phonetic writing," or logocentrism, is "the most original and powerful ethnocentrism, [which is] in the process today of imposing itself upon the planet" (3). Are we, forty years after the publication of *Of Grammatology*, beginning to see what deconstruction--and poststructuralism in general--can offer to ecocriticism? Does Derrida's sense that the "future can be anticipated only in the form of an absolute danger" (5) provide a way of conceptualizing global warming and climate change? Why would ecocriticism ignore *Of Grammatology*, the entire second half of which is called "Nature, Culture, Writing"? For the last ten years, Morton has been developing an ecotheory based in poststructuralism (as well as trends in philosophy such as Object Oriented Ontology) through a series of books, including *Ecology without Nature* (2007), *The Ecological Thought* (2010), *Hyperobjects* (2013), *Dark Ecology* (2016), and *Humankind* (2017), as well as multiple articles. This panel proposes to assess Morton's theoretical intervention into ecocriticism. Does ecocriticism gain anything by absorbing theories that its first practitioners consciously set themselves against? In what ways does Morton adapt central theoretical concepts from Marx, Freud, Lacan, and Derrida, among others, in order to bring ecocriticism into the realm of poststructuralist theory? The organizer of this panel seeks papers that explain, critique, apply, or adapt Morton's Dark Ecology in relation to ecocriticism, ecotheory, and environmental writing.

Securing Paradise: Borders, Human and Nonhuman Intersections

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126718/securing-paradise-borders-human-and-nonhuman-intersections>

Organizer: Emily C Vazquez-Enriquez (ecv27@cornell.edu), Cornell University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Wendy Brown argues that "nation-state walling responds in part, to psychic fantasies, anxieties, and wishes". Such fantasies encompass the idea of a geopolitical paradise where racial and economic privilege, security, and prosperity can be either achieved or preserved by containment walls. Physical border structures are often seen as measures that can stop people perceived as impediments to upkeep that fantasy. Yet, while border-securitization procedures fail to block human migration, they do stop nonhuman migrants and provoke extensive harm to the environment.

When talking about the ecological perils faced during the Anthropocene, Hillary Cunningham asserts that border studies should not remain aloof to the increasingly severe environmental decay accompanying it. Border structures and bordering practices have active roles in the intricacies of environmental detriments,

as Cunningham emphasizes, “in geopolitical terms, ecological regions do not neatly coincide with international territorial borders, creating a set of signal disjunctures between ‘environment’ and ‘political borders.’” Built barriers tend to fragment migratory corridors often necessary for the survival of endangered species; surveilling and patrolling activities in wild areas disrupt nonhuman modes of sustenance and routines; physical borders can aggravate floods and change the course of rivers; human migrants are often forced to face the dangers of crossing wild landscapes such as rivers, the ocean, the desert, or the jungle.

This panel welcomes papers that address intersections between border studies and the environmental humanities. Potential points of inquiry might be: How does literature, cinema and other creative practices account for environmental degradation when portraying borders? What forms do writers mobilize to assess the intersections between human and nonhuman agents situated in cross-border movements? Can nonhuman migrants be fictionalized not just as a way to expose human suffering, but their own? In what ways are hopes for a borderless world framed not just as a human concern? What are the entanglements between borders and extinction? How can border narratives challenge our notions of what it means to be human?

Topics might also include:

- Environmental racism
- Multi-species and interspecies relations
- Speculative Fiction
- Race and animal studies
- Borders and animality
- Borders in Cli-Fi
- Ableism and speciesism in border contexts
- Posthumanism

Seeing Past the Nature/Culture Dualism

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126719/seeing-past-the-nature-culture-dualism>

Organizer: Karla Armbruster (armbruka@webster.edu), Webster University

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

From William Cronon’s identification of the nature/culture dualism as the heart of “the trouble with wilderness” to the environmental justice movement’s arguments that nature can be found in urban and other built environments seemingly dominated by human culture to Donna Haraway’s concepts of the cyborg, natureculture, and companion species, which all begin with the ways the categories of nature and culture are inextricably interrelated, one of the major challenges identified by environmental and ecocritical thinkers has been the dualistic mindset that sees nature as separate from culture.

In the spirit of Rebecca Solnit’s reference to the possibility of paradise arising from hell because “the suspension of the usual order and the failure of most systems” can free us to live another way, this roundtable will explore works of literature (and other art forms) that represent alternative modes of human perception that challenge or complicate the nature/culture dualism. For example, Ursula Le Guin’s “Vaster Than Empires and More Slow,” the hyper-empathic Osden is able to sense the consciousness of the vegetation on the planet he and his team are exploring, much like the (sometimes mystical, sometimes

quite scientific) connection with trees exhibited by some of Richard Powers' characters in *The Overstory*. However, submissions need not focus on plants as the exemplars of nature!

Settler Colonial Ecocriticism

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126720/settler-colonial-ecocriticism>

Organizer: Tom Lynch (tplynch2@gmail.com), University of Nebraska

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Various sorts of colonialisms have clearly had a major influence on the flora, fauna, and overall wellbeing of planet Earth. The field of postcolonial ecocriticism, which examines the aftereffects of mercantile and exploitive colonialism, has by now become well established as a field of study, with a wealth of influential books, articles, and conference papers. But, although another form of colonialism, settler colonialism, has arguably had an even larger and more continuing, impact on the planet's ecology, scholars have barely approached the field of settler colonial ecocriticism. A moment's reflection, however, would make us realize that many of today's most pressing environmental problems, such as habitat loss, ecocide, and extinction, can be traced to the results of settler colonialism. Indeed Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin argue in their new book *The Human Planet: How We Created the Anthropocene*, that the Anthropocene should be dated to 1610 and the beginnings of European settler colonialism in the Americas.

At the same time, within the context of settler colonial theory, some of the more positive efforts to mitigate environmental harm can appear suspect. National Parks and designated wilderness areas, for example, whatever their very real merits, are clearly settler colonial phenomena. Likewise, bioregionalism and related "becoming native to place" efforts can be seen as responses to, and extensions of, settler colonial practice that seek to displace Indigenous people. It is notable that the discourse of various "back to the land" and "off the grid" types of environmentalism are replete with the tropes of settler colonialism.

This panel seeks papers that engage with the interconnections of settler colonialism and ecocriticism. While much settler colonial analysis has involved the Anglophone settler colonies of Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand, proposals will be considered from any settler colony in any language tradition. Depending on the number of proposals received this will be either a traditional panel (4 papers) or a roundtable (6 papers).

Solarpunk Poems and Ecogre Work: Speculative Embodiment and Practices of Hope

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126721/solarpunk-poems-and-ecogre-work-speculative-embodiment-and-practices-of-hope>

Organizer: Petra Kuppers (petra@umich.edu), University of Michigan

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This panel invites discussion of emergent eco-lit genres like solarpunk and cli-fi (climate fiction), and their relationships to social justice performance practice, traditional genre writing, and experimental poetics. We hope to take our cue from publications like *Octavia's Brood* (2015). Evoking Octavia Butler, an African-American US science fiction writer and a form of fictional sociologist, the two editors, Walidah Imarisha and

adrienne maree brown, worked with activists in multiple fields to explore the use of genre narrative as a way to communicate the need for change.

Let's talk about how creative writing and performance practices are activist tools, ways of making change, and forms that can bring people together. How can experimental creative practice allow us to feel things differently? How can we invent new appreciation and embodiment practices for human and other eco-diversities? What can 'speculative' or 'non-realist' embodiment mean, and how can we make it resonant for eco-arts? The panel invites both practitioners and critics. A healthy mix of the two approaches would make for the most interesting discussion.

Staying Alive Roundtable: Narratives of Person, Profession, and Place

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126723/staying-alive-roundtable-narratives-of-person-profession-and-place>

Organizers: Mark Long (mlong@keene.edu), Keene State College, and John Tallmadge (jatallmadge@gmail.com), Independent Scholar

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

This roundtable will feature ASLE members sharing narratives of building sustainable professional and personal lives. The session will feature narratives from members with different histories, at different phases of life and career, in diverse places and academic institutions. The presentations will be published on the Staying Alive blog and members of the audience will be invited to write and share their stories with the ASLE community on the Staying Alive blog following the conference.

The Staying Alive project has been facilitating reflective practice among members of ASLE since a workshop for academic professionals at ASLE in Spartanburg, South Carolina, in the summer of 2007. The Project leaders, Mark Long and John Tallmadge, have worked with over one hundred members of the ASLE community—graduate students, contingent faculty, pre-tenure and tenured faculty, retirees, and independent scholars—in pre-conference ASLE workshops, in-conference individual mentoring sessions, and on the Staying Alive Project blog that continues to make visible stories of the promises (and perils) of institutional life across all phases of a life and a career.

Swimming into Paradise: Toward an Ecomaterialist History of Immersion

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126724/swimming-into-paradise-toward-an-ecomaterialist-history-of-immersion>

Organizers: Lowell Duckert (lduckert@udel.edu), University of Delaware, and Steve Mentz (mentzs@stjohns.edu), St. John's University

Planned Format: Jam Session (7-8 Presenters)

Recent developments in the blue humanities have emphasized the alien pressure of the great waters on our understandings of history, ecology, politics, and individual experience. Bringing the water into view reveals how the strait between environmental heaven and hell narrows as pelagic “paradise” is put at risk: tsunamis sweep away walled resorts, while families flee terrestrial wildfires by taking to the sea. Many oceanic ecocritics, from theory-focused feminists such as Astrida Neimanis to historicist literary critics such

as Dan Brayton, include calls to “learn to swim” as ways to respond to the increasingly fluid conditions of the Anthropocene. This multi-voiced “jam” panel dives into the benefits, challenges, and disorientations that come with physical immersion. Paying special attention to the Pacific waters of northern California, host to both surfers and great white sharks, the jam invites contributions about swimming in metaphor, history, and fact. Possible areas of interest include “seascape epistemologies”; the insular origins of the word “California” in chivalric romance; the material histories of storms, waves, and currents; the philosophical and ecological implications of immersion; the precariousness of drowned communities and poisoned bodies (the subject of Michiko Ishimure’s *Paradise in the Sea of Sorrow*); the nature of terraqueous communities; the elemental encounter between fire and water; and any other topic in the blue humanities. Why swim, we ask, as the world flames? What paradise waits inside the waves?

The seminar leaders will invite participants and others to a fresh-water swim in Lake Beryssa on the Wednesday before the conference and a possible salt-water swim in Drake’s Bay on the Sunday after.

Teaching the End of the World

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126725/teaching-the-end-of-the-world>

Organizer: Jamie M. Bolker (jbolker1@fordham.edu), Fordham University

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

With some climate scientists calling the year 2035 the “point of no return” for reducing global climate warming, it is our ethical imperative to encourage our students to be thinking about the perils of the environment so that they may potentially take part in solutions. This roundtable session will consider: how are we to teach the end of the world? How do we incorporate our present climate crisis into courses on literature from time periods that may be well before people were thinking about climate change? What strategies can we use in composition and/or media studies courses to analyze the rhetoric of apocalyptic language used in news reports and scientific studies? How can we address the very real possibility of reaching “the point of no return” in the context of the classes we teach? How do we combat apathy toward an unknowable and (not so) distant future? Additionally, what tactics would or do you use in teaching climate fiction?

Participants in this roundtable session will discuss their strategies, struggles, and questions regarding the incorporation of time-sensitive contemporary environmental issues into literature, composition, and other classes covering various time periods and thematic approaches. This session will be an opportunity to share and learn about the teaching methods—including sample assignments, lectures, readings, etc.—used by scholars from various fields.

Terraforming Tales and Technics

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126726/terraforming-tales-and-technics>

Organizer: Derek Woods (Derek.J.Woods@dartmouth.edu), Dartmouth College

Chair: Rebecca Evans (evansrm@wssu.edu), Winston Salem State University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters) **Note: This panel is seeking a fourth presenter to add to the three presentations below**

For many commentators, the arrival of the Anthropocene means that the Earth has become artificial. In a striking slip from literature to science, they suggest that humans have been unintentionally “terraforming Earth” for generations. The tautological sound of this phrase—literally, “earth-forming Earth,” or making Earth earth-like—is an effect of its science-fiction origins. Coined by Jack Williamson in his story “Collision Orbit” (1942), terraforming refers to narratives about making other planets habitable for terrestrial life. Some well-known examples are Octavia Butler’s *Xenogenesis Trilogy* (1987-1989) and Kim Stanley Robinson’s *Mars Trilogy* (1992-1996). In other words, the phrase “terraforming Earth” tracks a reflexive fantasy: one that begins by projecting outwards, away from our planet, then bends back to Earth as a way of imagining the Anthropogenic biosphere.

Beyond this planetary sense of terraforming, this panel expands the topic to include other forms of landscape modification: land art, terraria or artificial biospheres, manufactured landscapes, and the writers and artists who take them up. Some examples outside science fiction are the Center for Land Use Interpretation, the installation works of Marina Zurkow, and the parody of the Biosphere 2 project at work in Leslie Marmon Silko’s novel *Almanac of the Dead*. “Terraforming Tales and Technics” reads across science fiction and film with a focus on the role of aesthetics in the anthropogenic production of real landscapes and ecosystems. For example, we ask how the fantasy of terraforming other planets will affect efforts at geoengineering and climate change mitigation.

In “Terraforming Earth: Ecotechnics and Science Fiction,” Derek Woods (Postdoctoral Fellow, Dartmouth College) theorizes how terraforming has moved back and forth between US science fiction and science. He argues for the emerging importance, for the mediation of ecological crisis, of a structure that relates the three phenomena of climate change, terraforming, geoengineering and the three causal forces of intention, accident, and feedback.

In “Strange, Barely Habitable Worlds: Terraforming Narratives from Octavia Butler to Elon Musk,” Allison Carruth (Associate Professor, UCLA) develops the juxtaposition of alien bioengineers and human terraformers as literary-cultural forms of relevance both to the environmental humanities and the environmental sciences. She does so by parsing, rather than close reading, primary materials drawn from science fiction, popular science, and astrophysics engineering.

Working with film rather than literature, in “Cine-Forming Life” Selmin Kara (Associate Professor, OCAD University) looks at narratives that take up the terraforming of Earth and other planets, like Wanuri Kahiu’s *Pumzi* (2008), Christopher Nolan’s *Interstellar* (2014), Ridley Scott’s, *The Martian* (2015), and Alex Garland, *Annihilation* (2018), tracing how they imagine sustainability in the Anthropocene.

The Textual, Emotional, and Ethical Borders of Climate Fiction

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126734/the-textual-emotional-and-ethical-borders-of-climate-fiction>

Organizer: Adeline Johns-Putra (a.johns-putra@surrey.ac.uk), University of Surrey

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

As readers cross into textual worlds and inhabit new points of view, to what extent are they transformed ethically and morally? And, in an age of biospheric devastation, to what extent might such ethical transformation involve an appreciation of nonhuman agency and value? Recent ecocritical speculation on literature’s emotional power in the Anthropocene (Erin James and Alexa Weik von Mossner, for example) has highlighted the cognitive and ethical leaps that literature enables. Textual borders are meant to be

porous, enabling imaginative crossings into other places and perspectives. Yet, some have suggested that such imaginative adventures remain a strictly anthropocentric enterprise. Timothy Clark argues that literary narrative is actually "allied with forms of anthropocentric thinking to be overcome" (*Ecocriticism on the Edge*, p.187). Even texts that attempt to give an "authentic" voice to nonhuman nature, rather than focus on human experience, risk "subjectivating" - that is, imposing subjecthood onto - the nonhuman, warns Catriona Sandilands (*Good-Natured Feminist*, p.79).

Certainly, climate fiction invites crossings into the stories of human and nonhuman others in a climate-changing world. But does it also perpetrate the anthropocentric biases in our ethics, politics, and culture that have led to the very devastation imagined therein? To explore this possible impasse at the heart of climate fiction, this panel invites proposals for papers on climate fiction, either creative or scholarly, that consider also:

- the relationship between literary form, emotion, and ethics; or
- opportunities for cross-species empathy; or
- anthropocentrism and/or anthropomorphism and their risks.

Theorizing Indigenous, Settler, and Corporate Petro-Media

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126786/theorizing-indigenous-settler-and-corporate-petro-media>

Organizer: Rachel Webb Jekanowski (rachel.w.jek@gmail.com), Independent

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters) **Note: seeking to add 2 panelists**

From oil to wind to solar, the production of energy requires corresponding financial institutions, socio-political systems, media networks, and ways of viewing the world that support the extraction, production, and consumption of energy. Given our location on occupied Indigenous territory where we work as researchers and educators, we assert that energy developments are always already implicated within histories of white settlement in North America. Media, we contend, like energy infrastructures, are used as conduits for the transportation and transmission of fuel, people, and capital, and ideas about sovereignty, identity, futurity, and relationships to the nonhuman world. Different types of media—from corporate films, digital photography, games, and television advertisements, to activist protests and social media—have alternatively been used to uphold, facilitate, critique, legitimize, and resist these energy practices within settler nations like the United States and Canada.

To frame these concerns, this panel will concentrate on media engaging with petroleum and its attendant structures. Drawing on technology and media studies, energy humanities scholarship, and critical theory, we seek to theorize contemporary and historical uses of media to resist and facilitate energy infrastructures. Individual papers will take up media production by Indigenous and settler artists, activists, and corporate representatives to examine the complex entanglements of cultural production, settler colonialism, and petroleum extraction. In doing so, this panel contributes to discussions within media and literature studies about the imbrication of energy, communication, and art, while foregrounding Indigenous resurgence, energy justice movements, and deepening attention to the asymmetrical effects of climate change on communities and environments.

We are seeking to add 2 panelists to the following planned talks:

- Now or Never: Extraction Discourses and the Duty to Consult, Patricia Audette-Longo

- Posthuman Pollution: Indigenous Petro-Media in LaPensée's Thunderbird Strike and Cariou's Petrography, Stina Attebery
- Resource Commons, Colonial Recognition, and Energy Developments in Canadian Settler Cinema, Rachel Webb Jekanowski
- Photography, Oil, and Mining the "Depth of Feeling" in the Standard Oil Photography Project, Emily Roehl

Theorizing Luminism in American Literature

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126737/theorizing-luminism-in-american-literature>

Organizer: David Rodriguez (david.m.rodriguez@stonybrook.edu), Stony Brook University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This panel will explore the relationship between the environment and literary texts through the development of a literary application of the art historical term "luminism."

Luminism is a post-hoc and somewhat controversial term developed in the mid-20th century for mid-19th century landscape art in the US, mostly produced by the Hudson River School. It usefully highlights the unique interplay of light, color, space, and aerial perspective typical of paintings by Frederic Edwin Church and Sanford Gifford. It has identifiable features in the kind of pristine realism and purity of vision in a painting such as "The Oxbow." The term's use has been criticized for its emphasis on ahistoric formalism, being more about bolstering a new "ism" for art historians than a useful or even relevant category, given the contemporary political and social context.

This tension between formalism and historicism is, of course, mirrored in literary theory. But the theoretical debate about luminist painting is unique in that the environment is the primary battleground: how do we see the environment? how do we see representations of the environment? how should we label them and contextualize them? how do we describe the aesthetic experience of landscape and landscape art? These questions can be asked, similarly, of literary texts that represent the environment in ways that fit into the category of luminism.

Can this term be applied to literary texts contemporary to the Hudson River School? How does foregrounding space and light invite us to read literary images of the environment in new ways? What is the role of the reader, in general, when encountering descriptions of nature? This panel invites both theoretical and applied analyses of the possibilities for this term to be applied to literary texts.

Thinking with Pollination

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126738/thinking-with-pollination>

Organizers: Scott Russell (sc.a.russell@gmail.com), and A.C. Quinn (alyssacalliequinn@gmail.com), University of British Columbia

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

Pollination networks - systems of interactions whereby animal and/or inorganic vectors transfer pollen amongst plants - maintain reciprocal, generous relationships amongst many varieties of life in facilitation of

future generations for all involved. To think with pollination, we argue, means to explore multiple knowledges (indigenous, western scientific, poetic, or others) and actively seek an ethical attunement to our obligations and responsibilities to those many persons - plant, animal, and otherwise - through whose interrelations life can thrive, be generous, and establish its own relations. This orientation of present relationships in service of livable futures is promiscuous, intimately inhabiting and responding to ecotonal spaces between disciplines.

By insisting on multidisciplinary oriented towards our obligations to a future threatened by ecological devastation, pollination thinking resists compartmentalisation of political, literary, and environmental questions (Neimanis et al 2015). Furthermore, such an ethical mode contests conventional figurations of agency operating through single, active subjects by conceptualising agency through living, adapting relational schema grounded in reciprocity and obligation. Not easily read, these schema require sustained attention and sensitivity to the site-specific languages through which vegetable, animal, and inorganic entities convene. Literary texts provide one kind of (re)productive site in which we can explore reconfigurations of agency and, therefore, forms of intimacy.

This roundtable invites participants to investigate pollination as a mode of thought. Participants are asked to explore pollination through literature, but in accordance with pollination's promiscuity, such explorations need not be limited to literary criticism, and may include creative work, political theory, and multidisciplinary dialogues.

Third Nature: Ecology in the Ruins

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126739/third-nature-ecology-in-the-ruins>

Organizers: Sarah Lincoln (slincoln@pdx.edu), Portland State University, and Sarah Ensor (sensor@umich.edu), University of Michigan

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

The recent publication of Anna Tsing's ethnography of matsutake mushrooms, *The Mushroom at the End of the World*, foregrounded the ecological significance of disturbed, ruined, or contaminated spaces and the multispecies assemblages that emerge in their wake. Earth itself, scarred by centuries of industrial and colonial violence, increasingly resembles a planet in ruins, and the apocalyptic register of contemporary cli-fi and cli-film cultivates affects of despair and terror in the face of our inevitable doom. But whereas public environmentalism has long relied on discourses of wilderness and preservation to mobilize popular support, ecology in the Anthropocene will increasingly demand theoretical, ontological, and ethical attention to the sites and relations that constitute "third nature"—what manages to live, as Tsing puts it, "despite capitalism," in the abandoned or toxic peripheries of modernity.

This panel attends to the cultural, philosophical, and ethical potential of ecological thinking and being "in the ruins," exploring non-hegemonic forms of environmental relation that offer alternatives to conservationist purity or melancholic hopelessness. Papers might contemplate:

- temporalities of ruin, residue, persistence, or endurance;
- literary and representational forms associated with, or demanded by, such sites, modes, and figures;
- ecologies of ruin in the wake of colonial and other forms of violence;

- discourses of contagion, disease, disability, race, queerness, and other forms of ruinous embodiment;
- affective ecologies (love, fear, melancholia, mourning, joy, hope, rage...) in the Anthropocene;
- alternative or emergent ecologies;
- urban ecologies;
- the ecological potential of Walter Benjamin and other philosophers of ruin.

Submit 200 word abstracts for 15-20 minute papers by December 15.

This Means War: Militancy and Environmental Imagination in the 21st Century

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126740/this-means-war-militancy-and-environmental-imagination-in-the-21st-century>

Organizer: Shannon Davies Mancus (shannonmancus@mines.edu), Colorado School of Mines

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters) **Note: *The panel currently consists of three presenters, and we are soliciting a fourth panelist and a chair.***

“This Means War: Militancy and Environmental Imagination in the 21st Century” will explore the discursive power of the frame of war to interrogate concepts of militancy with regards to environmental activism. The environmental humanities—its attention to form, context, and ethics—provides unique and important vantage points into how the deployment of the discourse of war can have material impacts on both humans and the non-human environment. Discourse analysis recognizes that form not only reflects power, but investigates how knowledge and form are effects of power (A. Baldwin “Racialization” 1476).

Shane Hall, an Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies at Salisbury University, will present “The Flawed Iconography of Climate Chaos: (De)Racialized Climate Migrants and American War.” This paper will explore how the logics of emergent and insurgent threats are attributed to anthropogenic climate change through the figure of the forced “climate migrant.” It will argue that nowhere is the insurgent threat of climate change more concretized than in the discursive construction of “climate migrants.” The discursive figure of the “climate migrant” is a powerful synecdoche of the emergent threats and possibilities climate change poses to the post 9/11 security state.

H. Louise Davis is associate professor of American Studies at Miami University of Ohio. Her presentation “Igniting a Revolution: Representations and Repercussions of Militant Eco-Activism” traces the evolution of environmental activist into “eco-terrorist” in Twenty-First century popular culture texts, and examines the responses of non-militant and militant eco-activists to this inflammatory label. Looking at a range of written, audio-visual, and social media texts by and about environmentalists, Davis problematizes the concept of “terror” while arguing that, to effect radical change, environmental movements must employ multidimensional tactics—both militant and non-militant—in order to reach the broadest audiences and effectively intersect and build alliances with diverse social justice initiatives.

Shannon Davies Mancus, the Hennebach Visiting Assistant Professor of Environmental Humanities at the Colorado School of Mines, will present “War as Script: Radical Environmentalism, ‘Ecoterrorism,’ and the Performance of Militancy” which will focus on the ways in which both radical environmentalists and their government foes mobilize the war genre. This paper will look at how both sides of this conflict reference war as a discursive touchstone and performative framework to justify extreme tactics, whether it be the

government's justification of the application of anti-terrorism laws to members of the Earth Liberation Front or radical environmentalist's justification of their actions as akin to liberatory guerrilla warfare.

Potential panelists and chairs should be interested in engaging in the following questions: How do militant discourses structure legislative and material outcomes of environmental conflicts? In what ways do neoliberal concepts of war and terrorism/ culture of fear inhibit activism? How do rhetorics and iconographies of war structure performances of citizenship or "outsider" identities?

Too Much Nature: Radical Transformations in Eco-horror

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126741/too-much-nature-radical-transformations-in-eco-horror>

Organizer: Andrew McMurry (amcmurry@uwaterloo.ca), University of Waterloo

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

One of the central fixations of horror film and literature is bodily transformation that renders subjects both too natural and unnatural at the same time. This ambiguity reflects a deeper truth of the horror genre: fear is generated by a confrontation with the abominable, the uncanny, the undecidable. Horror is thus the limit case of all literature, which is, to paraphrase Julia Kristeva, "a version of the apocalypse...rooted ... on the fragile border where identities do not exist or only barely so—double, fuzzy, heterogeneous, animal, metamorphosed, altered, abject."

In this panel we will discuss the forsaken bodies of eco-horror film and literature, the "monstrous" subjectivities of race, gender, class, nation—whether living or dead, or somewhere in between--as they clash, contest, or coevolve with their environments. Theorists of zombies, aliens, protean blobs, vampires, black lagoon creatures, were-creatures, things, and swamp-things are welcome.

Toward a New "Exploration Narrative:" Challenging and Expanding Traditional Speakers and Forms

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126742/toward-a-new-exploration-narrative-challenging-and-expanding-traditional-speak>

Organizer: Elizabeth Bradfield (lizbradfield@gmail.com), Brandeis University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

From Alexander Von Humboldt to John Muir to Barry Lopez, narratives of exploration have been part of environmental writing since its outset. They are also inherently problematic, and often erase the realities of local peoples already living in the "explored" area as well as of how white/male/cis travel is itself a skewed perspective that influences what is experienced. For women, people of color, or non-cis people, journeying to new places embodies and engenders different narratives. Even more, these explorations often demand new forms to speak of their experiences.

In this panel, writers and scholars will share examples of new forms and approaches to "exploration" that reflect the complexity, pitfalls, and ongoing lure of writing about travel. How can it be done differently? How can we honor the open curiosity that prompts leaving home to experience new spaces and write in ways that are honest, clear-minded, and acknowledging of the social and economic complexities always involved in travel?

Poets Elizabeth Bradfield and Sean Hill are both engaged in book-length projects that grapple with these questions. They will share their work and invite other creative writers and scholars to join the conversation for both historic and contemporary perspectives.

In her forthcoming book *Toward Antarctica*, Elizabeth Bradfield uses images, haibun, and footnotes to write about her work as a naturalist/guide in Antarctica. The economics of ecotourism, gender, sexuality, and the palimpsest of history are throughlines in her writing. Bradfield is the author of the poetry collections *Once Removed*, *Approaching Ice*, and *Interpretive Work*. Her poems and essays have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *West Branch*, *Orion* and her awards include a Stegner Fellowship and the Audre Lorde Prize. Founder and editor-in-chief of Broadside Press, she lives on Cape Cod, works as a naturalist locally as well as on expedition ships around the globe, and teaches creative writing at Brandeis University.

www.ebradfield.com

Sean Hill's recent work takes the road trip as a site for exploring race, culture, and otherness. He is the author of *Dangerous Goods*, awarded the Minnesota Book Award in Poetry, and *Blood Ties & Brown Liquor*, named one of the Ten Books All Georgians Should Read in 2015. His poems and essays have appeared in *Callaloo*, *Orion*, *Poetry*, *Terrain.org*, *Tin House*, and numerous other journals and anthologies. He has received fellowships and awards from organizations and institutions including Cave Canem, Bread Loaf, the University of Wisconsin – Madison, Stanford University, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

www.seanhillpoetry.com

We look forward to meeting other panelists who would like to engage either from a historic, critical perspective or through their own praxis as creative writers.

Translating Paradise/Translating Hell: Latin American Environmental Writing

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126743/translating-paradise-translating-hell-latin-american-environmental-writing>

Organizer: Jesse Lee Kercheval (jlkerche@wisc.edu), University of Wisconsin-Madison

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

Latin America is paradise on fire or at least under severe ecological threat. What is happening in the Amazon is the most widely discussed ongoing environmental crisis. Yet the voices of the people who are living this experience often go unheard. Spoken or written in Spanish, Portuguese or their indigenous tongue, their voices often never make it across the cultural, economic and linguistic barriers into the wider environmental conversation. But there is a growing and active cohort of translators, editors and publishers trying to break down those barriers and facilitate a cross-cultural conversation. This roundtable will be an open conversation about translating of Latin American environmental writing, including indigenous expressions of land and culture. It will address both the challenges of finding and translating that work and of publishing it or otherwise making it available to English language readers. Odile Cisneros will talk about her translations and the creation of Ecopoesia.com, an online anthology of environmental writing from Latin America, including indigenous voices. Jesse Lee Kercheval will talk about her translations of Uruguayan ecopoetry and editing *Earth, Water and Sky / Tierra, cielo y agua: A Bilingual Anthology of Environmental Poetry* and *Una gota del agua/ One Drop of Water: A Bilingual Anthology of Environmental Essays*. Tiffany Higgins will discuss her translations of Brazilian indigenous poetry, testimonies, and documents of resistance to increasing threats from hydroelectric projects, mining, agribusiness, and

incursions on indigenous lands, as well as translations of Afro-Brazilian expressions of divinities within nature.

With an imbalance in the environmental humanities in works representing the Global South, we consider it urgent to bring this range of voices—of peoples being directly affected by extractivism in diverse forms—to readers and classrooms in order to mobilize change. With threatened creatures and communities also come threatened epistemologies and ontologies, ways of understanding land and culture that also are in jeopardy.

These Latin American works in translation are records of trauma and destruction, of the “hell” in Rebecca Solnit’s quotation “paradise arises in hell,” but also of the “paradise” as communities struggle to rebuild, as Solnit would say, “free to live and act another way.” And for us, the very act of translation, our efforts to make these voices from Latin America heard, is our response to life in catastrophic times. It is how we chose to live and act during this era when paradise is on fire.

Uneven Ecologies of the Global South

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126744/uneven-ecologies-of-the-global-south>

Organizer: Todd Kuchta (todd.kuchta@wmich.edu), Western Michigan University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Though planetary in scope, the ravages of climate change are hitting the global South first and worst. This panel considers the uneven space-time of ecological crisis in literatures of uneven development.

In *Provincializing Europe*, Dipesh Chakrabarty condemned the concept of uneven development as inherently Eurocentric: he argued that by presuming modernity occurs “first in the West, and then elsewhere,” it consigns the postcolony to the “waiting room of history” (6, 8). But as Amitav Ghosh notes in *The Great Derangement*, the Anthropocene has reversed this temporal order, so that “those at the margins are now the first to experience the future that awaits us all” (62-63). Indeed, Chakrabarty’s own recent work suggests that we cannot *not* talk about uneven development when it comes to climate change. While he blames “the unevenness of postcolonial development” for leaving one billion people without access to safe drinking water (“Postcolonial” 7), he also notes that greenhouse gas emissions would be worse if not for “the fact that development is uneven and unfair” (“Climate” 11).

Examining environmental literature that challenges conventional views of uneven development, this panel addresses works in which the global South is not the “waiting room of history,” nor a victim of slow violence, but rather the frontline of impending ecological crisis. It asks how this crisis is transforming the global South as well as the larger world-system.

Among the questions to be considered are the following:

- How do petrofiction, CliFi, or other genres of environmental literature represent uneven space, nonsynchronous time, or unequal access to resources in the global South?
- How are looming emergencies like water shortages, air pollution, resource depletion, or extreme weather events formally encoded in works of postcolonial, global, or world literature (including but not limited to “peripheral” realisms/modernisms, magical realism, or Asian/Afrofuturisms)?
- How does environmental literature challenge versions of uneven development in which capitalism or modernity appear as belated, derivative, or incomplete in the global “peripheries”? In other

words, how have environmental and ecological concerns transformed the South into a site of emergence, incipience, and futurity—whether apocalyptic or utopian?

- How have environmental issues intersected with capitalist development—particularly in ascendant economies like China, India, Brazil, and South Africa—to alter the world-system?
- How do environmental or ecological issues complicate theories of uneven development (by Trotsky, Neil Smith, or David Harvey) or related approaches, such as the synchronicity of the nonsynchronous (Bloch); unequal exchange (Samir Amin); world-systems analysis (Wallerstein, Arrighi); residual and emergent formations (Raymond Williams); a singular modernity (Jameson); or literary world-systems (Moretti, Casanova, the Warwick Research Collective)?

Works Cited

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. "Climate and Capital: On Conjoined Histories." *Critical Inquiry* 41 (Autumn 2014): 1-23.

---. "Postcolonial Studies and the Challenge of Climate Change." *New Literary History* 43.1 (2012): 1-18.

---. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000.

Ghosh, Amitav. *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*. Chicago: U Chicago P, 2016.

Unsettling Environmental Orientations

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126747/unsettling-environmental-orientations>

Organizers: Samia Rahimtoola (srahimto@bowdoin.edu), Bowdoin College, and Juliana Chow (chowjh@slu.edu), Saint Louis University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

This panel asks what senses of place are generated from within experiences of migration, removal, detention, segregation, and other modes of unsettling. We understand unsettling in two ways. Through the fragmentation, erosion, isolation, divisions, and zoning of landscapes, both humans and nonhumans have been unsettled into increasingly uninhabitable zones. From the desert landscapes of the U.S.-Mexico border and the barren, resource poor reservation lands to the urban ghettos and Chinatowns of modern cities, environments have long been conscripted into repressive and racializing roles. On the other hand, subjects manage, adjust to, refuse, and remake spaces intended to debilitate them. Such practices encourage us to view unsettling as an open, iterative process of coming to terms with a changing environment that can only be partially known. We seek papers that attend to these contradictory impulses within unsettling and their resonances in aesthetic practice. Possible inquiries include:

- Knowledge / Relation / Orientations : how do subjects orient themselves to radically altered or changing environments?
- Partial and incomplete senses of environment: how do subjects draw on unstable, non-comprehensive knowledges to navigate their worlds?
- Forms of responsiveness, adjustment, and transformation that move beyond neoliberal frameworks of precaritization, resilience, and forced adaptation: how is this adapting without settling for less? how is this surviving without being the fittest?

- Aesthetics: how do aesthetic forms and practices participate in unsettling the environment? how does aesthesis--the process by which the world becomes perceptible to sensing subjects--allow subjects to give shape to their experiences?
- States that are neither zoe and bios or 'subject' and 'ab/object' (following Fred Moten and Debarti Sanyal): how does life persist? how do states of removal, reserve, fugitivity, migration, or detainment become states of persistence? how does "race" get unfixed or dislocated?
- Attention to the adverbial: how do we ...?

Unsettling Paradise in the Age of Extinction

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126748/unsettling-paradise-in-the-age-of-extinction>

Organizers: Gayathri Goel (Gayathri.goel@tufts.edu), Tufts University, and Fiona Maurissette (Fiona_maurissette@emerson.edu), Emerson College

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Violence against beings that are not deemed human mirrors the violence against people of color who are routinely dehumanized or animalized by the shifting forces of capitalism, imperialism, and colonialism. In *Animal's People*, Indra Sinha recounts the catastrophic toxic gas leak of 1984 in Bhopal that affected 300,000 people and countless animals making it one of the deadliest man-made ecological disasters in recent history. In Sinha's novel, his protagonist, Animal, walks on all fours as an indictment of the man-made causes that dehumanize him. That humans are bestialized in order to then be abused and exploited is also indicative of the way animals are devalued and treated as disposable beings. This panel aims to examine the root causes that lead to the collective precariousness and devaluation of human and nonhuman beings.

In Western history, colonized spaces have often been perceived as tropical paradises that enthrall explorers and settlers over centuries. But these distant and "exotic paradises" are also feared as "The Heart of Darkness"—a fear that legitimizes the ongoing exploitation of such places and the indigenous communities who live there. Historically, settler colonialism has "animalized" and thus justified the oppression of marginalized peoples. Thus, this panel explores literatures from the Americas, Caribbean, Africa, South Asia and Oceania that expose how violent white settler colonialism continues to impact both human and animal lives.

Often, animal suffering evokes greater sympathy than humans as animals are seen as helpless victims in the age of man-made ecological catastrophe—the Anthropocene. How do capitalism and neocolonialism dehumanize/animalize vulnerable communities? How does the racial coding of animals impact humans and nonhumans? How is the conservation of "exotic animals" embedded in the long history of violent exoticism of native/indigenous peoples? How can we re-envision Animal Studies to recognize the entanglement of human and animal suffering? In what ways can we simultaneously recognize animal agency and work together to resist colonialist oppression? How can we problematize Western conservation efforts in formerly colonized nations? How can we challenge human/animal hierarchy? How can we reimagine a paradise that challenges the ways in which we value some animals at the expense of human lives or vice versa?

Topics/themes/theories to consider:

- Ethics of human & animal experimentation

- Humanism/Non-humanism
- Postcolonial animal studies
- Postcolonial ecocriticism/zoocriticism
- Environmental Justice
- Animal domestication
- Animal rights/ethics
- Zoos/conservation zones
- Animal autobiographies
- Animal agency and affects
- Meat culture/factory farming
- Intersection of Animal Studies and race/gender/sexuality
- Narratives of dehumanization
- Cli-fi and animals
- White saviorism in animal conservation
- Extinction studies
- Biopolitics

Submit a 300-word abstract and a brief bio by December 15, 2018.

Utopian Modernism/Modernist Utopias

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126749/utopian-modernism-modernist-utopias>

Organizers: Lauren Benjamin (labenj@umich.edu), University of Michigan, and Sean Seeger (saseeg@essex.ac.uk), University of Essex

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Modernist studies and utopian studies are generally considered separate and distinct spheres of scholarly enquiry. Even where modernist scholars are concerned with utopian elements in texts, this rarely translates into a fuller engagement with existing conversations and debates within utopian studies. Scholars in utopian studies, on the other hand, likewise show little direct interest in modernism per se, despite the modernist credentials of some of the key texts in the utopian tradition, such as Perkins Gilman's *Herland* and Zamyatin's *We*. This panel aims to foster a dialogue between the two camps in order to see how work on modernism might inform our understanding of utopias, and vice versa. Central to this aim is a question drawn from the ASLE conference's theme: How might looking to the modernist past enliven contemporary understandings of paradise or its opposites? Other questions to be addressed by the panel may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- What are the connections between modernism and the utopian imagination?
- To what extent may modernism be seen to have been a utopian venture?
- Was there a modernist 'turn' in utopian literature? If so, when was this?
- What is the effect of situating modernist texts within the utopian tradition?
- Might race, gender, and sexuality be important meeting points for modernism and utopia? How does an intersectional understanding of utopian works complicate, underscore, or refute claims for modernist affinity?
- How does dystopia function alongside, or in contradistinction to, utopia's relation to modernism?

Vegetal Feminist Experimental Creation

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126750/vegetal-feminist-experimental-creation>

Organizers: Caitlin McIntyre (camcinty@buffalo.edu) and Kellie Sharp (kelliesh@buffalo.edu), SUNY at Buffalo

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

Creative work by women often disrupts patriarchal divisions between human and nonhuman, animate and vegetal. Indeed, feminist texts abound with leaves, plants, and flowers. These plants constitute more than background or scenery; their presence often facilitates connections between characters and their ecosystems, prompt questions of human agency, and anticipate questions of ecological sustainability in an era of industrial development. This plant life is sensuous, for example, in Felix's first glimpse of Robin Vote in Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood* (1936), Robin is "surrounded by a confusion of potted plants, exotic palms and cut flowers." The "jungle" that surrounds her creeps onto her body, as "her flesh was the texture of plant life. Barnes's avant garde aesthetic allowed her to critique the unsustainability of the nation-state in the years leading up to World War II, while simultaneously imagining other possibilities and entanglements and invoking questions of ethics and shared earthliness. The worlds created by plant life and death in Barnes's modernist experimentation compellingly anticipate the stakes of contemporary critical plant studies. Here, scholars including Michael Marder, Jeffrey Nealon, Catriona Sandilands, Timothy Morton, and Luce Irigaray (among others) have turned to plants in order to critique Enlightenment tenets of the "great chain of being" as well as the exploitation and instrumentalization of biota, all while centering "plantness." What do plants say about themselves?

Equally, Barnes's feminist vegetation tracks into contemporary experimentation as well, in an era where climate disruption betrays the unsustainability of the capitalistic "paradise," contingent on whiteness, wealth accumulation, and colonization. For example, in *Parable of the Sower* (1993), Octavia Butler anticipates the impending rapid depletion of natural resources that was only just coming into public consciousness in the 1990s. Against this backdrop, her protagonist, Lauren Olamina, develops a cosmology inflected with plant life and propagation she calls Earthseed. The California setting for Butler's novel is no coincidence, highlighting the urban sprawl and the displacement of flora and fauna constitutive of the expansion of urban or agrarian paradise. In another contemporary pacific narrative, Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl* (2002), the haunting smell of durian fills the pages, clinging to protagonist Miranda's skin, thereby constituting an organic olfactory connection for queer love in the face of dehumanizing biocapital. What these narratives ask us is how to imagine localized paradises, not beholden to grand narratives of extraction and accumulation? These paradises are contingent and not necessarily transformative. What these texts show equally is that rethinking the human is essential to an equitable feminist politics. What are the intersections in the political interests of plants and people under patriarchy? And yet, what does it mean to imagine these kinds of paradises, to listen for plantness, in an era of ecological precarity?

This panel will explore the vegetal feminist avant garde through these questions or concerns: different modes of nonhuman animacy/agency; vegetation as form; plant symbolism; botany, biochemistry and taxonomy; plant-based folk-knowledge, medicine, and spirituality; depictions of agricultural space and/or labor; biosemiotics and plant communication; the aesthetic and sensorial worlds of plants.

Walt Whitman at 200: Environmental Perspectives

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126751/walt-whitman-at-200-environmental-perspectives>

Organizer: Christopher Anderson (ctanderson@pittstate.edu), Pittsburg State University (Kansas)

Planned Format: Jam Session (7-8 Presenters)

With the 200th anniversary of Whitman's birth taking place on May 31, 2019, this panel will offer a chance for participants to offer ecocritical perspectives on Whitman, his work, and his influence. In addition to scholarly approaches, the panel could include readings or commentary by creative writers whose work has been influenced by Whitman.

Submit proposals for brief (5-8 minute) presentations in a 7-8 person "jam session" format. Depending on the number of submissions received, the panel may be adapted to a different format as necessary. Submit proposals of up to 300 words by December 15, 2018.

Possible topics:

- Whitman as environmental writer
- Perspectives on Whitman's influence on later writers
- Contemporary reviews and responses to Whitman as a nature poet
- Historical, literary, social, and scientific 19th-century contexts
- Whitman and his contemporaries
- Queer ecology and Whitman
- Ecocritical perspectives on Whitman's idea of America/democracy
- Whitman's relevance in the 21st-century
- Readings of creative work demonstrating Whitman's influence/relevance

Waste in the California Literary and Artistic Imagination

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126752/waste-in-the-california-literary-and-artistic-imagination>

Organizer: Dr. Rachele Dini (Rachele.Dini@roehampton.ac.uk), University of Roehampton

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters); if the CFP attracts a large number of abstract proposals we may change the format to a round-table/jam session to enable more participants.

The language of waste permeates California's fraught race, class and environmental history, from the very justification for its settlement, which was based on the Lockean view of land occupied by indigenous people as "uncultivated wasteland" to be civilized (1591), to current debates over San Francisco's growing homeless population, seen by the city's wealthiest as "marring" the landscape and by critics as embodying the human toll of Silicon Valley's monopoly on wealth. Throughout California's history, the categorisation of objects, land and humans as disposable has served to justify the productivist paradigm, the displacement of indigenous people, and segregationist and anti-immigrant housing policies (Wacquant 1993; Bauman 2004; Davis 2006; Manzanos/Sanchez 2014).

Home to the first modern landfill (Fresno California, 1937), Hollywood, the Military-Industrial Complex, and indeed Japanese internment camps, California has engendered a proliferation of countercultural artistic and literary responses that have mobilised the language of waste to address the exploitation of land and resources, the mistreatment of specific peoples, and the exclusionary foundations of the "California

dream.” From Frank Norris’s *McTeague* (1899) and Nathanael West’s *The Day of the Locust* (1939), to Joan Didion’s accounts of the 1960s and the waste-ridden landscapes of science fiction (Ray Bradbury, Ernest Callenbach); from the recycling efforts of the California assemblage movement to the waste-infused border writing of Chicano literature (El Puente, Ito Romo), there is a rich tradition in attending to the waste(d) by-products of the myth of California.

This panel on waste in the California literary and artistic imagination invites interventions on topics including but not limited to:

- Utopias/dystopias of waste
- Waste & sci-fi
- Salvaging, recycling, mending
- Hot-rodding as waste art
- Waste and California countercultures
- Waste, environmentalist activism, class
- Systems of human (de)valuation; human by-products of the California dream
- Literatures of internment
- Literatures of the landfill
- Silicon Valley and sustainability in tech
- Digital waste(lands)
- Waste & gender
- Waste & Hollywood
- Waste & modernism/postmodernism

"We have to feel": Environmental Affect and Minority Identities

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126300/we-have-to-feel-environmental-affect-and-minority-identities>

Organizer: Jennifer James (jjc@email.gwu.edu), The George Washington University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters) **Note: seeking a fourth panelist**

We are seeking a fourth panelist for a panel on minoritarian affect and the environment, to add to the talks below:

Dana Luciano’s paper, “Apocalypse: The View from Here,” pursues the question of survival from the perspective of queer settler subjects living in the wake of the devastation wrought by the first decades of the AIDS pandemic. Following Sarah Ensor’s contention that queer writing about AIDS offers an unexpected resource to environmental thinkers and activists, she reflects on the 1993 AIDS documentary *Silverlake Life: The View from Here* (Tom Joslin/Peter Friedman), a film that, on its surface, has nothing to do with climate change. Looking back at the film’s depiction of the crisis ordinary of two white gay men living with advanced HIV disease, she explores its powerful imbrication of living and dying, resignation and optimism, and repulsion and love as guides to a more politically nuanced, ethically capacious understanding of environmental affect.

Michelle N. Huang’s paper, “Elemental Transitions in Mei-mei Berssenbrugge’s Water Triptych,” examines how Mei-mei Berssenbrugge’s poetic triptych on the material states of water—“Fog,” “Mizu,” and “Alakanak Break-Up”—plays with the trope of space between molecules to similarly condense and

attenuate the density of individual human identity. Focusing on the affective intimacies produced by environment and landscape, Huang argues that the three poems' anaphoric repetition and shifting signifiers invite a transitional poetics of transfiguration, rather than of postmodern fragmentation, for formulating Asian/American racial formation.

Jennifer James's paper, "Environmental States: Race, Gender and Environmental Dread" examines the intersection of racial dread, the existential state of anticipating the myriad, quotidian racial catastrophes which befall black Americans in a necropolitical state, and environmental dread, which James will explore as a particular form of repression produced by a climate-denying U.S. state. Focusing on texts by black women writers about Katrina—Natasha Trethewey's memoir, *Beyond Katrina: A Meditation on the Mississippi Gulf Coast*, Jesmyn Ward's novel *Salvage the Bones* and Patricia Smith's book of poetry, *Blood Dazzler*—James will ultimately consider black womanhood as a locus of racial and ecological feeling with the potential to create alternative, generative states outside of and beyond foreboding.

We Need Utopian Cli-Fi, and We Need it Now

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126777/we-need-utopian-cli-fi-and-we-need-it-now>

Organizer: Ted Howell (howelle@rowan.edu), Rowan University

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

The great promise of cli-fi rests in its capacity to guide readers imaginatively through a world different from their own, whether in their past, present, or even far distant future. Yet like mainstream discourse about climate change itself, cli-fi is overwhelmingly disaster-centric, with apocalyptic imagery and the language of crisis predominant. (Think of the pandemic of Atwood's trilogy, the burning California of Butler's Parable books, and the scorched setting of Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl* and *The Water Knife*). With a few notable exceptions, such as the work of Kim Stanley Robinson, "cli-fi" often correlates to "dystopian fiction." Yet, while dystopian works of cli-fi admirably sound the alarm about the future we're well on our way to realizing, they are less helpful when it comes to imagining an alternative.

What we need badly, and immediately, this panel claims, is a distinctly utopian cli-fi, one that focuses not on the disasters that await us but instead on ways of living robust, sustainable, emotionally and intellectually rich, deeply human lives in a future radically altered by climate change. We want to write, read, teach, and critique works that fulfill the fundamental purpose of utopian writing: to think through what it might look like to live in a better world, to offer ideas and visions for what this world could look like, and to energize people who seek to bring those ideas and that world into existence. A utopian cli-fi could counter-balance dystopian disaster stories, offering readers, students, and scholars another compelling way to talk about our future world.

Following a Roundtable format, this panel seeks a range of papers. Participants could discuss individual works of cli-fi, whether utopian or dystopian, finding works from the past or present that speak to the theme; participants could make claims that emerge from a synthesis of multiple works of cli-fi; participants could describe a work of cli-fi they have written themselves, or would like to write (or even ones they would like someone else to write); participants could also create short, utopian works of cli-fi that could be read at the panel.

Western Films as Ecological Narratives

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126778/western-films-as-ecological-narratives>

Organizer: John Bruni (brunij@gvsu.edu), Grand Valley State University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

Setting out for the territories historically involved heading west in search of a paradise. Western films' imaginings of paradise become projected against the California backdrop where they were often first dreamed—and then materialized in specific environmental places and spaces.

This panel seeks papers that look at the past, present, and future of Western films and explore their environmental contexts. Long known for their depictions of frontier spaces where the natural and cultural shape and reshape each other, these films chronicle environmental change through responding and reacting to national stories about social progress and the imperialist fantasies these stories evoke. What is of central concern is the ways that Westerns denature landscapes by showing how they are observed through the filmic apparatus, complicating traditional interpretations of hero- and villain-guided acts. This panel is especially interested in papers that apply ecocritical approaches to films that challenge the generic parameters of the Western—for example, the New Hollywood excesses of Sam Peckinpah and/or the radical minimalism of Kelly Reichardt. We hope that the panel will invite a far-ranging conversation about rethinking the Western by showing its capacity for enabling ecological critiques. Paper topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Biopolitical approaches to tracing the cinematic image of the frontier
- Animals and the reshaping of species identity through Western films
- Iconic performers/performances, for instance John Wayne, in Western environmental settings
- How films of the classic phase, such as *Fort Apache* (1948), represent the wild/wilderness
- Time, space, and geographies produced by/in Western films

Wild for Fantasy: Ecofiction Jam Session

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126779/wild-for-fantasy-ecofiction-jam-session>

Organizer: Michael Gale (michael.a.gale@gmail.com), National Wildlife Federation

Planned Format: Jam Session (7-8 Presenters)

The roots between fantasy—really speculative more broadly—and the natural world run deep and gnarled. For eco-fiction writers, their work goes beyond the environment serving as mere setting and theme. A paradise enflamed requires action, courageous characters, and bold story-telling. The tales are out there, waiting to be discovered, explored, and shared. This jam session celebrates the creative work of a diverse array of ASLE writers and artists who are wild about fantasy. They focus their work on the stories that connect the imagined with reality and that inspire better thinking and action on helping the environment and protecting nature. Creators will present their work in brief audio and/or visual formats. This session came out of discussions in the ASLE Creative Caucus.

Wild Things: Children's Culture and Ecocriticism at Fifteen (Ecocriticism, Youth Literatures, and Childhood Studies Today)

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126780/wild-things-childrens-culture-and-ecocriticism-at-fifteen-ecocriticism-youth>

Organizers: Andrea Casals (acasalsh@gmail.com), Universidad Católica, and Clare Echterling (cechterling@ku.edu), University of Kansas

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

2019 marks fifteen years since the publication of Sidney I. Dobrin and Kenneth Kidd's *Wild Things: Children's Culture and Ecocriticism* (2004), the first and only edited collection on children's literature, media, and ecocriticism. Today, it remains essential reading for anyone working at the intersections of environmental literary studies and the humanities, youth literature studies, and childhood studies. However, ecocriticism and the environmental humanities, children's literature and childhood studies, and youth literature and media have all drastically changed since 2004. In honor of its quinquennial anniversary, we are assembling a roundtable to discuss what we can learn from the collection today as well as emerging and overlooked topics in ecocritical youth literature, media, and childhood studies. Our goal in part is to encourage more work on youth literatures and culture within ASLE.

Ahead of the conference, co-chairs Andrea Casals and Clare Echterling will ask participants to revisit the essays in *Wild Things* and prepare a five- to eight-minute statement in response to the following questions:

- What insights does *Wild Things* offer to ecocritics working in youth literature, media, and childhood studies today?
- What topics or trends do you see emerging in the field today?
- What topics are under-researched and overlooked? (In other words, where are the gaps in the research?)

During the roundtable, Casals and Echterling will offer five to eight minutes of introductory remarks. Each participant will then speak for five to eight minutes, leaving about a half hour for discussion with the audience and panel participants.

Please submit a 200- to 300-word proposal that explains your interest in and qualifications for this roundtable. If you would like to be considered for one of the conference's open panels in the event we cannot include you on the roundtable, you may **in addition** submit a 300-word proposal for a traditional paper presentation as part of your uploaded file.

Expressions of interest and questions may be sent to Andrea Casals and Clare Echterling at acasalsh@gmail.com and cechterling@ku.edu.

Writing WITH Animals

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126784/writing-with-animals>

Organizer: Marybeth Holleman (marybeth@marybethholleman.com), Independent

Planned Format: Roundtable (5-6 Presenters)

From Franz Kafka's "A Report to the Academy" to Karen Joy Fowler's "We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves," animals play a central role in literature. As our awareness grows of animals' intelligence and sensitivity, how must literature evolve? Authors discuss how they portray animals in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, from crafting point of view to developing animals as characters, and offer ways to write about animals in artistic, not didactic or polemic, ways. As writers, we live in an era in which animal suffering is becoming more evident, while animals face a possible next great extinction. For those who do not yet see this or who choose not to see this, reading realistic, accurate, and sensitively written stories, poems, or novels featuring animals can open hearts and minds to the reality of their suffering and loss, and to our role as animals ourselves in this anthropocene age. This panel invites writers across genres to take a closer look at how they treat animals in their work, and elucidates how contemporary writers are finding new approaches to writing about/with/for animals.

The Zoo in Wartime

<https://asle.submittable.com/submit/126735/the-zoo-in-wartime>

Organizer: Kári Driscoll (k.driscoll@uu.nl), Utrecht University

Planned Format: Traditional Panel (4 Presenters)

In his lectures on air war and literature, published in English under the revealing title "On the Natural History of Destruction," W.G. Sebald cites various accounts of the Allied bombing of the Berlin Zoo, and the fate of the animals there. Sebald suggests that "these images of horror" are so powerful because they remind us that zoos, which "owe their existence to a desire to demonstrate princely or imperial power, are at the same time supposed to be a kind of imitation of the Garden of Eden" (2004, 92). This peculiar combination of political and religious symbolism—the ruins of empire and the loss of innocence—allows the zoo to serve as a powerful "material-semiotic node" (Haraway) for reflecting on history and violence in a more-than-human sense, including the "slow violence" of climate change and extinction. It is striking that the "zoo-in-wartime" has become a recurring motif in literature, film and other media over the past two decades, i.e. seemingly in tandem with the discourse on the Anthropocene. This panel seeks to explore the critical potential of this motif as well as its limitations when it comes to thinking about the destruction of the natural world. How can the zoo in wartime, as a literal manifestation of "paradise on fire," serve as a focal point that brings together discourses on (neo-)colonialism, imperialism, racism, and speciesism? And to what extent can this motif serve to obscure or distract from complexities and inequalities by potentially reinstating a monolithic human-animal binary, which these discourses are working to undermine?