

ENG 425A.3/625A.3 Literature of Climate Crisis Cross listing: WMST463 Climate Justice
Spring 2020 M4-6:45pm CBC-C232
Prof. Charles Whitney, Emeritus whitney@unlv.nevada.edu

We live in astounding times and pretend we don't. The climate crisis threatens to destroy our fossil-fueled world. It disproportionately affects those who bear the least responsibility for its furor. But that crisis still affords earthlings a shrinking amount of time to fashion more just and lasting worlds framed ecologically. This course concerns diverse, imaginative speaking and writing that in different ways could help establish such worlds.

Required course readings, except for the four novels, are posted to Canvas, which also contains a range of supplementary resources.

Assignments: three class presentations on assigned readings, take-home midterm and final exams, one nine-plus-page paper on class readings (twelve-plus for graduate students) making significant use of one or more outside sources, and active class participation.

Schedule

Week 1 Jan. 20 Martin Luther King holiday

Week 2 Jan. 27 Course introduction

The Anthropocene

Earth Statement (online site): state of the planet

Passages displayed from David Wallace-Wells, *Uninhabitable Earth*, 2019

Online protest and advocacy:

Greta Thunberg Ted talk

Extinction Rebellion

clips of worldwide youth climate demonstrations with Amy Goodman interviewing participants
(*Democracy Now!* Sept. 20, 2019)

Week 3 Feb. 3

Bruno Latour, *Down to Earth: Politics in the New Climatic Regime*, tr. Catherine Porter (2018), pp. 1-12 only

Naomi Klein, essays in *On Fire: The Burning Case for a Green New Deal* (2019):
"Capitalism vs. the Climate" pp. 70-103; "Let Them Drown: the Violence of Othering in a Warming World" 149-68; "There's Nothing Natural about Puerto Rico's Disaster," 253-58
youtube, United Nations, *Sisters on the Planet Series*: "Ursula," Carteret Islands;
youtube, "Sinking Paradise, Carteret Islands"

Week 4 Feb. 10

Naomi Klein, *On Fire*: chapters on the Green New Deal, pp. 259-91

Klein, youtube, "A Message from the Future with Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez"

Todd Miller, "Sustainable National Security: Climate Adaptation for the Rich and Powerful," (Chapter 2 of *Storming the Wall: Climate Change, Migration, and Homeland Security* (2018), pp. 37-70)

youtube: United Nations, *Sisters on the Planet Series*: "Sahena," (Bangladesh)

Week 5 Feb. 17 President's Day Recess**Week 6 Feb. 24**

Miller, "The 21st Century Border," *Storming the Wall*, pp. 71-105
 Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (2016), Part 3, "Politics," (sections 1-7: critique of the dominant Western conception of the novel; the continuing role of empire in furthering climate change)
 youtube, *Sisters on the Planet Series*: "Melissa," U. K.
 and: [comondreams.org/news/2020/02/01/watch-news-anchor-shows-americans-real-size-wealth-gap-using-american-pie](https://www.commondreams.org/news/2020/02/01/watch-news-anchor-shows-americans-real-size-wealth-gap-using-american-pie)

Week 7 March 2

Ghosh, *The Great Derangement*, "Politics," (sections 8-9: rhetorical analysis exposing the weak and deceptive 2015 Paris climate agreement through comparison with Pope Francis' encyclical on climate change)
 Arundhati Roy (India), stories: "The President Took the Salute" from *Capitalism: A Ghost Story* and "The Briefing," from *Field Notes on Democracy: Listening to Grasshoppers*
 Irene Dankelman, "Case Study 3.1" from *Gender and Climate Change: An Introduction*, 2010, as background to:
 Kanishk Tharoor (India), story: "Ghost Town," *McSweeney's Quarterly* No. 58, 2019, 2040 A.D
 youtube: Wangari Maathai (Kenya) and the African Green Belt Movement

Week 8 March 9

1. The notion of Apocalypso
 Poetry: Evelyn Reilly, *Apocalypso* (selections)
 Juliana Spahr, from "It's All Good, It's All F...ked" in *That Winter the Wolf Came*
 Sam Solnick, "Apocalypso" in *An Ecotopian Lexicon*, ed. Matthew Schneider-Mayerson and Brent Ryan Bellamy, 2019

2a. Poetry: let each student please bring a short poem related to the climate crisis from either of the two collections posted on Amy Brady's Burning Worlds site at *The Chicago Review of Books*, online. You may also choose Ruth Padel, "Slices of Toast" (photocopy). Be ready to recite your poem and explain why you chose it.

2b. online reading: Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner (Marshall Islands) reads her poem "Utilomar"

3a. Cli-Fi Criticism:
 Axel Goodbody and Adeline Johns-Putra, "Introduction to Cli-Fi," from *Cli-Fi: A Companion* (2019)

3b. More short stories
 Elif Shafak (Turkey), "He are the People" (from McSweeney's literary journal, 2040 A. D. [2019])
 Pitchaya Sunthanthad (Thailand), "Floating" (from *Guernica Magazine*, 2018)

March 16: Spring Break

Week 9 March 23**Take-home midterm exam due**

Saci Lloyd, *The Carbon Diaries 2015* (YA, 2008), entries for Winter and Spring

Week 10 March 30

The Carbon Diaries 2015, Summer and Fall

Sina Farzin, “*The Carbon Diaries*,” *Cli-Fi: A Companion*

N. K. Jemisin, “Three Reads” [foreward to *Parable of the Sower*]

Octavia E. Butler, *Parable of the Sower* (1993), chs. 1-5

Week 11 April 6

Parable of the Sower, chs. 6-16

Shelly Streeby, “Climate Refugees in the Greenhouse World: Archiving Global Warming with Octavia E. Butler”

Week 12 April 13

Parable of the Sower, chs. 17-25

Jesmyn Ward, *Salvage the Bones* (2011), days 1-3)

Week 13 April 20

Salvage the Bones, days. 4-9

Week 14 April 27

Salvage the Bones, days 10-12

Waubgeshig Rice, *Moon of the Crusted Snow* (2019) chs. 1-14

Week 15 May 4

Moon of the Crusted Snow, chs. 15-31

Kate Raworth, front matter, *Doughnut Economics: How to Think Like a 21st Century Economist* (2017)

Rhiana Gunn-Wright, “Think This Pandemic Is Bad? We Have Another Crisis Coming (addressing climate change is a big-enough idea to revive the economy),” Op-Ed, *The New York Times*, April 15, 2020 [Green New Deal]

Paper due by Friday of this week

Final Exam due Friday, May 15 by midnight