

- Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines
- www.unine.ch/lettres

Seminar 4: Modern and Contemporary Literature : Literature and the Environment (2AN1431)

Filières concernées	Nombre d'heures	Validation	Crédits ECTS
Pilier principal B A - langue et littérature anglaises	Séminaire: 2 ph	Voir ci-dessous	5
Pilier secondaire B A - langue et littérature anglaises	Séminaire: 2 ph	Voir ci-dessous	5

ph=période hebdomadaire, pg=période globale, j=jour, dj=demi-jour, h=heure, min=minute

Période d'enseignement:

- Semestre Printemps

Equipe enseignante

Prof. Patrick Vincent

Contenu

Literature has always played a constitutive role in our thinking about the environment, notably contributing to constructions of Nature as 'other' (from 'Culture', 'Reason' or even 'Man'). Yet as recent critics such as Bruno Latour, or Timothy Morton have argued, the nature-culture dichotomy also hides the achievements of non-modern societies as well as modern society's entanglements with natural processes, and it has contributed to the fossil-fuelled Industrial Revolution, leading to what geologists today controversially call the "Anthropocene". These arguments raise the question of whether literature, and culture more generally, are complicit in generating climate change and a sixth massive extinction, or on the contrary can help us repair the planet.

This course will introduce students to the history, theory, and practice of environmental writing and criticism in the age of the "Anthropocene". We will explore the vexed relationship between nature and culture from the Enlightenment to today in a variety of genres (fiction, poetry, non-fiction prose), including two short novels. Students will be asked to present philosophical or critical texts related to each week's readings, developing topics including the nature-culture split and concepts of Nature as Other; Romantic nature aesthetics; the idea of wilderness and land conservation; regionalism and sense of place; ecology and gender; animal rights, antispecism, and post-humanism; literature and climate change; and the "end" of Nature. Postmodern ecological concepts will be integrated into our discussions and questioned. The aim of the course is to explore whether, and how literature can enhance our relationship to the planet and to its inhabitants, both human and non-human.

Forme de l'évaluation

Ev. Interne : One in-class presentation of primary or secondary text (10%); eco-journal (20%) ; research essay (6-8 double-spaced pages) (70%).

Documentation

- Margaret Atwood, *Surfacing* (1972)

All other reading will be available on the Claroline course platform

Pré-requis

First-year courses (PP1-PP3) are required; « Modern and Contemporary Literature » lecture is recommended.

Forme de l'enseignement

Seminar (participation is required)

URLs	1) https://moodle.unine.ch/course/view.php?id=5830
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