Readings in Contemporary Literary Theory: Ecocriticism

Class code
ENGL-UA 9735 – 001 or ENVST-UA 9510 – 001

Instructor Details
Laura McLauchlan
laura.mclauchlan@nyu.edu
Consultation by Appointment
Please allow at least 24 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails.

Class Details
Spring 2018

Readings in Contemporary Literary Theory: Ecocriticism

Tuesday 3:30pm – 6:30pm
30 January to 8 May
Room 301
NYU Sydney Academic Centre

Prerequisites
None

Class Description
Ecocriticism asks how the literary arts—one of the richest arenas for the practice of human imagination—does, has, or could shape environmental thought and action. We read critical environmental theory, literature and poetry (and watch a couple of films!) to pry open new and urgent questions about the past and present, in order to build alternative visions for the future. Grounded in the research and writing methods of literary studies, this course also asks participants to be global citizens and polymaths – to think across national borders and disciplinary boundaries – in order to open up earthy and alternative ways of interpreting the ecological crisis that are arguably relevant to students in any study program.

Practically speaking, the course is broken into two parts “Ecocritical Theory” and “Ecocritical Reading”, and is firmly situated in Australia. In the first half of the course we will read and investigate a variety of exciting contemporary theories, including Donna Haraway’s “Companion Species”, Marie Puig de la Bellacasa’s “care”, Val Plumwood’s “Shadow Places” and Rob Nixon’s notion of “Slow Violence”, among others; students will also be introduced to important conceptual terms such as “the Anthropocene” and learn strategies for critiquing the distinction between nature and culture. The second part of the course is comprised of two modules–Coast and Interior–where we will read novels and watch films that represent these qualitatively different parts of the Australian continent. The first module focuses on
literature of Sydney, a coastal and watery city and considers the city not only as a place full of bright lights, pretty people and tall buildings, but as a lively multispecies environment shared with animals, bacteria, plants, afflicted by the weather and with a rich geological history. The second module, “Interior” explores literature of Australia’s arid and semi-arid interior and, in particular, the Mallee Bioregion and the Western Desert, using film, fiction and poetry to investigate failed attempts to farm the semi-arid zone and the area’s rich Aboriginal history. Encouraging students to be critically engaged as both scholars and tourists in Sydney, the primary texts in the course are almost exclusively Australian, situating our creative and critical thinking in the lively real world environment.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following outcomes:

- An understanding of the complex and various representations of nature;
- The ability to deploy appropriate critical strategies to analyse the ideological dimensions of representations of nature and ecology;
- The skills to reflect upon and critique both the real world environmental crisis and representations of related issues by thinking with important contemporary theoretical concepts;
- A critical understanding of different generic and formal modes of construction— including strategies for representing ecological disaster and threat, apocalypse, different ideas of nature (e.g. as a historical category, as the site of technological mediation) and the more than human world of animals, plants and landscape;
- Enhanced reading, writing, research and group communication skills; and
- The capacity to engage with secondary critical reading material, assessing the scholarly arguments that might contribute to their intellectual projects.

### Assessment Components

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<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Pages/Weeks</th>
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<tr>
<td>Photo Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4.5 Pages</td>
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<td>(Week 8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Preparation Blog</td>
<td>Work in Progress (10%)</td>
<td>(0.5-1 Pages per week)</td>
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<td>Final Grade (30%)</td>
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<td>(Several weeks between Wk2 – Wk14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Essay Proposal</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6 Pages, questions and answer style format</td>
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<td>(Week 11)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Essay Final</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>12-15 Pages</td>
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All assignments are due by 3:30pm, at the beginning of class.

*Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component will result in failure of the class.*

*For this course your total numerical score, calculated from the components listed above, is converted to a letter grade without rounding.*
Extra Credit: Site policy does not allow grading of work outside of the assignments included in the syllabus. The final grade will only be calculated from the assessment components listed here and no other work, whether additional or substituted, is permitted.

**Assessment Expectations**

**Grade A:** Excellent performance showing a thorough knowledge and understanding of the topics of the course; all work includes clear, logical explanations, insight, and original thought and reasoning. Written work is of a highly sophisticated standard.

**Grade B:** Good performance with general knowledge and understanding of the topics; all work includes general analysis and coherent explanations showing some independent reasoning, reading and research. Written work is of a superior standard.

**Grade C:** Satisfactory performance with some broad explanation and reasoning; the work will typically demonstrate an understanding of the course on a basic level. Written work is of an acceptable standard.

**Grade D:** Passable performance showing a general and superficial understanding of the course’s topics; work lacks satisfactory insight, analysis or reasoned explanations. Written work is of a basic standard.

**Grade F:** Unsatisfactory performance in all assessed criteria. Written work is weak, unfinished or unsubmitted.

**Grade Conversions**

This course uses the following scale of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

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<td>A</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90 to &lt; 94</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 to &lt; 90</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>84 to &lt; 87</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>80 to &lt; 84</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>77 to &lt; 80</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>74 to &lt; 77</td>
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<td>70 to &lt; 74</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>65 to &lt; 67</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>0 to &lt; 65</td>
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**Submission of Work**

Assignments (excluding in-class presentations and exams) must be submitted electronically via NYU Classes. It is the student’s responsibility to confirm that the work has been successfully been uploaded. In the unlikely event that a submission to Classes fails, students must immediately submit the work to the Academic Programs Coordinator via email before
the original submission deadline accompanied by an explanation of the issue. All in-class presentations and exams must be completed during the scheduled class time. An assessment component is considered completed when the student has met all the terms for that assessment component as outlined by the instructor.

An assessment component completed after the deadline without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100-point scale (for the assignment) for each day the work is late. Work completed beyond five weekdays after the due date without an agreed extension receives a mark of zero, and the student is not entitled to feedback for that piece of work. Because failure to submit or fulfil any required assessment component will result in failure of the course, it is crucial for students to complete every assignment even when it will receive a mark of zero.

**Plagiarism Policy**

The academic standards of New York University apply to all coursework at NYU Sydney. NYU Sydney policies are in accordance with New York University's plagiarism policy. The presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

It is a serious academic offense to use the work of others (written, printed or in any other form) without acknowledgement. Cases of plagiarism are not dealt with by your instructor. They are referred to the Director, who will determine the appropriate penalty (up to and including failure in the course as a whole) taking into account the codes of conduct and academic standards for NYU's various schools and colleges.

**Attendance Policy**

Study abroad at Global Academic Centres is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centres is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect students' semester grades. The class roster will be marked at the beginning of class and anyone who arrives after this time will be considered absent.

Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.

For courses that meet once a week, one unexcused absence will be penalized by a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade. For courses that meet two or more times a week, the same penalty will apply to two unexcused absences. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

Faculty cannot excuse an absence. Requests for absences to be excused must be directed to the Academic Programs Coordinator. Students must provide appropriate documentation for their absence. In the case of illness, students must contact the Academic Programs Coordinator on the day of absence. They must provide medical documentation to Academic
Programs Coordinator within three days of the absence in order to be medically excused. The note must include a medical judgement indicating that the student was unfit to attend class/work on the specific day or dates of the absence. Faculty will be informed of excused absences by the Academic Programs staff.

**Classroom Expectations**

This is a seminar subject and requires the active participation of all students. It also requires engaged discussion, including listening to and respecting other points of view. Your behaviour in class should respect your classmates’ desire to learn. It is important for you to focus your full attention on the class, for the entire class period.

- Arrive to class on time.
- Once you are in class, you are expected to stay until class ends. Leaving to make or take phone calls, to meet with classmates, or to go to an interview, is not acceptable behaviour.
- Phones, digital music players, and any other communications or sound devices are not to be used during class. That means no phone calls, no texting, no social media, no email, and no internet browsing at any time during class.
- Laptop computers and tablets are not to be used during class except in rare instances for specific class-related activity expressly approved by your instructor.
- The only material you should be reading in class is material assigned for that class. Reading anything else, such as newspapers or magazines, or doing work from another class, is not acceptable.
- Class may not be recorded in any fashion – audio, video, or otherwise – without permission in writing from the instructor.

**Diversity, Inclusion and Equity**

NYU is committed to building a culture that respects and embraces diversity, inclusion, and equity, believing that these values – in all their facets – are, as President Andrew Hamilton has said, “...not only important to cherish for their own sake, but because they are also vital for advancing knowledge, sparking innovation, and creating sustainable communities.” At NYU Sydney we are committed to creating a learning environment that:

- fosters intellectual inquiry, research, and artistic practices that respectfully and rigorously take account of a wide range of opinions, perspectives, and experiences; and
- promotes an inclusive community in which diversity is valued and every member feels they have a rightful place, is welcome and respected, and is supported in their endeavours.

**Religious Observance**

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. Students must notify their professor and the Academic Programs Coordinator in writing via email one week in advance before being absent for this purpose.
Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Moses Centre for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information, see Study Away and Disability.

Required Texts

It is a course expectation that you have done the required reading and have prepared sufficiently to discuss them in class.

Every week a number of mandatory and optional readings are set; both primary texts, and secondary readings from the field of eco-criticism. Mandatory readings must be completed by every student prior to the seminar. Optional readings are for those students who wish to deepen their understanding of a topic, or pursue a specific area of the course in their final research essays. With the exception of the film in Week 14, films need to be watched in advance of the seminar. Note that although readings are assigned to specific weeks, many are relevant to a wide range of sections in the course.

The readings will be made available through NYU Classes or the NYUS library. With reference to the novels, you may work from editions other than those that are listed here. Books will be available to purchase from the Co-op Bookstore.

PRIMARY TEXTS FOR ECO-CRITICISM, SPRING 2018.

Novels (to purchase):


Films (DVDs available Online or at NYU Sydney):


Autobiography (available on NYU Classes):


Short-Story/Essay (available on NYU Classes):

Poetry (available on NYU Classes and to be provided in class):


Theory & Criticism (available on NYU Classes):

- Puig de la Bellacasa, Maria. “Making time for soil: Technoscientific futurity and the pace of care” *Social Studies of Science* 45.

Supplemental Texts


There are also optional recommended readings for each seminar, listed in the week-by-week guide part of the syllabus. The instructor can also provide further supplementary reading; interested students should book a consultation time to discuss.

Internet Research Guidelines

A citation guide will be provided, detailing the proper form of referencing online, multimedia and textual sources. Students are encouraged to read beyond the set-list for the course at their own discretion. In researching their photo essays and research essays, students should maintain a sceptical mindset with regards to the reliability and authenticity of online resources.
PART 1: ECOCRITICAL THEORY (WEEKS 1-6)

Week 1  Part I: Rethinking Nature

Tuesday 30 January

This is an introductory seminar outlining the course and discussing how we plan to ecocritically rethink nature. The course is structured in two parts. In Part I we carefully read cultural theories relevant to ecocritical studies and in Part II we apply these theories to the reading of two novels and two films. The first half of the seminar will provide a comprehensive overview of the course outline, covering everything from the structure and content to assessments and expectations. We will then open the course by discussing some big conceptual questions. What and where is nature? The second half of the seminar will be a mini-lecture and discussion focused entirely on the questions: “What is ecocriticism?” and “What is ecocritical theory?”

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Announcements: Students will receive details of the assignment “Seminar Preparation Journal” and “Photo Essay”.

Week 2  The Anthropocene and its Discontents

Tuesday 6 February

This seminar will begin our exploration of conceptual and theoretical strategies for undertaking ecocritical analysis. Here we deconstruct the term “Nature” and introduce you to the “Anthropocene”. You will have watched Jan Zalasiewicz’s striking description of the new geological time-scale known as the “Anthropocene” – a concept that further complicates the relationship between humans and this thing we call “nature”. In this context, we will begin by deconstructing the term nature and exploring the idea of the Anthropocene not only as a stratigraphic layer, but as a useful cultural concept.

Required Reading:

Required Viewing:

Recommended Reading:

Assessment due: Seminar Prep Journal

Field trip/excursion: The Tank Stream – a Short Perambulatory Seminar (Meet at 3.30pm in Martin Place near the War Memorial – George Street End)

Week 3  Representing the Apocalypse (The Island Will Sink)

Tuesday 13 February

This week we will explore the apocalyptic tone of the ecological crisis and how this links to the tradition of representing the end of the world. A mini-lecture on the history of representations of the apocalypse will precede an exploration of the first major literary text of the course: Briohny Doyle’s The Island Will Sink. This novel will be read as a work of post-apocalyptic cli-fi. We will also spend some time thinking specifically about representation and genre: What literary forms are best suited to capturing environmental catastrophe? What does Doyle’s novel say about our ability to represent a ‘whole world’ catastrophe?

Required Reading:
• Doyle, Briohny. The Island Will Sink (Melbourne: The Lifted Brow, 2016).

Recommended Reading:

Assessment due: Seminar Prep Journal

Week 4  More than Human

Tuesday 20 February
A lively understanding of the world of things—from Animals, Plants, Fungi, Soil and Rocks, to Computers, Cyborgs, Bicycles, Cars, Roads, Coal, Atoms, Plankton, Drones and Pharmaceuticals—is essential for ecocritical thinking. This week we get down and dirty with a variety of more-than-human creatures, plants, objects and particles that share and, indeed, mutually constitute the world around us. This week we also sample two extraordinary works animating the world beyond the human. While the writing of Haraway and Maria Puig de la Bellacasa is difficult at times, we will spend good time in the seminars exploring the rich theoretical proposals offered by two giants of contemporary theory.

**Required Reading:**

**Recommended Viewing:**
- Haraway, Donna. “SF: String Figures, Multispecies Muddles and Staying with the Trouble” Lecture from 2014 at University of Alberta. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1uTVnHlHS8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1uTVnHlHS8)

**Assessment due: Seminar Prep Journal**

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<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Place</th>
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<td><strong>Tuesday 27 February</strong></td>
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The question of place and belonging is central to the disciplines of Ecocriticism, Environmental Humanities and Environmental Justice. Who gets to live and where do they get to live? Who has the right to certain place and what particular? This seminar will explore the complexities of place as a concept for ecocriticism, through the work of one of Australia’s best known environmental philosophers, the late Val Plumwood before going outside to explore and write about place in the inner City.

**Required Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**

**Field trip/excursion: Fieldwork and writing place**
We will go outside and, in preparation for your photo essays, explore inner Sydney thinking about how fieldwork, traditionally a method from Anthropology, can complement and complicate critical and creative reading and writing practices.

**Assessment due: Seminar Prep Blog**

**Assessment Return: Work in Progress Blog (10%)**

### Week 6  From Ecofeminism to Ecosexuality

#### Tuesday 6 March

What has feminism got to do with the environment? How are ecological discourses racialised? How can love and sex save the planet? This seminar will present a range of theoretical ideas in response to a tendency within Ecocriticism and the Environmental Humanities to universalise the experience of environmental degradation. Many speak of “our” planet, “our” responsibility, the price “we” must pay for “man’s” wrongdoing: but whom do we speak of? And can we speak for all? Foreshadowing some of the vexing questions and concerns raised by the fictional texts in the coming weeks, this particular seminar will focus on developing a vocabulary for discussing the ethics human difference within the environmentally oriented criticisms. Building on the critiques of the Anthropocene by Haraway in Session 2 and the anti-colonial theory of Rob Nixon, this week finds a way to discuss diversity, power, privilege, justice as linked to environmental questions.

**Readings:**

**Assessment Due: Seminar Prep Blog**

### SPRING BREAK: 12 – 16 March (Week 7)

**PART 2: ECOCRITICAL READING (WEEKS 8-15)**

#### Week 8  Part II: Ecocritical Reading and Essay Planning Workshop

#### Tuesday 20 March

Now we have acquired some theoretical tools how can we apply them to an ecocritical reading? How does the theory inform our reading of literature? How will it help us to draw out particular meanings from the primary texts? This seminar we will all read Rick Bass’s short story “Fiber” and Terry Gifford’s reading of the story. We will discuss Gifford’s argument with regards to Bass’s story and construct our own ecocritical reflection on Bass’s story as a class.

After providing a way into this section of the course way of a practical example of ecocritical reading, a mini-lecture will introduce the two modules of Part II “City” and “Desert”. The four texts of this half of the course,
Australia Daze, Indelible Ink, Tracks and Everyman’s Rules For Scientific Living variously represent these different environmental regions of Australia. The lecture will also outline how the theory learned in Part I will be useful to us in Part II.

Required Reading:


Assessment due: Photo Essay (20%)

Announcements: Students will receive details of the assignments Research Essay Proposal & Research Essay Final

Week 9  (Part II, Module I) City not Country (Australia Daze & Barangaroo Headland Walking Tour)

Tuesday 27 March

The late Australian poet Dorothy Porter once described Sydney as a “glittering tart”, and cultural theorist Ross Gibson added “Aqueous. Shiny. Shifty. Stupid. Braggart. Gorgeous beyond measure. Cruel. Exorbitant. A geist that puts hooks in you when you do your hardest wanting”. While these are evocative descriptions of Sydney today, there is more to Australia’s largest city than its brash and beautiful current incarnation. Indeed, the city is built on land stolen from its indigenous custodians, in a historical act of violence that has never been properly reconciled. To introduce our ecocritical study of the City will watch the documentary Australia Daze, made as a response to the “celebration” of the Bicentenary of the British Colonisation of Australia in 1988. Dramatised re-enactments of first contact clash with one of the biggest Indigenous protest marches in the Nation’s history, in a filmic pastiche that highlights the contested nature of the land beneath our feet. We also read the poetry of Brenda Saunders, an aboriginal poet that writes about indigenous identity in the city.

Required Viewing and Reading:


Recommended Reading:


Assessment due: Seminar Prep Journal
**Field trip/excursion: Barangaroo Headland** (More details will be provided closer to the date.)

**Week 10  Urban Ecologies: Class, Gender & a living City (*Indelible Ink*)**

**Tuesday 3 April**

From Seaforth to Surry Hills and from Gordon’s Bay to Villawood, Sydney is a living character in Fiona McGregor’s majestic novel *Indelible Ink*. In the photo-essay assignment you will have already explored some of the suburbs of Sydney featured in the novel and undertaken preliminary theoretical reflections on how the environment actively shapes life in the city. Here we have a chance to apply that thinking to a literary example.

While the novel as a literary form is known for its ability to represent the human experience–from gender and class wars, to the dynamics of desire and sexuality–an ecocritical reading of McGregor’s novel reveals a narrative carefully stitched into a lively setting. The novel’s setting binds the human to the more than human, the cultural to the natural, and the local to the global. This week we harness some of the tools developed in Part I–in particular Val Plumwood’s work on the Politics of Dwelling and Gender–and construct an ecocritical reading of Sydney’s role in the novel.

**Required Reading:**

*We will also draw on Val Plumwood’s work as the theory for this seminar, so please re-read her work for this seminar:*

**Recommended Reading:**
- Googling “Fiona McGregor” & “*Indelible Ink*” in a single search will reveal the author’s website, a range of her own responses to the novel, reviews and video blogs about the work. Familiarising yourself not only with the novel, but its reception both here and abroad, is recommended.

**Assessment due: Seminar Prep Journal**

**Week 11  More Than Human Sydney (*Indelible Ink*)**

**Tuesday 10 April**

In this seminar we explore the details of more-than-human Sydney and their role in Marie’s story, from Gardens and Vomit to Lemon Trees, Bars, Cafes, Cats, Cancer, Tattoo Parlours, the Harbour, the Zoo, Weeds and Petrol Stations. This seminar will methodically move through the novel and, using the theory of Jane Bennett and Donna Haraway, explore the variety of ways the author weaves the more-than-human world into her narrative.

During the novel, the heroine Marie is slowly tattooed with images of “more than human” phenomena, from flames and moths to passionfruit and angophora. Her body becomes a canvas for the representation of
aspects of Sydney’s ecology most relevant to her experience and memory. She also becomes very sick, as if poisoned by the lifestyle she led in the city. We will also think about the role of the individual human within the ecosystem. Harold Fromm writes eloquently about his bodily experiences of being polluted, by substances he cannot name, in his life on a farm. What if the toxic waste dump isn’t the waterway or the forest, but the self?

**Required Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**
We will also draw on Haraway and Puig de la Bellacasa as the theory for this seminar, so please re-read their work for this seminar:

**Assessment due: Research Essay (Proposal) (10%)**

**Week 12 Part II: Module II: Farm not Desert  (*Everyman’s Rules for Scientific Living*) and Essay Writing Workshop Tuesday 17 April**

This seminar takes us back to Week 3 of the course and ideas of the apocalypse and the challenges of representation. In *Indelible Ink*, the protagonist is given a book the cover of which showed a “parched Australian landscape. Prize stickers like UFOs floated across the red sky. A skeletal tree stood in the foreground”. This exchange reveals one of the paradoxes of the Australian cultural life: although we are one of the most urbanized populations on earth and all our major cities are on the coast, our imaginations are fixated in the interior. Indeed, award winning novels and films of our country tell stories of what Ken Gelder calls the “Rural Apocalypse”, including such tales as Carrie Tiffany’s novel *Everyman’s Rules For Scientific Living*. This seminar will explore the desire to shape the environment of the semi-arid and arid regions of Australia, and reflect on the role of the environment itself in the failure of that dream as represented in Tiffany’s novel.

**Required Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**

**Assessment due: Seminar Prep Journal**
**Week 13  Urban/Rural Divide (Everyman’s Rules for Scientific Living)**

**Tuesday 24 April**

This week we seek to further complicate received understandings of the urban and rural in Australian cultural life as we continue our consideration of Tiffany’s novel. Australian colonial and modernist concerns with a continental interior have been accompanied by a neglect of Aboriginal place-making and landscapes. In answer to this we consider Bruce Pascoe’s *Dark Emu* which challenges an enduring settler-colonial failure to understand Aboriginal country as occupied, and as rich with meaning and productive activity. This week’s field trip introduces a further turn as we find agriculture within urban space: the exploitative divisions of labour and space implied by the separation of rural from urban, and the would-be system that locks us into particular patterns of production and consumption, are arguably challenged by this (re)emergence of urban farming. Also, we will gain a distinctive experience of space and place to that of surrounding urban life.

**Required Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**

**Field trip/excursion: Pocket City Farms, Camperdown** - More details will be provided closer to the date.

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**Week 14  Desert Ecologies (Tracks)**

**Tuesday 1 May**

How do we imagine the vast and dry expanses of this great southern land? Recently, the politician Bob Katter said “If you drop a series of hydrogen bombs from the back of Cairns ... all the way across to Broome, you won’t kill anybody. There’s nobody living there. There’s only 670,000 people living on 95 percent of the surface area of this country.” But of course such an act would cause incredible loss of life. Australia may be big and sparsely populated, but the land is not empty and the flow on effect of such bombing would devastate the island ecology. Moreover, indigenous Australians traditionally inhabited the whole continent and the land is dotted with sacred sites. The colonial and anthropocentric attitude that Australia is empty is complicated by Robyn Davidson’s journey across the centre in *Tracks*. This seminar will use the 2013 film and an excerpt from Davidson’s own memoir *Tracks* (1980) as a way to frame our understanding of the interior.

**Required Viewing:**

**Recommended Reading:**

**Assessment due: Seminar Prep Journal (Final)**

**Week 15   The Beach & the Future**

Tuesday 8 May

Aaaand, we’re done! At the beginning of Seminar 15 you will hand in your final assessment piece. In this seminar we will revise the course together, its themes and key learnings over the semester. We will consider ‘where to from here’ options for when you return from Sydney to the United States, and we will ask for your feedback to help strengthen the course into the future. And discuss the politics of hope.

**Recommended Reading:**

**Assignment due: Final Research Essay (30%)**

**Your Instructor**

Laura McLauchlan is a PhD candidate in anthropology with the Environmental Humanities programme at the University of New South Wales. Her primary research is on questions of multispecies care in urban space and how we might best attend to the vital, at times deadly, ever-contingent attachments which make us all.

Emerging from her ongoing interest in affect and the many tensions of our attachments, Laura is beginning a new research project investigating what the insights of feminist environmental humanities might contribute to strategies for sustaining activism. Increasingly, Laura is also attending to the unconscious in both post-humanities scholarship and activism.