

English 782

Tim Sweet, English 782, Spring 2008

ENGL 782, Current Directions in Literary Study

Spring 2008: Literature and Environment

W 1600-1850, 223 Colson

Tim Sweet

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Overview:

While environmental criticism began to flourish in the 1990s, its historical roots run deep. We will trace the growth of environmental criticism from the history of Western environmental thought, classics of literary criticism, insights from other humanities and social-science disciplines, and engagement with science.

Readings:

Glotfelty and Fromm, eds., *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996)

Lawrence Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* (2005)

Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy* (2nd ed., 1994)

Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (1973)

Lawrence Buell, *Writing for an Endangered World* (2001)

Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick* (1851)

Clusters of readings (semiotics; ecological economics; ecofeminism and environmental justice; evolutionary biology and psychology) in journals or on eReserve.

Graded Work:

Two annotated bibliography items from bibliography of Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism*. (5%)

- Annotations = 100 words each

A presentation on one week's readings plus two relevant annotated bibliography items. (15%)

- Annotations = 100 words each
- Presentation should set a productive agenda and inspire interesting, analytical class discussion

A short (4-5 pp.) ecocritical reading of *Moby-Dick*. (10%)

An article-length essay project consisting of prospectus (10%), rough draft and final draft

(60%). Topic must be approved in advance.

- Prospectus = 500 words plus preliminary bibliography (min. 4 sources).
- Rough draft = full length plus full bibliography.
- Final draft = 20-25 pp., suitable for submission to an academic journal, incorporating minimum 8 recent scholarly sources (books published by university presses or equivalent, or articles from academic journals), documented using MLA style.

Schedule of readings and work due

1/16 Intro

1/23 Glotfelty and Fromm, eds., *The Ecocriticism Reader*, essays:
Glotfelty, Cheryl. "Introduction." xv-xxxvii.
White, Lynn. "Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis." 3-14.
Howarth, William. "Some Principles of Ecocriticism." 69-91.
Evernden, Neill. "Beyond Ecology." 92-104.
Rueckert, William. "Literature and Ecology." 105-23.
Campbell, SueEllen. "The Land and Language of Desire." 124-36.
Mazel, David. "American Literary Environmentalism." 137-46.
Philips, Dana. "Is Nature Necessary?" 204-22.

1/30 Buell, *Future of Environmental Crit*; **two annotated bibliography items due**

2/6 Worster, *Nature's Economy*

2/13 Williams, *The Country and the City*

2/20 Buell, *Writing for an Endangered World*

2/27 Cluster on semiotics:

Cronon, William, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in nature*. Ed. William Cronon. New York: Norton, 1996. 69-90.

<eReserve>

Howarth, William. "Imagined Territory: The Writing of Wetlands." *New Literary History* 30 (1999): 509-39.

Philips, Dana. "Ecocriticism, Literary Theory, and the Truth of Ecology." *New Literary History* 30 (1999): 577-602.

Slovic, Scott. "Nature Writing and Environmental Psychology: The Interiority of Outdoor Experience." *Ecocriticism Reader*. 351-70.

3/5 *Moby-Dick*; **essay on *Moby-Dick* due**

3/12 Research week

3/19 **Prospectus for final project due**; presentation of topics

3/26 Spring Break

4/2 Cluster on ecological economics:

Daly, Herman E. "Steady-State Economics: A New Paradigm." *New Literary History* 24 (1993): 811-16.

---. "Reply to Mark Saghoff's 'Carrying Capacity and Ecological Economics.'" *BioScience* 45 (1995): 621-24.

Luke, Timothy. "On Environmentality: Geo-Power and Eco-Knowledge in the Discourses of Contemporary Environmentalism." *Cultural Critique* 31 (fall 1995): 57-81.

Major, William. "Grounded Vision: The Radical Agrarian Alternative," chapter 1. Draft ms. <Word file will be sent by email attachment>

Owen, David. "Green Manhattan." *New Yorker* 18 Oct. 2004: 111-23. <eReserve>

Sagoff, Mark. "Carrying Capacity and Ecological Economics." *BioScience* 45 (1995): 610-20.

4/9 Cluster on evolutionary biology and psychology:

Boyd, Brian. "Evolutionary Theories of Art." *The Literary Animal: Evolution and the Nature of Narrative*.

Eds. Jonathan Gottschall and David Sloan Wilson. Evanston: Northwestern UP, 2005. 147-76. <eReserve>

Carroll, Joseph. "The Deep Structure of Literary Representations." *Evolution and Human Behavior* 20 (1999): 159-73.

Le Guin, Ursula. "The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction." *Ecocriticism Reader*. 149-54.

Love, Glen. *Practical Ecocriticism*. Charlottesville, U of Virginia P. 65-88. <eReserve>

Meeker, Joseph. "The Comic Mode." *Ecocriticism Reader*. 155-69.

Sugiyama, Michelle Scalise. "Reverse-Engineering Narrative: Evidence of Special Design" *The Literary Animal: Evolution and the Nature of Narrative*. Eds. Jonathan Gottschall and David Sloan Wilson. Evanston: Northwestern UP, 2005. 177-96. <eReserve>

4/16 Cluster on ecofeminism and environmental justice:

Alaimo, Stacy. *Undomesticated Ground: Recasting Nature as Feminist Space*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2000. 1-23. <eReserve>

Kolodny, Annette. "Unearthing Herstory." *Ecocriticism Reader*. 170-81.

Norwood, Vera. "Heroines of Nature: Four Women Respond to the American Landscape." *Ecocriticism Reader*. 323-50.

Meyer, John W. *Political Nature: Environmentalism and the Interpretation of Western Thought*. Cambridge: MIT P, 2001. 121-56. <chapters 6 & 7, eReserve>

Reed, T. V. "Toward an Environmental Justice Ecocriticism." *The Environmental Justice Reader*. Eds. Joni Adamson, Mei Mei Evans, and Rachel Stein. Tucson: U of Arizona P, 145-62. <eReserve>

4/23 Individual conferences on paper

4/30 **Draft of paper (including works cited) due;** workshop on drafts

Final paper due Monday, May 5.

Sign up for Presentations.

2/6 Worster, *Nature's Economy*

- 2/13 Williams, *The Country and the City*
- 2/20 Buell, *Writing for an Endangered World*
- 2/27 Cluster on semiotics
- 4/2 Cluster on ecological economics
- 4/9 Cluster on evolutionary biology and psychology
- 4/16 Cluster on ecofeminism and environmental justice