

Confluence: Situating the Environmental Humanities

30 May – 1 June 2024

University of Warwick



This international symposium brought together Environmental Humanities scholars at Warwick with our visiting partners from the 2023 EUTOPIA Connected Community on EH (Ca' Foscari University of Venice, NOVA University Lisbon, Dresden University of Technology). The symposium also helped anchor two new initiatives at Warwick, the launch of our [MA in Environmental Humanities](#) (MAEH) and the recently convened University Spotlight on Sustainability. Beginning with a welcome by Prof. Jennifer Burns, the University's Deputy Chair for External Engagement from the Faculty of Arts, the three-day event kicked off with a tour of Coventry city's sites of historical and environmental interest and a conversation with Dave Ridley, chair of Coventry for a Green New Deal, before returning to campus for 'Memories of a Future City,' a presentation by local artist Paul Lemmon introduced by his collaborator Prof. Graeme Macdonald (ECLS). Day Two began with a keynote talk by Dr Michael Niblett (ECLS), "West Midlands in the World-Ecology," linking the history of enclosure in the Coventry area to questions around sustainability in a projected post-carbon future, followed by responses from Graeme Macdonald, Catarina Garcia (Lisbon) and Myka Tucker-Abramson (ECLS). A further roundtable discussion featuring Catarina, Tom Simpson (History, Warwick), Tiago de Luca (Film and TV, Warwick), Moritz Ingwersen (Dresden), Nina Vieira (Lisbon), Lucio de Capitani (Venice) and Fabienne Viala (Hispanic Studies, Warwick) took up the theme of the role(s) and challenges of environmentally informed humanistic study in a time of crisis. The afternoon included visits to the [Sherbourne River Restoration Project](#) at Coundon Wedge, led by Ian Jelley of the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, and to Brandon Marsh Nature Reserve, headquarters of the WWT. Day Three again took participants outdoors for a 'slow walking' eco-poetics workshop led by Dr Jonathan Skinner (ECLS) and visits to the student-run Warwick allotment and Palestine Solidarity encampment, followed by a presentation of the 'Museum of Carbon Ruins' exhibit by Graeme Macdonald, part of the EU-funded Climaginaires project on inhabiting the landscape of decarbonised futures. After lunch, conferees went on a walk from campus to nearby Kenilworth via a tour of the local HS2 works, accompanied in part by activists involved in the Crackley Wood HS2 protest camp. The day concluded with a walk around Kenilworth Castle, linking the issues of ruins past, present and future over the long durée of world-ecological modernity, and a farewell dinner in Kenilworth.