UNIVERSITY OF SURREY asle-uki

Conference Programme

ASLE-UKI

(Association for the Study of Literature and Environment, UK and Ireland)

Biennial Conference, University of Surrey, 29-31 August 2013

Ecological Encounters: Agency, Identity, Interactions

Photograph by Matthew Evans

Welcome to

ASLE-UKI's 8th Biennial Conference, 2013

Ecological Encounters: Agency, Identity, Interactions

General information:

- Registration times: Thursday 29th August 09.00am – 11.00am
  Friday 30th August 08.00am – 10.00am
  Saturday 31 August 08.00am – 10.00am
- Helpdesk in the Concourse is open until 17.00 on Thursday and Friday, and until 14.00 on Saturday.
- Conference helpers, Emma Curran, Lucy Burnett and Michael Paye are also on hand if you need any assistance at all.
- Accomodation keys are available from Stag Hill Court Reception from 08.00 until 19:00 daily and from Security from 19:00 to 08.00.
- Accomodation keys are to be returned on Thursday and Friday to Stag Hill Court Reception between 08.00 until 19:00 daily or to Security from 19:00 to 08.00. On Saturday only, Stag Hill Court Reception closes at 12:00, so from 12:00 onwards on Saturday keys should be returned to Security.
- A luggage-room is available on Saturday. Luggage may be dropped off between 8:00 and 12:00 on Saturday morning via Helpdesk. This room will be kept locked, and you will be notified of the keyholder for collection of your luggage.
- Updates and messages will be posted on a message-board in the Concourse area. Delegates are also welcome to make use of this to post any messages you may have.
- The Routledge stand will be open throughout Friday.
- The bookstand will be open on Thursday from 08.00-11.00, on Friday from 15.00-16.00, and over lunches and some tea breaks on those two days.
- Lunches and teas / coffees will be served in the Concourse area. Dinners (for those who have booked dinners) will be served in the Hillside Restaurant. Please see programme for timings.

We hope you enjoy the event

PROGRAMME: QUICK REFERENCE

THURSDAY 29TH AUGUST		
09.00-11.00	Registration & refreshments	Concourse
11.15-11.30	Welcome	Griffiths Lecture Theatre
11.30-12.30	PLENARY 1	Griffiths Lecture Theatre
12.30-13.30	Lunch	Concourse
13.30-15.00	Session 1	Various
15.00-16.30	Session 2	Various
16.30-17.00	Tea / coffee break	Concourse
17.00-18.30	Session 3	Various
18.30-19.15	Wine reception, poetry	Hillside Restaurant
19.15 (please arrive promptly)	Dinner	Hillside Restaurant
FRIDAY 30TH AUGUST		
07.30-08.30	Breakfast	Hillside Restaurant
08.00-10.00	Registration desk open	Concourse
08.30-10.00	Session 4	Various
10.00-10.30	Tea / coffee break	Concourse
10.30-12.00	Session 5	Various
12.00-01.00	Lunch	Concourse
12.30-01.30	ASLE-UKI AGM	Room 10, Teaching Block
01.30-03.00	Session 6	Various
03.15-06.30	Field-trips	Meet Concourse 3.00-3.15
07.00-08.30	Conference dinner	Terry's Pond / Hillside
08.30-late	Cash Bar	Chancellor's Bar
SATURDAY 31st AUGUST		
07.30-08.30	Breakfast	Hillside Restaurant
08.00-10.00	Registration desk open	Concourse
08.30-10.00	Session 7	Various
10.00-10.15	Tea / coffee break	Concourse
10.15-12.15	PLENARY 2	Griffiths Lecture Theatre
12.15-13.15	Lunch	Concourse
12.30-13.30	EASLCE AGM	Room 6 Teaching Block
14.00-15.00	*ecozon@* advisory board	Room 6 Teaching Block
13.30-15.00	Session 8	Various
15.00-16.30	Session 9	Various
16.30-17.00	Tea/coffee break	Concourse
17.00-18.30	Session 10	Various
18.45-19.45	Dinner	Hillside Restaurant
20.00-21.00	Closing remarks, film	Griffiths Lecture Theatre
21.00-late	Drinks	Guildford Venue (TBC)

KEYNOTE SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

CATRIONA SANDILANDS is Professor and Canada Research Chair in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University (Toronto). Although she is best known for her work in feminist and queer ecologies—*The Good-Natured Feminist* (1999), *This Elusive Land* (2004) and *Queer Ecologies* (2010)—she has also written extensively about the broader intersections of environmental desires with cultural politics: parks, garbage, literature, landscape, bees, bodies—and plants.

MIKE HULME is Professor of Climate and Culture in the Department of Geography at King's College London (after 25 years at the University of East Anglia). His most recent book *Exploring Climate Change through Science and In Society* (Routledge) was published in August and he is currently writing *Can Science Fix Climate Change?* for Polity's New Human Frontiers series. His 2009 book *Why We Disagree about Climate Change* (CUP) was chosen by *The Economist* magazine as one of its science and technology books of the year. From 2000 to 2007 he was the Founding Director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, based at the University of East Anglia, and since 2007 has been the founding Editor-in-Chief of the review journal *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews (WIREs) Climate Change*.

SHEILA JASANOFF is Pforzheimer Professor of Science and Technology Studies at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She is affiliated with the Department of the History of Science and Harvard Law School, and she founded and directs the Kennedy School's Program on Science, Technology and Society (STS).

Professor Jasanoff has been a pioneer in the emerging field of science and technology studies (STS). Through her many administrative, pedagogical, and editorial roles, she has helped define the field for a generation of young scholars in STS. Her works on law and science, risk management, the comparative politics of regulation, and science in environmental decision making count as basic texts on those topics. In 2002, she founded the Science and Democracy Network, an international association dedicated to improving scholarly understanding of the relationships among science, technology, and political power.

Professor Jasanoff's research centres on the interactions of law, science, and politics in democratic societies. She is particularly concerned with the construction of public reason in various cultural contexts, and with the role of science and technology in global institutions. She has written more than 100 articles and book chapters on these topics and has authored and edited numerous books, including *Controlling Chemicals: The Politics of Regulation in Europe and the United States* (1985; with R. Brickman and T. Ilgen), *Risk Management and Political Culture* (1985), *The Fifth Branch: Science Advisers as Policymakers* (1990), and *Learning from Disaster: Risk Management After Bhopal* (edited; 1994). Professor Jasanoff is a co-editor of the *Handbook of Science and Technology Studies* (1995). Her book *Science at the Bar: Law, Science and Technology in America* (1995) received the Don K. Price award of the American Political Science Association, Section on Science, Technology, and Environmental Politics, for the best book on science and politics (1998).

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

Plenary 1: Thursday 29th August, 11.30-12.30

Catriona Sandilands, York University

GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE

Chair: Richard Kerridge, Bath Spa University

Botanical Sensations: Plants, Publics and New Materialisms

Professor Sandilands' presentation will explore the particular role that plants have played (or not) in emerging discourses of posthumanism and "new" materialism. Working through recent interdisciplinary concepts such as botanical agency, vegetal affect and plant thinking, in conjunction with older traditions of thinking about plants (e.g., gardening), the talk will argue that plants' particular omnipresent, lively alterity invites us to new ways of thinking about multispecies politics. Using several literary examples, the talk will also consider that plants have a history of public engagement, that politics are already organised around specific plant capacities, and that the capacities and fragilities of plants haunt environmental thought.

Plenary 2: Saturday 31st August, 10.15-12.15

Climate Change in the Public Imagination

GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE

Chair: Adeline Johns-Putra, University of Surrey

Mike Hulme, King's College London

Between Two Degrees and the Rainbow

Sheila Jasanoff, Harvard University

A New Climate for Society

This plenary session will bring together two world experts in science studies, Mike Hulme of King's College London and Sheila Jasanoff of Harvard University.

Professor Hulme will discuss the way in which our lives are immersed in many different 'climates': intellectual, moral, political, economic. Yet we read the atmospheric climate as separate from culture—purified (as Bruno Latour might say)—and predictable. 'Two degrees' of warming, we are told by scientists—but no more! Instead of the abstract discourse of two degrees, Professor Hulme will stake a claim for weather talk and its intimate connection to the human imagination—'the rainbow'—as a more fruitful way for us to compose the future.

Professor Jasanoff will explore the tensions that arise when the impersonal, apolitical and universal imaginary of climate change projected by science comes into conflict with the subjective, situated and normative imaginations of human actors engaging with nature. Pointing to current environmental debates in which a reintegration of scientific representations of the climate with social responses to those representations is taking place, she seeks to foster a more complex understanding of humanity's climate predicament. An important aim of her analysis is to offer a framework in which to think about the human and the social in a climate that seems to render obsolete important prior categories of solidarity and experience.

Chaired by Adeline Johns-Putra, the session will subsequently be opened up to discussion between the speakers, then to wider discussion and questions from the floor.

Wine Reception and Poetry Reading: Thursday 29th 6.30-7.15

Poetry Reading: Lucy Burnett

HILLSIDE RESTAURANT

As part of the wine reception, sponsored by Routledge, we will be treated to a poetry reading by Lucy Burnett, from her recently published *Leaf Graffiti* and other works.

Lucy Burnett's poems are always moving, playfully exploring the interface between words and things, rural and urban, nature and the human world. Fascinated by sequence, variation and repetition, the poet uses words, and the white spaces around them, as raw materials. Lucy will read from *Leaf Graffiti*, a book which according to one reviewer 'zings with an energy like beat poetry…over the whole ecology of the urban environment.' She will also read poetry from 'Through the Weather Glass', a recent hybrid project which draws on the myth of Icarus, a cycle expedition she completed from Salford to the Greek island of Ikaria, and Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*, in her quest for a poetics of climate change.

Lucy Burnett was born in Dumfries, and lived in Edinburgh, working in environmental campaigning, for many years before moving to the Manchester area. She taught creative writing at the University of Salford for three years while completing a Creative Writing PhD in ecopoetics, before returning to Scotland to work as a Teaching Fellow at the University of Strathclyde. Her first collection, *Leaf Graffiti*, was published by Carcanet Press in April 2013. She has previously been published in magazines including *Stand*, *Poetry Wales*, *Shadowtrain* and *nthposition*. Recently she was appointed Centre Director of The Hurst, the Arvon Foundation's centre in Shropshire, and will take up position in the autumn.

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MEETINGS AND AGMS

ASLE-UKI AGM	**FRIDAY, 30TH AUGUST 12.30-13.30**	***ROOM 10, TEACHING BLOCK***
EASLCE AGM	**SATURDAY, 31ST AUGUST 12.30-13.30**	***ROOM 6, TEACHING BLOCK***
***ECOZON@* ADVISORY BOARD**	**SATURDAY, 31ST AUGUST 14.00-15.00**	***ROOM 6, TEACHING BLOCK***

Thursday 29th August

09.00-11.00: Registration

CONCOURSE, LECTURE THEATRE BLOCK

11.15-11.30: Welcome

GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE

Phil Powrie, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences, University of Surrey
Adeline Johns-Putra, Chair of ASLE-UKI

11.30-12.30: Plenary 1

GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE

Catriona Sandilands, York University

Botanical Sensations: Plants, Publics and New Materialisms

Chair: Richard Kerridge, Bath Spa University

12.30 -1.30: Lunch

CONCOURSE, LECTURE THEATRE BLOCK

1.30-3.00: Session 1

Panel 1: Ecofeminist Encounters
GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE
Chair: Esther Rey - Universidad Complutense de Madrid / GIECO-Franklin Institute
Morgan Chiu-hua Chen, Tamkang University, Taiwan
Bodies and Nature: A Case Study of Helena Viramontes' *Under the Feet of Jesus*
Carmen Flys-Junquera, University of Alcalá / GIECO-Franklin Institute
Dialogical Encounters with the More-than-human through Literature
Maris Sõrmus, Tallinn University
Nature, Culture, and Identity: Human-Nonhuman Encounters in Monique Roffey's Novels

Panel 2: The De(con)struction of Ecological Agency
LECTURE THEATRE B
Chair: Arran Stibbe, University of Gloucestershire
Louise Squire, University of Surrey
(Re)constructing Ecological Agency in Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*
Sophia David, University of Exeter
Environmental and Linguistic Destruction in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*
Heidi Danzl, University of Salzburg
Agency, or the Lack Thereof

Panel 3: Moving Encounters
LECTURE THEATRE J
Chair: Sue Edney, Bath Spa University
Alicia Cohen, Independent Scholar
Poetic Transport: Car and Bike
Louise Chamberlain, University of Nottingham
'This is our poem Tom Tom / less than the whole dale gets in the poem': Site and Place in Alec Finlay's *White Peak/Dark Peak*
Isabel Fernandes Alves, University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro
Walking in the Landscape: Susan Cooper's Encounters with the Sense of Wonder

3.00-4.30: Session 2

Panel 4: Material Feminism
GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE
Chair: Serenella Iovino, University of Turin
Caoilfhionn Nic Fhearaí, University College Dublin
The Ecofeminism of Ursula LeGuin's *The Word for World is Forest*
Sherry Booth, Santa Clara College
Remaking Metaphors of Flight: Ecological Material Feminism in the Work of Terry Tempest Williams and Barbara Kingsolver
Etaf Ebanna, Ain-Shams University
The Ethos of Interconnectedness in Barbara Kingsolver's *Prodigal Summer*

Panel 5: Ecopoetic Encounters
LECTURE THEATRE B
Chair: Lucy Collins, University College Dublin
Mandy Bloomfield, University of Bedfordshire
'Back to the geography of it': Charles Olson's Open-Field Poetics
Daniela Kato, Central China Normal University
Ecopoetics and the Modernist Biomorphic Imagination: Encounters and Illuminations
Petr Kopecký, University of Ostrava
Petrifying Verse: Geopoetry and Anthropocentrism

Panel 6: Agencies of Silence and Absence
LECTURE THEATRE J
Chair: Daniel Finch-Race, Trinity College, University of Cambridge
Tonia Raquejo, Universidad Complutense de Madrid
Sound-Landscapes Escaping from Predominant Sight
Nicholas Kankahainen, Monash University
'Into Great Silence': Rereading the Silence of the Other-Than-Human
Iris Ralph, Tamkang University, Taiwan
"Where hast thou been Sister?": "Killing swine." The poor seen species in *Macbeth*

4.30-5.00: Tea/coffee

CONCOURSE, LECTURE THEATRE BLOCK

5.00-6.30: Session 3

Panel 7: Alternative Landscapes: New Critical Approaches
GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE
Chair: Louise Squire, University of Surrey
Catrin Gersdorf, Universität Würzburg
Landscape and Twentieth-Century African American Cultural Identity
Isabel Hoving, University of Leiden
The Unimaginable Wetlands: Art, Fantasy, and the Rise of the Sea Level
Hannes Bergthaller, National Chung-Hsing University
Photographing the Anthropocene: The Landscapes of Edward Burtynsky and David Thomas Smith

Panel 8: Agency, Scrap and Waste
LECTURE THEATRE B
Chair: Juan Ignacio Oliva, Universidad de La Laguna / GIECO-Franklin-UAH
Lucy Bell, University of Surrey
Reconfiguring Waste: Cardboard Publishing Houses in Latin America
Pippa Marland, University of Worcester
'Heaps of scrap metal and defunct machinery': Actants, Agency and Place in W.G. Sebald's Orford Ness
Véronique Bragard, Université catholique de Louvain
Garb/Tarp-age, Waste on Page: The Agency, Threat and Aesthetics of Waste in Contemporary Graphic Novels

Panel 9: Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic Literary Ecologies
LECTURE THEATRE J
Chair: John Miller, University of Sheffield
Terry Gifford, Bath Spa University/University of Alicante
The Influence of Ruskin on John Muir: *Modern Painters IV* and *Studies in the Sierra*
Daniel Hannah, Lakehead University
Queer Atlantic Ecologies in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*
Adrian Tait, Independent Scholar
'Enchased and Lettered': Hardy's American Readers and the Nature of Place
Kevin Hutchings, University of Northern British Columbia
Transatlantic Colonial Ecologies: Britain and North America, 1780-1850

6.30-7.15: Wine Reception and Poetry Reading

HILLSIDE RESTAURANT

Wine Reception
Sponsored by Routledge
Poetry reading: from *Leaf Graffiti* and other works
Lucy Burnett

7.15 -9.00: Dinner

HILLSIDE RESTAURANT

Friday 30th August

7.30-8.30: Breakfast

HILLSIDE RESTAURANT

8.30-10.00: Session 4

Panel 10: Climate Change Crisis: Agency, Risk, Responsibility
GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE
Chair: Hannes Bergthaller, National Chung-Hsing University
Tom Fisher, Portland State University
Responsibility, Disaster, and Literature
Adeline Johns-Putra, University of Surrey
Climate Change Fiction and the Ethics of Posterity
Axel Goodbody, University of Bath
Risk, Denial and Cultural Framing in Climate Change Fiction: Barbara Kingsolver's *Flight Behavior* and Ilija Trojanow's *Melting Ice*

Panel 11: A Poetics of Water
LECTURE THEATRE B
Chair: Emma Curran, University of Surrey
Loveday Why, University of Otago
Metaphors of Meltwater: Dissolution and Resistance in Cecilia Vicuña's "El Quipu Menstrual"
Hannah Boast, University of York
Returning to the Sea: The Mediterranean Sea in Israeli and Palestinian Literature
Yvonne Reddick, University of Warwick
'All voices should be read as the river's mutterings': Alice Oswald's Fluvial Poetics

Panel 12: Environmental Bodies
LECTURE THEATRE J
Chair: Carmen Flys-Junquera, University of Alcalá / GIECO-Franklin Institute
Esther Rey, Universidad Complutense de Madrid / GIECO-Franklin Institute
Bodies and Environments: The Material Turn in Ecofeminist Theory
Lucy Collins, University College Dublin
'A smear of tissue…contains great kingdoms': Contemporary Poetry and the Nature of Embodiment
Sarah Bell, University of Newcastle, Australia
Cultures of Management: Encountering Multiple Knowledges and the More-than-Human in Park Management

10.00-10.30: Teas/coffees

CONCOURSE, LECTURE THEATRE BLOCK

10.30-12.00: Session 5

Panel 13: Narrative Embodiments: Matter, Agencies, Stories, and Signs
GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE
Chair: Catriona Sandilands, York University
Kate Rigby, Monash University
Encountering Fire: Discerning Distributed Agency in Australian Bushfire Narratives
Wendy Wheeler, London Metropolitan University
The Carrying Power of Things: Biosemiotics and Semiotic Causation
Serenella Iovino, University of Turin
Reading Porous Landscapes: Material Narratives, Ecocritical Interpretation, and Natural-Cultural Memory

Panel 14: Revisiting Thoreau amid the Material Turn
LECTURE THEATRE B
Chair: David M Robinson, Oregon State University
Cristin Ellis, University of Mississippi
Thoreau's New Energy Economy
James Finley, University of New Hampshire
Henry David Thoreau and Free Soil: the Intra-Activism of Nature
Rochelle L. Johnson, The College of Idaho
On the Agency of Corn: Thoreau's Identity Translations
Michael Jonik, University of Sussex
The Science of 'Civil Disobedience' and the Democracy of Trees

Panel 15: Proto-Ecological Encounters I: The Eighteenth Century
ROOM 10, TEACHING BLOCK
Chair: Anne Milne, University of Toronto-Scarborough
Brycchan Carey, Kingston University
Wetland or Parkland? Ecocritical Approaches to Oliver Goldsmith's Deserted Village
Emma Curran, University of Surrey
Gendering the Genius of Place: Anna Seward's *Llangollen Vale*
Melissa Sodeman, Coe College
Joseph Priestley and the Vital Air: Experiments in Early Ecological Thought

Panel 16: Language and Ecological Identity
LECTURE THEATRE J
Chair: Uwe Küchler, Universität Bonn
Arran Stibbe, University of Gloucestershire
The Linguistic Performance of Ecological Identity
Rea Peltola, Université de Caen Basse-Normandie
Understanding Another Species in a Call-in Radio Show: Grammatical Agency and Identification
Katherine Lynes, Union College
'to grunt thru the noun': Encountering the Language of Nature in African American Poetry

12.00-1.00: Lunch
CONCOURSE, LECTURE THEATRE BLOCK

12.30-1.30: ASLE-UKI AGM
ROOM 10, TEACHING BLOCK

1.30-3.00: Session 6

Panel 17: Material Identities: Economic 'Reality', Lived Experience
GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE
Chair: James Finley, University of New Hampshire
Juan Ignacio Oliva, Universidad de La Laguna / GIECO-Franklin-UAH
Spatial Agency and Toxicity in the Construction of Chicana/o Dysfunctional Homeplaces
María Isabel Pérez Ramos, KTH-Royal Institute of Technology / GIECO- Franklin-UAH
Identity of Absence: Chicanos and the U.S. Southwest's Identities Revisited
Kate Andrews, Australian National University
Dreams or Delusions? 150 years of Cropping Schemes in North Australia

Panel 18: Agency and Identity in Environmental Pedagogies
LECTURE THEATRE J
Chair: Cristin Ellis, University of Mississippi
Isabel Galleymore, University of Exeter
Questioning Fact and Figuration in the Poetry of Charles Tomlinson and Nature Writing Pedagogies
Uwe Küchler, Universität Bonn
Teaching Ecological Encounters: Empirical Research on Teaching English and the Environment
Panel Discussion: Environmental Pedagogies
Additional discussion and question time; delegates are welcome to bring discussion points

Panel 19: **Animal Agencies and Materialities**
LECTURE THEATRE B
Chair: Louise Chamberlain, University of Nottingham
Payal Taneja, Queen's University, Canada [SKYPE]
Animal Agency and Guardianship in *Flush: A Biography*
Diana Villanueva Romero, University of Extremadura / GIECO-Franklin Institute
A Material Reading of Brenda Peterson's *Animal Heart*
Catherine Parry, University of Lincoln
Mortifying Flesh and Consoling Skin

3.15-6.30: Field Trips

FOR BOTH TRIPS PLEASE MEET IN THE CONCOURSE 3.00-3.15

Historic Guildford/Wey River Guided Walk

Winkworth Arboretum

7.00-8.30: Conference Dinner (lakeside BBQ weather permitting)

TERRY'S POND / HILLSIDE RESTAURANT

8.30-Late: Cash Bar

CHANCELLOR'S BAR

Saturday 31st August

7.30-8.30: Breakfast

HILLSIDE RESTAURANT

8.30-10.00: Session 7

Panel 20: New Nature Writing
GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE
Chair: Terry Gifford, Bath Spa University
Richard Kerridge, Bath Spa University
***Cold Blood* – a reading**
Christian Hummelsund Voie, Mid Sweden University
'Thriving on the road to ruin': Agency and Necroregions in Louisiana's Nature Writing
Astrid Bracke, Radboud University Nijmegen/University of Amsterdam
The New British Nature Writing: Forms, Themes and Ecocritical Approaches

Panel 21: Disturbing Encounters: Power, Knowledge, Materiality
LECTURE THEATRE B
Chair: Sherry Booth, Santa Clara College
Dominik Ohrem, University of Cologne
The Natures of Power and the Powers of Nature: Perspectives on American Gender History
Roman Bartosch, University of Cologne
Encountering Urban Interactions: the Subject and the City in the Fiction of Virginia Woolf
Kylie Crane, University of Mainz
Thinking Concrete

Panel 22: Interfaces: The Consumption and Production of Becomings
ROOM 10, TEACHING BLOCK
Chair: Louise Squire, University of Surrey
Emma-Jayne Abbots, University of Wales TSD/SOAS and Anna Lavis, University of Birmingham / University of Oxford
Consuming Boundaries: Eating as Generative Act
Luci Attala, University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Conversations over Dinner
Benjamin Coles, University of Leicester
Securing the Borders of Food: Geographical Knowledges and the Reproduction of Place
Samantha Hurn, University of Exeter
Crossing Borders to Become Animal

10.00-10.15: Teas/coffees

CONCOURSE, LECTURE THEATRE BLOCK

10.15-12.15: Plenary 2

Climate Change in the Public Imagination
GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE
Chair: Adeline Johns-Putra, University of Surrey

Mike Hulme, King's College London
Between Two Degrees and the Rainbow

Sheila Jasanoff, Harvard University
A New Climate for Society

12.15-1.30: Lunch
CONCOURSE, LECTURE THEATRE BLOCK

12.30-1.30: EASLCE AGM
ROOM 6, TEACHING BLOCK

2.00 - 3.00 *Ecozon@* advisory board
ROOM 6, TEACHING BLOCK

1.30-3.00: Session 8

Panel 23: Constituting Posthuman Agency
GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE
Chair: Roman Bartosch, University of Cologne
Dana Phillips, Towson University/Rhodes University
'How can you lie to a horse?' Cormac McCarthy and the Animal
Su Chiu-Hua, Soochow University
Pi's Lifeboat: On Latour's Idea of the Collective and its Posthuman Ethics
Christine Temko, Université Catholique de Louvain
Of Birds and Bits: Agency, Identity and the Constitution of the Ecological Subject in Jonathan Franzen's *Freedom* and Don DeLillo's *Underworld*

Panel 24: Ecological Agency: Identity and Community
LECTURE THEATRE B
Chair: Kylie Crane, University of Mainz
Hala Ewaidat, Mansoura University [Skype]
Al-Sharqawy's *Al-Ardd* (The Land): An Early Ecocritical Prediction of Agricultural Disaster in Egypt
Francesca Zunino, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia
Reintegrating Naturalcultural Identities: Contemporary Mexican Indigenous Stories
Peter I-min Huang, Tamkang University, Taiwan
Taiwanese Environmental Poet Sheng Wu: Pastoral Poet or Ecopoet?

Panel 25: Identity and Agency in a Time of Environmental Crisis
ROOM 10, TEACHING BLOCK
Chair: Pippa Marland, University of Worcester
John Parham, University of Worcester
The Importance of Being Elastic: Bergson, Humour, Environmental Rhetoric
Nicholas Beuret, University of Leicester
Looking Forward to the End: Inhuman Catastrophe and the Dark Mountain Project
Hugh Dunkerley, University of Chichester
Beyond Romantic Environmentalism

3.00-4.30: Session 9

Panel 26: Proto-Ecological Encounters II: Historicising the Ecological Encounter
GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE
Chair: Katherine Lynes, Union College
Thue Sebastian Winkler, Pembroke College, University of Cambridge
'A Green Chaos': The Postmodern Nature of John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman*
Daniel Finch-Race, Trinity College, University of Cambridge
Proto-Ecological Consciousness in Rimbaud's 'Comédie de la soif'
David M Robinson, Oregon State University
The New Henry: Natural History, Science Studies, and Thoreau

Panel 27: African Ecocritical Identities
LECTURE THEATRE B
Chair: Luci Attala, University of Wales Trinity Saint David
James Maina Wachira, Moi University [Skype]
Nature in Poetry and Poetry for Nature: Insights from the Samburu of Kenya
Felicity Hand, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
Decaying Humanity in Post-Independent Zanzibar
Peter Mortensen, Aarhus University
Ascetic Encounters: Afrocentric Eco-Critique in Hans Paasche and Karen Blixen

Panel 28: Transformational Encounters with Nature
ROOM 10, TEACHING BLOCK
Chair: Michael Paye, University College Dublin
David Whitley, University of Cambridge
Strange Meetings: Everyday Encounters with Nature
Paloma Villamil Agraso, Universidad de Alcalá / GIECO-Franklin Institute
Could Religion Save the Environment? The Case of *The Fifth Sacred Thing* by Starhawk
Hayden Gabriel, University of St Mark and St John
Tales of Ecology

4.30-5.00: Teas/coffees

CONCOURSE, LECTURE THEATRE BLOCK

5.00-6.30: Session 10

Panel 29: Visual Encounters
GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE
Chair: John Parham, University of Worcester
Sydney Landon Plum, University of Connecticut
Light, Distance, and Time: Photography in the Field
Helen Hughes, University of Surrey
With a View to the Environment: The Documentary Films of Nikolaus Geyrhalter
Vincent Campbell, University of Leicester
Environmental Disasters, Documentary and Agency in National Geographic *Witness* Factual Television Programmes

Panel 30: The Agency of Childhood
LECTURE THEATRE B
Chair: Hayden Gabriel, University of St Mark and St John
Jenny Bavidge, University of Cambridge
Looking 'in Steadiness': Ecocritical Readings of Literary Children
Joanna Coleman, University of Chichester
The Mirror, the Treasure Hunter, and the Red Moon: Shifting Identities in Cornelia Funke's *Reckless*
Cara Bartels-Bland, St Cross College, University of Oxford
Intertwining Human and Natural History: Imaginary Landscape and Mythical Objects in Twentieth-Century Children's Literature

Panel 31: Proto-Ecological Encounters III: the Long Nineteenth Century
ROOM 10, TEACHING BLOCK
Chair: Gregory Tate, University of Surrey
Anne Milne, University of Toronto-Scarborough
Habitat and the evocation of the Genius Loci in Beilby's and Bewick's *History of British Birds* (1797)
John Miller, University of Sheffield
Reimagining Arctic Ecology with James Hogg
Sue Edney, Bath Spa University
'Over sea to settle': Understanding Dorset; Exploring Newfoundland

6.45-8.00: Dinner
HILLSIDE RESTAURANT

8.00-9.00: Closing Remarks and Screening
GRIFFITHS LECTURE THEATRE

Developing the Environmental Humanities
A documentary installation by Peter Norrman, Anders Birgersson and Steven Hartman, The Nordic Network for Interdisciplinary Environmental Studies (NIES) and Zoopeople Media Collective, Stockholm

9.00-late: Drinks
VENUE IN GUILDFORD TBC

ABSTRACTS AND BIONOTES

Panel 1: Ecofeminist Encounters *Chair*: *Esther Rey*

Morgan Chiu-hua Chen, Tamkang University, Taiwan

Bodies and Nature: A Case Study of Helena Viramontes' *Under the Feet of Jesus*: Ecofeminists are concerned about interconnected social and environmental issues by means of breaking down oppression, deconstructing dualism, and building up both egalitarian institutions and individual perceptions of the world. This paper discusses contributions of ecofeminism proposed by theorists such as Val Plumwood, Greta Gaard, and Stacy Alaimo. Plumwood identifies ecofeminism as an anti-dualistic theory; similarly, Gaard explains that ecofeminism draws attention to the fact that women, the poor, and animals are most affected by unfair environmental practices as well as human labor practices. Furthermore, Alaimo's concept of transcorporeality focuses on the permeable borders between (non)human bodies and toxicity. In her article, "Marks of the Chicana Corpus," Helena Viramontes depicts the dilemma of being Chicana because they are treated as not only "commodities" but also "imprisoned bodies of labor" (6). This paper aims to explore Helena Viramontes's *Under the Feet of Jesus* (1996) in terms of ecofeminist literary theories, representations of environmental justice issues, and inter/intra-connections between bodies and nature. In this fiction, a Chicano adolescent girl Estralla tries to break through the boundaries of rigid gender norms and to construct her own identities after alienation. Viramontes represents environmental racism, mainly the influence of toxic pesticides used on the farm, by re-defining the value of "marginal" agriculture as the core of a well-balanced environment and healthy bodies. I propose that ecofeminist literature presents environmental (in)justice perspectives and literary resistance against toxicity.

Bionote: Morgan Chiu-hua Chen is a PhD candidate of English at Tamkang University, Taiwan. Her research interests include ecofeminism and postcolonial ecocriticism. Her current dissertation is "In-between: Toxic Bodies, Homes, and Nature in Helena Maria Viramontes's Works," under the supervision of Dr. I-ming Huang. She has presented papers at several conferences including International Multidisciplinary Conference Flowers / Fleurs / Flores held by Universidade Nova de Lisboa, The Fifth Tamkang International Conference on Ecological Discourse held by Tamkang University, and 2008 ACS (Association for Cultural Studies) Crossroads Conference held by University of the West Indies, Jamaica. She is now working on her dissertation.

Carmen Flys-Junquera, University of Alcalá /GIECO-Franklin Institute

Dialogical Encounters with the More-than-human through Literature: Acknowledging the diversity of beings which co-inhabit our environment takes place primarily in the moments of coming together and experiencing that "agential separability" (Karen Barad). Yet for ages, we humans have managed to remain both blind and deaf to the other-than-human as subjects. This presentation proposes the analysis of certain novels, such as those by Linda Hogan, Joan Slonczewski and Starhawk from the perspectives of ecofeminism and material feminisms in order to elucidate their strategies for encountering the non-human. Val Plumwood claims the need for developing a dialogical stance with the more-than-human in order to re-situate human beings within the biosphere. Starhawk presents in her essays methods for grounding ourselves in the rhythms of nature, learning to observe and listen to nature, which she later illustrates in her novels. As Randy Malamud claims, literary texts can present an empathising imagination, through which we can come closer to perceiving the world as the other, accepting the impossibility of fully understanding agency in an other-than-human sense (Alaimo). Though imperfect, literary discourse can provide a narrative and communicative response to the non-human other as suggested by Plumwood, facilitating that dialogical encounter. This paper seeks to illustrate how the attitudes reflected in these novels can provide readers with strategies to re-assess their own encounters with the non-human and learn to acknowledge the identity, agential separability and subjecthood of the more-than-human and the possibility of interacting across the species boundaries.

Bionote: Dr. Carmen Flys-Junquera is an Associate Professor of American Literature at the University of Alcalá, Spain. She founded and coordinates the ecocritical research group, GIECO and is the Director of the ecocritical book series, CLYMA, published by the Franklin Institute for American Studies, and was president of EASCLE from 2010-2012. She is the General Editor of *Ecozon@: European Journal of Literature, Culture and Environment*. Her publications centre on minority literatures of the US dealing with themes of cultural identity, mestizaje, environmental justice, sense of place and ecofeminism.

Maris Sõrmus, Tallinn University, Estonia

Nature, Culture, and Identity: Human-Nonhuman Encounters in Monique Roffey's Novels: The presentation proposes an ecocritical stance in exploring the uniquely biocentric novels by Monique Roffey, *The White Woman*

on the Green Bicycle and *Sun Dog*. By viewing environment's role and alternative possibilities for crossing nature-culture dichotomy, the aim is to take the writer out of the traditional feminist framework. The concern with nature constitutes not only Roffey's artistic idiosyncrasy but suggests further questioning of such contemporary debate-spurning issues as nature's voice(lessness), agency, anthropocentrism, and hierarchies. The depicted environment forms a looming presence, with the significance transcending the representational level to that of the central problematic, identity. Roffey namely problematises the issue of identity, using nature and the nonhuman as anchoring points for such problematising. The environment pertains to the protagonists' identity conflict, suggesting its active participation in human action and a unique environmental *bildung*. The environmental orientation is complemented by human-nonhuman juxtaposition, or, in particular, blurring of nature-culture boundary. It is not only the nonhuman that is portrayed provocatively as human (green mountain woman) but also vice versa (blossoming human body), thereby suggesting alternative bioregional ethic. Besides revisioning current understandings of humanism, Roffey attributes nature with voice and agency, making it speak and act out. In reconsidering human-nonhuman power positions, a noteworthy political level is added to the poetic one, illuminating further ecofeminist concerns. Challenging thus established ideas of humanism, anthropocentrism and blurring nature-culture boundary, Roffey's recent novels highlight a unique biocentric orientation in literature.

Bionote: PhD candidate at Tallinn University, Estonia. My dissertation focuses on the aspect of nature and place in the works of Anita Desai, Monique Roffey, and Kerstin Ekman. I propose alternative ways for transcending anthropocentrism via understanding of human-nonhuman intertwining, concepts of bioregionalism and "natureculture". Having an MA in comparative literature and cultural semiotics, my previous research has also been situated in ecocriticism. I have published ecocritical articles, conference papers and participated in a course on ecocriticism at Uppsala University, Sweden. My research interests include ecocriticism, contemporary British and Swedish literature, cultural studies, comparative literature, and postcolonial studies.

Panel 2: The De(con)struction of Ecological Agency *Chair: Arran Stibbe*

Louise Squire, University of Surrey

(Re)constructing Ecological Agency in Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*: The focus of this paper is the examination of an idea that appears to run across a strand of contemporary environmental crisis fiction: this is the idea that the emergence of environmental crisis is connected to a human failure to face death. By placing death on a plane of avoidance, a situation is created in which death must inevitably rebound. Conversely, to resolve environmental problems, humanity must be prepared to face its own limits. This strand of fiction often, therefore, presents characters for whom death-facing appears as some kind of imperative. This, however, becomes problematised when placed in the context of a globalising world. In this paper I explore the way Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* illustrates a death-facing paradigm as engendering rather than resolving conflicts between the human and the non-human. I then consider how the novel seeks to reposition this paradigm via the development of one of its key characters, Piya. This reconstructive mood in the novel reveals a transitional moment between deconstruction and a reconstructive turn toward the material in contemporary thought.

Bionote: Louise is currently a third year doctoral student at the University of Surrey and her thesis examines the human subject and the question of death-evasion in contemporary environmental crisis fiction. Louise also has an MA in Environmental Philosophy, and has published articles in *Antennae: Journal for Nature in Visual Culture* and the *Oxford Literary Review* (both in 2012). She is currently co-editing a *Green Letters* issue on Literature and Sustainability in connection with a recent ASLE-UKI symposium. Louise has interests in contemporary literature, continental theory and animal studies, and is currently an executive member of ASLE-UKI.

Sophia David, University of Exeter

Environmental and Linguistic Destruction in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*: This paper will consider the symbiotic relationship between the loss of biodiversity and language in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road.* It will argue that consequences of environmental destruction removes terms, expressions, inspirations, colours, textures and descriptions from our vocabulary. Merleau-Ponty claimed that 'without speech we cannot think'; following this notion then, we can think about how this loss of vocabulary can destroy thought. Ecocide also consequently withdraws meaning from our understanding of selfhood as defined through place and the other. Our way of knowing and being becomes dismantled without that around us to provide comparison. With less diversity in nature and language, we have less ways of understanding and producing meaning. Environmental destruction, therefore, destroys our symbolic order and how we know and exist within the world. Through a close reading of *The Road,* we can examine the relationship between language, thought and the environment,

and how these things are interconnected and what is means for the human and nonhuman when this relationship is destroyed.

Bionote: I started my academic career at Queen Mary University, where I studied English. After a brief period of working at Buckingham Palace I decided to return to academia. This time I headed north to the University of Edinburgh, where I completed an MSc in 'Environment, Culture and Society'. After graduating I was employed by 'Transition', a grassroots environmental organisation, as a 'sustainability engagement facilitator'. During this time, and mostly due to the frustrating nature of the job, my ideas for a PhD thesis started to form. In September I joined Exeter University, after being accepted onto the AHRC 'Environment and Sustainability' scholarship.

Heidi Danzl, University of Salzburg

Agency, or the Lack Thereof: Agency, or the lack thereof, as a core element of ecocritical discourse requires a closer investigation. Human and non-human encounters eventually lead to the question of who has agency and to what extent. The question of agency is not only a key concept for example in postcolonial discourse, Native American studies, toxic discourse or eco-feminism, but is also of great interest in the analysis of urban/rural, traditional/modern encounters - if one wants/can use those dichotomies. Mda Zakes' novel *Heart of Redness* and T.C. Boyles' *When the Killing's Done* promise an exciting approach to this analysis which closely investigates aspects of power mechanisms, instrumentality, and intercession. As Greg Garrard argues: "'pastoral' implies an idealisation of rural life that obscures the realities of labour and hardship" (2012: 37, 38). This, his third definition of the pastoral could also imply hardship in the form of lack of agency that is often experienced by peasants. Thus agency not only might help to find more nuances in the discussion of the pastoral but also seems to play a fundamental role in ecocritical analysis.

Bionote: Heidi Danzl is a PhD candidate from the University of Salzburg, Austria. Her focus is postcolonial ecocriticism, especially how eco-cosmopolitanism can be used within ecopoco discourse. She is looking at selected contemporary writers from South Africa and India. Heidi Danzl is also a member of ASLE and OSLE-India and has attended several conferences.

Panel 3: Moving Encounters *Chair: Sue Edney*

Alicia Cohen, Independent Scholar

Poetic Transport: Car and Bike: In this paper I address the immanent poetics of vehicular modalities. The ecological crisis demands our address of the personal car, which is a profound cause of habitat destruction, global warming, and death for most age groups both directly and "indirectly" through pollution toxicity. Indeed, the car's inherent violence exemplifies a late capitalist privileging of irresponsible freedom, mobility, and autonomy. Driving requires an everyday suspension of our fundamental responsibility to "care for" and "not kill." In this paper I argue that automobiles are a form of "bad infinity" that produce a "breathlessness." Through a discussion of poetic technology as "failure," "breath," and "responsibility," I argue that bicycles might be thought as a poetics of, to borrow the phrasing of Jean-Luc Nancy, a "being-together" that is the root of politics. With reference to the work of Emily Dickinson, George Oppen, Emmanuel Levinas, Alain Badiou, and Timothy Morton, "Poetic Transport" will argue that biking and/as poetry is breath, politics and our open future.

Bionote: Alicia Cohen is the author of two collections of poetry: *Bear* (Handwritten Press, 2000) and *Debts and Obligations* (O Books, 2009), which was nominated for the Oregon Book Award. A third collection is forthcoming from Verge Books. Her opera and gallery installation *Northwest Inhabitation Log*, explores the "between" of genocide and ecological catastrophe (2004). With a sociopolitical focus on the way poetry fabricates a palpable real, she has written on the work of Leslie Scalapino, Robert Duncan, Lorine Niedecker, among others. She has taught at Reed College and Portland State University and helped establish and run the art space Pacific Switchboard in Portland, Oregon.

Louise Chamberlain, University of Nottingham

'This is our poem Tom Tom / less than the whole dale gets in the poem': Site and Place in Alec Finlay's *White Peak/Dark Peak*: Alec Finlay's *White Peak/Dark Peak* (2010) is an 'audio-visual word-map of The Peak District', which uses OS coordinates, grid references, and description to locate readers or walkers in site. The text was published as part of *re:place*, which is described as a 'programme of site-specific contemporary visual arts commissions across Derbyshire'. This paper will argue that Finlay's engagements with the Peak District are not only moments of encounter with the natural space of Derbyshire but a reformulation of the relationship between the specificity of site and the generality of place. I will use performance's insights into 'site' theory and

geographical conceptions of place to analyse these tensions between site and place in Finlay's project. Performance theory on site-specific work is well developed, and it is willing, as Nick Kaye describes, to 'present […] a challenge to notions of "original" or "fixed" location'. This will help to destabilise the notion that site and place are essentially synonyms, as demonstrated by Ed Casey's assertion that: 'when place has been subjected to simple location, it becomes […] "site".' The orientating specificity suggested by 'this is our poem Tom Tom' will therefore be seen as, paradoxically, a wider encounter with environment and place.

Bionote: Louise Chamberlain is a second year PhD student and postgraduate teaching fellow at the University of Nottingham. Her thesis is concerned with representations of nature and environment in both mainstream and experimental contemporary poetry from 1990 to the present. It maintains a particular focus on the potential intersection between literary geography and ecocriticism.

Isabel Fernandes Alves, University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro

Walking in the Landscape: Susan Cooper's Encounters with the Sense of Wonder: A student of natural history and a persistent walker in the environs of Otsego Lake in New York, Susan Fenimore Cooper is the author of *Rural Hours* (1850, abridged 1887), "the first book of nature writing by an American woman" (Johnson). My reading of the work will emphasise Cooper's depiction of the meeting between her and the landscape that she saw as threatened, pioneering a road that writers such as Cecilia Thaxter, Mary Austin, and Rachel Carson will follow. Moreover, following Rebecca Solnit's view of walking as a mode of making the world as well as being in it, I will highlight how Cooper's book conveys walking as representing her desire to actively participate in the construction of landscape – her own and America's. Cooper uses the experience of walking to describe how the local may become meaningful if the observer is open to enchantment, to the realisation of what is unique in itself "yet infinitely connected in all its relations with all other places, all other times" (Walls).

Bionote: Isabel Alves is Assistant Professor at UTAD. She specialises in Willa Cather and other nineteenth and twentieth-century American authors. She has published the book *Fragmentos de Memória e Arte: Os Jardins na Ficção de Willa Cather* (Lisboa: Colibri, 2006). She is currently working on American Nature Writing and Ecocriticism.

Panel 4: Material Feminism *Chair: Serenella Iovino*

Caoilfhionn Nic Fhearaí, University College Dublin

The Ecofeminism of Ursula LeGuin's *The Word for World is Forest:* Ursula LeGuin's 1976 science fiction novel *The Word for World is Forest* narrates the plundering of the alien planet Athshe's natural resources and enslavement of its indigenous peoples at the hands of Terrans seeking lumber to ship back to a despoiled Earth. While LeGuin has identified the Vietnam War as a key influence, critics have been keen to analyse the environmentalist themes within the work, with LeGuin herself stating in the Afterword that "what [she] wanted to write about was the forest and the dream […] to describe a certain ecology from within". The pacifistic Athsheans live in harmony with their surroundings, and are ill-equipped to defend their world of way of life against their oppressors – it is the brutal rape of a native woman which finally instigates their rebellion. As the Athsheans are referred to as "creechies" and regarded as animals until the Terrans learn that they share the same ancestry, the victim is simultaneously woman, animal, and slave. The juxtaposition of her rape with the metaphorical rape of the environment thus addresses sexism, speciesism, racism, and ecological colonialism all at once. It is these very interconnections that I wish to explore in my paper, utilising material feminist environmentalism as a theoretical framework.

Bionote: I completed a Single Subject Major in English Literature at UCD in 2010, before entering the M.Phil in Popular Literature at Trinity College Dublin. My M.Phil dissertation consisted of an eco-critical reading of the works of James Tiptree, Jr., and I am currently undertaking a PhD in the School of English, Drama and Film at UCD, where my doctoral research investigates the impact of both the feminist and the environmentalist movement on New Wave Science Fiction in the United States. This work is funded by the Irish Research Council for the Arts and Humanities (2012-2015). My research interests include feminist Science Fiction, cyberculture, queer theory, ecofeminism, and ecotopia.

Sherry Booth, Santa Clara College

Remaking Metaphors of Flight: Ecological Material Feminism in the Work of Terry Tempest Williams and Barbara Kingsolver: I have an abiding interest in how contemporary women writers represent nature in their work, particularly in the context of climate change. Precious few manage it at all, and fewer still in narratives that can carry the weight of this issue without feeling propagandistic. Thanks to work in ecofeminist, material feminist, and post-colonial theory, many scholars have come to understand that women's class, location,

education, and relationship to power vary widely and affect both identity and agency. But much feminist scholarship, still wary of essentialism, has "distanced itself from nature" (and biology) as well as from ecofeminism (Alaimo 2008: 8) because identification of women with nature seems to reinscribe the woman/nature binary where both lose. However, the core of ecofeminism **is** an exploration of the important relationship between women and nature; to remove nature is an impossibility. My paper will examine the ways two contemporary writers, Terry Tempest Williams in *When Women Were Birds* (2012) and Barbara Kingsolver in *Flight Behavior* (2012), write into being a different way of viewing humans'—especially women's--relationships to the natural world, where women's lives and bodies are not separate from nature—from birds or butterflies—but exist in nature, all part and parcel of what David Abrams in *Becoming Animal* calls "this living field" that is the world.

Bionote: Dr. Sherry Booth is a senior lecturer in English at Santa Clara University whose teaching, research, and publications focus on ecofeminist theory and sustainability education. She directs undergraduate research projects in sustainability through the Environmental Science and Studies Department and serves on the University Sustainability Council. Her most recent publication is "Weaving a Culture of Sustainability: Santa Clara's University's Evolving Story." Co-authors Leslie Gray, Lindsey Cromwell, and Amy Shachter. Forthcoming in *Re-Imagining Higher Education: Stories and Strategies for Sustainability.* Geoff Chase and Peggy Barlett, eds. forthcoming MIT Press.

Etaf Ebanna, Ain-Shams University

The Ethos of Interconnectedness in Barbara Kingsolver's *Prodigal Summer*: This paper attempts a close reading of Barbara Kingsolver's eco-novel *Prodigal Summer*(2000) using an ecocritical approach. It is an environmentally conscious text which makes explicit statements about pressing environmental issues like species extinction, coyote hunting, herbicide and pesticide misuse. In this novel Kingsolver seeks to break out of the boundaries of Cartesian dualism by negotiating between the human and the non-human, between nature and culture and between woman and man. *Prodigal Summer* engages in a deconstruction of "otherness" through a critique of anthropocentric assumptions and values which place humans at the centre of the universe and reflects a postmodern decentering of any privileged discourse. Kingsolver celebrates a holism which entails a respect for both nature and all forms of life on the basis that each has intrinsic value in itself; a holism in which the self connects with "earth others'' believing that "[e]verything alive is connected to every other by fine, invisible threads." This interconnectedness is the basic foundation upon which environmental thought is built. Kingsolver emphasises, throughout her novel, the interrelatedness of all life forms. The paper will demonstrate how the idea of interconnectedness, apart from its persistence as a major theme, also significantly informs the structural, spatial, and linguistic framework of the novel. Thus, ecocritical readings may indeed be appropriate for examining literature in the context of globalisation. *Prodigal Summer* is an environmentally conscious text in an age of ecological unconsciousness. The issues it explores are on-going and deserve further study.

Bionote: Etaf A. Elbanna, Professor of English Literature, Dept. of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Ain-Shams University, Cairo. BA (Hons) English Literature, University of Edinburgh, UK (1981). M.Litt. English Lit. Indiana University, Pennsylvania, USA (1989). Research and teaching interests include British Victorian and modern novel, ethnic-American lit., Bakhtinian dialogics, eco-criticism, theoretical criticism and its literary application, interdisciplinary studies.

Panel 5: Ecopoetic Encounters *Chair: Lucy Collins*

Mandy Bloomfield, University of Bedfordshire

'Back to the Geography of it': Charles Olson's Open-Field Poetics: Charles Olson was prominent among an array of American poets and arts practitioners who were radically rethinking the poetics of place in the 1950s and 60s in the context of new social, scientific and cultural developments of the post-war period. This paper will examine the implications of his "open-field" poetics as articulated in his essays of the 50s and 60s for his engagement with the material geography of his hometown Gloucester in *The Maximus Poems*. Highly influenced by recent developments in physics and cybernetics, Olson's conception of the "open-field" was not initially oriented toward spatial or geographic modes of knowledge. But in *The Maximus Poems*, composition by field becomes a means of investigating the social and ecological relations of a specific geography. Olson is often thought of as propounding a nostalgically localist sense of place in the face of the destabilising incursions of global capitalism. However, I will argue that his poetry formally embodies a sense of place as a zone of transcultural and inter-bioregional encounter: a nexus of material-discursive interactions – or perhaps more accurately intra-actions (Barad) – which stretch across time and space.

Bionote: I am currently a Lecturer in English at the University of Bedfordshire. My research interests encompass poetry and poetics, experimentalism, ecology, place and transnational imaginaries. I have articles on contemporary modernist poetry in journals such as *Textual Practice* and *The Journal of British and Irish Linguistically Innovative Poetry* and my monograph, *Archaeologies of the Material Page*, will be published with the University of Alabama Press next year.

Daniela Kato, Central China Normal University

Ecopoetics and the Modernist Biomorphic Imagination: Encounters and Illuminations: Even though recent developments in ecopoetics have begun to explore at length the figurative capacity of poetic language to evoke the natural world – e.g. Scott Knickerbocker's *Ecopoetics: The Language of Nature, the Nature of Language* (2012) – few ecocritics have engaged with modernist poetics that encounters nature mainly through experimental form and through links with other expressive media such as music and the visual arts. It is my aim to redress this imbalance by drawing on some of the groundbreaking approaches collected in the 2011 essay anthology *Biocentrism and Modernism* (eds. Botar and Wünsche). The authors cogently identify in modernist cultural and artistic production a series of discourses sharing a set of themes, attitudes and topoi that suggest an intuitive and holistic attitude towards the idea of nature and the experience of the unity of all life, as well as an anti-anthropocentric worldview and an implied or expressed environmentalism. Of particular import in this respect is the frequent adoption of biomorphic forms by artists – that is, forms which, remaining though abstract, nevertheless evoke living forms such as plants and animals. However, the implications for ecopoetics of this biomorphic imagination have not been drawn. I shall attempt to draw some by focusing on the work of the British modernist poet Basil Bunting (1900-1985). Bunting has remained a marginal(ised) figure in modernist studies, even though he was one of the comparatively rare originators of poetic form in the twentieth century, particularly in his envisioning of surprising analogies between poetry and the medieval graphic art of manuscript illumination in the long poem *Briggflatts* (1966). My paper will explore these analogies and demonstrate how they are part of a broader modernist biomorphic imagination that was crucially defined by figures such as Wilhelm Worringer, a German art historian introduced in England by T. E. Hulme, and Wassily Kandinsky in the first half of the twentieth century

Bionote: Daniela Kato teaches at Central China Normal University and is editor of the journal *Foreign Literature Studies*. Her research interests focus on modernism and formally innovative ecopoetics, as well as on landscape philosophy, feminism and travel writing.

Petr Kopecký, University of Ostrava

Petrifying Verse: Geopoetry and Anthropocentrism: The paper will examine the rocky veins in the body of British, American and Canadian poetry, with the focus on writings that deploy geological phenomena to de-centre human agency. It will probe the temporal dimension of geopoetry, the deep layers which the authors unearth and cast against the human conception of time. Closely linked with the notion of deep time is the revival of the sense of wonder, which was systematically eroded by positivistic and rationalistic science. In the poems under scrutiny, the vanishing sense of wonder is recreated through the imaginative powers of geology-informed poetry. It is thus the overall impact of the geopoetic perspective on the dominant anthropocentric outlook that will form the focus of the paper. In the works of Robinson Jeffers and Don McKay, entire tectonic plates are used as metaphorical vehicles that carry radical implications. This paper will trace the subversive geopoetic tradition, emphasising the role of William Blake and Romantic rock imagery, exploring the philosophical overtones in the writings of Robinson Jeffers and Gary Snyder, and closing with the latest geology-based writings of Don McKay.

Bionote: Petr Kopecký teaches at the English Department, University of Ostrava, Czech Republic. In 2003-04 he was a Fulbright research scholar at San José State University, California. He specialises in California nature writing. His first book *The California Crucible: Literary Harbingers of Deep Ecology* came out in 2007 (University of Ostrava Press). Its revised edition was published by Lambert Academic Publishing in 2013. He has recently completed another book examining Robinson Jeffers and John Steinbeck through an ecocritical perspective. Kopecký's Czech translation of George Orwell's novel *Coming up for Air* was published in two editions (2003, 2005).

Panel 6: Agencies of Silence and Absence *Chair: Daniel Finch-Race*

Tonia Raquejo, Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Sound-Landscapes Escaping from Predominant Sight: It is normally accepted that the way we perceive a landscape is through our eyes. Certainly our Western culture has a clear tendency to ocular-centrism as well as

an anthropocentric attitude towards nature and environment. In spite of some cultural efforts nowdays, reality is understood through the human being's sight still. So it seems to be a peculiar interaction between the way we perceive and the way we stand for the world and feel about it. Along these lines, I would like to present two Spanish art-works which have been developed in the rural country side. The first, a sheep concert, was performed at Bercianos del Real, a village in the Camino de Santiago. The concert was thought of and carried out by Felipe, the Bercianos´ shepherd, who after having been in contact with a group of artists working in the area, decided to transform his daily activity into art, thus creating a sound landscape by arranging the sheep´s bells and conducting them throughout according to the way wind blew. The second art work was performed last autumn by B. Fluxá. Her project -boiled down to a video-work and a series of educational and cultural actions, proposing a journey to the experience of *transterminance* in the Gredos mountain range. The video follows the audible vestiges and the remains of the landscape of sheep herding as a means of survival practiced for hundreds of years and which has now disappeared. The nature´s sounds and the goat´s sight are the actants of this video that make an ethnographic portrait of the place and its people; but in the video not a single person is seen, neither a word is heard or said. It is an intent to tell a story of the others through other ways of "looking at".

Bionote: Dr. Tonia Raquejo (1958) is teaching at the Fine Arts Faculty (UCM, Madrid). She was granted a Fleming Award to do her doctoral thesis at the Warburg Institute (London University), and published 'The Arab Cathedrals: Moorish architecture as seen by British Travelleers' (1986) and *El palacio encantado* (1989). Tracing the relationship of the Romantic sublime she has published *Los placeres de la imaginación de Joseph Addison* (1991); she has also analysed the connections between nature, art, science and anthropology in *Land Art* (1998) and in several publications such as "El arte de la Tierra: espacio-tiempo en el Land Art" (2006). Currently she is directing a I+D research project on *Art and Ecology*.

Nicholas Kankahainen, Monash University

'Into Great Silence': Rereading the Silence of the Other-Than-Human: Insofar as the 'cohabitants and constituents of our material and discursive worlds' are only 'known' at the moment of encounter, I want to identity how "silence" may function as a trope through which to talk and think about the being of the other-than-human that exists beyond our ability to conceptually grasp it. The European encounter with the Australian landscape included a disjunction between the land and the English words used to talk about it. For this reason, along with "blank" or "empty", "silence" has been often used to describe Australian landscapes in terms that refer to more than a mere absence of sound. I will argue that "silence" functions as a trope by which to "speak" about that which could not be spoken of, in terms that parallel Derrida's reading of the *khôra* (1995). New materialist theories regarding non-human agency problematise the ostensible "silence of nature" as a mandate for "filling" with human activity. I want to consider how this "silence" can be understood as a signifier for the being of things that stand outside of our ontologies. I will consider how silence establishes a context for an encounter that acknowledges and respects the presence and complexity of being that is disclosed to our senses whilst remaining beyond our articulation or comprehension. Through a recovery or refiguring of the idea of "silence", I want to suggest a means of thinking about the other-than-human that identifies and implies the existence of being beyond our conceptual grasp.

Bionote: Nicholas Kankahainen is a Master's candidate in the Department of English, Cultural and Performance Studies at Monash University, Australia. His thesis examines tropes of silence in colonial and contemporary non-indigenous experiences of Australian landscapes.

Iris Ralph, Tamkang University, Taiwan

"Where hast thou been Sister?": "Killing swine." The poor seen species in *Macbeth*: *Macbeth*, one of four films adapted from Shakespeare in the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) series titled *ShakespeaRe-Told* (2005) highlights the posthumanist concerns of speciesism and ecophobia as well as the humanist concerns of homophobia, xenophobia, and classism in Shakespeare's 1606 drama. The Scottish kingdom is a Michelin three star rated restaurant catering to an urban *carnophile* clientele in secluded rooms a handful of flights above a grimy and gritty downtown area in the United Kingdom. King Duncan ("Duncan Docherty") is its famed owner and celebrity chef. Macbeth ("Joe") is the head cook. Banquo ("Billy") and Malcolm, Duncan's son, an ex-vegetarian, are also among Duncan's hand-picked staff. The two servants framed for Duncan's murder are illegally hired migrant workers from former Yugoslavia. The three hags are three garbage men, the battleground is a basement kitchen, and the heath is a landfill. I comment mostly on the speciesism content in the film including the prominent images of a severed pig's head in the opening scenes, the porcine prophesy uttered by the three bin men, and the alighting of "pigs" on the restaurant rooftop to arrest Macbeth.

Bionote: Iris Ralph is an Assistant Professor in the English Department at Tamkang University. She earned her Ph.D. in English (2005) from the University of Texas at Austin. Between 2006 and 2009, she taught at various institutes in Melbourne, Australia, and Incheon, Republic of Korea. Her most recent articles are published in *NTU Studies in Language and Literature* (National Taiwan University) and *Concentric* (National Taiwan Normal University). A co-authored book chapter on the phenomenon of Taiwan's *gou-mama* (dog mothers) has been published in *International Perspectives in Ecofeminist Ecocriticism* (Routledge, 2013). A book chapter on the subject of Ted Hughes' poetry and posthumanism in *Ted Hughes* (ed. Terry Gifford) is due out later this year (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

Panel 7: Alternative Landscapes: New Critical Approaches *Chair: Louise Squire*

Catrin Gersdorf, Universität Würzburg

Landscape and Twentieth-Century African American Cultural Identity: In his introductory essay to *The Home Book of the Picturesque: Or American Scenery, Art, and Literature* (1852), Elias Lyman Magoon underscored the significance of landscape (or scenery) as a central trope in an emerging discourse of American nationality. Against this historical background, it comes as no surprise that American studies scholars, whether they are members of the discipline's founding generation (Leo Marx, Henry Nash Smith) or their critical heirs (Annette Kolodny, Angela Miller, Robert E. Abrams), keep turning their attention to landscape as an aesthetic form that defines the problematic narrative of their nation's literary and artistic self-representations and provides it with an ideological anchor. However, in the more specific context of *African* American studies, landscape—as artistic genre, literary trope, or aesthetic form—plays a rather marginal role, mostly because it has been regarded as a representational convention inappropriate for expressing the specific historical, political, and social experiences of Black Americans. More recently, and perhaps inspired by the discursive and activist practices of the environmental justice movement in the U.S., an increasing number of writers, intellectuals, and scholars have contributed to what can be called the greening of African American studies. In *Shades of Green*, a groundbreaking study on *Visions of Nature in the Literature of American Slavery, 1770 – 1860* (2009), Ian Frederick Finseth provides a blueprint for "excavat[ing] the racial meanings encoded within the natural iconography or imagery" (209) in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century art and literature. Inspired by the critical productivity of Finseth's work, I will discuss the aesthetic, ideological, and political functions of landscape imagery in three contemporary African American writers: Cecil S. Giscombe, bell hooks, and Nathasha Trethewey. Understood as both a material reality *and* an aesthetic concept, landscape encodes many meanings. My focus will be on the racial implications of American culture's historical and political inflections of the natural.

Bionote: Catrin Gersdorf is Professor and Chair of American Studies at the University of Würzburg, Germany. She is a founding member as well as past Treasurer of the European Association for the Study of Literature, Culture and Environment (EASLCE). The author of *The Poetics and Politics of the Desert: Landscape and the Construction of America* (Rodopi 2009), she published essays on various aspects of American literature and culture; and she co-edited (with Sylvia Mayer) *Nature in Literary and Cultural Studies: Transatlantic Conversations on Ecocriticism* (Rodopi 2006) and *Natur, Kultur, Text: Beiträge zu Ökologie und Literaturwissenschaft* (Universitätsverlag Winter 2005). Her current research focuses on the intersections of democracy, ecology, and American literary culture in the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Isabelle Hoving, University of Leiden

The Unimaginable Wetlands: Art, Fantasy, and the Rise of the Sea Level: Climate change invites (popular) artists and writers to reflect on the changing landscapes in which the encroaching tide and swelling river waters play an ever increasing role. Popular artists, filmmakers and novelists often tend to emphasise the apocalyptical nature of the flood, while governmental publications rely on a technological discourse. In this paper, I will focus on a third set of responses. I will give a sense of the intercultural variety of creative responses that refuse both the apocalyptical discourse and the discourse of control, to explore new ways to imagine the uncannily unstable new landscapes, where water and firm land are intermingling. To what extent are these creative responses framed by posthumanism and/or (new) materialism? The artistic concern with dark meaninglessness (Morton, Rancière), or with fluidity and relationality (Benitez-Rojo, Glissant, DeLoughrey) suggest that they are to a great extent. This paper, however, also proposes to consider some less prestiguous, popular fantasy works that relate to the global anxiety about wet landscapes. The floating island in Yan Martell's novel *Life of Pi* (and the film adaptation) emphasises the destructive weirdness of spaces that are neither land, nor water; in a much more complex manner, Yuki Urushibara's manga and television series *Mushishi* ponders the ambivalent life saving and devouring qualities of an unstable swamp, while the highly popular manga series *One Piece* by Eiichiro Oda presents a curious mangrove that rather functions as a complex mediator between sea and land dwellers.

Through an exploration of the cultural and genre-specific backgrounds of these (visual) representations, I will discuss how these popular works relate to the posthumanist and (new) materialist responses to the anxieties caused by the unpredictable changes in the landscape.

Bionote: Isabel Hoving (Amsterdam, 1955) is affiliated with the Department of Film and Literary Studies of Leiden University, where she teaches postcolonial theory and theories of globalisation, ecocriticism, gender studies and cultural analysis. Her publications include a study on Caribbean migrant women writers, *In Praise of New Travellers* (Stanford UP, 2001), co-edited books on (Dutch) migration, Caribbean literatures, African literature and art; an edited volume on Dutch Racism and a monograph on the intersections of postcolonial theory and ecocriticism are forthcoming. She is member of the editorial board of *Thamyris/ Intersecting: Place, Sex, and Race*, *Ecozon@: the European Journal on Literature, Culture and the Environment,* and *Ecocritical Theory and Practice.* She is the founder of the Benelux Association of the Study of Art, Culture and the Environment. In addition to her academic work, she is an awarded youth writer.

Hannes Bergthaller, National Chung-Hsing University

Photographing the Anthropocene: The Landscapes of Edward Burtynsky and David Thomas Smith: The concept of the anthropocene entails the recognition that customary distinctions between human and natural history have collapsed, and that humankind itself has assumed the status of a geological force. What consequences does this insight have for the visual representation of landscapes, if the latter is understood as a "way of engaging with our own mode of being in the world" (Jeff Malpas)? To what extent does it expose the limitations of traditional modes of landscape representation, and what new artistic forms might be required in order to visually articulate what it means to live in the anthropocene? In this paper, I will discuss these questions with reference to the work of two documentary photographers, Edward Burtynsky and David Thomas Smith. Burtynsky's much-acclaimed work has centered largely on themed series of photographs which systematically document the transformation of particular landscapes by the globalised economy (e.g. *Tire Piles* [1997-1999], *Oil* [1999-2008], and *Water* [2009-2013]). Despite their often jarring content, these pictures hold on to the aesthetic conventions of more traditional forms of landscape photography. David Thomas Smith's series *Anthropocene* (2012), by contrast, consists of a series of photo-collages that weave thumbnail images of artificial landscapes taken from Google Earth into large panels visually resembling Persian rugs, thus underscoring their artificiality through his mode of presentation.

Bionote: Hannes Bergthaller studied American literature at the University of Washington, Seattle, the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and the University of Bonn in Germany, where he also received his MA (2000) and his Ph.D. (2004) with a dissertation on the literature and cultural history of the modern environmental movement in the US. From 2005 to 2010, he taught at the English Department of National Taipei University of Technology and, as an adjunct lecturer, at Tamkang University. Since 2010, he is on the faculty of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at National Chung-Hsing University, as an associate professor. His research is in the fields of ecocriticism, American Studies, and social systems theory. His book *Populäre Ökologie* ("Popular Ecology", in German) was published in 2007, and in 2011 he co-edited a collection of essays on American Studies and social systems theory (titled *Addressing Modernity*; together with Carsten Schinko). Among his more recent publications are essays on Cameron's *Avatar* (in the *European Journal of English Studies*), on Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood* (in the journal *English Studies*), on Hawthorne (in *NTU Studies*), as well as on Leopold's *Sand County Almanach* and the landscape photography of John Ganis. Hannes Bergthaller is a founding member of the European Association for the Study of Literature, Culture, and the Environment (EASLCE) and of ASLE Taiwan. In 2012, he was elected president of EASLCE, a position he will hold until 2014.

Panel 8: Agency, Scrap and Waste *Chair: Juan Ignacio Oliva*

Lucy Bell, University of Surrey

Reconfiguring Waste: Cardboard Publishing Houses in Latin America: Environmental movements in developing countries have tended to be met with resistance, viewed as neo-colonial impositions that fail to engage with the immediate needs and priorities of local populations. In this paper, I shall present what I see as an excellent case of the ways in which green agendas can be combined with goals focused on human beings, society, culture and art: the Latin American *editoriales cartoneras,* publishing houses that make their books out of recycled cardboard gathered by informal waste collectors. These small, independent publishers buy cardboard from *cartoneros* (cardboard collectors) at prices above market rates and sell the books at prices lower than those of large publishing houses. My argument is that these publishers, sometimes unwittingly, convey an ecological message at all levels, one related to waste and recycling. The recycling of the raw material of cardboard is only the first step in a chain of social and cultural transformative processes set in motion by the *editoriales*

cartoneras: the transformation of what Zygmunt Bauman terms 'wasted lives'; the rescue of books and authors from the rubbish dump of the globalised publishing industry; the metamorphosis of the concept of the cardboard publishing house as it spreads throughout Latin America; and of course the transformation of the text itself as it is read or re-read in its cardboard-covered format.

Bionote: Lucy Bell is a lecturer in Spanish and Translation Studies at the University of Surrey. She has published widely in literary studies, critical theory and Latin American Studies. Her first book, entitled *The Latin American Short Story at its Limits: Fragmentation, Hybridity and Intermediality*, is under contract with Legenda. She has recently started working on a project on art, waste and recycling in Latin America.

Pippa Marland, University of Worcester

'Heaps of scrap metal and defunct machinery': Actants, Agency and Place in W.G. Sebald's Orford Ness: At the beginning of W. G. Sebald's *The Rings of Saturn*, the narrator figure sets off to walk the county of Suffolk to try and shake off the sense of emptiness he experiences whenever he finishes a long piece of work. However, far from effecting the kind of reconnection associated with the Thoreauvian saunterer or the walkers of narrative scholarship and new nature writing, this journey leaves him prey to a "paralysing horror" which assails him "when confronted with the traces of destruction, reaching far back into the past, that were evident even in that remote place". Nowhere are these 'traces of destruction' more apparent than on the almost-island of Orford Ness, where the post-apocalyptic landscape and the ominous contraptions of the abandoned military base induce in him the fantasy that he is present long after the extinction of our civilisation, puzzling over the enigmatic beings who once inhabited the place. This paper explores the dissonant and disturbing affective implications of these all-too-human traces of horror, drawing on concepts such as 'thing-power' (Bennett), 'assemblages' (Deleuze and Guattari), and the ongoing generative interplay of 'actants' (Latour), and suggests that while the material turn in ecocriticism has contributed valuable theoretical tools to the posthumanist project of decentring the 'human', its emphasis on our material imbrication in the life of the planet and on the myriad agencies and forms of signification of the more-than-human world has at times deflected attention too far from the specificity of the human and the ongoing impact of the unique forms of our 'technicity,' both on the landscape and on our own consciousness.

Bionote: Pippa Marland is based at the University of Worcester and is writing an ecocritical PhD thesis on constructions of 'islandness' in literature from around the British and Irish archipelago. She has an article on Ecocriticism forthcoming this year for Literature Compass / Blackwell online and is co-editing an issue of the journal *Green Letters* due for publication in 2014. She is also a reviewer for the journal *New Welsh Review*.

Véronique Bragard, Université catholique de Louvain

Garb/Tarp-age, Waste on Page: The Agency, Threat and Aesthetics of Waste in Contemporary Graphic Novels: As material ecocriticism foregrounds a dissipation of certain binaries, such as that which separates active subject from passive object, it seems pertinent to explore to what extent the opposition between matter and waste can be similarly overcome. While certain writers emphasise the dangerous and menacing nature of waste's concrete overwhelming presence in contemporary society, they also portray discarded objects as "storied bodies" (Phillips & Sullivan, 2013: 447) and aesthetically approached matter perhaps rejoining what we perceive as refuse with the productive agency inherent in matter. Recent graphic novels figure waste as devastatingly spreading on the page and panels thereby visually overwhelming the reader in a disgust/fascination ambivalent inter-connectedness of human and nonhuman beings creating new ecological encounters. While dumping sites and rivers of discarded human waste stifle the page, garbage is also aestheticised and consequently given new value and agency. Craig Thomson's *Habibi* (2011) portrays a world increasingly occupied by waste that infiltrates rivers and city streets but also the panels of the book, thereby indicting pollution and stifling consumerism with the overwhelmingly visual. Within these wastescapes, characters are also considered and treated as waste, thereby echoing Zygmunt Bauman's perspective in *Wasted Lives*. Surplus, formlessness, march into the page to create visual choking and disgust. These graphic figurations of waste echo apocalyptic texts such as *Jeremiah* (1979), *Walking Dead* (2003), *The Wasteland* (2006), or *Great Pacific* (2012) where waste is used as metaphor for the end or the paradox of the void (old meaning of waste). Last but not least, my study will also refer to *I'm not a plastic bag* (2012), a piece in which Rachel Hope Allison portrays an anthropomorphic waste patch lost in the middle of the ocean and desperately looking for its place in nature. This paper will examine these texts in a comparative and graphic framework raising the following questions: How does the graphic piling of waste convey the language, texture and agency of waste, as referring to both abundance or void (Boxall)? How do these texts put into question the definition and identity of garbage?

Bionote: Véronique Bragard is Associate Professor in Comparative Literature at the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium. She has published and edited widely on Indo-Caribbean and Indian Ocean Literatures. She is the author of *Transoceanic Dialogues* (Peter Lang, 2008) and editor with Srilata Ravi of E*criture Mauriciennes au Féminin: Penser L'altérité* (L.Harmattan, 2011) and with Christophe Dony & Warren Rosenberg of *Portraying 9/11 : Essays on Representations in Comics, Literature, Film and Theatre* (McFarland 2011). Her current projects include the Belgian colonial past and Congolese Literatures, and the representation of waste in world literatures and graphic novels.

Panel 9: Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic Literary Ecologies *Chair: John Miller*

Terry Gifford, Bath Spa University/University of Alicante

The Influence of Ruskin on John Muir: *Modern Painters IV* and *Studies in the Sierra*: In the 'Conclusion' to *Ruskin and Environment* (ed. Michael Wheeler, 1995) I first suggested that Ruskin's influence upon the environmentalism of John Muir deserved further research, Ruskin's notion of the earth as 'a great entail' (Cook and Wedderburn 8.233), for example, being similar to Muir's conception of National Parks. 'Muir's Mode of Reading Ruskin' in my *Reconnecting with John Muir* (2006) argued from the evidence of Muir's annotations in his own volumes of Ruskin's *Modern Painters* that Muir's repeated dismissal of Ruskin was a strategic distancing from what had actually been a major influence. A detailed case study is required. In this paper I would like to examine more closely the influence of *Modern Painters* on Muir's essay series *Studies in the Sierra* (first published in 1874, but not collected in book form until 1950, currently available in my second volume of Muir's complete works, *John Muir: His Life and Letters and Other Writings*, 1996). The conception and form of Muir's book appears to be closely modelled on Ruskin's and, although its function is more scientific than aesthetic, its tone is often lyrical, poetic and even spiritual. My interest here is to bring an ecocritical close reading to both the literary and the ecological similarities and differences between these two writers in these texts, which, for each of them, are somewhat aside from the rest of their oeuvre, yet consistent with both their current stage of thinking and their larger vision. The implications for ecocriticism of the results of these observations will briefly conclude the paper.

Bionote: Terry Gifford is the author of *Ted Hughes* (Routledge, 2009), *Reconnecting With John Muir: Essays in Post-Pastoral Practice* (University of Georgia Press, 2006), *Pastoral* (Routledge, 1999) and *Green Voices: Understanding Contemporary Nature Poetry* (Manchester University Press, 1995; second edition CCC Press 2011), together with six chapters in books on Ted Hughes. He edited *John Muir: The Eight Wilderness-Discovery Books* (Bâton Wicks, 1992) and *John Muir: His Life and Letters and Other Writings* (Bâton Wicks, 1996). He recently edited *The Cambridge Companion to Ted Hughes* (CUP, 2011). His seventh collection of poems is (with Christopher North) *Al Otro Lado del Aguilar* (Oversteps Books, 2011). Terry Gifford is Visiting Professor at Bath Spa University's Centre for Writing and Environment, UK, and Senior Research Fellow and Professor Honorifico at the University of Alicante, Spain.

Daniel Hannah, Lakehead University

Queer Atlantic Ecologies in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*: Critics have often read the ending to Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun* (1860)—its transatlantic turning from the faun-like Donatello's imprisoned fate and the outstretched arm of his accomplice, Miriam, as Hilda and Kenyon return to America—as performing Anglo-American management of Latinate animalism. Less has been said about how this geographical shift also seeks to regulate Hilda's and Kenyon's queer attraction to Miriam and Donatello (much as the narrator deploys their American perspectives to contain the Italian scenery's perverse suggestiveness). Tracing the novel's pairing of domesticated animalism and constrained queer desire, this paper will also read the conclusion as a queer unravelling of its transatlantic ecologies, a decentring of human agency in alien environments. The narrative is, we are told, initiated by Kenyon's almost accidental sculpting of Donatello's evolution, a fragment that escapes yet captures the artist's vision by mimicking a fossil and that uncannily returns when Miriam and Donatello reveal the buried fragments of the *Venus de' Medici*, staging his subsequent return to Hilda as an ambivalent act of unearthing. Troping excavation, fossilisation, and exile as the narrative form's unstably intertwined analogues, Hawthorne's ending thus queries the containment of a supposedly animalistic and erotically threatening scene that its frame seemingly enacts. Tracing the novel's movements between discourses of belonging to the land, of rootedness (which direct Hilda's and Kenyon's transatlantic turning from Italy) and alternative mappings of queer longing, of perverse routes, this paper will, in turn, ask questions about the efficacy of analogies theory might draw between transatlantic, erotic, and ecological mobilities.

Bionote: Daniel Hannah is an Associate Professor at Lakehead University, Ontario. He is the author of *Henry James, Impressionism, and the Public* (Ashgate, 2013) and has published on a variety of other authors including

William Blake, John Clare, Felicia Hemans, Herman Melville, and Joseph Conrad. His current project is entitled *The Queer Atlantic.*

Adrian Tait, Independent Scholar

'Enchased and Lettered': Hardy's American Readers and the Nature of Place: The English, wrote Washington Irving in 1820, 'are strongly gifted with the rural feeling', and it was for that reason that American readers valued the nineteenth century novels of Thomas Hardy. Like Henry James, they praised his 'natural relish for harvestings and sheep-washings'; they decried the wilds of Egdon as a 'Waste'. Yet these were the very years during which Americans redefined their relationship to the environment in terms *of* wilderness, and established the first of the world's national parks to protect it. Indeed, this was how Hardy saw it. The paradox is that, whilst Hardy drew a sharp distinction between America's 'new regions' and England's 'ancient lands', as he put in the short poem 'On An Invitation to the United States', his emphasis on an 'enchased and lettered' landscape of memory resurfaces in the equally distinctive American counter-tradition of the bioregion, with its twentieth-century emphasis on what Kirkpatrick Sale calls 'the satisfaction of being rooted in history, in lore, in place'. Thus whilst Hardy appears to offer both the expression and embodiment of a British exceptionalism, rooted (the word is chosen deliberately) in the carefully calculated fiction of a settled and stable rural society whose values embody 'Englishness', his influence may nevertheless persist in twentieth-century American attempts to redefine the shape and nature of a sustainable society The aim of this short paper is, therefore, to explore the transatlantic dialogue between Hardy and his American readers, and situate it in the context of the continuing eco-critical debate about the importance (or otherwise) of place.

Bionote: Dr Adrian Tait is a practicing eco-critic and member of the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment (ASLE-UKI). Having recently completed his doctoral thesis, which systematically analysed Thomas Hardy's verse collections from *Wessex Poems* to *Time's Laughingstocks*, he continues to develop a broader understanding of what might be described as Hardy's 'poetic vision of the environment.' He has published related articles in *The Hardy Society Journal* (2012) and ASLE-UKI's own journal, *Green Letters* (2010, and forthcoming), and he has presented papers at several recent conferences, including an International Poetry Conference dedicated to Hardy's verse and verse drama (2012).

Kevin Hutchings, University of Northern British Columbia

Transatlantic Colonial Ecologies: Britain and North America, 1780-1850: In 1801, British agricultural theorist William Marshall complained that England contained "extensive tracts of [valuable] land … which lie nearly in a state of wild nature! which were *never inhabited*! … unless by freebooters and homebred savages." As indolent "savages" rather than productive civilians, Marshall's forest-dwelling peasants didn't count as bona fide human "inhabitants." Hence, in the name of "improvement," he argued that such people could be removed from their forest homes without raising troubling ethical questions. Thinkers such as William Pitt, however, opposed such arguments, asserting that the "great improvement" associated with enclosure resided not only in the transformation of landscapes but also in the transformation of their inhabitants, who would undergo a positive "material alteration in their situations, in consequence of [the land's] being enclosed" (1809). Similar tensions existed in the contemporary Americas. Certainly, as Kate Rigby (2004) has argued, the discourse of savagery helped to justify "the displacement of colonised people through the attempted Europeanisation of their land." And yet, British colonists such as Lord Selkirk saw North American agricultural "improvement" not as a way to displace Native peoples, but as a process that would force them to "exchange the tomahawk and scalping-knife for the plough and the hoe," thereby ending their "seeming affinity to the wild beasts of the desert" (1806). By examining the theory and practice of "improvement" on both sides of the Atlantic, my paper will clarify the related cultural and environmental implications of nineteenth-century British land-use policies at home and overseas.

Bionote: Kevin Hutchings is Professor of English and Canada Research Chair in Literature, Culture, and Environmental Studies at the University of Northern British Columbia. His books include *Romantic Ecologies and Colonial Cultures 1770-1850* (McGill-Queen's UP, 2009) and *Imagining Nature: Blake's Environmental Poetics* (McGill-Queen's UP, 2002). He is also co-editor of *Transatlantic Literary Exchanges* (Ashgate, 2011) and *Native Americans and Anglo-American Culture 1750-1850: The Indian Atlantic* (Cambridge UP, 2009). Kevin is founding co-editor, with Julia M. Wright, of the Ashgate Series in Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic Studies. He is currently working on a monograph entitled *British Romanticism and North American Indigenous Governance 1800-1940*.

Panel 10: Climate Change Crisis: Agency, Risk, Responsibility *Chair: Hannes Bergthaller*

Tom Fisher, Portland State University

Responsibility, Disaster, and Literature: Responsibility, as Thomas Keenan writes in *Fables of Responsibility*, takes place when we do **not** know what to do. Too, for Keenan, following Derrida, this is the experience of literature as it demands a response that "cannot be organised in advance." In "Ecology After Capitalism" Timothy Morton writes, "The more you are aware of ecology, the more you lose the very 'world' you were trying to save." "Responsibility, Disaster, and Literature" aims to think these two claims together and explore the ways our encounters with literature might parallel our task to save a world that is always already "lost" to a future we do not–indeed cannot– know. Also, referencing the recent work of Lauren Berlant and Elizabeth Grosz, as well as the classic writing of Maurice Blanchot, I will discuss possibilities for the agencies of "not-doing," "abnegation," and "not-writing," and argue that these models are provocative ones for our response to environmental calamity as we negotiate a coming future that is both of our own making and outside our certain expectations.

Bionote: Tom Fisher's writings have appeared in *Arizona Quarterly*, *Chicago Review*, *Delmar*, *Journal of Modern Literature*, *Textual Practice*, and *Babilónia - Revista Lusófona de Línguas, Culturas e Tradução*. With artist Jessica Jackson Hutchins, he recently published *Convivium*. Currently he is at work on two manuscripts: one on poets who stopped writing and one on songs and sorcery. He teaches in the English Department at Portland State University, USA

Adeline Johns-Putra, University of Surrey

Climate Change Fiction and the Ethics of Posterity*:* Climate change fiction, increasingly known as cli-fi, is a recognisably new literary genre. Yet, the task of narrating and representing climate change constitutes a formal challenge to the novelist. Climate change has been described as a peculiar material-discursive hybrid: part-scientific reportage, part-lived experience, part-media discourse. Moreover, its spatial and temporal scale is beyond the usual horizons of novelistic settings. Thus, simplifying frames have been adopted to represent the complexity of climate change in fiction. However well-intentioned, though, these frames are implicated in attitudes that have resulted in environmental damage and injustice: it is now an ecocritical commonplace that climate change fiction's reliance on formulaic conventions such as apocalypse and dystopia replays ideas of human-nature opposition. More insidiously, climate change novels' increasingly common idealisation of inter-generational care as the appropriate response for the future risks repeating biases of gender, class and anthropocentrism; assumptions are made about what kind of caring takes place (when care might slip into paternalism and parochialism), who does the caring (when care becomes the burden of women and/or the economically under-privileged), and who makes decisions about caring (when decision-making becomes the domain of the economically and politically privileged). In this paper, I reflect on what opportunities exist to challenge, or even to 'short-circuit', reductivist tropes of intra-generational care while remaining committed to an ethics of posterity.

Bionote: Adeline is Reader in English Literature at the University of Surrey, and current Chair of ASLE UKI. Her research interests include Environmental Criticism and Romanticism, especially women's writing. Her books include *Process: Landscape and Text* (2010; co-edited with Catherine Brace); *The History of the Epic* (2006); and *Heroes and Housewives: Womens Epic Poetry and Domestic Ideology in the Romantic Age* (2001). Grants include 'From Climate to Landscape: Imagining the Future' (2009-12, co-investigator – European Social Fund). Adeline is currently guest-editor for a forthcoming issue of the journal *Symploke* on critical theory and climate change.

Axel Goodbody, University of Bath

Risk, Denial and Cultural Framing in Climate Change Fiction: Barbara Kingsolver's 'Flight Behaviour' and Ilija Trojanow's 'Melting Ice': This paper takes as its starting point Ursula Heise's comments on the role of cultural narratives and images in shaping public perception of environmental risks, in her book, 'Sense of Place and Sense of Planet'. 'Bildungsroman' and toxic discourse are identified as the key narrative forms in two recent climate change novels (one American, the other German). The implications of this choice are discussed, also those of the apocalyptic elements and structural metaphors which are present in both books. A special focus of the paper is the question of how Kingsolver's and Trojanow's depiction of climate denial relates to Kari Norgaard's findings in her study of the phenomenon, 'Living in Denial: Climate Change, Emotions, and Everyday Life'.

Bionote: Axel Goodbody is Professor of German Studies and European Culture at the University of Bath. Recent publications include the volume 'Ecocritical Theory: New European Approaches' (co-edited with Kate Rigby) and an essay on 'Frame Analysis and the Literature of Climate Change'. A past President of the European Association for the Study of Literature, Culture and Environment, he is Associate Editor of the online journal *Ecozon@*, and

co-editor of the book series 'Nature, Culture and Literature' (Rodopi) and 'New Studies in European Cinema' (Lang).

Panel 11: A Poetics of Water *Chair: Emma Curran*

Loveday Why, University of Otago

Metaphors of Meltwater: Dissolution and Resistance in Cecilia Vicuña's "El Quipu Menstrual"*:* In her site poem, *Menstrual Quipu* and accompanying 'Letter to Michelle Bachelet' (2006), Chilean poet, Cecilia Vicuña investigates the interplay of speech and silence through the metaphor of the melting glacier. In this paper, I investigate the complexity within the metaphor of glacial meltwater, which stands at once for open poetic expression of identity yet also for the potential dilution of cultures under the homogenising forces of globalism. I argue that Vicuña's pervading use of metaphor as a medium across which to move meaning enables a dynamic, fluid motion within her texts that supports intercultural ecocriticism's turn to water models (DeLoughrey, 2007) when discussing the problematics and potentialities of nationhood and speech in a dissolving world. Further, I explore how this dynamism is developed by Vicuña's materialising of this metaphor in her site poems as *quipu*. The threads that comprise the ancient Andean writing system are metaphorised as meltwater, ancestral blood and poetic speech. I propose that the *quipu* enacts, in its unravelling and retying (its speech and silence), the morphing motions of meltwater and the open authorship of poetic speech providing a physical enmeshing of text and physical world that highlights dynamism and precariousness. Building on these interplays, I turn to Vicuña's notion of transformation and how her dialectic of speech and silence interacts with silence over issues of climate change. I argue that Vicuña proposes fluidity and momentum - key features of poetic speech and of water, as it melts, refreezes and travels - as centrally important to a culturally specific ecopoetics alive to the ambivalence and instability of subjectivity, nation and the global environment.

Bionote: Loveday Why is a PhD candidate in the Department of English at the University of Otago. She investigates water as both material and metaphor through which to engage with issues of globalisation and intercultural relation in contemporary poetics. Her current research focuses on the cross-media environmental protest work of Chilean, Cecilia Vicuña. Her poetry and articles on poetics have been published in journals in the UK, New Zealand and online. A chapbook, *Chillida and the Sound* was published by the Gumtree Press in 2012.

Hannah Boast, University of York

Returning to the Sea: The Mediterranean Sea in Israeli and Palestinian Literature: The 'geobody' (Winichakul 1994) of Israel/Palestine is defined in terms of its boundedness by water, sited 'between the river and the sea' or 'from the river to the sea' depending on one's national affiliation. This is markedly clear in the Arabic form of the latter slogan, which translates more directly as 'between water and water'. However, the watery margins so central to picturing Israel/Palestine remain marginalised within Israel/Palestine studies, which has tended to face inward and focus on the land, including symbols of national 'rootedness' such as the Palestinian olive tree. In this paper I take my cue from a movement seawards in ecocriticism and cultural geography which often comes under the title of 'maritime studies' (DeLoughrey 2007, Peters 2010), and attempt a reorientation of Israeli and Palestinian literary studies towards the Mediterranean Sea, an effort begun from a broader cultural perspective by Nocke (2010). My theme will be narratives of the sea journey in Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's novel *The Ship* (1985), the poems of Yehuda Amichai, and the contemporary Palestinian activist event of the Gaza Freedom flotilla. In particular, I will examine the interactions between representations of the apparently enclosed ship and human body at sea, and notions of the nation-state as a 'container' (Balibar 1990, Giddens 1987). This paper argues that, in addition to serving as a medium through which the land of Israel/Palestine can be reached or departed, the Mediterranean Sea itself is a heterotopic space, substance, and 'thing' (Peters 2010, drawing on Bennett 2001) through which Israeli and Palestinian identities are imagined and negotiated.

Bionote: Hannah Boast is a PhD student in the Department of English and Related Literature at the University of York, co-supervised in the Department of Geography at Sheffield University. She researches representations of water in contemporary Israeli and Palestinian literature and her project is part of the interdisciplinary White Rose Network on Hydropolitics: Community, Environment and Conflict in an Unevenly Developed World. She is particularly interested in the relationship between water and land in national environmental imaginaries, and in literary depictions of water scarcity. Her work on Israeli forests has been published in the ASLE-UKI journal *Green Letters*.

Yvonne Reddick, University of Warwick

'All voices should be read as the river's mutterings': Alice Oswald's Fluvial Poetics: The British poet Alice Oswald has been exploring British landscapes in verse throughout her career. Her collections *Dart* (2002) and *A*

Sleepwalk on the Severn (2007) explore stretches of river, mapping them geographically and acoustically. Echoing through both collections are past voices, of both ordinary people who use the rivers and canonical literary predecessors. This paper examines the problems of presuming to speak for a voiceless entity. I aim to analyse how Oswald represents the sound of water, and how she presents human beings as entering into dialogue with the streams she describes. The tensions, and also the common ground, between allusions to canonical poetry, folk myths and the scientific language of water conservation are explored. Environmental considerations are mentioned explicitly in *Dart,* and I analyse the sound of polluted water in relation to the history of campaigns for water quality by West Country writers. A concern about water pollution begins with Henry Williamson, and comes to the fore in Ted Hughes and Brian Clarke's campaigns for water quality in the 1980s and 1990s; the influence that these writers have on *Dart* especially is analysed. This paper argues for a view of the collections as exhibiting multiple 'streams' of influence: literary, environmental and personal.

Bionote: Dr. Yvonne Reddick studied at the University of Cambridge and the University of Warwick, where she now holds an Early Career Fellowship. She is writing a monograph, *The 'Greening' of Ted Hughes*, which is the first single-authored book on Ted Hughes' environmentalism and ecopoetry. She has also published articles in respected peer-reviewed journals on Federico García Lorca, Henry Williamson and T.S. Eliot, and original poetry. She is planning a new research project on the exploration of African river environments.

Panel 12: Environmental Bodies *Chair: Carmen Flys-Junquera*

Esther Rey- Universidad Complutense de Madrid / GIECO-Franklin Institute

Bodies, Matter and Words: The Material Turn in Ecofeminist Theory and Practice: Regarding academic attention, material feminism can, in many ways, be considered a critical methodology approaching its peak. By challenging the productive language of discourse and text studies so actively important for previous feminist research, material feminists are currently trying to recuperate the prediscursive aspects of bodies, the "transversality" of the corporeal relations between bodies and environments, and the relevance of nonhuman actors or "posthuman" beings. Relying on Deleuze's theories of alterity and otherness, today feminist materialists challenge the humanist inclination to universalism, criticise it for being disembodied and disembedded, and choose to concentrate on processes, dynamic interactions and fluid boundaries when discussing the materiality of women's bodies and, more generally, of the natural world. Drawing from the recent literature on new material feminism -Stacy Alaimo and Susan Hekman's *Material Feminisms* (2008), Stacy Alaimo's *Bodily Natures* (2010), Jane Bennett's *Vibrant Matter* (2010) and Rick Dolphijn and Iris Van der Tuin's *New Materialism: Interviews and Cartographies* (2012) - and considering the newest developments in this field of studies – i.e. Elizabeth Grosz's reappraisal of Darwin's evolutionary theory, Nancy Tuana's meditations on the devastation caused by the hurricane Katrina, and Serenella Iovino's interesting search for a new materialist ethics - the aim of my paper is to explore the most challenging directions in this leading ecofeminist methodology, conceptual frame and political stand which drastically refuses the linguistic paradigm and stresses the validity of bodily experiences and practices.

Bionote: Esther Rey Torrijos is an associate lecturer at the Faculty of Philology, Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Spain), where she has researched the works of contemporary Anglo-Saxon women writers, focusing on the narrative of Elizabeth Bowen and Margaret Atwood. She has published articles on women's studies and ecofeminism in academic journals, including *Canadaria* (Revista Canaria de Estudios Canadienses), *NERTER* and *RCEI* (*Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses*), and has contributed with essays on ecocriticism and feminist ecocriticism to the following volumes: *Ecocríticas: Cultura, Literatura y Medioambiente* (2010), *Glocal Ireland: Current Perspectives on Literature and the Visual Arts* (2011), and *Realidad y Simbología de la Montaña* (2012). Currently in the press are her contributions to two edited volumes on sense of place (for Instituto Franklin, Universidad de Alcalá de Henares) and on feminism and ecology (for the academic journal *Feminismos*, Universidad de Alicante). Member of GIECO and EASLCE, and permanent researcher for Instituto Franklin (Universidad de Alcalá de Henares).

Lucy Collins, University College Dublin

'A smear of tissue…contains great kingdoms': Contemporary Poetry and the Nature of Embodiment: Reflections on matter shape our understanding of how humans relate to the more-than-human world, and help us to explore the boundaries of our own subjectivity. Many contemporary poets examine this relationship between materiality and subjectivity in their work, representing the body as an important agent of human experience. However, developments at the interface between creativity and technology have for some time problematised the concept of the body as singularly 'human' in character: 'my "own" body is material', Jane Bennett writes, 'yet this materiality is not fully or exclusively human. … In a world of vibrant matter, it is thus not

enough to say that we are "embodied." We are, rather, *an array of bodies*'. In an essay entitled 'Pathologies' in *The New Nature Writing* (Granta 102, 2008), Kathleen Jamie reflects on the role of the microscopic other in endangering human wellbeing and continuing life. Reconsidering her understanding of the term 'nature' in light of this enquiry, Jamie acknowledges the need to conceive of the body itself as a form of ecosystem: 'It's not all primroses and dolphins… [t]here's our own intimate, inner natural world, the body's weird shapes and forms, and sometimes they go awry'. This contemplation of the 'other within' also occurs in a short sequence of poems by Jamie—poems written in response to anatomical representations of the early 19th century, several of which relate specifically to reproductive disease. These poems consider this most proximate of encounters—that of the child in the womb with the body of the mother—as a site within which other forms of nature exert an invisible yet powerful force. My paper will explore these poems, and will further consider how contemporary poems of microscopic life aim to signal larger ecological issues.

Bionote: Lucy Collins is a lecturer in English Literature at University College Dublin, Ireland. Educated at Trinity College Dublin and at Harvard University, where she spent a year as a Fulbright Scholar, she teaches and researches in the area of modern poetry and poetics. She has published widely on contemporary Irish and British poetry, and is currently completing a monograph on Irish women poets. Recent publications include *Poetry by Women in Ireland: A Critical Anthology 1870–1970* (Liverpool). A co-edited volume, *The Irish Poet and the Natural World: An Anthology of Verse in English from the Tudors to the Romantics* is due for publication in 2014.

Sarah Bell, University of Newcastle, Australia

Cultures of Management: Encountering Multiple Knowledges and the More-than-Human in Park Management: This paper considers the more-than-human, contextual encounters that come together to produce national park management. Management of park spaces is often considered a universal and objective process, with plans and policies created by informed humans who are guided by scientifically proven evidence and facts. Drawing on empirical research conducted into Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, located on the outskirts of Sydney, Australia, this paper will explore the ways in which management and policy decisions regarding what belongs or doesn't belong in park spaces often take place in subjective, contextual and emotionally laden environments. This paper explores the repercussions of a recent change that has seen the management of Ku-ring-gai Chase confronted with governmental pressure to increase horse-riding access within the park. This was a highly controversial decision and has been met with much support from those advocating horse riding as a source of enjoyment, companionship and a link to Australia's colonial past, but also significant opposition from those who argue horse riding in national parks is a source of environmental degradation, through increased soil compaction and erosion and weed invasion. This paper will explore contentious ideas of horse riding in the park as a means to understand how multiple (often conflicting) knowledges and more-than-human objects and bodies come together to produce contextually specific management and policy decisions. This paper will also emphasise how more-than-human knowledges, objects and bodies influence the processes of management in messy and unexpected ways, such that the boundaries between nature and culture become blurred in park spaces.

Bionote: I am currently a PhD candidate at the University of Newcastle, Australia. After graduating with a Bachelor of Development Studies – Honours Class I in 2010, I began my PhD research into the management of Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, Australia. Utilising human geography literature, this research looks at how park management could be done differently if we thought about more-than-human nature of management practices. Through examining the way in which park management is performed and influenced by a range of more-than-human actors, this research aims to question ideas of national parks representing an idealised 'nature' that is separate from humans and culture.

Panel 13: Narrative Embodiments: Matter, Agencies, Stories, and Signs *Chair: Catriona Sandilands*

Kate Rigby, Monash University

Encountering Fire: Discerning Distributed Agency in Australian Bushfire Narratives: This paper brings a material ecocritical perspective to the phenomenon of wildfire, with specific reference to the potentially catastrophic firestorms of southeastern Australia, which are set to become more frequent as the planet warms and droughts lengthen and deepen in this part of the world. The discussion will focus on Colin Thiele's *February Dragon*, first published in 1965 with the support of the Bushfire Research Council of South Australia and one of surprisingly few Australian works of fiction centred around fire, which is endemic to Australian eucalypt forests. As a work of children's literature (8+), this story by one of Australia's best-known authors of children's literature affords consideration of the educational potential of narratives of eco-catastrophe for young readers. In particular, the paper will address the ways in which this text discloses the complex inter- and intra-action of human and

nonhuman actors and factors in the aetiology, unfolding and aftermath of bushfire disasters. While Thiele's narrative acknowledges the role of human agency, this is limited to practices that allow wildfires to start and spread, assuming seasonal regularities that are currently becoming anthropogenically unsettled: by burning fossil fuels to generate power we are, in effect, proliferating the fires that now threaten to consume our towns, farmland and forests, as evidenced by the "Black Saturday" firestorm that devastated much of Victoria in 2009. Consideration will also be given to differences between settler and Indigenous Australian perceptions of and ways of interacting with fire and seasonality in the context of climate change.

Bionote: Kate Rigby is Professor of Environmental Humanities in the School of English, Communications and Performance Studies at Monash University and a Fellow of the Australian Humanities Academy and of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. She is a Senior Editor of the journal *Philosophy Activism Nature*, and her books include *Topographies of the Sacred: The Poetics of Place in European Romanticism* (2004), and *Ecocritical Theory: New European Approaches* (2011; co-edited with Axel Goodbody). Kate was a founding member of the Australian Ecological Humanities and the inaugural President of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (Australia-New Zealand).

Wendy Wheeler, London Metropolitan University

The Carrying Power of Things: Biosemiotics and Semiotic Causation: In a by now rather famous little passage from a 1997 *New York Review of Books* review essay of Carl Sagan's *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark*, biologist Richard Lewontin wrote that 'it is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our *a priori* adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door'. The assumption – a product of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and in fact counter to all our ordinary experience – is that the fact of material causation must exclude non-material causes altogether. But not only do words and symbolic meanings, mere material no-things, have performative power, they can also boost our health and self-esteem or break our hearts. Beyond these well-researched and attested facts, meanings and knowledges grow like organic life does. Our relation to narrative is clothed in this enormous immaterial material power. In this paper I will discuss what I call 'the carrying': the dependence upon material bearers of a non-material causative power, some of the most exemplary powers of which are to be found in the work of art.

Bionote: Wendy Wheeler is Emeritus Professor of English Literature and Cultural Inquiry at London Metropolitan University and Visiting Professor at the Universities of Oregon, USA and RMIT Australia. She is the author of five books and numerous essays. The most recent are *The Whole Creature: Biosemiotics and the Evolution of Culture* and *Biosemiotics: Nature/Culture/Science/Semiosis*. She sits on the editorial boards of *New Formations*, where she has also been an editor, and of *Green Letters*: *Studies in Ecocriticism*, the journal of ASLE UKI. She is on the Advisory Board for the journal *PAN-Philosophy Activism Nature*. Her new book is on materialism, immaterialism and biosemiosis.

Serenella Iovino, University of Turin

Reading Porous Landscapes: Material Narratives, Ecocritical Interpretation, and Natural-Cultural Memory: One of the main tenets of material ecocriticism is the "narrativity" of matter, namely, the ways meanings, stories, signs, and discourses are embedded in material forms, intra-acting with the lives and landscapes of humans and nonhumans. In my presentation I analyse the material-discursive entanglements of Naples, the "porous city" (as Walter Benjamin defined it), by discussing a significant example of "storied matter": the plaster casts created by archaeologists in excavating Pompeii's ruins. There is a paradoxical aspect in these bodies: creating hollows in the solidified lava, their absence was instrumental to make visible the emerging interplay of nature (the volcanic eruption) and culture (Pompeii's social dynamics and the loss of memory about Vesuvius being a volcano). As a result, the collision of nature's agency with the material and cultural dimension of Pompeii's life created in the landscape a new naturalcultural, or diffractive, narrative. In this porous dimension in which bodies are absorbed by the world, and the world—in the form of lava or other matter—is absorbed by bodies, landscape became the material and cognitive context of memory. Although absent and silent, these bodies are thus powerfully eloquent, transforming a history of death into a lively narrative of naturalcultural emergences. In my presentation I propose how such an interpretation can *respond* to this narrative of worlds in "differential becoming," also considering the way the diffractive dynamics of nature and memory are embodied in what Pompeii's reality appears to be today.

Bionote: Serenella Iovino is Professor of Ethics at the University of Turin and Research Fellow of the Alexander-von-Humboldt Foundation. She is past president of the European Association for the Study of Literature, Culture and Environment (www.easlce.eu), and author of four books and numerous articles on environmental ethics, ecocritical theory, and German classical philosophy. With Serpil Oppermann, she is co-editor of *Material Ecocriticism*, a collection of essays that address the "material turn" recently emerging in the ecocritical debate (Indiana University Press, forthcoming). Serenella Iovino is in the editorial boards of several journals, including *ISLE*, *Ecozon@*, and *PAN-Philosophy Activism Nature*.

Panel 14: Revisiting Thoreau amid the Material Turn *Chair: David M Robinson*

Cristin Ellis, University of Mississippi

Thoreau's New Energy Economy: Readers attracted to Thoreau's reverence for the material world often struggle with his recurring advocacy of "a new austerity" towards the "inferior and brutish nature" of the body. Seeking to differentiate this Transcendentalist asceticism from forms of Christian and capitalist asceticism that it threatens to revive, critics like Michael Warner and Lawrence Buell have argued that Thoreauvian austerity is best understood as a technique for cultivating contemplative pleasure. As Buell argues, "voluntary simplicity of itself produces pleasure in the ordinary unobtrusive events that the life of simplification permits to become meaningful" (*Environmental Imagination* 152). But while Buell and Warner thus convincingly disarticulate Thoreau's asceticism from the materialist drives of capitalist self-abnegation, the very strength of their arguments can seem to confirm the hostility of this "divine" life of contemplation to the mundanely instrumental economies of the body. That is, the very impossibility of assimilating Thoreau's ascetic aestheticism to materialist ends would seem to prove its inimicalness to the body's "brutish" appetites. In this paper, I suggest that Thoreau himself struggled to conceive of aesthetic pleasure in more materialist terms. Through readings of Thoreau's *Journal* of the 1850s, this paper will retrace Thoreau's speculative thesis that aesthetic perception has somatic effects on the observer by a mechanism similar to photosynthesis. From his early observation that "certain wild flowers which Nature wafts to me…unaccountably sustain me," to his burgeoning conviction that "like plants we are fed through the atmosphere," Thoreau's speculations on the energetic economy of aesthetic attention, I argue, point towards a materialist reconciliation of his transcendentalist and environmentalist commitments.

Bionote: Cristin Ellis received her PhD from Johns Hopkins in 2012 and is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Mississippi. Her current manuscript, on materialist constructions of mind and nature in American Romanticism, draws on contemporary work in new materialism and posthumanism to elucidate the distinctly non-transcendental tendencies in American Romantic writing about nature.

James Finley, University of New Hampshire

Henry David Thoreau and Free Soil: the Intra-Activism of Nature: Although Henry David Thoreau famously avoided abolitionist societies, his journal contains two explicit references to the antislavery Free Soil movement, moments which, I will argue, reveal a turn toward an eco-materialist form of abolitionism. Free Soil articulated an agrarian antislavery message, resisting the expansion of slavery into the territories and calling for public land to be made available to landless homesteaders. This emphasis on land also manifested itself in arguments that plantation agriculture was degrading and blighting the productive environments of the South. In his journal for 17 July 1854, Thoreau explains that "It is not any such free soil party as I have seen—but a free man party—i.e. a party of free men—that is wanted." Thoreau's focus here is decidedly anthropocentric, expressing his belief that human action will effectively resist the environmental corruption of slavery. On 24 January 1856, however, Thoreau's entry expresses a radically new perspective, one that privileges what Jane Bennett has referred to as "vibrant matter." Here Thoreau praises American elms as "free-soilers in their own broad sense. They send their roots north and south and east and west into many a conservative's Kansas and Carolina, who does not suspect such underground railroads." In this second instance, I will argue, Thoreau turns his attention from humans to the environment as the most effective agent for resisting the slave power. Thoreau thus takes Free Soil concern with landscapes and the environment and reformulates it to emphasise the agentic and intra-active power of the material environment, articulating a sort of antislavery intra-activism.

Bionote: James Finley is a doctoral candidate in the English Department at the University of New Hampshire. His dissertation is titled "'Violence Done to Nature': Free Soil and the Environment in Antebellum Antislavery Writing." He has published on Henry David Thoreau in *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* and has an article forthcoming in *ESQ* on *The Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Henry Bibb, an American Slave*.

Rochelle L. Johnson, The College of Idaho

On the Agency of Corn: Thoreau's Identity Translations: Henry Thoreau (1817-1862) wrote repeatedly about the phenomenon of corn growing in the night. His first reference appears in his 1840 journal, and additional references appear in later private writings. He also notes the phenomenon in *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849), *Walden* (1854), and "Walking" (1862), which contains what scholars have called Thoreau's revised (secular) trinity: "I believe in the forest, and in the meadow, and in the night in which the corn grows." Others have traced these references to corn; James Guthrie's most thorough analysis argues that "corn's nocturnal growth . . . acquired the status of a religious metasymbol," signaling the importance of personal revitalisation. I will explore the persistent materiality present in Thoreau's references to corn, as well as their interest in what we would now call corn's "agentic capacity." I argue that beyond serving as "religious metasymbol," Thoreau's writings about the growth of corn indicate his persistent exploration of identity as the translation of self and world. His "belief" reveals an understanding of self as occurring amid corn's agency. Ultimately, I suggest that while the material turn clearly illuminates aspects of Thoreau's pursuit of science, as Laura Dassow Walls and others suggest, it also leads us to question some of the traditional assumptions about his self-fashioning. Whereas conventional understandings of American Transcendentalism emphasise Thoreau's engagements with nonhuman matter ("nature") as means to self culture, my analysis suggests his understanding of identity as formed amid and through the intra-activity of matter.

Bionote: Rochelle Johnson is Professor of English and Environmental Studies at The College of Idaho, where she teaches courses in American literature and the environmental humanities. A past president of ASLE-US, Johnson has published on early American environmental writers including Thoreau and Emerson. Her early work centered on recovering--with co-editor Daniel Patterson--the writings of Susan Fenimore Cooper (see *Rural Hours by Susan Fenimore Cooper* [U Georgia P, 1998]*, New Essays on Susan Fenimore Cooper's Rural Hours and Other Works* [U Georgia P, 2001] and *Essays on Nature and Landscape by Susan Fenimore Cooper* [U Georgia P, 2002]). Johnson's 2009 monograph explores Cooper's landscape aesthetics in relation to those of her contemporaries (*Passions for Nature: Nineteenth-Century America's Aesthetics of Alienation* [U of Georgia, 2009]).

Michael Jonik, University of Sussex

The Science of 'Civil Disobedience' and the Democracy of Trees: This paper will explore the connection between Thoreau's politics in "Civil Disobedience" and the "politics of the earth" that emerges in his writings on natural history and in his Journals. I will argue that Thoreau's "scientific" works illuminate "Civil Disobedience" and reveal another dimension to its politics, a dimension made particularly pertinent in today's heated debates concerning global climate change. Specifically, I will ask how we might expand the sense of "conscience" staked out in "Civil Disobedience" into what could be called an "earth conscience," if not the "intelligence with the earth" Thoreau calls for in *Walden*. I will show how Thoreau's scientific writing can give us a means for thinking what could be called an "earth conscience" of civil disobedience. This is perhaps one way of thinking through the form of polity Thoreau envisions—and, indeed, one that would go past "respect for the individual" and open to a politics no longer, in Nietzsche's phrase, " human, all too human." Action, then, becomes a call to interaction -- a life-labor of finding ever novel modes of interactivity, of navigating a world that is "extraordinarily diverse and non-hierarchical," indeterminate and volatile, plural and wild. Thoreau's "interactivity"--as a politics of relation—might then be understood in relation to James's radical empiricism and Whitehead's notion of "a democracy of trees," if not also in terms of the impersonal politics that traverses the human and non-human, as articulated by Roberto Esposito or the New Materialism.

Bionote: Michael Jonik is Lecturer at the University of Sussex in the School of English and American Studies. His research and teaching examine seventeenth- through nineteenth-century American and transatlantic literary and intellectual history in relationship to the history of science, religious studies, and philosophy. He is completing two books: *A Natural History of the Mind: Science, Form, and Perception from Cotton Mather to William James* and *Melville's Uncemented Stones: Character, Impersonality, and the Politics of Singularity.* He has also recently founded with a group of colleagues in the UK the British Association of Nineteenth-Century Americanists (BrANCA) which will hold its inaugural international conference in Brighton, England next November.

Panel 15: Proto-Ecological Encounters I: The Eighteenth Century *Chair: Anne Milne*

Brycchan Carey, Kingston University

'Wetland or Parkland? Ecocritical Approaches to Oliver Goldsmith's Deserted Village': Few debates in literary history have engaged quite as much local enthusiasm as that over the true location of Auburn, the supposed

location of Oliver Goldsmith's 1770 pastoral elegy *The Deserted Village*. On the one hand, the (remaining) inhabitants of both Glasson and Lissoy in County Westmeath claim it as their own, since these were the locations of Goldsmith's childhood. On the other hand, Nuneham Courtenay in Oxfordshire has long been identified and defended as a likely location since it is thought that Goldsmith witnessed the residents of this village being evicted to make way for a wealthy landowner's park. In fact, it is almost certain that the 'true' Auburn does not exist and that Goldsmith's village is an amalgam of several locations, both real and imagined, that suited Goldsmith's poetic purpose. That purpose, however, remains contested. Was Goldsmith protesting against enclosure, agricultural innovation, or the tyranny of local landlords? Was England or Ireland at the centre of his poem? I argue that close attention to the ecological information that Goldsmith included in the poem suggests that the village Goldsmith imagined was abandoned rather than forcibly dispossessed. This paper will revisit the poem, contrasting the detailed list of bird and plant species given with those found in reality in several sorts of abandoned village, as well as with Goldsmith's 1774 *History of the Earth and Animated Nature*, a book which establishes his credentials as an able natural historian. In particular, I will contrast Goldsmith's detailed descriptions of the lapwing and the bittern in *History of the Earth* with his depictions of those birds in the poem. The paper will conclude that, although Goldsmith may indeed have been an outraged witness of the eviction of Nuneham Courtenay, the ecological evidence in the poem suggests that this event is unlikely to have been a major influence on his literary construction of Auburn. Our understanding of Goldsmith's political purpose, therefore, must concentrate more on the general state of the rural economy than on the depredations, real or imagined, of tyrannical landowners.

Bionote: Brycchan Carey is Professor of English Literature at Kingston University, President of the Literary London Society, and Treasurer of the British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies. He is the author of *From Peace to Freedom: Quaker Rhetoric and the Birth of American Antislavery, 1658-1761* (Yale University Press, 2012) and *British Abolitionism and the Rhetoric of Sensibility: Writing, Sentiment, and Slavery, 1760-1807* (Palgrave, 2005). He has edited several collections of essays, including most recently *Quakers and Abolition*, co-edited with Geoffrey Plank. He is currently writing a book on the relationship between antislavery activism and the emergence of environmental consciousness and editing another, with Anne Milne and Sayre Greenfield, on Birds in Eighteenth-Century Culture. A full CV is available at www.brycchancarey.com.

Emma Curran, University of Surrey

Gendering the Genius of Place: Anna Seward's *Llangollen Vale:* This paper explores the ways in which Anna Seward, a central figure to both eighteenth-century and early Romantic poetry, reinvents the 'genius' poem. Contemporary to the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, which historians describe as regional in its development, Seward's eponymous genius poems become investigations into the eighteenth century's changed relation of people to nature, located within specific named regions and alert to shifts wrought by the advent of industry. In her reconsideration of the convention (whereby, traditionally, a Spirit of Place, the *genius loci*, is prevailed upon by poets and proprietors for inspiration and co-operation with land alteration) Seward is keenly aware of its stringently gendered dynamics, which are rarely explored in criticism. Although essentially a gender-neutral figure itself, the *genius loci* is used interchangeably in poetry of this period with other feminine personifications of place, such as nymphs and naiads and a generically feminised nature. The poet and the proprietor who address the *genius loci* are customarily masculine characters. This paper focuses discussion on three poems included in Seward's *Llangollen Vale* collection, published in 1796. *Hoyle Lake*, *Wrexham* and *Llangollen Vale* are remarkable for the manner in which they test the limits of the form they exist within, pushing at the boundaries of the convention and disrupting its gendered dynamics in order to present an alternative narrative of human encounters with non-human environment. A reading of Seward's revisions of the genius poem presents a valuable opportunity to observe eighteenth-century literature's early response to the entangled issues of environmentalism and the gendering of nature.

Bionote: I am a PhD student at the University of Surrey, researching personification of nature in women's Romantic poetry. I investigate how poetic form facilitates exploration of the relationship between human and non-human life, and further interrogate the role of gender and the historical moment. I have taught at undergraduate level at the University of Surrey and very recently presented a paper on Charlotte Smith at a postgraduate workshop entitled 'Ecological Inscriptions' (Nottingham). My own poems, generally immersed in the natural world, have been published widely in literary magazines.

Melissa Sodeman, Coe College

Joseph Priestley and the Vital Air: Experiments in Early Ecological Thought: In 1772, Joseph Priestley discovered a phenomenon we now know as photosynthesis. Sir John Pringle, President of the Royal Society, hailed the

discovery as revealing the interdependence of plant and human life: "From these discoveries we are assured," he writes, "that no vegetable grows in vain, but that from the oak of the forest to the grass of the field, every individual plant is serviceable to mankind … nor is the herbage, nor the woods that flourish in the most remote and unpeopled regions unprofitable to us, nor we to them." In this paper, I argue the scientific and literary texts generated by Priestley's experiments mark the emerging tendrils of ecological thinking in the eighteenth century. The proto-ecological epistemologies we find in writings by Priestley, Pringle, and Anna Barbauld grow out of the vibrant collaborations of the Birmingham Lunar Society, a group of natural philosophers, inventors, and industrialists whose varied ideas and activities we have already recognised as kindling the industrial revolution. But as this paper will demonstrate, their pursuits and innovations also engendered structures through which modern ecological ideas about the relationships between humans and the natural world could evolve.

Bionote: Melissa Sodeman teaches at Coe College in Iowa. Her essays have appeared in *Modern Philology*, *ELH*, and *SEL*. Currently she is completing a book-length study of women novelists and the rise of literature and embarking on a new project on early ecological thought in the later eighteenth century.

Panel 16: Language and Ecological Identity *Chair: Uwe Küchler*

Arran Stibbe, University of Gloucestershire

The Linguistic Performance of Ecological Identity: This paper will examine the linguistic ways that writers, speakers and thinkers perform ecological identities through their selection of vocabulary, grammatical patterning, metaphor, pronoun use, framing and lexical creativity. Ecological identity, for the purposes of this paper, means belonging to a group whose members include both humans and others drawn from the more-than-human world. These 'others' may be animals, plants, rocks, forests, or rivers; except that they are not 'others' in an ecological identity, they are 'us'. Performing an ecological identity is an accomplishment since it swims against the stream of both the language 'system' and prevailing mainstream discourses which tend to separate humans from 'environment', humans from 'animals', humans from 'ecosystems', humans from 'nature'. The paper uses ecolinguistic analysis based on a combination of rhetorical analysis, cognitive linguistics and a modified form of Critical Discourse Analysis. Examples are drawn from contemporary nature writers such as Jay Griffiths, philosophers such as David Abram, ecologists such as Aldo Leopold, green business mavericks such as Ray Anderson, permaculturists and members of the Dark Mountain movement.

Bionote: Arran Stibbe is a Reader in Ecological Linguistics at the University of Gloucestershire where he teaches ecolinguistics, discourse analysis, ethics and language, and communication for leadership. He has published numerous articles on discourse analysis in a range of areas including health, disability, masculinity, animals, and the environment. He edited the *Handbook of Sustainability Literacy: Skills for a Changing World*, a paperback and multimedia resource that brought together 51 sustainability educators to investigate the skills that students need for the challenging conditions of the 21st century. He is also author of the book *Animals Erased: Discourse, Ecology and Reconnection with the Natural World* published by Wesleyan University Press.

Rea Peltola, Université de Caen Basse-Normandie

Understanding Another Species in a Call-in Radio Show: Grammatical Agency and Identification: This paper examines the linguistic conceptualisation of human-animal interface in Finnish. Grammatical descriptions usually lean on distinctions of animate–inanimate and human–non-human. Operating within the framework of cognitive semantics, the present study addresses the position of animals on these scales. The data analysed comes from a radio program where listeners call in to ask a council of wildlife experts questions arising from their nature observations. The discussions usually consist of a caller's narrative, reporting the human-wildlife encounter, and a discussion between the caller and the experts. The study shows that, in this discourse, animals are mostly included in the same class of entities as humans. However, two types of variation can be observed. The first concerns the intentionality of the animal participant: the degree of grammatical agency is connected to the alternation of expert and non-expert discourse (cf. Halliday 2001, Stibbe 2012). Secondly, the speakers display a constant negotiation between the sameness and the otherness of animal participants. The callers' questions are motivated by the incomprehensive aspects of animal behavior; yet, to describe the actions of the animal participant, the speakers typically use grammatical constructions allowing the identification with the position, the emotions and the thoughts of the other being. This representation of animals can be modeled within the framework of Conceptual Blending (Fauconnier & Turner 2002): the speakers construct new mental spaces, blends, where elements from human and animal spaces combine in new ways.

Bionote: Rea Peltola is Lecturer in Finnish Studies at the University of Caen Lower-Normandy. Her doctoral thesis in Finnish linguistics, defended at the University of Helsinki in 2011, investigated expressions of modality (e. g. intention, permission, obligation, capacity) in Finnish and French. More generally, her research interests have included the link between time and modality from a cognitive semantic perspective and the dialogical dimension of language. Her current research project focuses on intentionality of animals in the light of grammatical constructions.

Katherine Lynes, Union College

'to grunt thru the noun': Encountering the Language of Nature in African American Poetry: The tradition of African American nature poetry includes the history of enslavement and lynching. The lesser known thread in this tradition represents attention to language embodying pleasure taken in the relationships between human and non-human. I explore Anne Spencer's "Earth, I Thank You," in which the pleasure of the earth's language brings the poet into existence. Langston Hughes's 'Earth Song" highlights both the connection (imagined or otherwise) to the earth and the history of disconnection from the earth and its pleasures. Camille Dungy's "Language" represents a way toward understanding non-human nature around us, even though we may only access this understanding through our own reactions to natural forces. Poetic encounters with nature call attention to the pleasures of the language of non-human nature, necessarily translated into human language and through human perception. As poets attempt to express the experience of the not-I in nature, they often do so through the use of pleasure. This pleasure does not have to be naïve nor distanced from its social constructions, nor does it necessarily lead to amelioration of social ills. Yet, pleasures taken through interactions with nature could help fill a communicative gap. If we perceive of non-human nature as not Other, but rather as a kind of interlocutor, we have better chances of seeing other humans in the same way. Poetry is positioned to bring us to an acute awareness of both who we are, as humans, and what we know by calling our attention to our language and our environment simultaneously.

Bionote: I am an associate professor of English, affiliated with the Africana Studies Program. My research combines African American poetry and poetics and ecocriticism. I have published two articles to this effect: "The Ecologies of African-American Poetry Collections." Comparative American Studies, (7)2, June 2009; and "'Sprung from American Soil': the "Nature" of Africa in the Poetry of Helene Johnson." Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment, (16)3, Summer 2009. I have recently presented conference papers on African American ecopoetics at MLA in Philadelphia (2009); the Association for Environmental Studies and Sciences conference (2010); the Literature and Conservation: Responsibilities Conference at Trinity College, Dublin (2011); and the Conference on Ecopoetics at UC-Berkeley (2013).

Panel 17: Material Identities: Economic 'Reality', Lived Experience *Chair: James Finley*

Juan Ignacio Oliva, U. La Laguna/GIECO-Franklin-UAH

Spatial Agency and Toxicity in the Construction of Chicana/o Dysfunctional Homeplaces: Exploring new experiential perspectives of inhabiting a specific space is key to understanding the idiosyncrasy of great part of the Chicana/o contemporary production that include not only the affinities and attachments felt for home (or living) lands, but also the repulsions and phobias that derive from living in deprived areas. Taking into account not only those intimate experiences but also other demographic, mythical, or material items that complete the panorama of sensitivity towards a certain place, Chinese-American geographer and environmental critic Yi-Fu Tuan states (in *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* [1977]), that "profound attachment to the homeland appears to be a worldwide phenomenon. It is not limited to any particular culture and economy. The city or land is viewed as mother, and it nourishes" (154). It is the aim of this paper, therefore, to tackle the construction of Chicana/o spatial agency under the light of these ambivalent feelings of "topophilias" and "topophobias," as Tuan would put it, to the milieu they are living in, to discern whether they sense it as a protecting (or inversely as a hostile) *locus* in their everyday lives. A special factor to be considered is the tight relationship established between dysfunctional family circles and environmental issues (such as living in deprived suburban areas, inhabiting decaying dwellings, or being surrounded by many types of toxicities like water pollution, junk foods and other carcinogenic elements) that seem to affect not only the level of tension between family members but also their capacity of reaction to the hostile milieu. Literary evidences can be profusely found, from the obvious cases of Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* (1987) and Ana Castillo's *Massacre of the Dreamers* (1994), to the seemingly more positive versions of Cherríe Moraga's *Loving in the War Years* (1983) or the recent *A Xicana Codex of Changing Consciousness* (2011).

Bionote: Dr Juan Ignacio Oliva is Full Professor at the Universidad de La Laguna (Tenerife, Canary Islands), where he currently teaches Postcolonial Anglophone Literatures (with an interest in Irish, Canadian, Indo-English, and

Chicano/a cultures) at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. He has published extensively on contemporary authors, such as James Joyce, John Fowles, D.M. Thomas, Salman Rushdie, Shyam Selvadurai, Sunetra Gupta, Jamie O'Neill, Ana Castillo, Sandra Cisneros, Abelardo Delgado, Ricardo Sánchez, and others. He is also presently the Head of the La Laguna Centre for Canadian Studies, the current editor of *Canadaria (Revista Canaria de Estudios Canadienses)* and the current secretary of *RCEI (Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses)*. Recently, he has been elected Vice-president of EASLCE (the European Association for the Study of Literature, Culture and the Environment), and he is secretary of AEDEI (Spanish Association for Irish Studies) and committeeperson of AEEII (Spanish Association of Interdisciplinary Studies about India).

María Isabel Pérez Ramos, KTH-Royal Institute of Technology / GIECO- Franklin/UAH

Identity of Absence: Chicanos and the U.S. Southwest's identities revisited": Both Chicanos and the US Southwest's identities are often constructed in a discourse of absence: their identities are linked to what used to identify them but is not there anymore. The southwestern state of New Mexico is known as *The Land of Enchantment*, but the writings of authors such as John Nichols' depict how this enchantment mostly disappeared when Easterners moved to this land and gradually substituted its uniqueness with the preconceived idea they had of the place. On the other hand, some Chicano writers, such as Rudolfo Anaya, resort to a mythical, nearly magical past, providing their readings with a beautiful story-telling like character, but losing strength in the activist arena of contemporary Chicano concerns (concerns about environmental degradation and racism, or cultural survival). In the light of Gerald Vizenor's "fugitive poses", both Chicanos and the southwest are therefore often defined, by themselves or by others, in terms of absence rather than of presence, and this perpetuates their historical invisibility, and disregards their pressing social, cultural and environmental concerns. Laura Pulido writes about the dangers of turning to 'cultural essentialism' (a common form of 'identity of absence'), to defend Chicanos' claims: arguing cultural homogeneity and an innate special connection to the land overlooks the diversity and conscious environmental ethic of many present-day Hispano southwesterners. There is a need, therefore, to define (or reclaim existing definitions of) both Chicanos and the southwest in positive, realistic ways.

Bionote: M. Isabel Pérez Ramos is a doctoral student from the EHL (Environmental Humanities Laboratory) at the Division of History of Science, Technology and Environment, at KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Sweden. Her previous research stays include the University of New Mexico, the King's College London and the University of California, Berkeley. She is also a member of the research group GIECO (Grupo de Investigación en Ecocrítica). Her main academic interests are Chicano Literature, the U.S. Southwest, Ecocriticism and Environmental Justice.

Kate Andrews, Australian National University

Dreams or Delusions? 150 years of Cropping Schemes in North Australia: Despite 150 years of attempted cropping in tropical north-west Australia, an area of 564,647km2 (or twice the size of Britain), less than 1% has been cleared or is being used intensively. With both the pressure of Australia's growing water demands and international food security concerns, the revival in public discussion of the great 'untapped' potential of northern Australia for agricultural development is emphatic. This discourse has emerged regularly in Australia's public sphere over the last century, impelled by a variety of drivers. In 1965 the economist B.R. Davidson published 'The Northern Myth' which "examines the case for subsidised development of agriculture in northern Australia, and concludes that the case is bad." Yet long before this, and ever since, governments have invested millions of dollars in supporting agricultural development through research, water infrastructure, subsidies and such ilk. Yet the huge region has countered the international trend of intensification of agriculture. Over the last one hundred and fifty years failed attempts have accumulated, from millions of American dollars spent by ambitious Texan entrepreneurs, to Australian families walking off small allotments or soldier settlements, to Indigenous Australians being even further marginalised. This paper explores the relationship between public discourse and actual experience in the environment of "underdeveloped" northern Australia. Through histories of farming schemes it examines the myriad of elements in this social-ecological system and how society learns about its environment, or fails to, through this relationship—a process of gaining landscape literacy.

Bionote: Based in Darwin Kate is Chair of Territory Natural Resource Management, an NGO which covers the Northern Territory and works with people across all landscapes and tenures to look after our environment. Kate also sits on a number of national committees including the Australian Landcare Council and the Advisory Committee for CSIRO's Sustainable Agriculture Flagship. Kate is undertaking a PhD at the Australian National University exploring the history and perceived potential of cropping in northern Australia, and what this reveals about how societies learn from their experience in the environment. Kate was the first Chief Executive of the Lake Eyre Basin Coordinating Group working for 5 years with people across the Basin in central Australia

(1.2million km^2 – about 5 times the size of the UK) designing and establishing the community-based organisation from scratch. Since that time Kate has also worked with Land & Water Australia as their first Knowledge and Adoption Manager developing their inaugural strategy for research into practice, and as an advisor to research organisations managing research for uptake.

Panel 18: Agency and Identity in Environmental Pedagogies *Chair: Cristin Ellis*

Isabel Galleymore, University of Exeter

Questioning Fact and Figuration in the Poetry of Charles Tomlinson and Nature Writing Pedagogies: Although Dana Phillips and David W. Gilcrest recognise that ecocriticism's focus upon nonfictional texts jeopardises the literary nature of nature writing, they continue to advise nature writers to become 'bell-like instruments and empty vessels' (220). Such an approach supposedly negates the self to generate ecocentric writing, yet this paper will question such an assumption and challenge the similar assumption that *metaphorical* approaches to nature writing are egocentric endeavours. To do so, this paper will explore contemporary nature writing pedagogies that prompt factual relationships with the environment and compare this prescriptive quality with the reflexivity in Charles Tomlinson's poetry that interrogates acts of observation. Tomlinson's early collections value a poetics that displays a 'mental fibre beneath the elegance'. Yet his later collections display a curiosity of the boundaries between fact and figuration. Negotiating recent pedagogical theories that environmental commitment depends on factual knowledge, David Orr's discussion of 'personhood' challenges definitions of fact in the light of the self and experiential learning. By juxtaposing these discussions it will be argued that a 'figurative scaffold' supports much of our factual knowledge and can foster more meaningful engagements between the self and the environment. Whilst critiquing certain pedagogies, and giving attention to a poet that ecocriticism has, so far, overlooked, this paper's conclusion will touch upon the larger discussion of the 'objective poetic textures' (Berggren 253) of perception and metaphor as 'not something we can stand outside' (Punter 84).

Bionote: Isabel Galleymore is a first year PhD student at the University of Exeter. Her thesis is concerned with the use of figurative language in environmental poetry and pedagogies and is funded by the AHRC Environment and Sustainability Award.

Uwe Küchler, Universität Bonn

Teaching Ecological Encounters: Empirical Research on Teaching English and the Environment: Since the 1970s, many academic disciplines and school subjects have adopted nature, the environment and sustainability as topics in their own right. Yet, the foreign language classroom is not a neutral terrain. Squarely placed in a society's core value system, it restates a society's collective identity: what is that society trying to communicate to the next generation? The culture of origin creates images to make sense of the world's complexities. As images of a foreign culture, stereotypes are put in the service of an image upheld of the other. The consideration of ecology in foreign language education can be a way to counteract this tendency. Learning about ecology from linguistic, (inter-/trans)cultural and literary perspectives, pupils and teachers scrutinise a crucial component of their identities as well as possibilities for agency and interaction. The learning of foreign languages provides learners with the opportunity to express themselves beyond the borders of their own language community. What is more, foreign language learning introduces learners to different worldviews and, thus, a variety of (cultured) perspectives on the changing environment and its cultural contexts. Because of this, intercultural communicative competence has become one of the most valued goals of foreign language instruction over the past two decades. Yet how can this teaching objective be interrelated with environmental concerns and sustainability? In the paper, I will give a brief overview of the theoretical foundation of research in the field of foreign language education (here the *Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages*, TESOL). Furthermore, research design and first results of an empirical study will be introduced. Special emphasis in the presentation will be put on the contributions that sustainability education can make to fields like foreign language education/EFL and vice versa.

Bionote: Professor Dr. Uwe Küchler studied English and American Studies, French and Sociology at Berlin's Humboldt-Universität, the University of London's Goldsmiths' College and at Georgetown University in Washington DC. He received his first degree Magister Artium in 2001. He has worked in the publishing house *Berlin Verlag* and for the *Literary Scouting Agency Maria B. Campbell Associates* in New York City. Between 2001 and 2005, he was a Hans-Böckler-scholar and member of the Postgraduate College, Knowledge Management and Self-Organization in the Context of Teaching and Learning Processes' at Universität Dortmund. In his dissertation he pursued questions of intercultural learning and teaching in the context of internationalisation in higher education. In 2006, Küchler worked as a program coordinator at the Carl-Schurz-Haus/German-American

Institute e.V. in Freiburg (Breisgau). He organised teachers' training and a lecture series. In October 2006, Dr. Küchler came to Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg. In the winter term 2012/13, Dr. Uwe Küchler served as a substitute professor in the Department. Avocationally, he teaches English at Freies Gymnasium Großkorbetha. In February 2013, Dr. Uwe Küchler was appointed *Junior professor* (Teaching of English as a Foreign Language) at Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn.

Panel 19: **Animal Agencies and Materialities** *Chair: Louise Chamberlain*

Payal Taneja, Queen's University, Canada [SKYPE]

Animal Agency and Guardianship in *Flush: A Biography:* Over the past few years, literary scholars influenced by the animal studies strand of ecocriticism have examined the limits of anthropomorphisation in *Flush* (1933), in which Virginia Woolf tries to imagine the inner life of a canine co-habitant. Modernist critics, on the other hand, have underscored the ways in which Flush functions as a hot commodity due to his breeding. However insightful discussions of Flush as an anthropomorphised or commodified canine have proven, they do not adequately encompass the complexity of the pet-owner relationship presented in this text. Drawing on post-humanist and anthropological theories, I argue that the canine co-habitant of this narrative should be read as a gift, one that helps to cement the friendship of two female characters. By recognising the agential separability of their companion animal and endowing him with spiritual and sentimental values, Mary and Elizabeth oppose the objectification of their pet. The fact that these female figures resist reducing Flush to an economic unit shows that they act not merely as the owners of their companion animal, but also as his custodians. Through the pet exchange Mary and Elizabeth enact, the novel expresses disdain for an understanding of the animal that is defined purely by the ideology of the marketplace, an ideology that depends on denying animal agency and difference. Overall, my paper explains the ways in which *Flush* attempts to think beyond the notion of profit in order to counter a mercantilist approach to the animal.

Bionote: Payal Taneja is a doctoral candidate at Queen's University in Canada. She is writing her thesis on human-animal representations in popular and high modernist fiction from the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. Her specialisation is in British modernism with additional interest in cosmopolitan and environmental topics.

Diana Villanueva Romero, University of Extremadura /GIECO-Franklin Institute

A Material Reading of Brenda Peterson's *Animal Heart*: In Brenda Peterson's *Animal Heart* (2004) topics such as the notion of science, the limits of animal experimentation, the different faces of activism, and the ways of coping with coexisting identities are knit together in an attempt at revaluing our relationship with nonhuman animals. The story develops around an episode in the life of animal rescuer and wildlife forensic pathologist Isabel Spinner. Through her brother Andrew Isabel meets Marshall McGreggor, an aquatic photographer to whom she is immediately drawn. This relation, however, will take an unusual path after Marshall's heart attack and subsequent surgery in which he is transplanted a baboon heart. Throughout the novel, Peterson presents two main instances of how dispassionate forms of science involving the use of animals lead to the erasure of their ethical significance. In light of these examples, in this paper, it will be highlighted how the objectification of animals by science is contrasted throughout Peterson's novel with other modes of looking at them. In these alternative approaches, animals are seen not as fragments of a whole that can be decomposed into repair or disposable parts, but as agentic beings with a soul. The aim of this paper is to question the validity of our understanding of animals in today's scientific practice. Within this, xenotransplantation is an especially suitable image of the contingent status of the species boundary and the instrumentalisation of bodies typical of a Cartesian mechanistic model. Ultimately, I will argue, inspired by some strands of the so-called new materialisms, that the borders between the parallel dichotomous structures mind/spirit/human versus body/matter/animal can be blurred by a paradigm shift emanating from contact with non-Western and nonandrocentric ways of knowing.

Bionote: Diana Villanueva Romero teaches at the University of Extremadura, Spain. She holds a Master's Degree in American Studies at the University of Alcalá as well as a Master's Degree in Modern Languages at the same institution. She is been an active member of GIECO - Research Group in Ecocriticism at the Franklin Institute, University of Alcalá, since its foundation and has collaborated in the past with Friends of Thoreau's environmental program in Spain. She is both interested in ecocriticism and animal studies.

Catherine Parry, University of Lincoln

Mortifying Flesh and Consoling Skin: Western conceptions of the human have for centuries depended on the contrasting elements of flesh and spirit; animals have tended to be relegated both discursively and physically to

the flesh side of this distinction. Literary Animal Studies, unable to encounter actual animal flesh in its critical practice, is interested in the function and production of textual animals and the way in which the use of 'the animal' as a method of defining 'the human' is re-inscribed or challenged in literary texts. Anat Pick, in *Creaturely Poetics*, is concerned with "the flesh and blood vulnerability of beings", and evolves a methodology for reading texts which pays *attention* to the living body. In studies of two very different novels – Liz Jensen's *Ark Baby*, and Aryn Kyle's *The God of Animals* – this paper will consider how narrative form can invoke the fleshiness of living beings (human or animal), and will pay attention to the textualised flesh of living beings in fiction in order to develop the multiple inflections of mortifying flesh as a critical model. It will also consider the novels' interest in skin and personhood, achieved through the exposure of vulnerable flesh to the complex necessities and desires of humans. If, as Pick says, the human-animal divide is a system of consolatory thinking intended to deflect reality, then in these novels the skin of such a consolation is breached and peeled back to reveal dissected animal flesh and shattered bones, and their mortified flesh cannot be ignored.

Bionote: Catherine Parry is a doctoral candidate and part-time lecturer at the University of Lincoln, and is researching the terms and conditions of the human-animal divide in twenty-first century fiction. Her research interests include literary animal studies, ecocriticism, posthumanism and science fiction. Her chapter on literary rural representations is to be published by Routledge shortly in a volume of essays entitled *Interpreting Rurality; Multi-disciplinary approaches.*

Panel 20: New Nature Writing *Chair: Terry Gifford*

Richard Kerridge, Bath Spa University

***Cold Blood* – a reading:** I would like to give a reading from my new work of creative non-fiction, *Cold Blood*, which is under contract from Chatto & Windus, and was given the 2012 Roger Deakin Award by the Society of Authors. The book combines nature writing, personal memoir, popular science and cultural analysis. Its subject is reptiles and amphibians: their natural history, their evolution, their ways of perceiving the world, their embeddedness in their ecosystems, their vulnerability to the current wave of extinctions, the different cultural and symbolic meanings they have now, and the way they fascinated me and my friends in childhood. *Cold Blood* is also a book about the changing colours and light on heathland, and about adolescence, friendship, parents, sexuality, fear, desire, mortality, the suburbs and edgelands, and the contemporary meaning of wild nature. A sample from the book, published in *Granta* in December 2011, can be found here: http://www.granta.com/New-Writing/Our-Adder. This will be an interdisciplinary paper, part ecocriticism and part creative writing. I will preface my reading with a presentation of the work as an example of what in Britain has been called 'the new nature writing' - nature writing in which human social life and wild nature are not separate zones, and in which the human protagonist is situated in evolutionary history. The chapter from which I will read draws upon some of Lynne Isbell's ideas about the role of snakes in human evolutionary history, attempts to achieve a conscientious anthropomorphism, and tells a story about a failure to strike a blow.

Bionote: Richard Kerridge has published books and articles on ecocritical topics ranging from ecocritical theory, Shakespeare and Thomas Hardy to present-day fiction, poetry, nature writing and film. He was co-editor of *Writing the Environment* (Zed Books, 1998), the first collection of ecocritical essays to be published in Britain, and a leading member of the team that wrote *The Face of the Earth: Natural Landscapes, Science and Culture*, (University of California Press, 2011 - lead author SueEllen Campbell). *Beginning Ecocriticism*, a general introduction to the field, will be published by Manchester University Press in 2014. He has recently contributed essays to *the Oxford Guide to Ecocriticism and Environmental Writing* and to *Teaching Green Cultural Studies*, both edited by Greg Garrard, with whom he is co-editor of the new Continuum ecocriticism series. Richard was founding Chair of ASLE-UK and is currently Treasurer. He served as an elected member of the ASLE Executive Council (the first non-American to do so). He lectures in English Literature and Creative Writing at Bath Spa University, where he also leads the MA in Creative Writing and co-ordinates Humanities research and graduate studies. His nature writing has been broadcast on BBC national radio, and published in various magazines, most recently *Poetry Review* (Winter 2011) and *Granta*. He has twice received the *BBC Wildlife* Award for Nature Writing.

Christian Hummelsund Voie, Mid Sweden University

'Thriving on the road to ruin': Agency and Necroregions in Louisiana's Nature Writing: This paper will argue that some of the most intriguing exemplars of so-called new nature writing, or what this paper labels Anthropocene nature writing, have been inspired by the vast and rich wetlands on Louisiana's Gulf coast. In this vibrant place, where the bottom is literally dropping out from under their feet, nature writers chronicle a complex dance of agencies, human and non-human, as they try to decipher the interconnecting network of

causes that are sending one of America's greatest ecosystems and cultural treasures the way of Atlantis. Rather than venture a traditional escape into the wild, Louisiana's nature writing introduces its readers to a region where multiple human and non-human worlds orbit one another, often hardly interacting, but intra-acting in ways science has barely begun to discern, many of which are speeding along one of America's greatest ongoing environmental disasters. My paper focuses on the last decade of Louisiana nature writing, and takes its structural cue from the metamorphoses it has recently undergone in response to real world crises. It will show how the genre changes, expands and adapts as the region suffers through the hammer blows of environmental disaster, from Katrina raising the specter of global warming, to the trans-corporeal neurosis following on the heels of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Writing with great urgency in an ecosystem in "metabolic meltdown", where everything is on the move, and all boundaries are permeable, ceaselessly shifting, forming and reforming, Louisiana's nature writing strives to adapt and remain an act of hope and defiance in what could well be an emerging necroregion.

Bionote: Christian Hummelsund Voie is a doctoral student at Mid-Sweden University, Härnösand, Sweden. The working title of his dissertation is "Nature Writing of the Anthropocene," and his current research interests include ecocritical ethics and activism, posthuman subjectivity, material ecocriticism, environmental fiction, nature writing and architecture. His latest published articles are "Ecocriticism, the Germinating Instance and the Four Landscapes of Nature Writing" (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011) and "Permeable Borderlines: Discovering an Ecocritical and Architectural Ecotone" (Peter Lang, 2012)

Astrid Bracke, Radboud University Nijmegen/University of Amsterdam

The New British Nature Writing: Forms, Themes and Ecocritical Approaches: Although over the past few years many critics have noted and defined new (British) nature writing – most recently in *Green Letters* – few have considered the implications of the genre to ecocritical analysis. In the proposed paper I will argue that new nature writing embodies a challenge to ecocriticism that is long overdue, requiring it to come to terms with issues of textual and narratological form, as well as urbanised landscapes. Adding my own definitions to existing ones, I characterise new nature writing as concerned with what I call "contemporary natural spaces": landscapes that are *acknowledged* as man---made, but *experienced* as nature, such as Paul Farley and Michael Symmons Roberts' "edgelands". Using a number of new nature writing works (Jamie; Macfarlane; Sprackland; Woolfson), I will discuss the kinds of contemporary natural spaces these texts present, and what these imply about human---nature relations. Subsequently, the focus will be on the ways in which form and content intersect to present contemporary natural spaces, and relationships between the human and nonhuman natural environment. Contemporary ecocriticism is as yet ill equipped to analyse form and non--- traditional natural landscapes. Hence, in the final section of the proposed paper, I will introduce an ecocritical methodology more attuned to form and contemporary natural spaces, by drawing on terminology provided by narratology, nature writing and urban studies.

Bionote: Astrid Bracke teaches at the Radboud University Nijmegen and University of Amsterdam. Her dissertation, Ecocriticism and the Contemporary British Novel (2012), is the first extensive ecocritical study of contemporary British fiction, as well as the first to propose a narratological dimension to ecocriticism. Her new project, Narrating Nature, examines the development of the new British nature writing since 2000, its depiction of contemporary natural landscapes, and particularly the ways in which ecocriticism can engage with these. Her articles have appeared in *English Studies* and *ISLE*, and in the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Ecocriticism*.

Panel 21: Disturbing Encounters: Power, Knowledge, Materiality *Chair: Sherry Booth*

Dominik Ohrem, University of Cologne

The Natures of Power and the Powers of Nature: Perspectives on American Gender History: In recent years, posthumanist, new materialist and material feminist perspectives have challenged us to rethink human bodies and subjectivities in ways that allow for a recognition of the various human corporeal and non-human material forces involved in their production and transformation. Instead of understanding the human body/subject as a closed system, an autonomous agent, or a unilateral materialisation of power/knowledge, embodiment and subjectification should be reconceptualised as potentially disturbing and conflict-ridden but productive encounters between discourses, embodied experiences and worldly materialities. This paper attempts to adopt these important insights for a material-discursive perspective on American gender history which understands the construction of gendered bodies and subjects as the result of interactions between historically specific formations of power/knowledge, human corporeality and the affordances and constraints of non-human environments. If, as Andrew Pickering puts it, "[t]he world makes us in one and the same process in which we make the world," how can we conceptualise "the human" in its distribution across overlapping and

interpenetrating non-human, social, cultural and other environments? This paper will address this question with a particular focus on nineteenth-century American frontier history and constructions of "natural manhood" and the "natural body" against the background of an increasing environmental nationalism. While dominant narratives of American westward expansion are centered on a bounded and sovereign white subject navigating through "hostile" non-human environments that function as spaces of masculine performativity, other accounts posit porous bodies susceptible to and even dependent on the non-human forces that surround and traverse them. Oscillating between desires of mastery and realisations of dependency, nineteenth-century American conceptions of masculine embodiment emerge from the contact zone between non-human material and human corporeal agency and the dominant racial, gender and environmental knowledges of the time.

Bionote: Dominik Ohrem teaches Anglo-American history at the University of Cologne. In his research and teaching he focuses on US-histories of gender and race, the histories of African and Native Americans as well as environmental history. He is currently working on his dissertation about "Wilderness and Transformations of Masculinity in Nineteenth-Century America."

Roman Bartosch, University of Cologne

Encountering Urban Interactions: the Subject and the City in the Fiction of Virginia Woolf: An archetype of messy heterogeneity and an over-complex arena for multiple forms of encounter, the modern city – anthropogenic yet autopoetic – fosters a practice of literary negotiations which, on the one hand, try to represent and simulate urban experience by various means of literary devises and experiments. On the other hand, literary fiction of and about the city never only replicates structures of urban experience but negotiates and sublates them: by providing panoramic perspectives in a context of substantial disorientation; by giving insights into "streams of consciousness" when talk is about anonymity and dissolution; or by creating palimpsestic textures that suggest continuity and connection in an environment often perceived as chaotic, ahistorical and in constant flow. In that they employ agential flows and configurations of numerous subjects and subjectivities, literary experiments spell out avenues for non-dichotomous thinking and understanding. Moreover, literature not only stages material encounters but functions as such an encounter in itself: as materialisations of ideas and discourses, books are material objects worthy of agential analyses. I will show how in Woolf's novels, interconnectedness materialises both on the diegetic and the extradiegetic level, and how her narratives thus function less in terms of a clash of distinct entities such as a clearly delineated subject and its outer world but as readerly encounters with objects, nonhuman subjects, figurations of subjectivity, and their intra-actions. Thus, Woolf negotiates the peculiar nodal character of being a subject through significant fictional means, upon which this paper seeks to comment in order to outline a functional model of literary fiction in the context of current debates on posthumanism, speculative realism and object-oriented ontology.

Bionote: Dr. (des.) Roman Bartosch teaches English literatures at the University of Cologne. He has published on postcolonial and posthumanist theory and in his research focuses on literary theories, especially new formalism, reader reception theory and hermeneutics, and discusses literary canonicity, literary quality and questions of ethical criticism. His book *EnvironMentality – Ecocriticism and the Event of Postcolonial Fiction* will be released with Rodopi in 2013.

Kylie Crane, University of Mainz

Thinking Concrete: In this paper, I want to play with two meanings of the term 'concrete' to tease out (intertextual) encounters between two novels: Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and J. G. Ballard's *Concrete Island*. As a noun, concrete refers to a heavy-duty building material comprising broken stones or sand. In this respect, it has an intimate connection to landscapes elsewhere as it comprises of materials that are absent in other places. The intertextual references between Ballard's and Defoe's novels thus gain further import, as imaginings of the sand from Crusoe's Caribbean island flow into imaginings of the concrete walls of Maitland's London traffic island. As an adjective, concrete references its qualities as a noun, but implies something solid, real, not abstract. It is in this sense that we might say that something is 'set in concrete' meaning that it is fixed and unalterable. Crusoe's construction of dwellings and fences, albeit without modern-day concrete, are read thus as manifestations of fixation: of meaning, property, self, environment. Maitland's environment is characterised, in contrast, by the concrete walls that ostensibly work to prevent his escape yet ultimately seems to work as a commentary on the fixedness of meanings and his willingness to subject himself to such constraints. I will show how reading the two novels together entails thinking about concrete, both as metaphor and as matter.

Bionote: Prof. Kylie Crane teaches Anglophone Literatures and Cultures at the University of Mainz (Germersheim), after studying at Monash University, Tübingen University and the University of Erlangen-

Nuremberg. Her first book *Myths of Wilderness in Contemporary Narratives: Environmental Postcolonialism in Australia and Canada* was published with Palgrave Macmillan in 2012. She has also presented and published on ecocriticism, critical animal studies, indigenous writing (esp. in Australia), and cultural geography.

Panel 22: Interfaces: The Consumption and Production of Becomings *Chair: Louise Squire*

Emma-Jayne Abbots, University of Wales TSD/SOAS
Anna Lavis, University of Birmingham/University of Oxford

Consuming Boundaries: Eating as Generative Act: Eating, as a conceptual and a physical act, brings the environment, foods and bodies into view. In being placed in the eater's mouth, chewed, tasted, swallowed and digested, food's solidities are broken down and rendered into fragments that both materially interact with, and become, the eater's body; a process that concomitantly produces and ruptures interactions between multiple agents, whether they are the food's producers, retailers, material components, or original environmental sources – its *terroir*. Drawing on Deleuze and Guatarri, Latour and actor network theory, this paper unpacks the (often haphazard and unplanned) assemblages and rhizomatic encounters that occur between (human and non-human) bodies, and the environments in which they are situated, within the interactive space of eating.

Bionote: Emma-Jayne Abbots is a Lecturer in Anthropology at the University of Wales Trinity St David and a Research Associate at the SOAS Food Studies Centre, University of London. A political and economic anthropologist, her research centres on the cultural politics and practices of consumption and exchange, with a particular focus on food and eating. She has further interests in intimacies, materialities, the mediation of food/body knowledges, and rural sustainability. She is co-editor (with A. Lavis) of *Why We Eat, How We Eat: Contemporary Encounters Between Foods and Bodies* (Ashgate, 2013).

Bionote: Anna Lavis is a Medical Anthropologist and Research Fellow at the University of Birmingham, where she conducts applied research into first episode psychosis. Also with a focus on individuals' lived experiences and subjectivities of mental illness, Anna's doctorate explored pro-anorexia and she continues to work on eating, food and eating disorders. As a Research Associate in the Anthropology Department at the University of Oxford, she is currently collaborating on projects investigating media representations of obesity. She is the co-editor (with E-J. Abbots) of *Why We Eat, How We Eat: Contemporary Encounters Between Foods and Bodies* (Ashgate 2013).

Luci Attala, University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Conversations over Dinner: Recent botanical studies present plants as responsive subjectivities that communicate metaorganismically. Using these findings, in association with the ideas of the posthumanist and multispecies ethnographic moves, this paper repositions digestion and challenges the assumption that consumption of plant matter is coincidentally beneficial to the consumer and is merely a simplistic one-way process. Focusing on addictions and the process of becoming dinner, this paper suggests that being eaten can be conceived as a chemically based corporeal affiliation between species and a long-term dialogue between the consumer and the consumed.

Bionote: Luci Attala is a Lecturer in Anthropology at the University of Wales Trinity St David. Luci's interests are primarily ethnobotanical. Her work focuses on plant agency by exploring plant-human interactions with specific attention to the relationships of consumption, particularly via ingestion. She is concerned with the ideas of more-than-human, post-humanist and multi-species movements with a view to repositioning plants as 'persons' and as affective players in their relationships with humanity. Luci also works in rural Kenya monitoring the socio-economic consequences associated with a reforestation and tree-planting community project that links Giriama farmers with a farming community in Wales.

Benjamin Coles, University of Leicester

Securing the Borders of Food: Geographical Knowledges and the Reproduction of Place: This paper uses a topographic lens to examine the scales and spatialities through which people secure food, the geographical in/visibilities that inform 'security', and the aesthetic regimes that reproduce their ideological formations(s). It argues that 'security' is spatial, and 'made' in places through ideologically informed material practices and interactions. Furthermore, I argue that it is these very places that define and produce the edges of in/security.

Bionote: Benjamin Coles is a Lecturer in Political and Economic Geography at the University of Leicester. His research interests centre on place, space and scale, with a particular interest in the relationship(s) between place-making, commodity culture and the production and consumption of food.

Samantha Hurn, University of Exeter

Crossing Borders to Become Animal: This paper will explore the transnational trade in endangered wildlife, with particular focus on the current 'rhino crisis' in South Africa. Levels of rhino poaching have reached unprecedented highs in the last year, as organised crime syndicates manage the supply chain to feed demand for rhino horn products across much of Asia. Rhino horn, along with many other parts of many other critically endangered animals are credited with numerous medicinal and social powers, from general panacea and cure for cancer, to status symbol for the upwardly mobile. Rhino horn is ground into a powder and ingested by consumers striving for greater health, wealth and happiness. This process of incorporation, of taking part of a powerful, valuable and endangered animal into the body, creates a particular set of relationships, breaking down boundaries between human and animal as consumer takes on the symbolic qualities of the consumed. Yet this intimate rupture and becoming is only possible because numerous other boundaries and borders have also been blurred, broken or violated. These different boundaries, interfaces, connections and disruptions will be discussed in the hope of finding some way out of this messy and unsustainable situation.

Bionote: Samantha Hurn is a Lecturer in Anthropology in the Department of Sociology and Philosophy at the University of Exeter where she also convenes an award winning MA in Anthrozoology. Samantha has conducted fieldwork in Wales, Spain, South Africa and Swaziland. Her book *Humans and Other Animals* is published by Pluto Press.

Panel 23: Constituting Posthuman Agency *Chair: Roman Bartosch*

Dana Phillips, Towson University/Rhodes University

'How can you lie to a horse?' Cormac McCarthy and the Animal: In Cormac McCarthy's *Border Trilogy*, animals act as agents who do things routinely and deliberately, thereby helping to shape both the plot and the point of view over the course of three lengthy novels. Their vital role, moreover, is not merely a feature acknowledged in the trilogy's narration: McCarthy's human characters all recognise the agency of animals, and they often ponder questions of the sort that philosophers and scientists—especially biologists and ecologists—have long debated. These questions, which the cowboys featured in the trilogy translate (in effect) into folk idioms, include whether the presence in a landscape of large predatory animals makes that landscape—that "country," as the cowboys phrase it—more alive, and perhaps even an agent in its own right; whether the positioning of a horse's eyes means its consciousness must be divided between right and left, with sometimes fatal consequences; and whether it is possible to "lie to a horse." McCarthy's human characters thus recognise, however dimly, that they do not provide natural indexes for the measuring of agency and awareness. This suggests that McCarthy rejects a governing principle of his chosen genre: the centrality of human consciousness. I will argue that his redistribution of agency and awareness is, paradoxically, the primary source of the uncanny novelistic affects he achieves in the *Border Trilogy*, a posthumanist and therefore non-anthropocentric narrative that ought to be of keen interest to ecocritics.

Bionote: Dana Phillips received his Ph.D. from Duke University. He is currently an associate professor of English at Towson University in Maryland and an honorary senior research associate at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa. He has published articles on literature and the environment, on ecocriticism, and on Walt Whitman, Cormac McCarthy, Don DeLillo, and Henry David Thoreau. His book *The Truth of Ecology: Nature, Culture, and Literature in America* was published by Oxford University Press in 2003; it won the Modern Language Association's prize for best book by an independent scholar in 2004, and was republished by Oxford Scholarship Online in 2007.

Su Chiu-Hua, Soochow University

Pi's Lifeboat: On Latour's Idea of the Collective and its Posthuman Ethics: In Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*, a fantasy about the survival of a young boy and a Bengal tiger on a lifeboat in the perilous sea after shipwreck, the story is told in a far-from-realistic fashion that pushes our imagination to the extreme and testifies the motto of wildlife conservation, "to live and let live." I propose to read the novel as an allegory in which the direst situation of our age of ecological crisis is envisioned. On the surface, the story seems to exemplify the humanistic myth of *homo faber:* a man who makes use of tools to change his environment. However, the success of the survival, I argue, is impossible if it had not been for the co-dependence among the human boy, the tiger, and various tools. The lifeboat is an imbroglio, a complicated and precarious formation, or, in Bruno Latour's term, a Weaver of Morphism. In this study, I would like to read the "life" of Pi on the lifeboat as a Collective, rather than a Society, because the "becoming-with" is a heterogeneous assembly which fleshes out the Nonmodern Constitution that Latour discusses in *We Have Never Been Modern*. The interweaving of quasi-subject and quasi-objects is clearly shown in the employment of things equipped in the boat and invention of new tools by things at hand.

Moreover, Pi's interaction with Richard Parker makes visible the intermediary which is often hidden in the Modern Constitution. Hopefully, the lifeboat's properties of object-discourse-nature-society can therefore lay bare the possibility of a new democracy that is extended to things themselves.

Bionote: Su Chiu-Hua is an assistant professor in the English Department at Soochow University, Taiwan. She has published several journal articles, such as, ""Back to the World of Light: On Tactile Subject in Melville and Merleau-Ponty" and "From Everydayness to Programmability: A Discussion of the Posthuman Tendency in Stiegler's Theory via the Nineteenth Century Magic Theatre." Her study interests include: phenomenology, animal studies, magic studies, and posthumanism.

Christine Temko, Université Catholique de Louvain

Agency, Identity and the Constitution of the Ecological Subject in Don DeLillo's *Underworld*, Jonathan Franzen's *Freedom* and *Strong Motion*: Starting from DeLillo's *Underworld* (1997), and Franzen's *Strong Motion* (1992) and *Freedom* (2010), this paper focuses on material ecocriticism's "search for […] connections between matter and agency on the one side, and the intertwining of bodies, natures and meanings [social, political, cultural, and symbolic] on the other side". Although these authors present highly contrasting views of the ecological subject, its constitution and its degree of agency within the environmental struggle, they both examine interrelations between material-discursive configurations and ecological identity, be it through "bottom-up" or "top-down" phenomena. DeLillo's waste executive Nick Shay acknowledges and admires the force of garbage and landfills precisely for their ugly aspects - as places where deeds and discourses ultimately come to shed and shit their material effects. Franzen's ecological activists, however, systematically become involved with the very corporations which they are struggling against due to their conspicuous lack of agency. Hardcore conservationist Walter Berglund, for instance, is stricken with personal and professional hopelessness as he strives to preserve functional bird habitats within compartmentalised suburban landscapes. While *Underworld* is concerned with how the regulation of waste through infrastructure and discourse has trickle-down effects on the constitution of the subject, both *Strong Motion* and *Freedom* centre on links between personal identity, filiation and sociopolitical affiliation, showing that the formation of these discourses can potentially be traced back to (agonal) dynamics of individuation within familial and social groups.

Bionote: Christine Temko is currently a research fellow at the Université Catholique de Louvain (Belgium). Her work examines the creative representation of waste in contemporary American literature. It aims at establishing how the portrayal of man-made detritus both gestures towards the limits of our capitalistic system and attempts to reimagine the terms of our relationship to the object-world. It is concerned with the cultural contexts which lead us to categorise things as either spoiled or still useful, and in doing so hopes to prove that the way in which we conceptualise waste is closely tied to the manner in which we view our identity as a species.

Panel 24: Ecological Agency: Identity and Community *Chair: Kylie Crane*

Hala Ewaidat, Mansoura University (SKYPE)

Al-Sharqawy's *Al-Ardd* (The Land): An Early Ecocritical Prediction of Agricultural Disaster in Egypt: Abdel-Rahman Al- Shrqwy (1920-1989) was born in an Egyptian village. He graduated in the college of Law, worked in journalism, moved from the village to the city life with all its noise yet remained loyal to his roots: the case of the "Peasant" remained his permanent creative worry. In his writings - which varied between poetry, novels, plays and Islamic writings- he defended human ethics, love, justice, freedom and more importantly Egypt's agricultural land. For thousands of years farmers in Egypt suffered to preserve their land, the Nile water, their domestic animals, and even farm birds. This is the major theme of *Al-Ardd* (*The Land*), a novel that examines the bond between Egyptians and their agricultural land, between the human and the non-human with its final message: Egyptians are ready to sacrifice their lives to preserve the agricultural land of their ancestors. Many critics consider Sharqawy's novel a model for realistic socialism in Arabic Literature. He laid our hands on the contradictions the countryside faced in the thirties of the twentieth century: occupation, feudalism, corruption and injustice which almost led to a struggle for survival. Yet, this paper focuses on *Al-Ardd* as an early eco-critical exploration in Arabic literature that presented in the seventies Sharqawy's early warning of the dangers Egypt is facing in the twenty-first century after the crisis of building on the agricultural land especially in the last thirty years that witnessed an unprecedented transgression of the farmland. On the danger of building on farmlands, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation has warned that global farm production needs to rise by 70 per cent in 40 years to feed an extra 2.4 billion people. But in Egypt the population rises and the farm land is vanishing. Last year the population stood at 84.5 million, up from 27.8 million in 1960. Around 99 per cent of the population lives near the banks of the river Nile (about 5.5 per cent of Egypt's landmass). As for

the farmland, in the *Egyptian Gazette* A'laa –Koddous Allah mentions in her article, *We have to live somewhere*, that something like 10,000-15,000 feddans of agricultural land are lost per year, sometimes less, sometimes more. The famous American/Egyptian scientist Farouq el-Baz has called on people to stop building on agricultural land, warning that, if they continue to do so at the present rate, all the agricultural land will have disappeared by 2085 and bread will cost dollars. The present study attempts a reading of Sharqawy's work in the light of eco-criticism.

Bionote: I am an Assistant Professor in the Department of English, Mansoura University, Egypt and former Head of the Department of English, College of Education, Dammam University, Saudi Arabia. I have been teaching English language, Literature and Culture at Mansoura University and Dammam University in Saudi Arabia for 28 years. I taught English courses at the American University in Cairo, and Arabic courses for Canadians in ISWAP in Egypt. I have attended more than ten national and international conferences. I am a member of ASLE-UKI and MLA

Francesca Zunino, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia

Reintegrating Naturalcultural Identities: Contemporary Mexican Indigenous Stories: The natural vs cultural spheres opposition is culturally-determined and implies artificial differences (Bang 2007) that constrain our identity perceptions and social praxis (Bang and Døør 1993). This duality often leads to destructive social-environmental practices, institutionalising contrasting moral and aesthetic binary options (Harré et Al. 1999:37-40). This paper analyses a range of contemporary Mexican indigenous stories from the Nahuas, Totonac, Mayan and Mixtec communities (CoNaCultA 1994; 1996; 1997; 1999) showing how they provide an integrational, non-anthropocentric perspective (Fill 2007) and a synthesis of one contextualised nature-culture ecosystem (Latour 1993; Döring and Zunino in press) along the lines of deep ecology (Naess 1973). Non-European thought, language and meaning creation systems offer an alternative "greenspeak" (Ibid.) without separating human from natural identities and agents. These narratives portray reality as a complex network of interconnected beings with a fluid natural-cultural relation, sharing one fate: maize cries and dances, babies are born from women and birds, stones walk and plants sing to god. The actants-heroes are animals and plants speaking and interacting with humans. Iguanas, weeds, frogs, trees are agential expressions representing one synchretic identity with human, natural, and divine attributes. Applying the philosopher R. Panikkar's (1994) ecosophical cosmoteandrism's perspective, that is integrating the cosmic-natural, the spiritual-religious and the human-cultural domains of our perception of reality and of life, these contemporary traditional stories underline how Mexican indigenous communities still release natural and human elements from their "limited meaning or restricted identity" (Marmon Silko 1996: 266), having an inclusive world vision. With an anticipatory history perspective (DeSilvey et Al. 2011), this analysis shows that learning from alternative, constructive discourses (Stibbe 2012: 11) can assist our vulnerable times of resilience, adaptation and transition (Folke et Al. 2010; Adger et Al. 2012) for a much-needed natural-environmental, psychological-cognitive and social-cultural domains' discursive re-integration into one networked bio-psycho-social ecosystem (Couto in press).

Bionote: Francesca Zunino has a PhD in Human Sciences (with a thesis in ecolinguistics and cultural studies), an MSc in Environmental Studies in Latin America from the University of London and a joint BA in Languages, Literatures and Linguistics in Spanish and English. She has lived, studied, researched and lectured in Italy, Mexico and the UK. She currently teaches language and translation studies and Spanish and Latin American cultural and literature studies at the University of Modena and at the University of Venice. Her research extends to engaging across disciplines analysing the diachronic aspects of the relationship between Europe and Latin America from an integrated ecological linguistic, socio-cultural and literary standpoint. She particularly focuses on original and contemporary pre-Hispanic and Mesoamerican narratives, multimodal ethnography and gender and identity issues. In June 2012 she organised the very first international Ecolinguistics conference in Italy and she is now editing her first book together with Alwin Fill, titled *Talking about Nature and Culture: Words, Images and Discourses of Language and Ecology.* She is part of the Language and Ecology Research Forum.

Peter I-min Huang, Tamkang University, Taiwan

Taiwanese environmental poet Sheng Wu: Pastoral Poet or Ecopoet?: In *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet*, Ursula Heise articulates the criticism of the position that calls for governments and individuals to restore the planet's lost "natural" environments. This position, as she summarises the attacks upon it, reflects the desire to return to older kinds of environments and is an unfeasible "pastoral countermodel" and sentimental "pastoral residue" (122). In contrast with this position is that of the ecofeminist and environmental justice activist Vandana Shiva. Shiva focuses on the powerful corporate global companies that wrest traditional small scale farms from politically vulnerable communities and transform these places into vast industrially farmed spaces. I

address this particular issue by looking at some recent definitions of "pastoral" by ecocritics J. Scott Bryson, Greg Garrard, and Terry Gifford. Their definitions reflect the impact of the work outside of literature of such environmental justice activists and writers as Shiva. Thus, I also address this issue by commenting on the poetry of Sheng Wu, a Taiwanese poet who, like Shiva, advocates restoring the world to a place that consists of more pastoral places and calls on more political engagement in his pastoral poetry, or what Bryson calls ecopoetry and Gifford calls postpastoral.

Bionote: Peter I-min Huang received his PhD in English from National Taiwan University. He currently holds the position of Associate Professor in the English Department of Tamkang University. He served as the English Department chair from 2008 to 2012, during which time he organised two international conferences on ecocriticism and founded ASLE-Taiwan (2009). His current ecocritical interests and research are in ecofeminism and Native American literature. He has published articles in *Foreign Literature Studies, Ecozon@, ASLE-Japan Journal, Indian Journal of Ecocriticism*, and *Journal of Poyang Lake*. His latest publication is the book chapter "Corporate Globalization and the Resistance to It in Linda Hogan's *People of the Whale* and in Sheng Wu's Poetry" (*East Asian Ecocriticism*, ed. Simon Estok and Won-chung Kim, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

Panel 25: Identity and Agency in a Time of Environmental Crisis *Chair: Pippa Marland*

John Parham, University of Worcester

The Importance of Being Elastic: Bergson, Humour, Environmental Rhetoric: Exploring some implications for environmentalism of Henri Bergson's 'Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic', I will begin by arguing – via the comedian Sacha Baron Cohen ('Ali G') – that environmentalists are, more often, the butt of humour, a process that can be understood and counteracted via Bergson. Bergson makes two points: that humour has a disciplinary function – holding over 'deviant' groups the threat of ridicule or humiliation; that the most inherently comic trait is rigidity, 'automatism', 'inelasticity'. In this analysis, environmentalists attract ridicule because the earnestness of (most) environmental rhetoric is out of step with a capitalist, consumerist culture in a state of constant 'carnival' – of 'cool', irony, irreverence. 'In a culture of fun', Michael Billig writes, 'seriousness can operate at a disadvantage'; secondly, that major 'performative' modes of environmentalism are often *out*moded, conventional, and 'inelastic', self-imposed types vulnerable to precisely the ridicule Bergson sketches and Cohen, too easily, demonstrates. Arguing, then, that environmentalism must converse with, adopt, transform, and subvert popular culture – and highlighting an *Alternative and Activist New Media* nourished, Leah Lievrouw argues, by an 'acute sense' of both contemporary culture and 'irony and humour' – I'll conclude with two comedians who have attempted to re-shape environmentalism within popular cultural forms: Marcus Brigstocke's inversion of disciplinary humour in attacking climate change denial and car driving; and Bill Bailey's deployment of incongruity – in modes of performance drawn from popular music – to explore human-nonhuman relations.

Bionote: John Parham teaches media and cultural studies at the University of Worcester and is co-editor of the ASLE-UKI journal *Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism* (Routledge). He has published, recently, ecocritical essays on British and Australian punk - including a forthcoming essay on John Cooper Clarke - Alice Oswald/ecopoetry, and the crime writer Fred Vargas. He is currently writing a book, *Green Media and Popular Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

Nicholas Beuret, University of Leicester

Looking Forward to the End: Inhuman Catastrophe and the Dark Mountain Project: *"We are not sure everything will be fine. We are not even sure, based on current definitions of progress and improvement, that we want it to be."* – Uncivilisation: the Dark Mountain manifesto (Kingsnorth and Hine, 2009). The advent of the Anthropocene --- our current geological epoch marking the rise of humanity as a geological force --- seems to have arrived just in time for the end of the world. And while many in the UK environment movement look to defer any final ecological reckoning, the Dark Mountain Project welcomes it's not so warm embrace. This paper seeks to explore the rise and work of this project as a reaction to the failure of environmentalism (Hamilton, 2011). In particular, the paper examines how the Dark Mountain Project's stance of radical fatalism is framed by their vision of the immanent arrival of ecological catastrophe. Drawing on Lauren Berlant's characterisation of genre (2011), I explore the political and organisational effects of the eco---catastrophic imaginary that operates within the Dark Mountain Project. I contend that this imaginary illustrates an impasse (ibid) in ecological praxis, one that stems from the importation of an *inevitably* catastrophic future into the present. This impasse is characterised within the UK environment movement by a pervasive sense that a radical social transformation is impossible. Radical fatalism can be morose or joyful, but regardless of the passions it generates, as a mode of political affect it refuses the practices of deferral and instead looks to survivalism, seeking to prefigure the

disaster communities that will continue through the collapse of civilisation generated by eco-catastrophe. This paper makes use of an analytical autoethnographic methodology combined with critical discourse analysis of the Dark Mountain Projects publications.

Bionote: Nicholas Beuret is a second year PhD student at the School of Management, University of Leicester. Prior to this he was a campaigner at Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Island for four years as well as an active member of the UK environment movement. His current research investigates the political and organisational effects of the catastrophic imaginary within the context of neoliberalism and the current ecological and economic crisis.

Hugh Dunkerley, University of Chichester

Beyond Romantic Environmentalism: Environmentalism has largely, up until now, defined itself in opposition to many aspects of capitalism and to technological fixes such as GM crops and nuclear power. In fact, for many environmentalists, such opposition has become, I would suggest, an article of faith. Deriving their views from such assumptions, Greens have often framed a sustainable future as one where humans reduce their numbers and somehow return to a more holistic dwelling with nature. I would term such thinking Romantic Environmentalism. However, in his recent book *The God Species*, Mark Lynas shows how many of the assumptions of the Green movement regarding GM, organic farming and nuclear power, for example, are in fact as unscientific as the views put forward by climate change deniers. In addition to this, Lynas suggests, the growing population and the increasing demand for a western standard of living for all will not go away. Instead Lynas, a former Romantic Environmentalist himself, suggests that rather than step back from technological engagement, we must use everything we have at our disposal to mitigate the effects of human activity on the biosphere. He also submits that, as capitalism is the in effect the only game in town, we must work to adapt it so that it benefits all. In this paper, I will use Lynas's work as a catalyst to examine narratives of environmentalism and to ask whether we have now reached the end of Romantic Environmentalism as useful idea.

Bionote: I teach English and Creative Writing at The University of Chichester. I have been involved with ASLE UK-I since its original incarnation as ASLE UK, of which I was vice-chair for a number of years. My particular interests are contemporary poetry and the environment and, more widely, literature and environmental crisis. I have published a number of articles on contemporary poetry and ecopoetics. In 2004 I hosted and ran the ASLE UK biennial conference at Chichester. I am also a poet and short story writer.

Panel 26: Proto-Ecological Encounters II: Historicising the Ecological Encounter *Chair: Katherine Lynes*

Thue Sebastian Winkler, Pembroke College, University of Cambridge

'A Green Chaos': The Postmodern Nature of John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman*: In his 1979 essay *The Tree,* John Fowles wrote that 'the key to my fiction, for what it is worth, lies in my relationship with nature.' Throughout all his works – both non-fictional and fictional – a recurrent green theme is distinctly recognisable. However, as an acknowledged early master of the postmodern novel, his work has received attention predominantly on account of its formal experimental features. So far, little attention has been given to the theme of nature in his writings although ecocritically inspired readings are now slowly starting to emerge. However, these readings are all marked by a certain uneasiness about Fowles's status as a postmodern author. Some reject the label, arguing that his apparent faith in external material reality belie what they see as the strong postmodern emphasis on textuality, while others simply sidestep the issue and avoid commenting on the postmodern aspects of the writing. This paper will explore what happens when the postmodern meets the green and chart the many different influences on Fowles that caused the two to coexist in *The French Lieutenant's Woman.* It will investigate Fowles's conception of nature as an open-ended source of human creativity which resists ultimate fixed readings. Finally, it will be argued that Fowles's writing both conforms to and deviates from what is typically considered postmodern and that his work is best understood alongside a historicised understanding of the different stages and transformations of the term.

Bionote: Thue Sebastian Winkler is a Ph.D. candidate in English Literature at Pembroke College, University of Cambridge. He holds BA and MA degrees from the University of Copenhagen and an MA from King's College, London. His research interests include British and Postcolonial literatures from the 19th century to the present and his current research centres on the representation of nature in the British novel in the 1960s and 70s.

Daniel Finch-Race, Trinity College, Cambridge University

Proto-Ecological Consciousness in Rimbaud's 'Comédie de la soif'*:* Nineteenth-century 'ecological awareness' was based upon the complicated relationship between industrialising society and nature: the scientific modification of the non-human world (and mankind's relation to it) in the pursuit of industrialisation had led to

a rapport based upon exploitation for nourishment, clothing, shelter and profit, and to a quantitative and qualitative breakdown of 'symbiosis' between the environment and humanity. Nature, once perceived as unassailably grand, was pitted against the increasing technological ability and ambition of mankind, and was made to submit to the will of society. The consequent dichotomy between mankind and the non-human world revolves around the idea of humanity interfering in ecological processes, and the 'reaction' of nature to this upset. Rimbaud's verse of 1872 seems entwined with degradation of the (poetic) environment, particularly in 'Comédie de la soif', wherein the poet senses a lost affinity with the world. The ecological theme and irregular prosodology of this poem interface with the evocation of human/non-human interaction and conflict, raising questions about society's pro-environmental responsibilities, the role of the natural world in forming psychosocial values, and the idea of a 'poetic biosphere', wherein nature is a yardstick against which humanity measures the quality of its experience. By utilising notions from biological studies, an ecocritical sense of 'crisis' - channelled through perversions of animal, mineral and vegetal nature - can be deconstructed in this key work of ecologically-minded verse.

Bionote: Daniel Finch-Race is a first-year PhD candidate in Modern and Medieval Languages at the University of Cambridge. His primary research focuses on ecology and irregular prosodology in the latter verse of Baudelaire and Rimbaud, as well as eco-poetic correspondences with Mallarmé, Verlaine and T. S. Eliot. He is the recipient of an External Research Studentship from Trinity College.

David M Robinson, Oregon State University

The New Henry: Natural History, Science Studies, and Thoreau: Reflecting on his decision in the early 1850s to begin learning methodically the names of the plants around Concord, Thoreau reflected on the relative ease with which he came to "know" his "neighbors." "I little thought that in a year or two I should have attained to that knowledge without all that labor. Still I never studied botany, and do not to-day systematically, the most natural system is still so artificial" (J 9:157). Thoreau may belittle his efforts, but he is nevertheless specifying the moment at which he transformed himself into the author capable of completing a literary masterpiece in *Walden*, and launching more ambitious natural history projects that were long unrecognised. The Thoreau of the "American Renaissance," Matthiessen's fabled group of symbol makers, is now understood as the proto-ecologist, whose exacting compilations of data and field observations represent a valuable scientific legacy, and stand as an exemplar of the modern mind engaging the materiality of natural processes. This paper will survey this remarkable shift in Thoreau's reputation, noting the growing awareness of the environmental crisis (the work of Lawrence Buell), and the challenge of newly edited texts (the work of Bradley P. Dean) that reshaped his critical identity. We are at a moment in which Thoreau's phenological charts and survey mapping are receiving intensive scholarly attention, works that were recently considered sub-literary. Thoreau seems to have emerged as an entirely new figure, yet his fondness for the "old naturalists" who "sympathize with the creatures which they describe" suggests his ambivalence about the developing systematic and professionalised science of his own day.

Bionote: David M. Robinson is Professor of English and Director of the Centre for the Humanities at Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon. He is author of *Emerson and the Conduct of Life* (Cambridge U Press, 1993), and *Natural Life: Thoreau's Worldly Transcendentalism* (Cornell U Press, 2004), among other works on the American Transcendentalist movement. He is a long-standing member of ASLE and member of the *ISLE* Editorial Board, and published "Wilderness and the Agrarian Principle: Gary Snyder, Wendell Berry, and the Ethical Definition of the Wild" in volume 6 (1999) of *ISLE*.

Panel 27: African Ecocritical Identities *Chair: Luci Attala*

James Maina Wachira, Moi University [Skype]

Nature in Poetry and Poetry for Nature: Insights from the Samburu of Kenya: This paper discusses the nature/culture boundary in some poetry the Samburu perform. The poetry features plants, animals they raise and those found in the semi-arid region the community occupies. It archives values that sustain the community. An analysis of its performance reveals the community's strategy in protecting nature. I demonstrate with two poems how the Samburu conserve acacia trees and ostriches. Ostriches provide feathers that male initiands need during circumcision. Circumcision marks transition from childhood to adulthood. The community benefits from acacia in more than seven ways. I collected the poems among the Samburu of Wamba between August, 2009 and October, 2009. I augment the analysis of the poems with data I collected through informed conversations with respondents at Wamba. With the aid of some research assistants I recorded, transcribed and translated the poems. I read the role of the poetry using Mikhail Bakhtin's ideas on discourse and John Carlos

Rowe's on structure. Michel Foucault's principles on the production of discourse account for the Samburu's ingenuity – of producing poetry and an element of its culture to safeguard nature, the(ir) environment

Bionote: I am a PhD candidate in the Department of Literature, Theatre & Film Studies in the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Moi University. I have taught English and Literature in secondary schools in Kenya. At the time of writing the paper, I was also serving in the Department of Literature as a part-time lecturer. My interest in studying poetic texts that represent the environment developed when I was teaching at St. Theresa' Secondary School, Wamba in Wamba county. During a lesson a student asked about the procedure for classifying poetry performed to animals. That was my first such experience. That was in 2007. In 2008 I enrolled for the MPhil. In November 2010 I attended a conference in Nairobi. The conference was organised by NEMA (The National Environment Authority). I presented a paper and interacted with some individuals who had analysed the role of poetry in conserving the environment. I ended up writing a thesis on the Samburu Oral praise poetry. The material used for this paper was part of the data I had collected in Wamba.

Felicity Hand, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Decaying Humanity in Post-Independent Zanzibar: The debut novel of British Zanzibari writer Abdulrazak Gurnah features a lone male protagonist, Hassan, who appears to shoulder the blame for the people's disillusions in the aftermath of the 1964 Revolution in Zanzibar. In *Memory of Departure* (1987) Hassan is a peripheral figure, more at home at the docks, a space crossed by traces of slavery and also of pre-European civilisations. Prospects are dim for a young man of Arab ancestry as shown by the physical decay, the material manifestation of a corrupt and diseased social body. This paper aims to read *Memory of Departure* through the lens of postcolonial ecocriticism, that is a reading that focuses on both the aesthetic function of the literary text and the sociopolitical issues that it raises. Form jostles side by side with content through a dialectic relationship with what Huggan and Tiffin call "the continuing centrality of the imagination" (12) and the discourses of colonial and neocolonial exploitation. The ambiguity of the boundaries between the human and the animal is foregrounded by images of disease, corruption, filth and neglect. They mimic the obscenity of the post-independent, militarised state that Zanzibar has become. I conclude the paper by suggesting that the need to consider humanity in environmental discourses allows an opening up of the ecocritical canon and a reminder of the interconnectedness between nature and culture in postcolonial spaces.

Bionote: Felicity Hand is senior lecturer in the English Department of the Autonomous University of Barcelona. She teaches post-colonial literature and history and culture of the British Isles. She has published articles on various Indian and East African writers including Vikram Seth, Ved Mehta, Salman Rushdie, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, M.G.Vassanji and Abdulrazak Gurnah and a full-length study of the Mauritian author Lindsey Collen. She is the head of the research group Ratnakara <http://grupsderecerca.uab.cat/ratnakara> which explores the literatures and cultures of the South West Indian Ocean. At present she is head of a research project financed by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness which focuses on the Indian community of South Africa.

Peter Mortensen, Aarhus University

Ascetic Encounters: Afrocentric Eco-Critique in Hans Paasche and Karen Blixen: The development and articulation of ecological consciousness and critique has been mediated in complex and ambiguous ways by colonial and postcolonial encounters between European and non-European peoples. In this essay I discuss and compare two modern writers, the German Hans Paasche (1881-1920) and the Danish Karen Blixen (1885-1962), connecting their interest in industrial pollution, wilderness conservation, dieting and animal vivisection to their active (if conflicted) role in the European colonisation of Africa. Among many other striking similarities between these patrician writers, Paasche served as navy officer in German East Africa (Tanzania) from 1905 to 1908, while Blixen acted as manager of a coffee plantation in British-controlled Kenya from 1914 to 1931. Focusing on Paasche's satirical novel *Die Forschungsreise das Afrikaners Lukanga Mukara ins innerste Deutschland* (1912) and Blixen's fictionalised memoir *Out of Africa* (1937), I am particularly interested in understanding how Paasche and Blixen interpreted Africa through the lens of asceticism – a philosophy harking back to classical antiquity that had recently been revitalised by the rise of early twentieth-century body culture, life reform and other anthropotechnic practices believed capable of repairing the modern human being's "unnatural" relationship to the self and the natural world. While it contributed to perpetuating certain enduring mystifications of "the other," I argue, this imaginative framing also allowed Paasche and Blixen to posit a proto-environmentalist critique that innovatively related the human and environmental effects of modernisation in Europe to developments in the colonial world.

Bionote: Educated at Aarhus University and the Johns Hopkins University, I am associate professor of English at Aarhus University, Denmark. Having a long-standing interest in environmentalism and ecocriticism, I have

published a book on romanticism (Palgrave, 2005) as well as many articles on writers like Jane Austen, D. H. Lawrence and Knut Hamsun. I am currently working on a book-length study of green lifestyle reformism in the early 20th-century novel.

Panel 28: Transformational Encounters with Nature *Chair: Michael Pay*e

David Whitley, Cambridge University

Strange Meetings: Everyday Encounters with Nature: This paper explores some of the ways in which everyday encounters with wild creatures may open up a range of fresh connections, insights and feelings. The focus of the paper is the bird of prey that is likely to be most commonly encountered in ordinary, everyday life within north-western Europe, the kestrel. This is a bird that has taken up residence within our cities, is commonly seen hovering in search of prey at the edges of motorways, and regularly comes into the field of awareness, even of people who are otherwise not particularly interested in birds. Tracing interconnections and differences in rhetorical strategy and focus between two well-known lyric poems (Hopkins 'The Windhover' and Ted Hughes' 'Hawk in the Rain') and the popular novel/film *Kes*, I argue that art re-presents encounters with nature as 'events' with potentially transforming outcomes. The paper concludes by considering how these 'events' may be reconfigured and returned to the domain of ordinary experience in discursive prose. Mark Cocker and Richard Mabey's entry on the kestrel in *Birds Britannica* positions the natural history of the bird in relation to all of these literary and filmic encounters, in ways that suggest the emergence of a distinctive ecological ethics and aesthetic. The characteristics and possible effects of such a position are finally reviewed.

Bionote: David Whitley is a lecturer in the Education Faculty at Cambridge University primarily on poetry, film, and children's literature. David has published articles on a number of major poets, and co-edited Poetry and Childhood (2010). His ecocritical study of Disney, 'The Idea of Nature in Disney Animation' was reissued in an updated paperback edition in 2012.

Paloma Villamil Agraso, University of Alcalá /GIECO-Franklin Institute

Could Religion Save the Environment? The Case of *The Fifth Sacred Thing* by Starhawk: Could religion change people's behaviour towards the environment? What if there was a religious belief which considered nature as something sacred? The answer to these questions may be in the feminist and ecotopian science fiction novel *The Fifth Sacred Thing* by Starhawk. This novel covers the issue of environmental damage and the relationship between the oppression of both women and nature at the hands of men and the humankind respectively. However, it also presents the reader a pagan spirituality which considers earth, air, fire and water the four sacred things; and thus, they have to be shared equally by everybody as nobody can truly possess them. In *The Fifth Sacred Thing* Starhawk shows the reader a world without poverty or hunger, where people from different races and sexual orientation live peacefully. This futuristic utopia is also an ecotopia: the ideal society portrayed in Starhawk's novel follows some religious principles which are meant to diminish the society's negative impact on their surrounding environment. In this presentation, I will approach Starhawk's novel from an ecofeminist perspective to identify oppressive cultural patters. Also, I will analyse the influence of this Earth-based belief in those same oppressive patterns. Moreover, I will try to find an answer to the questions proposed in this abstract.

Bionote: My name is Paloma Villamil Agraso and I am from Galicia, Spain. I studied English Philology in the University of A Coruña (Galicia). After I graduated, I did an MA in American Studies in the University of Alcalá (Alcalá de Henares, Madrid). Currently, I am doing a PhD in American Studies. My doctoral thesis deals with approaching science fiction novels (utopias and dystopias in particular) from an ecofeminist and spiritual ecofeminist perspective. I am interested in analysing the relationship between religion and the common oppression of women and nature

Hayden Gabriel, University of St Mark and St John

Tales of Ecology: Which stories might we be telling now in the hope of forming part of a coherent and useful response to environmental crisis – is the question that underpins Hayden's PhD study. The presentation will include both a reading of a short story as an example of one of the many ways in which it is possible to answer thisquestion, and consideration of the impulses relating to that narrative.

Bionote: Hayden Gabriel has recently completed a third novel. She is Programme Leader for Creative Writing at the University of St Mark and St John in Plymouth and is nearing completion of a PhD in Creative Writing which seeks to answer the question, which stories might we be telling now in the hope of forming part of a coherent and useful response to environmental crisis.

Panel 29: Visual Encounters *Chair: John Parham*

Sydney Landon Plum, University of Connecticut

Light, Distance, and Time: Photography in the Field: A quick tour through (roughly) 100 years of (mostly American) nature photography as an expression of aesthetic and cultural values, and as a means to promote conservation. The rhetorical use of photography has become more common as more of the planet and its marginalised inhabitants are endangered. Photography and film are now crucial tools in efforts to span the gap between the endangered and those who might save them — yet without, necessarily, systematic reflection on representational and rhetorical issues. This presentation explores the problematic relationship between the natural world and digital representations. I will also endeavour to enlarge upon the limited critical work in this field, while providing some analysis of the techniques that shape our vision of nature.

Bionote: Since 1999, Sydney Landon Plum has been an adjunct in the English Department at the University of Connecticut, Storrs, where she teaches creative writing and environmental literature. In 2009 Plum received an award for outstanding teaching. She is the author of Solitary Goose published by the University of Georgia Press, and edited *Coming Through the Swamp: The Nature Writings of Gene Stratton Porter*. Plum has a chapter, "Glooscap Makes American Known to the Europeans", in *Facing the Change*, an anthology of writings about climate instability edited by Steven Pavlos Holmes and forthcoming from Torrey House Press in Fall 2013.

Helen Hughes, University of Surrey

With a View to the Environment: The Documentary Films of Nikolaus Geyrhalter: This paper will primarily discuss the documentary film *Abendland* (2011), directed by Nikolaus Geyrhalter and edited by Wolfgang Widerhofer, the title translatable as 'Europe' or 'The West' but also literally as 'Evening Land' or 'The Land Where the Sun Goes Down'. The paper will explore its focus on the theme of 'fortress Europe' and the machinery that automates surveillance procedures, making connections between humans, systems, mechanisms and the morality of restricted access. It will connect this image making with the writings of Bruno Latour, and his project to reconnect science and politics through study of the ways in which science has shaped contemporary social relations. The Austrian documentary filmmaker Nikolaus Geyrhalter has been making a sequence of films focussed on the highly technologised life of Europeans. His films have become in part a study of the environments that such a life has created and a meditation on the effects of that environment on the inhabitants. It is clear in his films that the documentary process is concerned with unblocking the view to the images that confirm the ways in which the environment and hence social relations have been organised by the combination of science and politics. As Geyrhalter puts it: 'I want people to finally see these things that they know happen in the background, and which are normally blocked from your view intentionally.'

Bionote: Helen Hughes is a Senior Lecturer in Film Studies at the University of Surrey. She has published articles and chapters on West German cinema, Austrian experimental film (Valie Export, Ferry Radax), Kafka adaptations, GDR and new Austrian documentary, and eco docs (Hubert Sauper, Rob Stewart, Niklaus Geyrhalter). She co-edited *Deutschland im Spiegel seiner Filme* (2000) and translated Alexander Kluge's *Cinema Stories* (2007) with Martin Brady. She has just completed a monograph on environmental documentary film in the twenty-first century to be published by Intellect Books.

Vincent Campbell, University of Leicester

Environmental Disasters, Documentary and Agency in National Geographic *Witness* Factual Television Programmes: Environmental disasters have been an historically prominent feature of popular culture, and the visualisation of "natural" disasters have been a regular feature of mediated representations of the environment (Buell, 2010). A central feature in representations of environmental disaster in popular beliefs and popular culture has been the positioning of human beings in relation to disasters, sometimes as the clear agents behind disaster (whether by invoking the wrath of god in religious framing of disasters, or in secular accounts through the exploitation and abuse of natural resources in processes like global warming). In other representations, however, humans are depicted more as passive victims of environmental disasters, their agency reduced to witnesses and survivors as in most disaster movies for instance (Kakoudaki, 2002). In terms of documentary and factual television programmes, there has been a notable shift in formats and styles in recent decades, and one development within factual programming which places these competing narratives of agency and passivity into tension is the emergence of programmes which include large amounts of amateur footage of environmental disasters captured by people in the midst of those disasters on their camcorders and mobile phones. This paper focuses on specific examples of these kind of programmes, the Witness series of programmes produced by National Geographic, including the Emmy award winning 'Witness: Katrina' (2010), and will explore such

programmes in terms of the way they highlight questions of the mediated representation of disaster victims' agency, identity and interactions with environmental disasters.'

Bionote: Vincent Campbell is a Lecturer in the Department of Media and Communication at the University of Leicester. His research interests include a focus on the communication of science in factual television and documentary. He has a forthcoming chapter on analysing factual entertainment television programmes in a book on 'Visual Communication' (ed. Machin, 2014), and a forthcoming journal article for 'Environmental Communication' on the representation of natural disasters in factual television (vol 8, 2014). He has published work on the representation of palaeontology through computer-generated imagery in factual television, and is currently writing a book on 'Science, Entertainment and Television Documentary' for Palgrave Macmillan.

Panel 30: The Agency of Childhood *Chair: Hayden Gabriel*

Jenny Bavidge, University of Cambridge

Looking 'in Steadiness': Ecocritical Readings of Literary Children*:* This paper addresses the figure of the child as ecological object in contemporary British literature. The familiar symbol of the 'green' and 'greening' child dropped from view in the literature of the 1980s and 90s, but has returned in recent years in a revised form. In some cases, the child still appears as a guarantor of a given naturalness, at other times children - especially those in urban settings - are summoned in a self-conscious reworking of pastoral and post-pastoral tropes binding childhood, the natural, and ecological loss. With a particular focus on London literature and drawing on examples from recent work by Maggie Gee, Penelope Lively and Julie Myerson as well as the new 'urban nature' writing, this paper will ask how ecocriticism might register the ways in which current writing represents children's geographies and the spatiality of childhood in an urban context. In the interaction between child, city and nature, the figure of the child continues to be called up as a source of the real in the face of an uncertain urban subjectivity, whilst the reality of urban childhoods is caught only in glimpses, heavily coded with notions of victimhood and villainy.

Bionote: Jenny Bavidge is a Lecturer in English, based at the Institute of Continuing Education at the University of Cambridge. She is a Fellow of Murray Edwards College. She has particular research interests in the intersection of urban literature, childhood studies and ecocriticism. Her most recent article on this topic focuses on the representation of New York's nature in children's literature. She has also written on London's rats, urban ecogothic, and the ubiquitous image of city children holding red balloons.

Joanna Coleman, University of Chichester

The Mirror, the Treasure Hunter, and the Red Moon: Shifting Identities in Cornelia Funke's *Reckless:* In Cornelia Funke's new fantasy novel for young adults, fairy land is entered through a mirror. Twelve year old Jacob Reckless follows his father through its doorway to become a treasure hunting hero. Although fairy land typically presents an encounter with animate spirits of the more-than-human other, Funke's Mirrorworld seems to isolate Jacob in a realm in which true encounter with the other is impossible, for it exists – only – within his own reflection. Yet self, in the novel, is unstable. Funke uses shapeshifting to emphasise the fragility of human skin and challenge the privileging of human over non-human animal, and invents stone-skinned warriors whose very existence undermines animate/non-animate binaries. The human act of naming, and by extension the imposition of order upon chaos that it presupposes, is similarly undercut – when a fairy is named in an attempt to control her, it is the namer, not the named, on whom a curse rebounds. The Mirrorworld is a world in which transformation is the only constant, and stable symbols of human identity become fluid and shifting. Echoing contemporary ecocritics such as Timothy Morton and Susan Rowland, Funke thus interrogates a binary opposition between human and nature. The novel perhaps ultimately suggests that to journey inwards is also to journey outwards, and recalls philosophical conceptions of a human unconscious which is indivisible from the more-than-human world.

Bionote: Joanna Coleman is a PhD student at the University of Chichester, in association with the Sussex Centre for Folklore, Fairy Tales and Fantasy. Her topic is 'Animal Transformation in Contemporary Narrative', and involves an ecocritical investigation of shapeshifting motifs in young adult literature. Joanna has an MA in creative writing from the University of East Anglia and an MA in literature from the University of St Andrews. She has just returned from eight years in the Czech Republic where she was teaching literature at Charles University. She is currently running eco-writing workshops at the ONCA gallery in Brighton.

Cara Bartels-Bland, St Cross College, University of Oxford

Intertwining Human and Natural History: Imaginary Landscape and Mythical Objects in Twentieth-Century Children's Literature: This paper will address the use of mythical objects as intermediary entities between

nature and culture in twentieth-century children's fantasy, concentrating in particular on Alan Garner's *The Owl Service*, Jenny Nimmo's *The Snow Spider Trilogy* and Nancy Bond's *A String in the Harp*. In each of these texts the landscape and objects play a key role: they act as intermediary between the 'real' world and the mythic environment. The texts I have chosen use medieval Welsh tales as pre-texts, creating an environment which is split between the 'real' world of the twentieth century and the mythical world of medieval Wales. Objects, both non-human and man-made, link these two worlds, in that they allow the protagonists of the children's texts to navigate between these environments. This paper will employ one of Lawrence Buell's criteria for discovering a text's ecocritical potential as a focal point: 'The nonhuman environment is present not merely as a framing device but as a presence that begins to suggest that human history is implicated in natural history' (Buell, 1995). The medieval Welsh pre-texts display a profound connection to the landscape of Wales. This paper will argue that this intrinsic relationship of human storytelling and non-human environment is replicated and amplified in the twentieth-century texts.

Bionote: Cara Bartels-Bland holds an MA and MRes from the University of Glasgow and is currently a DPhil student in English at St Cross College, University of Oxford. She is undertaking ecocritical research on the influence of the medieval Welsh Mabinogi tales on twentieth-century fiction and illustration. She further teaches children's literature at undergraduate level in the English Faculty at Oxford University.

Panel 31: Proto-Ecological Encounters III: the Long Nineteenth Century *Chair: Gregory Tate*

Anne Milne, University of Toronto-Scarborough

Habitat and the evocation of the Genius Loci in Beilby's and Bewick's *History of British Birds* (1797): Many of the cogent observations in discussions around species management and conservation lie in the consideration of place. While conservation biology focuses attention on sustainability and the preservation of wildlife habitat, cultural studies offers perhaps deeper thinking on the more ephemeral topic of place. In my work on local culture in the eighteenth century in England, I have begun to look more carefully at the representations of animals and habitat in early printed field guides. I am interested here in the intersections between text and illustration especially as printmaking techniques such as wood engraving enable a more sophisticated interaction of text with illustration. In this paper I look specifically at Ralph Beilby's and Thomas Bewick's collaborative *Book of British Birds* alongside other illustrated and descriptive texts from the end of the eighteenth-century – especially as these texts integrate aspects of the environs in and around Newcastle – to generate both a record of local landscapes replete with detail and the implication of a spirited locality (*genius loci).* I am particularly interested in how these local landscapes textually propagate to contribute to a more generalised imaginative geography of Britain that also incorporates apparently 'universal' British values. In considering the *Genius Loci* as integral to our understanding and preservation of twenty-first century wildlife habitats, I propose that a perspective more inclusive of bioregionalism, local culture, and the place of the artist in place illuminates a new cultural and environmental history of 'contested ground'.

Bionote: Anne Milne is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at the University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) in Toronto, Canada. Her research and published work focuses on representations of animals, labouring-class poets, and agrarian studies in Restoration and Eighteenth-Century British texts. She published "'Lactilla Tends her Fav'rite Cow': Ecocritical Readings of Animals and Women in Eighteenth-Century British Labouring-Class Women's Poetry" with Bucknell University Press in 2008 and was a 2010-2011 Carson Fellow at the Rachel Carson Centre for Environment and Society (Ludwig Maximilians University/ Deutsches Museum) in Munich, Germany.

John Miller, University of Sheffield

Reimagining Arctic Ecology with James Hogg: The early nineteenth century was something of a heyday for British Arctic exploration. The search for the pole and the north-west passage appeared as emblems of a burgeoning imperial confidence that was nourished by the lucrative harvests of the whaling fleet. An abundance of literary and journalistic representations of the far north drew public attention to the forbidding environment in which these enterprises were enacted, infusing geographical and economic undertakings with an atmosphere of national virility. Arctic animals, when not thought of as mere commodities, functioned in this ecological discourse as metonyms of the daunting, sublime terrain; signs of a world that of all terrestrial habitats, seemed most removed from the human. Encountering large and sometimes aggressive Arctic animals consequently took on the significance of a heroic self-assertion of civility over animality and of Britain over the northern 'wastes'. Taking these contexts as a starting point, this paper explores the reimagining of Arctic ecology in perhaps the nineteenth century's oddest narrative of British endeavours in the north. James Hogg's 1837 posthumously published novella 'The Surpassing Adventures of Allan Gordon' is a tale of a whaler shipwrecked on an iceberg

with only a juvenile polar bear for company. Naming the bear Nancy after an old sweetheart, the eponymous figure embarks on a weirdly intimate and consistently eroticised relationship with the bear that unravels many of the period's most prominent tropes of Arctic ecology, most notably the idea of a hyper-masculine identity emerging out of confrontation with the wilderness and with its monstrous animal presences.

Bionote: John Miller is a lecturer in nineteenth-century literature at the University of Sheffield and the general secretary of ASLE-UKI. He is the author of *Empire and the Animal Body: Violence, Identity and Ecology in Victorian Adventure Fiction* (2012) and the co-author (with Louise Miller) of *Walrus* for Reaktion Press's *Animal* series (forthcoming, 2013). He is currently working on a literary history of fur.

Sue Edney, Bath Spa University

'Over sea to settle': Understanding Dorset; Exploring Newfoundland: Newfoundland was once viewed and used as a huge fish supply for Europe, and not much else. The Grand Banks appeared to hold unlimited amounts of cod; the island was a handy staging place for preparing the fish, and the profits were good. What happened to the cod has been referred to as a version of the 'tragedy of the commons', a phrase made familiar by Garrett Hardin in 1968. While a certain amount of criticism was subsequently directed at Hardin's methodology as well as his conclusions, his prose is persuasive. He might, in fact, have intended it to be 'coercive': 'mutual coercion, mutually agreed on' was his answer to over-use. Much of Newfoundland's settlement and fluctuating prosperity relied on selective coercion in order to succeed. A majority of settlers in the early1800s were British: Newfoundland was settled, in part, by Dorset labourers, hard pressed by post-war depression and the Poor Laws. Sturminster Newton, William Barnes's home town, was a centre for this 'trade' in labour to the fisheries, sailing regularly from Poole harbour. Barnes's emigrant, 'Richard', details his love for the place he leaves; 'the ground where I've a-worked and played' but, whatever he might prefer, ''tis noo use to have sich foolish wishes; / I shall be tossed, i' may-be, to the vishes'. Hardin quotes William Forster Lloyd: 'The essence of dramatic tragedy is not unhappiness. It resides in the solemnity of the remorseless working of things'. This paper explores patterns of environmental information in Newfoundland and Dorset that enabled such 'coercion' to work, and what can be persuasively applied to present-day environmental dilemmas.

Bionote: Sue Edney is a part time lecturer in English at Bath Spa University, where she also completed her PhD on John Clare, William Barnes and the relationships of dialects to domestic landscapes. She has presented widely at conferences over a number of years, on subjects as varied as dialect, georgic poetry, garden history and wastelands. She has several papers published on nineteenth-century literary dialect and on William Barnes. At present, Sue has her PhD under consideration for publication with Ashgate, and is working on a study of 'margins' in poetry, places and language.

A warm welcome to ASLE-UKI's 2013 Biennial Conference, Ecological Encounters: Agency, Identity, Interactions.
The event runs across three days, with keynote presentations from Catriona Sandilands (York University), Mike Hulme (King's College, London) and Sheila Jasanoff (Harvard University), and a poetry reading by Lucy Burnett.
ASLE-UKI wishes to thank the University of Surrey for hosting this event

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