

**EL 588.01 Special Studies in Modern English Poetry:
Ecopoetics**

Fortuny, Fall 2015-16/I

Course Description

Ecocriticism began in the 1990s as a vaguely collective study of the relationship between literature and the environment. Based initially in the western United States, the field has since grown interdisciplinary and international in scope and is currently a major academic movement. This seminar will focus on the poetry that inspired the movement, current critical texts in ecopoetics that challenge human-centered aesthetics and ethics and reading in modern poetry

Course Requirements

Comprehensive reading and active participation in the weekly seminar discussion. A fifteen-page seminar paper will be due at the end of the semester.

Reading Schedule

Week 1: General Introduction to Ecopoetics:

Robert Hass, "American Ecopoetry: An Introduction"

King James Bible, Genesis: Chapters I-IX

Week 2: General History of Ecocriticism:

Christopher Manes, "Nature and Silence"

David Fromm, "From Transcendence to Obsolescence"

Week 3: Literary Roots of Ecopoetics and Ecocriticism: British Romantic Poetry

Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey"

Shelley, from notes to *Queen Mab*, "Mount Blanc"

Week 4: Literary Roots of Ecopoetics and Ecocriticism: American Transcendentalism

Emerson, "Nature"

Thoreau, selections from *Walden*

Week 5: Literary Roots of Ecopoetics and Ecocriticism: Walt Whitman

"A Song of the Rolling Earth," "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking,"

Memories of President Lincoln"

Week 6: American Indian poetry

Robin Wall Kimmerer, "Learning the Grammar of Animacy"

N. Scott Momaday, selections from *Again the Far Morning*

Kenneth M. Roemer, "Bear and Elk: The Nature(s) of Contemporary American Indian Poetry"
Joy Harjo, "Eagle Poem"

Week 7: Nature in Literature and Cultural Studies

Louise Westling, "Literature, Environment and the Posthuman"
William Carlos Williams, poetry selections

Week 8: Bioregionalism and Poetry of Place:

Aldo Leopold, from *A Sand County Almanac*
Robert Frost, poetry selections
Theodore Roethke, poetry selections

Week 9: Animals and Ecopoetics

Kim Fortuny, "Elizabeth Bishop's 'Pink Dog' and Other Non-Human Animals"
Elizabeth Bishop, poetry selections
Marrianna Moore, poetry selections

Week 10: Catch-up

Week 11: Black Nature Poetry

Critical essay TBA
bell hooks, "Earthbound"
Poetry selections from: Lucille Clifton, Yusuf Konunyakka, Indigo Moor, Tim Seibles

Week 12: 21st-century poetry selections

Week 13: Round-table presentations of term papers.