

Module Information

2022.01, Approved

Summary Information

Module Code	6132ENGL
Formal Module Title	The Literature of Extinction: American Writing and the Environment
Owning School	Humanities and Social Science
Career	Undergraduate
Credits	20
Academic level	FHEQ Level 6
Grading Schema	40

Teaching Responsibility

LJMU Schools involved in Delivery
Humanities and Social Science

Learning Methods

Learning Method Type	Hours
Lecture	11
Seminar	22
Tutorial	2
Workshop	2

Module Offering(s)

Display Name	Location	Start Month	Duration Number Duration Unit
SEP-MTP	MTP	September	12 Weeks

Aims and Outcomes

Aims	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To develop students' understanding of the representation of the environment through the study of selected critical discourses drawn from, for example: phenomenology, Marxism, cultural geography, psychoanalysis, ecocriticism, environmentalism, affect theory or literary theory; 2. To situate American ideas about the environment in their historical and cultural contexts; 3. To explore how the experience of the non-human world shapes individual and group identities and how, reciprocally, those identities affect how people experience that world; 4. To analyse the environmental aesthetics of a range of American literary and visual texts.
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After completing the module the student should be able to:

Learning Outcomes

Code	Number	Description
MLO1	1	Understand and evaluate different critical discourses about the experience and representation of the environment;
MLO2	2	Demonstrate awareness of how American ideas about nature and the environment have developed through particular historical and cultural contexts;
MLO3	3	Through critical engagement with a range of critical, literary, visual and other texts, reflect on how humans experience and know the non-human world;
MLO4	4	Analyse how nature and the environment are represented in a range of American literary and visual texts.

Module Content

Outline Syllabus	<p>The module will be taught in thematic blocks. The blocks below are indicative, as are the set texts:</p> <p>1) Block 1: 'Pure' nature and the idea of America. An introduction to how nature is central to the concept and ideology of America, as shown, for example in the metaphors that have historically been used to evoke American national identity, and in the conceptual mapping of America. David Henry Thoreau and responses to him organize this block. Set texts: Henry David Thoreau, Walden, Jon Krakauer, Into the Wild and Native American poetry.</p> <p>2) Block 2: 'Polluted' nature and increasing sensitivity to anthropogenic climate change and extinction. This block explores the philosophy and development of modern environmentalism through the analysis of key American texts. Set texts: Rachel Carson, Silent Spring, Don DeLillo, White Noise, and Kim Stanley Robinson's Antarctica.</p>
Module Overview	
Additional Information	<p>Scientists recently designated the contemporary era as the sixth age of mass extinction, and the first in which humanity has played the primary role. This module explores how human-made, or anthropogenic, extinction on various scales, from the local and national to the planetary is conceptualized and represented in important American environmental and ecocritical texts. By studying a range of genres, including fiction, poetry, film, art, autobiographical writing, ecological writing, nature writing, and ecocritical theories, we will consider the imaginative and ideological strategies that allow individuals and communities to form attachments to different American environments.</p> <p>The set texts explore threats to species, ecosystems, traditional lifeways and people through everyday actions and spectacular events. Environmental distress is felt everywhere, from Middle America to spaces designated marginal, frontier and extreme. The set texts demand a rethink of how we relate to different environments by calling on, for example, the critical powers of the American idea of the wilderness, the figure of the 'ecological Indian', and the genre of environmental literature.</p>

Assessments

Assignment Category	Assessment Name	Weight	Exam/Test Length (hours)	Module Learning Outcome Mapping
Essay	1500 word	40	0	MLO4
Essay	2500 word essay	60	0	MLO1, MLO2, MLO3, MLO4

Module Contacts

Module Leader

Contact Name	Applies to all offerings	Offerings
Colin Harrison	Yes	N/A

Partner Module Team

Contact Name	Applies to all offerings	Offerings
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