Draft Syllabus

FYS, Spring 2121 Una Chaudhuri

Becoming Ecospheric: Embracing Life on a Damaged Planet

Description:

This course explores current theories and practices for understanding --and learning to live responsibly and creatively on--our deeply damaged planet.

Our theoretical readings will be drawn from the fields of Critical Climate Studies, Environmental Humanities, New Materialism, and multispecies ethnography, and will include thinkers like Donna Haraway, Anna Tsing, Bruno Latour, and Jane Bennet. Their ideas will be explored with the help of a range of imaginative works in many genres: film, theater, graphic novels, visual art, and performance.

A central interest of the course will be in trying out new ways of creating knowledge, beyond reading and writing. We will experiment with a variety of activities and practices, including creative work, to engage with the question: what do we need to know and to do--as individuals and groups--in order for the planet's geophysical systems, landscapes, and species (including our own) to thrive?

Schedule of Topics and Assignments, by week

1. How We Got Here
   ~Naomi Oreskes, The Collapse of Western Civilization
   ~Steve Cosson, The Great Immensity (play)

2. Naming and Knowing our Place and Time
   ~Donna Haraway, “Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin”
   ~Both Introductions to Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet
   ~Deborah Bird Rose: “Shimmer: When all you love is being trashed” (in Arts of Living)

3. Telling Climate Stories
   ~Amitav Ghosh, The Great Derangement, Part 1
   ~Caryl Churchill, Far Away
   ~Jane Bennet, Introduction and Chapter 1 of Vibrant Matter
   ~Suzanne Simard, "How Trees Talk to Each Other" TED talk

4. Recent Histories and Near Futures
   ~Amitav Ghosh, The Great Derangement, Parts 2 and 3

5. Deep Histories and Far Futures
~Anna Tsing, “Unruly Edges; Mushrooms as Companion Species.” *Environmental Humanities* 1 (2012) 141-154
~Richard McGuire, *Here*

7. **Making Kin, remaking sociality**
~Heather Davis, “Plastic Progeny” (on NYU classes)
~Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*
~Nick Hayes, *The Rime of the Modern Mariner*

9. TBA

10. Student Group-led Class on: Plastic

11. Student Group-led Class on: Oceans

12 Student Group-led Class on: Forests

13. Student Group-led class on:

14. **Conclusion and presentation of Final projects**