

EN2D0 and EN3D0: Essay 2 questions, 2019-20

Essays of 3,000 words (Level 5) or 4,000 words (Level 6) are due on **Tuesday, 28th April 2020** (Week 2 of Term 3). As before, the following topics are intended to offer only suggested directions for your own thinking and research; feel free to develop your own topic in consultation with me beforehand, and note that the first set of essay questions continues to be available for this essay.

1. Critically review the response to Naomi Klein's *This Changes Everything* and develop a thesis concerning the 'environment' emerging around its reception. (Note that in the course of this review you may engage with any aspect of the work itself.)
2. Is Amitav Ghosh right to argue that world literature has failed to meet the challenge of the Anthropocene? Discuss, with examples.
3. Fast disasters vs. slow violence: choose as a case study a particular environmental crisis and examine the journalistic, literary and cultural responses to it. What are the implications of punctual vs. gradualist understandings of ecological damage in current environmental discourse?
4. Caribbean ecopoetics: write a comparative essay on the imbrication of language (including language politics) and ecology in any two texts by Caribbean writers.
5. The weather of world-ecology I: analyse literary evocations of 'the weather' – including particular meteorological phenomena such as rain, snow, drought, fog, storms, etc. – from the standpoint of political and/or historical ecology.
6. Radical walking: discuss the C20 poetics and politics of walking as a form of eco-praxis. Examples might include: André Breton and the surrealists, Guy Debord and the situationists, the Ramblers Association, the Jarrow marchers, Michel de Certeau, W. G. Sebald, Richard Long, Iain Sinclair, Rebecca Solnit.
7. Interdisciplinary ecocriticism: write an ecocritical study of two works in different media and/or genres, e.g. literature and film, poetry and visual art, fiction and music.
8. Petrocultures: write a comparative analysis of the material and symbolic presence of oil in any two works of world literature.
9. Slum ecologies: analyse the dynamics of representing 'city nature' within the context of a C21 'planet of slums' (Davis).
10. The weather of world-ecology II: discuss the ecological dimension of communications technology, considered as a form of environment-making or 'second nature.' In what ways do communications systems (including literary ones) constitute material ecosystems?
11. Write an essay on the role of social media in the production of the (worldwide) web of life. How might we read online platforms such as Twitter and Facebook as world-ecological?

12. Discuss the rhetorics, philosophies and/or strategies of contemporary environmental movements. Institutions to consider might include Greenpeace, 350.org, EarthFirst!, Friends of the Earth, Earth Liberation Front, Dark Mountain, Youth Strike for Climate, Extinction Rebellion and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. In what ways do these or other groups attempt to link theory (or mission) and practice (or tactics/strategies)?
13. Future natures: write an essay on dystopian (or utopian) projections of the world-ecology after the age of the four 'cheaps' (Moore): resources, energy, food and labour.
14. Clifi and beyond: write an essay on writing (in any genre) that seeks to encompass the large-scale processes of global climate change.
15. Global South and Global North: compare two works, from low- and high-income nations respectively, addressing ecological crisis. How do they differ, and what do these differences imply concerning the relations of culture, political economy and environmental justice?
16. Foodways: write an essay on the literary-cultural registration of food (either in production, consumption or both) as index to questions raised by the production of nature.
17. Comparative superstorms: using the optic of boundary-disrespecting storms such as Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, explore the methodological implications of tracking their representation in different literary-cultural works.
18. Analyse the use of concepts such as 'adaptation,' 'resilience' and/or 'sustainability' in contemporary ecological discourse. Are these concepts adequate for meeting the challenges raised by the Anthropocene/Capitalocene?
19. Write an essay on the ecological history and/or footprint of the University of Warwick.
20. Using Anna Tsing's focus on 'the possibility of life in post-capitalist ruins,' write an essay drawing on notions of salvage, recuperation, 'entanglement' and precarity for the task of imagining a future beyond the horizon of the neoliberal present.