

Professor Stephanie LeMenager
W 9-11:50

ENG 607 Seminar. Environmental Public Humanities

This course takes on the meanings and methods of the Public Humanities, starting with a gloss on the so-called crisis of the Humanities and moving through case studies of successful experiments with public writing, popular/hipster philosophy, new media, activist or embedded scholarship, and institution building. One of the primary goals of the course is to ask what the Humanities can be in a time of crisis—other than threatened—and to consult with individuals who've both succeeded in the traditional sense of academic publication and "broken the fourth wall," so to speak, to become public intellectuals. Intended as both a seminar and practicum for graduate students, the course asks all students to sketch out a public humanities project and present it to the class. Although our readings are all in the environmental humanities, your written work and project can take up other themes/topics with a Public Humanities emphasis.

Regular Participation (15%). Regular participation includes consistent attendance and substantive commentary on course materials. Every week students who wish to be considered for an "A" grade for participation should come in with a list of three conceptual questions and three passages or scenes for discussion, from readings or media texts.

Seminar Leadership (15%). Students (individually or in teams of two) will choose one week in which to lead class discussion for approximately 30 minutes. Leadership will include explaining the central ideas or themes of a text, its format and stylistic particularities, and the ways in which it indicates its intended public (e.g. how it aspires to summon an audience, and what kind of audience it hopes to summon).

Studio (30%). On Week 9 of the seminar, we will stage a mock studio, with students presenting drafts for imagined public humanities projects from 5-page papers to be turned in at the end of class. PowerPoint or other visual materials may be used for the presentation but are not part of the page count. Each paper should include a short bibliography of two secondary (critical, philosophical) texts *not* assigned for class in addition to assigned readings.

Seminar Paper or Living Language Assignment of 10-12 pages (40%).

Seminar Paper: The final seminar paper can be on a topic of your choice, so long as it draws on course materials and themes. It should have a bibliography of approximately ten items, five of which should be readings not assigned in seminar. The seminar paper can be an elaboration and extension of your public humanities project as presented on week 9. Due June 10 by 5pm.

Living Language Assignment: Create two-to-four “Living Language” keyword essays to be submitted to the journal *Environmental Humanities*, for their Living Language section. Alternately you can submit keywords for “an Anthropocene yet Unseen” to Cymene Howe’s *Cultural Anthropology* special section. Due June 10 by 5pm.

Course Schedule

3/30

Course Introduction

Stephanie LeMenager and Stephanie Foote, “The Sustainable Humanities” (2011)

4/6

Environmental Humanities, Public Humanities, Para-Humanities

David Theo Goldberg, “The Afterlife of the Humanities” (2014)

Eileen Joy, “help wanted: steal this university”

Rob Nixon, Interview for *Resilience*, “The Environmental Humanities” (2014)

Cultures of Energy Podcast #5: LeMenager (2016)

4/13

The Breakthrough Book

Roy Scranton, *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene* (2015)

“What I Learned on a Luxury Cruise through the Global Warming Apocalypse” in *The Nation* (2015)

Roy Scranton Skype, 9:30am

4/20

Hipster Philosophy: Plus and Minus

Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World* (2013)

Björk Shares E-mail Correspondence with Philosopher Timothy Morton

4/27

New Media for Environmental Action

Rita Raley, “Digital Humanities for the Next Five Minutes” in *differences* (2014)

Allison Carruth, “Environmental Media Studies,” in *PMLA, The Changing Profession: EcoDH* (2016)

Marina Zurkow and Uma Chaudhuri, **Dear Climate** (online)

Anna Tsing, **Matsutake Worlds** (online)

5/4

NPR University/The Breakthrough Book II

Nicole Starosielski, *The Undersea Network: Sign, Storage, Transmission* (2015)

Surfacing (www.surfacing.in)

Interview with Nicole Starosielski, NPR’s “Science Friday”

5/11

Environmental Justice Theory, Practice, Policy-Making

Kyle Whyte, "What Do Indigenous Knowledges Do for Indigenous Peoples?" (2015);
"Our Ancestors' Dystopia Now: Indigenous Conservation and the Anthropocene"
(forthcoming); Guidelines for Considering Traditional Knowledges in Climate Change
Initiatives: <https://climatetkw.wordpress.com>
(guest speaker in class TBA)

5/18

From Book to Institute: Community Building

Krista Comer, *Surfer Girls in the New World Order* (Excerpts)
The Institute for Women Surfers
Krista Comer Skype, 9:30am

discuss/troubleshoot student projects

5/25

Student Project Presentations: Students present sketches for PUB HUM projects.
Time-limitations dependent upon number of students in seminar. Any media can be
used for presentations.

6/1

"New Words for Living By": The Living Language Projects

Lexicon for an Anthropocene Yet Unseen

Cymene Howe and Anand Pandian

<http://www.culanth.org/fieldsights/803-lexicon-for-an-anthropocene-yet-unseen>

Living Lexicon for the Environmental Humanities

<http://environmentalhumanities.org/lexicon/>