

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF LETTERS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
Syllabus

Title of the Course: IED 392 Ecocriticism

Instructor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Aslı DEĞİRMENCİ ALTIN

Year and Term: 2020 Spring

Class Hours and Rooms: Friday 9:30-12.20 B2/205

Office Hours: Friday 13:30-16:00

Google Drive Folder:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1z-VKKHkuUpN_AAthFqMD4G49dhJHdI3W

Course Aims and Contents

With its emphasis on the relationship between humans and the natural environment, ecocriticism is a recent form of literary and cultural interpretation. It studies the role of nonhuman nature in a wide range of texts, literary and otherwise, and interrogates the philosophical and cultural implications of human understanding of and impact on the natural environment and the ways that human interactions with nature (plants, animals, geology, landscapes, air, water) have affected both human and nonhuman life and the environments. (A series of questions about the relationship between the natural world and the human beings who have defined and affected that world are listed below).

Since ecocritics set literary works in dialogue with scientists and examine the current importance of ecological ideas, they emphasize the role played by literature in the development of human discourses, cultural practices, and ethical values about the natural world. Therefore, ecocriticism is a constitutively cross-disciplinary field of study

Some key theoretical movements in the method of ecocriticism include nature writing, place-based ecocriticism, bioregionalism, social ecology, deep ecology, ecofeminism, animal studies, queer ecology, postcolonial ecocriticism, environmental justice ecocriticism, and material ecocriticism and posthuman directions. These movements sometimes overlap and sometimes prove mutually exclusive, but they chart a critical genealogy of ecocriticism. After examining these and thumbing through the essays in the reading list, all of which provide solid backgrounds in ecocriticism, the final question we will address in class is “What are its future prospects?” This question for many ecocritics today is the most imperative, as literary scholars are called upon ever more frequently to explicate their contribution to a world whose hallmarks are economic sustainability, impact quotients, and climate change.

Fiction:

Ghosh, Amitav. *Gun Island*. 2019.

Martin, Mark, ed. *I'm with the Bears: Short Stories from a Damaged Planet*. London: Verso, 2011.

Ian McEwan. *Solar*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2010.

Jeanette Winterson. *The Stone Gods*. London: Harcourt, 2007.

Octavia Butler, *The Parable of the Sower* (if time permits)

Documentaries:

The Inconvenient Truth (2006)

Cowspiracy (2014)

The True Cost (2015), *Unravel* (2012)

Before the Flood (2016)

An Inconvenient Sequel (2017)

Movies

Day After Tomorrow (2004)

Into the Wild (2007)

Beasts of the Southern Wild (2012)

Snowpiercer (2013)

Okja (2017)

Course Outline:

Week 1-2 (Feb 28-March 6): Introduction to Ecocriticism and some basic concepts in ecological thought

Cheryll Glotfelty. "Introduction: Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis." *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. Eds. Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1996.

Barry, Peter. "Ecocriticism: Ecocriticism or Green Studies?" *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*.

Week 3 (March 13) Anthropocene, nature writing, first instances of environmentalism, the first and second waves of ecocriticism

Articles in google drive folder

"The Siskiyou, July 1989" by T.C. Boyle from *I'm with the Bears*

Watch before class: *Into the Wild*

Week 4 (March 20): Postcolonial Ecocriticism.

Articles in google drive folder

Watch before class: *The True Cost* (2015), *Unravel* (2012)

Gun Island by Amitav Ghosh

Week 5 (March 27): Postcolonial Ecocriticism (continued), Environmental Justice

Articles in google drive folder

Gun Island by Amitav Ghosh (continued)

Beasts of the Southern Wild

Week 6 (April 3): Feminist Ecocriticism.

Articles in google drive folder

Week 7 (April 10): Feminist Ecocriticism (continued), Slow violence

Articles in google drive folder

Week 8 (April 17): Material Ecocriticism.

Articles in google drive folder

Week 9 (April 24): MIDTERM

Week 10 (May 1st): International Labour Day. NO CLASS.

Read *Solar* and *Stone Gods*

Week 11 (May 8th): Posthumanism

Articles in google drive folder

Stone Gods by Jeanette Winterson

Watch: *Before the Flood*

Week 12 (May 15): Animal Studies

Articles in google drive folder

Watch: *Okja*, *Cowspiracy*

Week 13 (May 22): Climate Change Fiction; Ecotopia, Eco dystopia

Articles in google drive folder

Solar by Ian Mcewan

Inconvenient Truth and *Inconvenient Sequel*

Day After Tomorrow

Week 14 (May 29th): Climate Change Fiction

Selections of Eco-poetry

Snowpiercer

There may be changes to course outline. Students are expected to check for any updated in the syllabus in google drive folder.

Method of Instruction: Interactive: comprised of discussions and lectures.

Course Requirements: Attendance is obligatory. More than 12 hours of absence will result in F1.

Students will come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings for each day as discussion will form a central part of class work. Students are expected to write one research paper (around 1500 words), making an ecocritical reading or analysis of a cultural text they choose with help from the theoretical readings we'll discuss throughout the semester.

Assessment: Students will be evaluated on the basis of class participation, one research paper, a midterm, pop quizzes, and a comprehensive final exam. In the grading of oral and written work 25% will be taken off for language mistakes. The midterm exam will be 25 %, pop quizzes and participation 5%, the research paper will be 20% and the Final Exam will be 50 %. The passing grade in the Final is 50.