

# Environment, Justice, and the Politics of Emotions Symposium

April 27 (on campus) and April 28 (online), 2023.  
Hosted by the University of California, Riverside

## Symposium Program



# Environment, Justice, and the Politics of Emotions Symposium

Convened by Jade Sasser, Sarah Jaquette Ray, and Blanche Verlie.

UCR would like to respectfully acknowledge and recognize our responsibility to the original and current caretakers of this land, water, and air: the Cahuilla [ka-weeahh], Tongva [tong-va], Luiseño [loo-say-ngo], and Serrano [se-ran-oh] peoples and all of their ancestors and descendants, past, present, and future. Today this meeting place is home to many Indigenous peoples from all over the world, including UCR faculty, students, and staff, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on these homelands.

Many thanks to the University of California, Riverside for hosting this event, in particularly the Office of the CHASS Dean, and the Center for Ideas and Society.

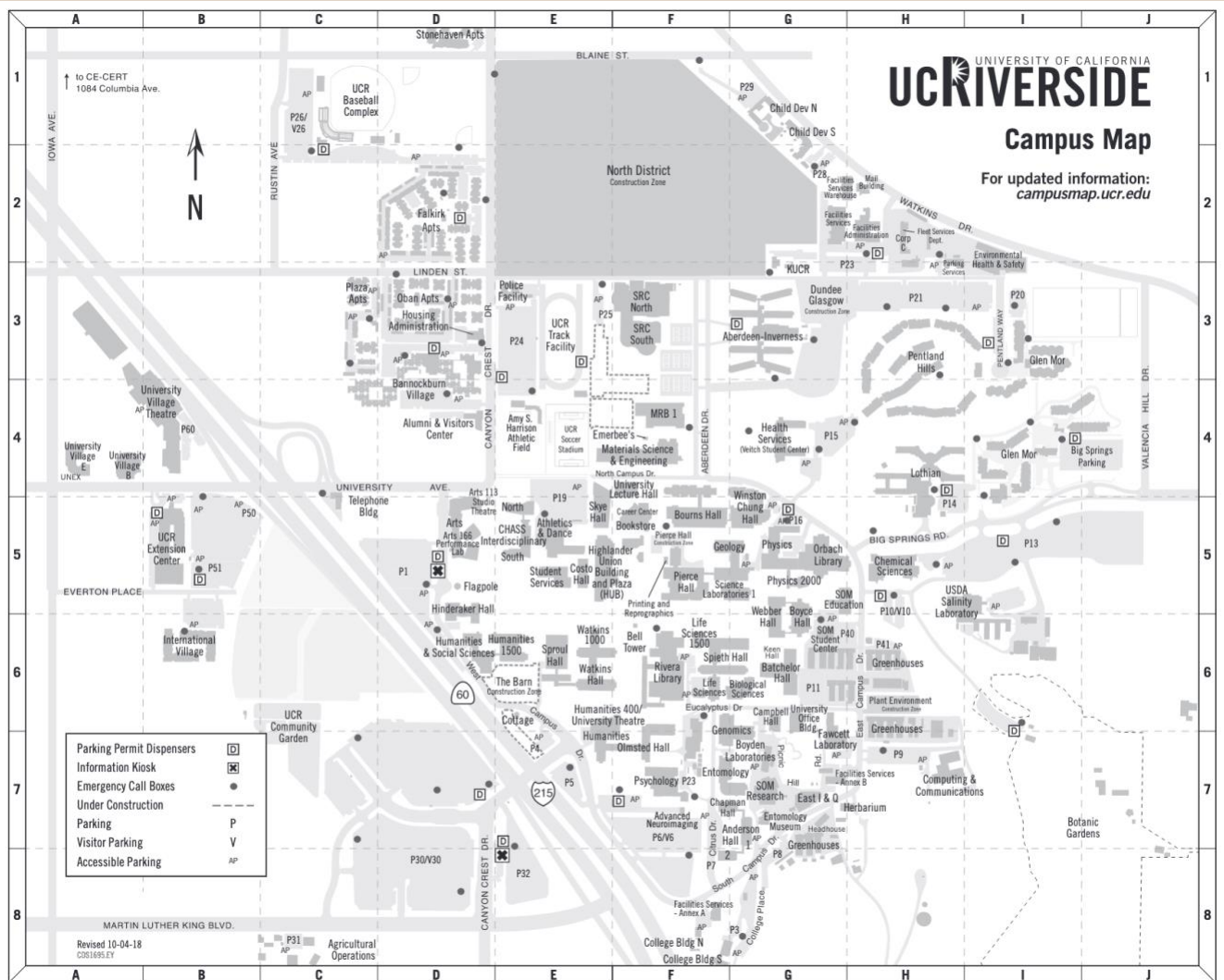
*Cover image: Climate change protest in London, September 2019.  
Image by Gabriel McCallin, via Unsplash.*

# UCR campus map

(Available online at <https://campusmap.ucr.edu/sites/default/files/2021-01/map.pdf>)

If you are coming to campus via rideshare you should enter 900 University Avenue as the campus address. That will take you to the flagpole drop-off location across from Parking Lot 1. At the flagpole you will see a sign directing you toward the symposium rooms.

We will be in the CHASS Interdisciplinary Building, which has North and South sides (E5 on map grid below). For room numbers in the program schedule (see following pages), INTS = CHASS Interdisciplinary South, INTN = CHASS Interdisciplinary North.



## Alphabetical Legend

Building Name	Grid		
Aberdeen-Inverness Residence Hall	G3	Greenhouses	H6
Administration (Hinderaker Hall)	D5-6	Headhouse (Greenhouses)	G7
Advanced Neuroimaging	C8	Health Services	G4
Agricultural Operations	C8	Herbarium	G,H7
Alumni & Visitors Center	D4	Highlander Union Bldg/Plaza (HUB)	E5
Anderson Hall (SoBA, AGSM) 1 & 2	G7-8	Hinderaker Hall (Administration)	D5-6
Arts Building	D5	Housing Administration	D3
Arts 113-Studio Theatre	D5	HUB (Highlander Union Building)	E5
Arts 166-Performance Lab	D5	Humanities	E7
Athletics & Dance Building	E5	Humanities 400/University Theatre	E6
Bannockburn Village	D3-4	Humanities & Social Sciences	D6
Batchelor Hall	G6	Humanities 1500	E6
Bell Tower	F6	Human Resources	B5
Biological Sciences	G6	International Village	B6
Bookstore (Campus Store)	F5	Keen Hall	G6
Botanic Gardens	I, J6-8	KUCR Radio	G2
Bourns Hall (Engineering)	F5	Library, Orbach	G5
Boyce Hall	G5-6	Library, Rivera	F6
Boyd Laboratories	G7	Life Sciences Building	F6
Campbell Hall	E4-5	Life Sciences 1500	F6
Campus Tours (Student Services)	E5	Lothian Residence Hall	H4
Capital Programs	A4-B5	Materials Science & Engineering	F4
Career Center (Bookstore)	G4	MRB	F4
Center for Geospatial Science (Rivera Library)	F6	Oban Family Housing	D3
Chapman Hall	F,G7	Olmsted Hall	F7
CHASS Interdisciplinary North and South	E5	Orbach Library (Science Library)	G5
Chemical Sciences	H5	Parking Services	H2
Child Development Center	G1-2	Pentland Hills Residence Hall	H3-4
College Building North and College Building South (CNAS)	F8	Physics Building	G5
Computing and Communications	H7	Physics 2000	G5
Costo Hall	E5	Pierce Hall	F5
Cottage	E6	Plaza Apts	C3
East I & Q (Insectary)	G7	Police Facility	E3
Entomology	G7	Printing and Reprographics	F5
Entomology Museum	G7	Psychology Building	F7
Environmental Health and Safety	I2-3	Purchasing Dept.	H2
Facilities Services	G2	Rivera Library	F6
Falkirk	D2	School of Medicine Education	G5
Fawcett Laboratory	G7	School of Medicine Research	G7
Flagpole	D5	School of Medicine Student Center	G6
Geology Building	F,G5	Science Laboratories 1	G5
Glen Mor	I4-5	Skye Hall	E5
Genomics	F,G6	Spieth Hall	F6
		Sproul Hall (GSOE)	E6
		Stonehaven Apts	D1
		Student Recreation Center	F3
		Student Services	E5
		The Barn	E6
		UCR Baseball Complex	C1-2
		UCR Community Garden	C6-7
		UCR Extension Center	B5
		University Lecture Hall	F4
		University Office Building	G6
		University Theatre	E6
		University Village	A4
		University Village Theater	B4
		USDA Salinity Laboratory	H,J5
		Watkins Hall	E6
		Watkins 1000	E6
		Webber Hall	G5-6
		Winston Chung Hall (BCOE)	G5
<b>Colleges and Schools</b>			
Bourns College of Engineering (BCOE)	G5		
College of Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences (CHASS)	E5		
College of Natural & Agricultural Sciences (CNAS)	F8		
Graduate School of Education (GSOE)	E6		
School of Business Administration (SoBA)	G6		
School of Medicine (SoM)	G5		
The Anderson Graduate School of Management (AGSM)	F8		
<b>Top UCR Destinations</b>			
Alumni & Visitors Center	D4		
Athletics & Dance Bldg	E5		
Bookstore (Campus Store)	F5		
Campus Tours (Student Services)	E5		
Career/Counseling/Health Services (Health Services)	G4		
Dining Services (Bannockburn Village)	D3-4		
Highlander One-Stop Shop (Student Services)	E5		
Housing Administration	D3		
HUB (Highlander Union Bldg)	E5		
Orbach Library	G5		
Rivera Library	F6		
Student Recreation Center	F3		
University Theatre	E6		

# Program schedule

**April 27, in person, University of California Riverside**

9:00 - 10:15	<p><b>Keynote:</b> Nicole Seymour: <i>Climate crisis and comedy crisis</i>          Room: INTS 1113          Chair: Jade Sasser</p>		
10:15 - 10:45	<p><b>Morning refreshments</b>, in room: INTS 1113</p>		
10:45 - 12:00	<p><b>Youth climate emotions</b>          Room: INTS 1113</p> <p>Chair: Sabrina Guzman Skotnitsky</p> <p>Sabrina Guzman Skotnitsky: <i>Coping with Climate Crisis: How Arts-based Approaches Can Help Youth Process Climate Anxiety and Generate Active Hope.</i></p> <p>Dan Suarez: <i>Radical Implications: Teaching About Planetary Crisis (When You're in a Planetary Crisis).</i></p>	<p><b>Reading affects</b>          Room: INTS 1111</p> <p>Chair: Lindsey Falkenburg</p> <p>Lindsey Falkenburg: <i>Restoration Cemeteries: Decolonize, Grieve, Dismantle Capitalism.</i></p> <p>Addie Hopes: <i>"Terrorist Pleasures" &amp; "Fracked-up" Desires: Unsettling Eco-Somatic Infrastructures of White Settlerdom in Rachel Zolf's "Janey's Arcadia."</i></p> <p>Juliann Emmons Allison: <i>Mourning the End of Nature: The Literature of Race, Ethnicity, Culture and Climate Justice.</i></p>	<p><b>Affects as politics</b>          Room: INTN 2043</p> <p>Chair: Charles Couchman</p> <p>Charles Couchman: <i>Emotional Impediments to Climate Action: Intrapsychic Conflict and Emotional Hegemony</i></p> <p>Rudy Leal McCormack: <i>The Problem with Eco-Neurosis (EN): A Reconceptualization of EN Through the Lens of Erich Fromm's Political Theory.</i></p>
12:00 – 1:15	<p><b>Lunch</b>, in Room INTS 1113</p>		
1:15 - 2:45	<p><b>Workshop:</b> Maria Vamvalis and Rebecca Weston: <i>Collective Affect and the Politics (Limits) of Professionalism.</i>          Room: INTS 1113</p>		

2:45 – 4:00	<p><b>Affects of place</b> Room: INTS 1113</p> <p>Chair: Emma Frances Bloomfield</p> <p>Emma Frances Bloomfield, Laekyn Kelley, &amp; Eddie Estrada: <i>(Im)Mobilizing Eco-Anxiety in Nevada</i></p> <p>Jenny N. Myers: <i>Narratives of Resilience: Place Attachment in Vieques, Puerto Rico.</i></p> <p>Jennifer Ladino: <i>Fire Stories and Just Emotions: Gratitude, Humility, and Compassion in Rural Communities.</i></p>	<p><b>Sexuality and Reproduction in an Age of Climate Crisis</b> Room: INTS 1111</p> <p>Chair: Jade Sasser</p> <p>Jade Sasser: <i>The Kid Question: Navigating Race, Climate Emotions, and Reproductive Anxiety.</i></p> <p>Amara Miller, Abrina Valdez, Emily Ernst and Megan Curry: <i>Climate Change, Emotions, and Un/Certainty in Reproductive Decision Making in North America.</i></p> <p>Findley Dunn: <i>Queer(y)ing Climate Emotions: Exploring Gender-Diverse Peoples' Emotional Responses to Change in Gender Identity and Climate.</i></p>
4:00 – 4:15	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Afternoon refreshments and close</b> Room: INTS 1113</p>	
6:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Optional <b>dinner</b> together (at your own cost) Riverside Food Lab: <a href="https://www.riversidefoodlab.com/">https://www.riversidefoodlab.com/</a></p>	

## April 28, Online

*All times in Pacific Daylight Time – you will need to convert the times to your local time zone.*

*For those watching the sessions from the UCR campus, we will all meet in Room INTS 1113. Morning and afternoon refreshments will be provided.*

*Zoom links will be emailed to registered participants 24 hours before the sessions.*

9 - 10.00	<p><b>Keynote:</b> Charles Ogunbode: <i>I feel, I resist, I resign: What emotions tell us about individual responses to present and future climate change in Nigeria and the Philippines.</i> Chair: Blanche Verlie</p>		
10.00 - 10.15	<p><b>Break</b></p>		
10.15 - 11:45	<p><b>Eco-fiction 1: Indigenous speculations.</b></p> <p>Chair: Markus Schwarz</p> <p>Markus Schwarz: <i>Community after the End of the World: A Relational Reading of Waubgeshig Rice's Moon of the Crusted Snow.</i></p> <p>Esha Shah: <i>Who is the decentered affective human? A feminist reading of (post)-apocalyptic/(post)-disaster climate fiction.</i></p> <p>Delia Byrnes: <i>Post-Apocalyptic Feeling and Indigenous Futurity in Cherie Dimaline's The Marrow Thieves.</i></p> <p>Lara-Lane Plambeck: <i>Climate Trauma Narratives of Eco-Ancestral Connecting and Indigenous Survivance – a Decolonial Consideration.</i></p>	<p><b>Politics of eco-emotions.</b></p> <p>Chair: Blanche Verlie</p> <p>Blanche Verlie: <i>Climate distress as structural violence.</i></p> <p>Louise Knops: <i>How climate emotions shape democracy.</i></p> <p>Sanita Fejzic: <i>War is Garbage: Feeling Transnational and Transcorporeal Violence.</i></p> <p>Megan Fowler: <i>On the Social, Political, and Ecological Exigencies of Embodiment: Interrogating Coloniality in the Era of Planetary Distress.</i></p>	<p><b>Interrogating mental health models.</b></p> <p>Chair: Dan Murphy</p> <p>Dan Murphy: <i>Liberating the duty of care in university counseling centers in the US.</i></p> <p>Vanessa Weighgold and Weronika Kałwak: <i>The political and psychological implications of using the concept of 'eco-anxiety'.</i></p> <p>Panu Pihkala: <i>Justice issues and the Process of Eco-anxiety and Ecological Grief.</i></p> <p>Kalina Michalska: <i>Risk and resilience pathways from discrimination and climate threat to the neurobiology of anxiety in preadolescent Latina girls in the Inland Empire.</i></p>

11:45 - 12:00	<b>Break</b>		
12:00 - 1:00	<p><b>Workshop</b> Emily Laurens &amp; Rachel Porter: <i>Tarot as inspiration when witnessing ecological and societal breakdown.</i></p>	<p><b>Workshop</b> Kate Schapira, Caroline Contillo and LaUra Schmidt: <i>Embodying Possibility: Collective Care and Action through Climate Emotions.</i></p>	<p><b>Workshop</b> Megan Thiele Strong: <i>Climate Alignment: Coping with the Reality of Climate Destabilization.</i></p>
1:00 - 1:30	<b>Break</b>		
1:30 - 3:00	<p><b>Youth, futures, and reproductive anxieties.</b></p> <p>Chair: Yuan Yuan</p> <p>Yuan Yuan: <i>Reproductive Anxiety and Caring for the Young in Chinese Climate Fiction.</i></p> <p>Clemence Demay &amp; Mathilde Krähenbühl: <i>'Not wanting a child': Emotions as a translation in climate change trials in Switzerland.</i></p> <p>Summer Gray, Brigid Mark, Corrie Grosse, and Julia Fine: <i>The Role of Emotions in Motivating Youth Activism and Advancing Justice at the COP.</i></p>	<p><b>Eco-emotions in the public sphere.</b></p> <p>Chair: Lucy Drummond</p> <p>Lucy Drummond: <i>The Infinite Scroll's Flattening Effect: Environmental Content on Instagram.</i></p> <p>April Anson: <i>Ecofascism is and is Not a Metaphor.</i></p> <p>Rajani Bhatia &amp; Anne Hendrixson: <i>Kindling Green Hate through Eco- and Demographic Anxiety.</i></p> <p>Kirsti Maria Jylhä and Julia Mosquera: <i>How to feel about climate change? An analysis of the normativity of climate emotions.</i></p>	<p><b>Pedagogical Practices.</b></p> <p>Chair: Nicolette Trueman</p> <p>Alice Beban, Nicolette Trueman, Heather Meikle, Warwick Tie, Matt Wynyard: <i>Rooting education in practices of hope: A case study of He Kaupapa Tūmanako.</i></p> <p>Kelsie Fowler: <i>Lessons from the girl boat: Treading in a plastic sea of grief and authoring ecological hope.</i></p> <p>Terry Harpold: <i>'They Don't See Me': Climate Anxiety under an 'Anti-Woke' Regime.</i></p>



3:00 - 3:15	<b>Break</b>		
3:15 - 5:00	<p><b>Eco-fiction 2: Loss, erasure, and affective complexity.</b></p> <p>Chair: Barnali Sarkar</p> <p>Barnali Sarkar: <i>The spring that never existed: Water crisis, eco-anxiety and women’s sense of place in Emmi Itäranta’s “Memory of Water” (2012).</i></p> <p>Sonakshi Srivastava: <i>In(ter)ventions: Technologies of Preserving Nonhuman Life in the Anthropocene.</i></p> <p>Mohamed Louza: <i>Eco-anxiety in Mohsin Hamid’s Exit West.</i></p> <p>Saba Pirzadeh: <i>Climate Breakdown and Mourning in Amitav Ghosh’s Gun Island.</i></p>	<p><b>Affective materialities beyond the human.</b></p> <p>Chair: Rahul Ranjan</p> <p>Rahul Ranjan: <i>Grief in the Climate: Entanglements and Anthropocene in the Himalayas.</i></p> <p>Maureen Kinyanjui: <i>Exploring Emotions to Understand Human-Elephant Coexistence in a Changing Environment.</i></p> <p>Loretta Pyles: <i>Tracking Rewilding Imaginaries: Ecopsychological Archetypes in an Age of Climate Change</i></p> <p>Sophie Chao: <i>When Everywhere Becomes Nowhere: The Affective Infrastructures of Plantations on the West Papuan Oil Palm Frontier.</i></p> <p>Melanie Dennis Unrau: <i>Feeling Rough: Oil-Worker Poetics and the Structures of Feeling of Energy Transition.</i></p>	<p><b>Emotions in climate justice activism.</b></p> <p>Chair: Robin L Murray</p> <p>Robin L Murray and Joseph K Heumann: <i>“Why Should I Study for a Future I Won’t Have?”: Activism and Eco-Trauma in I Am Greta.</i></p> <p>Vito Giannini: <i>Narratives and emotions of youth participants and activists in climate justice movements in Italy.</i></p> <p>Trevor Lies and Alyssia Vallejo: <i>Climate change emotions as a collective process: insights from research with environmental activists.</i></p> <p>Harrison Schmitt: <i>Understanding and Addressing Emotional Distress in an Environmental Justice Community.</i></p> <p>Alice Poma: <i>The Emotional Dimension of Mexican Climate Activism.</i></p>
5:00 - 5:15	<b>Symposium conclusion:</b> Sarah Jaquette Ray		

# Authors and abstracts

## Day 1, April 27

### Keynote

#### **Nicole Seymour: Climate crisis and comedy crisis**

Environmental art and activism in the Global North have long been known for employing modes such as “doom and gloom,” sanctimony, and sentimentality—modes which can overwhelm and alienate audiences. Nicole Seymour’s recent book *Bad Environmentalism* has outlined a neglected tradition of alternative art and activism: one that employs comedic modes such as irony, irreverence, and campiness to reflect critically on both our current moment of crisis and on mainstream environmentalism itself—including its whiteness and straightness. However, as she will describe in this keynote that builds on that prior work, some cultural critics have since declared that comedic modes are in crisis. For instance, the satirical climate-fiction author Karl Taro Greenfeld has worried that the heightened absurdities of life in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century will quickly eclipse his writing. Meanwhile, a new online generation of white supremacists have been embracing comedic modes historically associated with the progressive Left. Where can comedy go from here? More specifically, what’s the future of bad environmentalism and other alternative approaches to environmental crisis? Seymour will conclude her keynote with a few predictions and possibilities.

Dr. Nicole Seymour researches the roles that queer styles and affects play in environmental movements. She is the author of *Strange Natures: Futurity, Empathy, and the Queer Ecological Imagination* (University of Illinois Press, 2013), *Bad Environmentalism: Irony and Irreverence in the Ecological Age* (University of Minnesota Press, 2018), and *Glitter* (Bloomsbury’s Object Lessons series, 2022). She recently held fellowships at the Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society in Munich and the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the University of Edinburgh. She is currently Associate Professor of English and Graduate Advisor for Environmental Studies at California State University, Fullerton.

### Youth climate emotions

#### **Sabrina Guzman Skotnitsky: Coping with Climate Crisis: How Arts-based Approaches Can Help Youth Process Climate Anxiety and Generate Active Hope.**

As inheritors of the climate crisis, young people are struggling with disproportionately high rates of climate anxiety and other forms of eco-distress triggered by the increased intensity and frequency of climate change impacts. As a young person and climate justice advocate, I know from lived experience how these emotions can lead to immobilization, depression, and burnout. Having explored the impacts of

movement toxicity and burnout on activist retention through my undergraduate thesis, I have come to understand that relationship building and mental wellbeing are critical to the success of the climate justice movement. Youth are a large driving force of this movement worldwide, which is why it's essential we support them to sustain their action for the long haul. Scholars have found that art and storytelling can be powerful tools for healing, resilience-building and fostering community among people who share common mental health struggles. My Master's research asks, how then can art and storytelling be used to help young people grapple with these difficult eco-emotions, envision better futures and generate active hope? This session will include a presentation on my most recent research findings and a facilitated discussion and question period. My hope is that participants take away 1) a greater appreciation for the unique challenges but also the strengths of youth living through the climate crisis, 2) ideas of how the arts can be integrated into research methods and mental health services, and 3) practical resources on climate change and mental health.

Sabrina Guzman Skotnitsky is a climate justice advocate, artist, consultant and researcher residing on the ancestral and unceded territories of the lək̓ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples. As a bisexual woman with mixed Mexican and European descent, intersectionality is an important focus in her research, work, and advocacy. Over the past two years Sabrina has worked with Youth Climate Lab, the Canadian Council for Youth Prosperity, and the Emerging Youth Consultancy on a range of projects related to climate policy, green jobs, just transition, and youth leadership. She is currently pursuing a Master's of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria, specializing in Political Ecology.

### **Dan Suarez: Radical Implications: Teaching About Planetary Crisis (When You're in a Planetary Crisis).**

The task of teaching about acute ecological crisis poses a vital political and pedagogical challenge and an important provocation for critical scholars. Across a host of environmental subfields, educators are now revisiting fundamental and politically significant questions concerning what to teach, how to teach, and even why to teach as their traditional subject matter transforms around them. In this paper, I present ongoing research studying how environmental educators are grappling with the radical implications of what they are teaching and I explore the politicizing effects of this predicament. I suggest that this distinctive educational context, beyond confronting educators with bewildering learning challenges, is also generating unique demands and important openings for radical scholarship in higher education. Through interviews with educators endeavouring to teach about planetary environmental crisis (from within an exceedingly dire planetary environmental crisis), I illustrate diverse attempts to interpret the radical demands of this learning challenge and to negotiate its many complexities, practical difficulties, and political possibilities.

I am an Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies at Middlebury College, where I study the contemporary politics of global environmental transformation and teach classes in environmental politics, environmental justice, political ecology, and social movements.

### **Reading affects**

**Lindsey Falkenburg: Restoration Cemeteries: Decolonize, Grieve, Dismantle Capitalism.**

Restoration cemeteries provide unique opportunities for decolonization, anti-capitalism, and climate grief resiliency. The history of environmental restoration is fraught, often excluding indigenous peoples' traditional ecological knowledge, allowing settlers to "move towards innocence" (Tuck and Yang 2012), enforcing xenophobia and supporting harmful capitalist systems like mitigation. Commercial cemeteries in the United States are filled with harmful embalming chemicals, nature is mowed and manicured into submission and many people have lost touch with traditional grieving practices due to white supremacy and the commodification of burial practices. It is time for environmental restoration and green burial to imagine something new. Restoration cemeteries can be interstitial (Wright 2010), anti-capitalist strategies, dismantling the commodification of death by creating co-op burial options, teaching people how to care for their dead and providing community-based grief support. Systems of support for loss of a loved one can be translated to feelings around loss of eco-communities. Setting up this alternative system of death care, allowing people practice with direct democracy and creating grief resilience will be necessary in the face of needed climate action and the inevitable collapse of capitalism. Restoration cemeteries can also be spaces for decolonizing - they are opportunities to participate in the Land Back Movement, connect to honest stories about colonization through relationships with native/invasive species and envision a decolonized future through a socio-ecological lens. Decolonization demands repatriation of land. Under our current political system this is most likely to happen through the "everydayness" (Corntassel and Scow 2017) of relationship building activities, like environmental restoration.

Lindsey is determined to provide people with decolonized, anti-capitalist spaces to process eco-emotions, building resilience for the climate work ahead. They spent the last ten years engaged in environmental restoration on the lands of the Duwamish people - building relationships with eco-communities and teaching young leaders how to do the same.

### **Addie Hopes: "Terrorist Pleasures" & "Fracked-up" Desires: Unsettling Eco-Somatic Infrastructures of White Settlerdom in Rachel Zolf's "Janey's Arcadia."**

Environmental affects rooted in white guilt and shame—and the patterns of avoidance, denial, and "claims to innocence" (Tuck and Yang) they inspire—are an urgent problem. They not only hamper the work of climate and environmental justice at individual, cultural, and political scales (as Kari Norgaard and others have shown) but also reinforce structures of settler colonialism, racial capitalism, and white supremacy by protecting familiar comforts and legitimizing what poet Rachel Zolf calls the "terrorist pleasures" (52) of the status quo. In the context of ongoing racial and colonial violence on Turtle Island, the desire to defend "terrorist pleasures"—and to freeze in place the "good life" they promise—is materialized in the very muscles, tissues, and nervous systems of (white) bodies that contract in a self-protective stance I call the "shape of white settlerdom." This paper draws on queer, feminist, and anti-colonial approaches to somatics in order to argue that Rachel Zolf's volume of documentary ecopoetics, *Janey's Arcadia: Errant Adventures in Ultima Thule*, disrupts eco-somatic infrastructures of guilt and denial. Through a poetic practice of "disfluent listening" and "fracked-up" manipulation of US and Canadian colonial texts, Zolf is a "queer, complicit, already-glitched witness" (*Janey's Arcadia* 116) who stages semantically and somatically disorganizing encounters with the genocidal and ecocidal project of settler colonialism. Like the volume itself, this paper does not seek to re-center whiteness but to "frack up" its sedimented patterns and to imagine what justice-oriented pleasures might emerge.

Addie Hopes (she/her) is a Ph.D. candidate in the English Department (Literary Studies) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and holds an MFA in Fiction from Brooklyn College, CUNY. She's currently on the editorial team at the Network in Canadian History and Environment (NiCHE), Edge Effects magazine, and The Hopper. When she's not writing a dissertation about documentary ecopoetry, she's thinking about queer and feminist approaches to mer-people and speculative multispecies worlds.

### **Juliann Emmons Allison: Mourning the End of Nature: The Literature of Race, Ethnicity, Culture and Climate Justice.**

A multidisciplinary literature on the practice of mourning suggests that expressions of sadness and grief associated with ecological loss, generally, have the potential to generate individual behavioral and social changes conducive to climate adaptation. Willox (2012), more specifically, identifies specific mourning practices--recognition of the mutual vulnerability of all life; public expression of grief; witnessing and sharing of grief; development of a new, proactive climate narrative; and acceptance of the notion that negative feelings, such as anger, rage, and hate can be psychologically healthy—that contribute to this transformation. I argue that a rich literary and scientific body of nature writing expresses ecological grief in ways that can motivate communities, indeed entire societies, to embrace the social and technological changes necessary to establish more just and sustainable futures. Bill McKibben's *The End of Nature*, arguably the first popular book on climate change, represents a significant example of this phenomenon. My study takes a broader, and more critical view. I use Willox's framework to analyse and compare a selection of literary writing by white and BIPOC authors that includes climate change, but may not be limited to that substantive focus. The proposed presentation will: (1) introduce the study; (2) review the literature on ecological grief and mourning; (3) discuss the case selection and method of analysis; (4) present a comparative case analysis; and (5) suggest conclusions based on the work in progress.

Juliann Emmons Allison is Associate Professor of Gender and Sexuality Studies, Faculty Chair of Sustainability and Director of Global Studies at the University of California-Riverside. Allison's current research examines the sustainability of Southern California's warehousing industry, gender and transitions to renewable energy sources, and ecological grief.

### **Affects as politics**

#### **Charles Couchman: Emotional Impediments to Climate Action: Intrapsychic Conflict and Emotional Hegemony**

Discomfort with emotion related to the climate emergency is an important obstacle to climate action. This presentation offers a framework, influenced by critical theory and the psychodynamic concept of intrapsychic conflict, for how emotion relates to action, how action is undermined, and how we can work towards reclaiming our power. Active emotions are characterized by embodied behavioral action tendencies (e.g., "anger" to assert needs, "love" to nurture, "sadness" to enlist support). They are our vitality; however, when met with threats to attachment, they become associated with anxiety. This results in conflicted emotion, which is avoided using defense mechanisms that impair functioning. Emotional

hegemony refers to the set of processes by which emotions are socially controlled in alignment with the interests of the powerful (which are typically inseparable from climate-destructive practices). Emotional hegemony works, in part, by conflicting the emotions involved in resistance, care, and solidarity (e.g., anger and love). Emotional hegemony also promotes defenses that make us more easily subjugated, such as by distracting us through mass entertainment, consumerism, and ego-aggrandizing pursuits; pacifying us through depressive sadness, anger-turned-inward, pseudohelplessness, and defensive grief; dividing us through individualism, othering, anger displacement, and reaction formation against love; and scaring us into compliance such that we cling to authority and dominant ideologies. Understanding these processes helps us resist them. However, directly experiencing conflicted emotions, especially in the body, challenges emotion-anxiety associations. This loosens defenses and frees us to fight for what we care about, including a livable planet.

Charles Couchman, PhD, is a clinical psychologist in private practice in Austin, Texas. He has been providing empowering, emotion-focused forms of psychotherapy for almost 25 years and is interested in the integration of psychology and critical theory as they relate to problems of domination, exploitation, injustice, and the climate emergency.

### **Rudy Leal McCormack: The Problem with Eco-Neurosis (EN): A Reconceptualization of EN Through the Lens of Erich Fromm's Political Theory.**

The terms climate anxiety and eco-anxiety have reached a critical level of concern among the public. So much so that in February of 2022, the New York Times published a Sunday article headlined "Climate Change Enters the Therapy Room," which touched on the timeliness of the issue. The American Psychological Association (APA), and clinical psychologists more broadly, are also taking eco-anxiety seriously in recent years, although this was not always the case. However, the term eco-neurosis is lesser known to the public and is not part of the APA's report. Yet I believe the term/concept eco-neurosis (EN) provides a more complex nexus in which to identify the phenomenon as part of a systemic (such as cultural, historical, and political) disturbance. By reinterpreting EN as a systemic effect, hidden layers emerge within the human and more than human worlds. Therefore, I will demonstrate that EN is not just for the individual mind suffering symptoms of neurosis, but that EN is a cultural illness. My argument theorizes that EN is not adequately understood as a psychological development located in individual minds; rather it is a systemic reaction to a social order that appropriates human and more than-human life at too high a cost. Thus, I postulate that EN is a felt separation of humanity from more-than-human life; at the same time, it is also an unhealthy adaptation from the current civilization organization and its relation to the more-than-human domain.

Rudy received his B.A. in Political Science and Philosophy, as well as his M.A. in Political Science from Florida International University. Rudy is a first-generation Cuban-American, who emigrated to the U.S. at seven years old, born in Cuba, and raised in Miami, FL. Rudy's research interests fall within a Western Marxist approach, concentrating on a cross-disciplinary framework in understanding the effects of capitalism through climate change and psychological pathologies. In addition, the theoretical traditions of psychoanalysis, world-ecology, eco-psychology, and non-indigenous decolonial praxis are particular frameworks that he uses to complement his current research on eco-anxiety/neurosis.

## Workshop

### **Maria Vamvalis and Rebecca Weston: Collective Affect and the Politics (Limits) of Professionalism.**

The growing mental health crisis, amidst persistent ecological, social and political violence demands intensive engagement from both educational and clinical communities. Mounting evidence reveals the profoundly harmful and inequitable impacts of climate distress in diverse communities (Ojala, Cunsolo, Ogunbode & Middleton, 2021). Many are increasingly concerned about the extent to which younger people are affected both by the violence and societal failure to protect younger generations (Hickman et al., 2021; Sanson & Bellemo, 2021). Currently, institutions emphasize scientific/technocratic solutions at the expense of deeper engagements with both structural root causes and affective, embodied experiences of harm, complicity and transformation. (Verlie, 2022). In confronting the climate crisis, we recognize that feelings arise out of material, social, political and emotional contexts that are cultural expressions as much as individual experiences. We also recognize that actions in response to the climate crisis are also culturally and politically situated. Similarly, climate anxiety, while increasingly widespread, is profoundly contextual as is the ability to act in the face of a changing climate (Ogunbode, Doran et al, 2022). Through facilitated conversation, we will explore the responsibilities and tensions of nurturing transformative agency as clinicians and/or educators. We will also ask: What kinds of new social norms and imaginaries do our actions invoke? What do they foreclose? What actions are necessary in these times? Given the threat of eco-fascism, what are our professional and personal responsibilities to articulate, cultivate, organize and enact responses based in love, connection, relationship and an informed, collective solidarity?

Maria Vamvalis, PhD Candidate lives in Tkaronto (Toronto). Her doctoral research explores climate justice education that nurtures meaning, purpose and hope. She has worked for many years in the public education system in Canada as a teacher, as a facilitator of professional learning, and is currently teaching in the Masters of Teaching Program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Rebecca Weston, LCSW and JD lives in the metro-New York area and is a practicing clinician and Co-President of the Climate Psychology Alliance of North America. In this capacity, Rebecca organizes and provides support for climate-aware mental health clinicians. She speaks frequently about the mental health impacts of the climate crisis, the varied ways in which climate mental issues are interwoven with systems of inequity, the psychological underpinnings of climate denial and the need to open compassionate space for people to engage their emotions and step forward into action.

## Affects of place

### **Emma Frances Bloomfield, Laekyn Kelley, & Eddie Estrada: *(Im)Mobilizing Eco-Anxiety in Nevada***

With increases in global temperatures and climate-driven disasters, feelings of distress, often called eco-anxiety, are also on the rise. Our interdisciplinary team conducted a survey of 1560 Nevadans about their climate attitudes, including two questions about climate concerns and what should be done about them. Open-ended responses were inductively coded for topics related to eco-anxiety. This presentation

analyzes three prominent themes: 1) temporal framing of concerns (from the present into the future); 2) spatial framing of personal risks, community risks, or environmental risks; and 3) mobilization, or how feelings of climate anxiety inform feelings of fatalism (lack of agency) or environmental agency. This project has theoretical and practical implications. While research into eco-anxiety is relatively new, concerns about environmental changes are not. Eco-anxiety as a term is a symbolic construction that makes meaningful a nexus of emotions and feelings. The term performs rhetorical functions in concretizing long-standing concerns into a recognizable concept. Our research also analyzes the polysemous meanings of “eco-anxiety” as concerns about climate change’s consequences from climate advocates and concerns about the consequences of environmental policies from climate skeptics. Additionally, we attend to how eco-anxiety manifests regionally as opposed to viewing nations as experiencing homogenous emotional states. Our analyses reveal county differences that may help tailor messaging (e.g., northern Nevadans concerned with wildfires and southern Nevadans concerned with Lake Mead’s levels). Ultimately, our findings contribute to our understanding of eco-anxiety and outline potential strategies for appealing to eco-anxiety in ways that mobilize climate agency instead of fatalism.

Emma Frances Bloomfield (Ph.D., University of Southern California) researches the rhetoric of science and environmental communication, particularly regarding climate change, human origins, religion, and the body. She teaches classes on rhetoric and persuasion and is an advocate of inclusive pedagogy.

Laekyn Kelley is a Masters Student in Communication and Rhetoric at University of Nevada Las Vegas. Her lines of research include perspectives on climate change in Nevada and analysis of corporate environmentalism in the electric energy movement.

Eddie Estrada (M.P.A., University of Nevada, Las Vegas) is a Research Assistant for the Public Communication Initiative, a Teaching Assistant for the School of Public Policy & Leadership, and a Public Affairs Ph.D. student. He researches healthcare equity and communication strategies. He previously worked with the State of Nevada, the City of Mesquite, and the Clark County Fire Department.

### **Jenny N. Myers: Narratives of Resilience: Place Attachment in Vieques, Puerto Rico.**

As a contribution to decolonizing discourses, this presentation discusses affective place-based relationships as a source of agency (Barnd, 2017; Groves, 2015; Johnson & Larsen, 2013). While Groves (2015) identifies the colonialization of place attachment as an environmental injustice that hampers individual and collective agency, I suggest that the survivance of place attachment in colonized space enables resistance through acts of inhabiting (Barnd, 2017) that Fullilove (2014) describes as community practices of love. This presentation is framed as a response to two critical questions identified by Devine-Wright (2014) to articulate the role of place attachment in shaping human responses to climate change. He calls for research into “(a) whether place attachments enable or obstruct the ability of individuals to adapt to change; and (b) how place attachments are embedded within and reflect the politics of place change, notably acts of resistance” (p. 175). I will unfold narrative accounts from the island of Vieques, Puerto Rico, where residents have fought forced displacement, militarized violence, and environmental trauma during nearly 60 years of U.S. military occupation. By investigating narratives of resilience, this research reflects an effort to challenge the paradigm of damage-centered scholarship (Calderon, 2016; Tuck, 2009). The narratives emerging from Vieques are illustrative of ways residents are claiming their



power and healing from traumatic experiences through transformative acts of place-making and re-making. It is my hope that their stories will inform critical conversations about community resilience in the face of climate change.

Dr. Jen Myers (she/her) is a Visiting Assistant Professor and Chair of Sustainability at Wells College. She has a master's in Environmental Philosophy and a Ph.D. in Sustainability Education. Her research investigates affective place-based relationships as a source of agency and pathway for community and individual resilience in the face of climate change.

### **Jennifer Ladino: Fire Stories and Just Emotions: Gratitude, Humility, and Compassion in Rural Communities.**

This proposal builds on my contribution to the Climate Justice Educators Toolkit, which focused on the value of fear emotions in rural communities like my own in north Idaho—communities that, until recently, have had the privilege of avoiding some of the worst impacts of climate change. Majority white rural communities in the U.S. West have not been a priority for scholars of climate justice; however, I suggest that amplifying these rural voices brings important affective knowledge about environmental problems. Drawing on a National Science Foundation-funded transdisciplinary project that gathered personal stories of wildfire from residents of the inland Pacific Northwest, my presentation explores how these fire stories reveal new emotions associated with environmental disasters and may help facilitate justice-oriented forms of resilience. Rural communities are increasingly hit hard by wildfire, with detrimental impacts on local economies (e.g. tourism, agriculture, and construction) and on peoples' physical, mental, and emotional health. But along with “negative” emotions like solastalgia, grief, and anxiety, stories of fire showcase a suite of more “positive” community-focused emotions that circulate in fire's aftermath: gratitude, humility, and compassion. These emotions both draw attention to existing sociopolitical hierarchies and enable people to see similarities between themselves and others. As such, they are important ways of feeling toward one another, combatting isolation and depression, and facilitating self- and community efficacy as we face the climate crisis together. Unlike modes of resilience that are complacent, privileged, unreasonably hopeful, or resigned to oppressive systems, these just emotions are ways of participating in civic life that may fuel collective resistance and transformative change.

I am a professor of English, core faculty of Environmental Science at the University of Idaho, and a co-founder and co-director of the Confluence Lab. I am the author of *Memorials Matter: Emotion, Environment, and Public Memory at American Historical Sites* (2019) and *Reclaiming Nostalgia: Longing for Nature in American Literature* (2012). I also co-edited, with Kyle Bladow, *Affective Ecocriticism: Emotion, Embodiment, Environment* (2018) and have published articles on a range of subjects in the environmental humanities.

### **Sexuality and Reproduction in an Age of Climate Crisis**

**Jade Sasser: The Kid Question: Navigating Race, Climate Emotions, and Reproductive Anxiety.**

While a growing body of research in the U.S., Canada, and Europe is exploring facets of the mental and emotional health impacts of climate change, few of these studies explore how climate emotions shape reproductive plans. Those that do tend to ignore race, with the practical effect of centering white participants' lives, emotions, and experiences. This exclusion of people of color is troubling in the U.S. in particular, given the widespread evidence that climate impacts have disproportionate impacts on marginalized communities of color, and that mental and emotional impacts may also be more severe. This study asks: is race a factor in the expression of climate emotions and reproductive anxiety? Based on a national survey and in-depth interviews, this paper argues that race is a key variable shaping climate change-related emotions, reproductive anxiety, and climate-driven plans to have fewer children. Based on these findings, I argue for a framework that recognizes culturally competent mental and emotional support, as well as reproductive justice, as necessary components of climate justice.

Jade Sasser is an Associate Professor of Gender and Sexuality Studies at UC Riverside. Her research and teaching explore the roles of gender, race, and social justice in the framing of climate change and its interventions. Her current research analyzes the role of race in climate emotions and reproductive plans.

**Amara Miller, Abrina Valdez, Emily Ernst and Megan Curry: Climate Change, Emotions, and Un/Certainty in Reproductive Decision Making in North America.**

How do emotional experiences due to climate change influence the reproductive plans of environmental activists in the United States? How do whiteness and gender shape affect and decision making? This study draws on a sample of fifty-two testimonials publicly available through the organization Conceivable Future, a network of individuals raising awareness about the risks that climate change poses to reproductive justice. We focused on individuals who expressed they were choosing childlessness due to environmental concerns. The majority of testimonials are white (97%) as well as women (62%). Transcriptions were coded with special attention to emotional cues and analyzed with attention to code co-occurrences. Preliminary results indicate that regardless of gender the emotional experiences of all individuals were similar in terms of expression and rate of affective occurrence. Exceptions were that fear, worry, and anxiousness were felt more strongly by women, while men expressed anger more strongly. Those who expressed more uncertainty in their decision had stronger co-occurrences with fear, worry, and anxiousness as well as sadness and grief and were concerned about making an ethical choice for future generations. Those who were more certain about choosing childlessness were also concerned about ethical questions and expressed similar emotions, but were more likely to explain that their decision was an expression of love. They also were more likely to have intentions to pursue alternative caregiving. Engaging in other activism and alternative forms of caregiving was also associated with feelings of hope and joy.

Amara Miller is an Assistant Professor in Sociology at California State University, East Bay. Her main areas of research are cultural sociology, social movements, and complex organizations, with broader interests in post/colonialism, feminist theory, critical race theory, environmental sociology, and historical/field methods.

Abrina Valdez earned her B.A. in Sociology and is currently working as a Human Resources Business Partner in Southern California. Her interests include education inequity, racial/ethnic experiences, feminist theory, and decolonizing education.

### **Findley Dunn: Queer(y)ing Climate Emotions: Exploring Gender-Diverse Peoples' Emotional Responses to Change in Gender Identity and Climate.**

Findley Dunn (they/them) will present their research, supervised by Elin Kelsey and Kara Shaw. Their study aims to better understand how gender-diverse (i.e., non-cisgender) people are engaging with change through non-normative gender identities and climate emotions. Findley proposes that gender-diverse people are familiar with change through experiences including transitioning, subverting stereotypical gender roles, and dealing with society's responses to said changes. They also propose that gender-diverse people are familiar with change as it relates to climate change. Findley wants to see whether gender-diverse folks' experiences with change in terms of gender can provide unique perspectives about change in terms of climate (and corresponding climate emotions). They have interviewed 15 gender-diverse individuals living in Victoria, BC about their perspectives. This research is collaborative: discussion directions have been partially driven by interviewees; Findley and each participant agreed upon trauma-informed, inclusive, brave-space practices for their interview; and Findley asked participants their opinions on knowledge dissemination methods they think will be most engaging for the gender-diverse community. Insights from this research may result in guidance that can be applied to people of many gender identities who are engaging with climate change and climate emotions.

Findley Dunn (they/them) is a queer, trans\*, white Master's student of settler ancestry from the land of the Mississaugas of the Credit and the Anishnabeg, Chippewa, Haudenosaunee, and Wendat peoples. They currently attend the University of Victoria on Lekwungen (Songhees, Esquimalt, W̱SÁNEĆ) land, working in the Political Ecology lab in the School of Environmental Studies. They graduated from the University of Waterloo, on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples, with a Bachelor's degree in Knowledge Integration Joint with Biology. Their research explores how change is experienced by gender-diverse folks in terms of climate, gender identity, and associated emotions. They are interested in climate justice, anti-colonial methodologies, queer studies, collaboration, and interdisciplinary work.

## Day 2, April 28

### Keynote

**Charles Ogunbode: I feel, I resist, I resign: What emotions tell us about individual responses to present and future climate change in Nigeria and the Philippines.**

Dr. Ogunbode is an Assistant Professor in Applied Psychology at the University of Nottingham, UK. His research broadly addresses how our personal experiences, the media we consume, and the attitudes of people around us shape the way we respond to environmental issues. He is also interested in how engaging with nature and the environment affects our wellbeing.

### Eco-fiction 1: Indigenous speculations.

**Markus Schwarz: Community after the End of the World: A Relational Reading of Waubgeshig Rice's Moon of the Crusted Snow.**

The threat of the end of planet earth is abundant in myriad works of climate fiction: cities are flooded, droughts threaten the food supply, pandemics ravage the planet, to name but a few scenarios, which are often presented as novel and unprecedented. But how does this perspective change, when one's world has already ended? In indigenous speculative fiction, a world has already been wiped out: settler colonialism has eradicated indigenous ways of living and relating to the world. In this paper, my aim is to read indigenous world-making practices in Rice's novel as alternatives to the closed horizon of techno-capitalist climate solutions. Informed by Édouard Glissant's Poetics of Relation, utopian theory and indigenous futurism, I will explore the break between the trauma of settler colonialism and the possibility of imagining otherwise in *Moon of the Crusted Snow* to analyze "how to coordinate love and kinship back into our lives to reorder all our relations with the entire biosphere" (King, Navarro & Smith 20).

Markus Schwarz is currently working on his dissertation as a PhD candidate at the University of Salzburg, Austria. His interests are utopian theory, the intersections of space exploration and climate change, as well as postcolonial and indigenous perspectives on the future.

**Esha Shah: Who is the decentered affective human? A feminist reading of (post)-apocalyptic/(post)-disaster climate fiction.**

In relation to climate change debates, Anthropocene has become meta-narrative that mobilizes the idea of the earth-system as a whole dominated by the activities of humans as a species. Even when many scholars argue how the Anthropocene is just another expression of predatory nature of modern capitalism, and even when there is no such a thing as the human being in the singular, humanity as a species do possess anthropological capacity for reflexive decentering by imagining new social forms and normative ideas. In this paper, I aim to do a feminist reading of the "decentered affective human" as imagined especially in the (post)-apocalyptic or (post)-disaster climate fiction – the kind of fiction that Ursula Le Guin would

describe as “what if” fiction or “speculative fiction” in the words of Margaret Atwood. I aim to engage with the feminist narratives of especially women writers who have dared imagine a fundamentally different human-self and thereby a different future by closely examining the affective underpinnings of the existing order. My claim is that this fiction could be important vehicle through which the socio-political history leading to climate change can be re-examined and the affective nature of the anthropos re-interrogated.

I will examine three interconnected registers or tropes of the decentered affective human as imagined in the climate fiction. I have only long-listed the potential list of fiction as I am still mapping and reading and making up my mind.

1. Imagining anti-capitalist environmental subjectivities and multispecies future -- *Sultana’s Dream* by Begum Rokeya (1908), *The Woman Who Thought She was Planet* by Vandana Singh (2014), *Fifth Season* by N. K. Jemisin (2016), *Camille Stories* by Donna Haraway (2016), *MaddAddam* by Margaret Atwood (2013), *Bloodchild* by Octavia Butler.
2. Melancholy or grieving human: *Pterodactyl* by Mahasweta Devi (1995).
3. A new religious, spiritual and Creative Human: *The Lathe of Heaven* by Ursula Le Guin (1971), *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel (2014), *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler (1993), *Spider the Artist* by Nnedi Okorafor (2011).

I currently work as senior lecturer with Wageningen University, Netherlands. I have held teaching and research positions with Sussex University, Maastricht University and have been a fellow with the Indian Institute of Advanced Study and Institut d’études avancées de Nantes, France. I teach courses on feminist political ecology, politics of emotions and natural resources, and how science is emotional. Relevant recent publication: *Who is the Scientist Subject? Affective History of the Gene*, Routledge, 2018.

### **Delia Byrnes: Post-Apocalyptic Feeling and Indigenous Futurity in Cherie Dimaline’s *The Marrow Thieves*.**

In this paper, I will explore Dimaline’s novel and its themes of Indigenous futurisms and post-apocalyptic feelings in relation to environmental scholar Kyle Whyte’s critique of “crisis epistemology,” a settler affect that threatens environmental futurity for all human and more-than-humankind. Whyte implicates the settler tendency toward framing climate change as “unprecedented” and “new,” noting that this epistemology reproduces harm by validating further colonial violence in the name of crisis management. Whyte instead advances an epistemology of “coordination” that emphasizes the importance of kinship bonds for generating the “responsible capacity to respond to constant change.” This presentation will explore how an epistemology of coordination and a politics of Indigenous post-apocalyptic feeling enables the survivance of the novel’s protagonist and his found family in *The Marrow Thieves*, while also grappling with the ongoing legacies of colonialism in the Anthropocene present.

Delia Byrnes is an Assistant Professor of Environmental Science and Sustainability at Allegheny College. Her research focuses on oil, infrastructure, and environmental justice in contemporary U.S. literature and culture. Her essays appear in *The Cambridge Companion to American Literature and the Body*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, *The Global South*, *NiCHE: Network in Canadian History & Environment*, *Environmental History Now*, and other venues.

## **Lara-Lane Plambeck: Climate Trauma Narratives of Eco-Ancestral Connecting and Indigenous Survivance – a Decolonial Consideration.**

In recent years, the theory on traumatic impacts of climate change has extended to the humanities concerned with its reflection in narratology. In this presentation, I'd like to extend the dominant notion of E. Ann Kaplan's definition of climate trauma being pre-traumatic (2016). Applying critique on trauma theory and issues of climate justice to Kaplan's, I will argue for the focus on the future-oriented and individual experience of climate change to resemble a re-enforcement of Western-humanist, white supremacist perspectives of separation and neocolonial ignorance of differing experiences to the Eurocentric West. In that context, I will analyse two different narratives as climate trauma narratives that diverge from Kaplan's narrow focus on eurocentric, futuristic fiction. The first one is a non-fictional litany titled *Animals at the Eve of Extinction* (2020) by Jennifer Case which will extend the notion of climate trauma to the inter-species domain as climate change anxiety and grief about livelihoods and extinction travel across species, times and bodies. The traumatic wounding induced by the rupture between event and experience of the hyperobject climate change opens up the possibility for an eco-spiritual reconnecting rather than mere disorientation in which anxiety and symptoms of preTSS are weaved into meaningfulness by reconnecting with cross-species memory and the practice of mourning, compressing planetary history and the future into the now. The traumatic impact of living in the ruptured experience of the hyperobject climate change reconnects the individual to a larger collective trauma of humankind – the ecological separation of human and nature – and generates an ecological reconnection that does not stand in contrast to grief and psychic stress in the individual's experience of the now. The second one, a video by Daniel Lin called *Rise* (2018) in which two Indigenous poets perform, will be argued to extend the notion of climate trauma to a more collective level where Indigenous traumatization by climate change is embedded into narratives of larger collective, ongoing re-traumatization of (settler-)colonial history throughout time, which, through ancestral information and grievance, becomes simultaneously a narrative of Indigenous reclamation, emergence and survivance from the past into the future.

I am an MA student from Germany, currently studying a Masters called English and American Literatures, Cultures and Media in Kiel, Germany. Before, I did a BA in Amsterdam, Netherlands, in Cultural Analysis. In my writing, I try to bring together Cultural Studies and my lived engagement with environmental and social justice issues. My passion lies in the environmental humanities, decolonialism, Marxisms, feminisms and practices of embodying change. At the moment, I find great joy in engaging with these topics more locally and in the context of my own heritage in the Northern German countryside.

## **Politics of eco-emotions.**

### **Blanche Verlie: Climate distress as structural violence.**

While conversations about climate distress are expanding, dominant structures mean that feeling upset about climate change is often seen as an individual's problem which can be measured through psychometric instruments and then treated through mental health services. Although many climate psychologists explicitly state that climate distress is a rational and healthy response to planetary

destruction and should not be pathologized, the discourses of late capitalism nevertheless situate emotional pain as a personal problem to be addressed by individuals through private therapy. This reduces the role of the state to one where supposedly benevolent governments can (partially) fund time- and geographically-limited mental health counselling following ‘individual’ extreme weather events and leave it at that, ignoring and downplaying their own role in fuelling the systematic upscaling and compounding nature of these climate crises. To adequately prevent, and also better heal, climate distress, I believe we need our conversations to explicitly and consistently hold governments and their fossil fuel allies accountable as the architects of this harm, and to resist pathologisation and victim blaming in all forms. Framing climate distress as *affective climate violence* enacted by fossil fuelled governments can enable us to do this work. In this presentation, I will discuss affective climate violence as the suffering and disempowerment arising from the fossil-fuelled rupturing of healthy socio-ecological relationships, and clarify the value such a socio-political analysis can offer.

Blanche is a Lecturer in Sociology in the School of Humanities and Social Inquiry at the University of Wollongong. Blanche’s research draws on feminist and multispecies philosophy to consider the complex, diverse and intimate ways that climate changes manifests in contemporary life, and how this analysis could inform more just and ecological modes of living in, with, and as the world. Her work focuses specifically on the ways climate change is felt, lived and imagined, such as the often visceral experiences of climate distress, and the unequal and unjust dimensions of this, as well as how this affective injustice can inspire regenerative forms of climate action. Her book [‘Learning to live-with climate change: From anxiety to transformation’](#) is available as a free e-book.

### **Louise Knops: How climate emotions shape democracy.**

Climate change and ecological transformations trigger a vast range of emotions. Whilst these emotions are receiving increasing scholarly attention, classic democratic theory largely ignores the ways in which ecological emotions are pushing the boundaries of existing democratic systems and institutions. On the one hand, climate change has spurred a renewed interest in ‘democratic innovations’ (Dryzek and Pickering, 2018; McKenzie, 2021), but these are often pitched against the realm of emotions, under a typically modern dualistic ontology. On the other hand, existing research on ecological and climate emotions tend to overlook the democratic implications of these emotions, in terms of democratic engagement and ideals, and in terms of democratic reform. This paper seeks to fill this gap by bringing into conversation democratic theory (Saward, 2010; Urbinati, 2006; Mouffe, 2000; Eckersley, 2020), affect theory (Ahmed, 2004; Slaby and von Scheve, 2019; Verlie, 2021) and ecological Marxism (Malm, 2013). First, I show how climate-emotions act as binders of more-than-human subjectivities (Baloud and Chopot, 2021) and produce new conflicts under an agonistic conception of ecological democracy (Machin 2020). Second, I discuss the democratic implications of climate-emotions in enabling the conditions for ecological justice and opening ecological democratic imaginaries. Third, I highlight the ontological potential of climate emotions in re-politicizing climate change from the inside-out and discuss the concrete implications of this at the democratic-institutional level.

Louise Knops is post-doctoral researcher in political science at the Université Catholique de Louvain and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (in Belgium). Her doctoral research focused on

'indignation' as key affect of the crisis of democracy and the recent wave of climate mobilization. Her research interests cover social movements, democracy, climate change and emotions.

### **Sanita Fejzic: War is Garbage: Feeling Transnational and Transcorporeal Violence.**

War is garbage. It is often documented that victims of war experience post-traumatic stress disorder, not to mention chronic health issues that follow famine, violence and forced exile. Based on my situated knowledge and embodied experience of experiencing the genocide of my Muslim Bosniak people during the 1992-1995 Balkan War, my presentation brings to the foreground the affective dissonance left over from loss of land and the lasting impacts of spiritual, emotional, and physical disconnection from one's ecological milieu following armed conflict. What human-centric discourses on the effects of war often neglect or obscure are the ecological impacts on land and other-than-human bodies, as well as the erosion (and loss) of ecocentric cultures and patterns of feeling due to forced migration flows. The Bosniak peasant way of life, my way of life, is rooted in eco-centric emotions such as deep respect, relationality and reciprocity with land, bodies of water and nonhuman animals. I document the sense of disconnection, alienation and disorientation that arises from moving to Western urban contexts that are shockingly anthropocentric. My presentation offers a queer re-orientation toward peasant Bosniak ways of emotionally embracing one's ecological milieu. Specifically, I articulate a gender-fluid, trans eco-politics grounded in Stacy Alaimo's concept of "transcorporeality." Trans-corporeality pertains to fluidity between material bodies, challenging dualities and dichotomies between human and nonhuman. Transcorporeality assumes inter- and intra-dependency, intra-actions, entanglements, and transits between human and other-than-human bodies. I co-become with trees, moss, bodies of water and terraforming ecologies and further, my body is porous and plural with the more-than-human world, not separate and autonomous from it. Using transcorporeality in this generative sense, I offer avenues of co-healing wounded, oppressed, and violated gendered bodies.

Sanita Fejzić is an award-winning Bosnian-Canadian writer, playwright and scholar specializing social and ecological violence. At the age of seven, she fled the genocide of her Muslim Bosniak people and the Siege of Sarajevo. A refugee across three countries for five years, their body of work is rooted in her queer, trans and eco-feminist embodied experience.

### **Megan Fowler: On the Social, Political, and Ecological Exigencies of Embodiment: Interrogating Coloniality in the Era of Planetary Distress.**

As an initial point of departure, this paper assumes that part of the challenge belying humanity's response to climate change revolves around our efforts to reclaim embodied subjectivities and interrogate the power structures precluding such transformative shifts. For the purposes of this discussion, the entanglement between heteropatriarchy and the subaltern framework of coloniality names the power dynamic through which mind-supremacy is actualized as the dominant ontological and epistemological orientation of modernity, adjudicating the boundaries between normative and non-normative modes of being while functioning as a deeply engrained power-logic that is both a relic of imperialist colonialism and precondition for the edicts of an extractive neoliberal capitalist economy. These totalizing ideologies require a disavowal of our embodied, spiritual, and emotive domains, stymying our ability to actualize a fuller sense of our humanity and develop concerted responses to planetary distress. Engaging Foucault's



work on biopower and Bourdieu's notion of habitus against the framework of coloniality, and by bringing these articulations into an exchange with critical feminist, indigenous, and contemplative literature, this paper exposes the social and ecological exigencies underlying the politics of embodiment—that is, the project of reclaiming our ability to relate to the more-than-human world through our affective, sensorial, intuitive, moral, and spiritual registers. Ultimately, this paper articulates a theoretical intervention imperative for humanity's redress of climatic destruction and advances a call to amplify subaltern perspectives and contemplative traditions of practice that articulate the criticality of, and provide a means for, decolonizing the mind and social imaginary.

Megan Fowler is a doctoral student at the University at Albany (SUNY) in the School of Social Welfare, studying the intersections of contemplative science and critical consciousness, earth-based stewardship, and collective healing. Megan utilizes critical frameworks to understand how contemplative practices can interrupt hegemonic patterns of 'othering' replete within modernity.

## **Interrogating mental health models.**

### **Dan Murphy: Liberating the duty of care in university counseling centers in the US.**

Over the past five years, dominant social groups in the US have entered the era of climate alarm. At the same time, demand for services from university counseling centers in the US has surged. This surge has been driven by a number of contributing factors that uniquely affect university students, including rising levels of stress related to social, political, and ecological chaos. Therapists in university counseling centers hold a duty of care to respond to students' climate stress, so they are forced to adapt their service delivery, but at a faster rate than Westernized scientific, academic, and institutional-organizational methods of innovation can sustain. Being forced to adapt at speed, therapists risk falling back on theoretical frameworks, training models, and clinical techniques which reproduce the medicalized violence of modern clinical psychology. But there are corresponding opportunities to adapt counseling and psychotherapy for deeper alignment with the principles of intersectionality, environmental justice, and sustainability. One key pathway for adapting counseling and psychotherapy and liberating the duty of care in university counseling centers lies in deprogramming the politically mediated instinct to "therapize" climate emotions, thereby fostering opportunities for student communities to regenerate equity in psychotherapeutic spaces and techniques. This presentation will outline potential actions for university counseling centers and their stakeholders to consider as the professions of psychotherapy and counseling continue to respond to the ecopolitical crisis of the Anthropocene.

Dr. Murphy (he/him/his) is an early-career clinical psychologist with dual specialization in climate psychology and mental healthcare for people who hold minoritized sexual and gender identities. In 2022 he completed a postdoctoral fellowship in professional psychology at University of Michigan. Currently he does wage-earning work in private practice in Pittsburgh, and community-building and advocacy work through the Climate Psychology Alliance of North America and the Society for the Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity (APA Div. 44).

### **Vanessa Weihgold and Weronika Kałwak: The political and psychological implications of using the concept of 'eco-anxiety'.**

Research on ecological emotions is growing and focuses by majority on the concept of eco-anxiety. Related to this we offer the thesis that the performative function of this concept dominates over its descriptive function. Simultaneously, a variety of emotions is subsumed under the label of eco-anxiety, and the concept has an ambiguous theoretical affiliation to psychoanalytic tradition, DSM classification of mental disorders, and lay understanding of anxiety (Pihkala, 2020). We argue that a political aim is performed by popularizing the concept of eco-anxiety: draw public attention to dire consequences of the climate crisis and recruit people to climate action. Although these are moral intentions, we offer a critique of such a conceptual-political move. Additionally, by using a medicalized term like eco-anxiety (or climate depression, eco-grief etc.) in order to indicate a decline in emotional well-being, we enter the professional domain of mental health. The current discourse of eco-anxiety creates a conceptual and ethical challenge for psychological practice: while the practice is supposed to address suffering and maladaptive response to stress, eco-anxiety is regarded as a sign of a noble moral attitude (thus something to be perpetuated). Evaluation of people's emotion as "adequate", "practical", or "valuable", (Kurth & Pihkala, 2022) and a confluence of psychological sensitivity with moral sensitivity, pose a risk to ethical psychological practice (Kałwak, Garncarek & Hankus, 2022). A similar entanglement of the moral and the psychological is manifested in pathologizing a wrong moral and cognitive attitude of avoiding pro-environmental action as denial (Kałwak & Weihgold, 2022).

Vanessa's PhD-project at the universities Aix-Marseille and Tübingen addresses the question whether ecological emotions show a cultural conflict. Vanessa studied Philosophy in her Master and Philosophy, Romance Studies and Economic Psychology in her Bachelor. She has been working in Marketing and Exports for a Wholesaler and in Production and Typesetting at a publisher.

Weronika Kałwak, assistant professor, Institute of Psychology, Laboratory of Qualitative Research, Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Cracow, Poland; a delegate of Polish Psychological Society to the EFPA's expert reference group for psychology and climate change (European Federation of Psychologists' Associations). Biography: Obtained a PhD in psychology in 2018 (and MA in philosophy) at Jagiellonian University in Krakow. In her recent qualitative empirical, conceptual, and ethical research she attempts to understand the impact of global climate crisis on mental health and wellbeing in (Middle) Europe, and resulting challenges for psychological practice.

### **Panu Pihkala: Justice issues and the Process of Eco-anxiety and Ecological Grief.**

In this presentation, the broad process of eco-anxiety and grief is explored via the results of a recent research process. Special attention is given on justice issues. In the proposed new process model, a major feature is a phase of Coping and Changing, which includes three dimensions: Action (pro-environmental behavior of many kinds), Grieving (including other emotional engagement), and Distancing (including both self-care and problematic disavowal). In this presentation, it is argued that societal or community failure in helping people with any of these three dimensions results in injustice. People should be given fair chances for ecological action and for rest. Grief skills should be learned and taught in community. All these aspects are related not only to inter-human justice, but also to ecological justice in the wider sense. Drawing from the earlier work of the author, many different climate emotions will be discussed in relation to the dynamics which are studied.

Dr. Panu Pihkala (b. 1979, he/his) is an adjunct professor of environmental theology (Title of Docent) at the University of Helsinki. He is currently known as a leading expert in interdisciplinary eco-anxiety research. Pihkala is the author of several books and he has received many awards for his work with eco-anxiety.

### **Kalina Michalska: Risk and resilience pathways from discrimination and climate threat to the neurobiology of anxiety in preadolescent Latina girls in the Inland Empire.**

An estimated one third of adolescent girls are affected by internalizing symptoms including anxiety, and rates among Latina adolescents have significantly increased in recent years representing a critical health disparity. During middle childhood, when important regulatory brain networks are undergoing substantial change, exposure to potent sociocultural and environmental stressors, such as ethnic-racial discrimination, anti-immigration attitudes, and threat of climate change may affect brain development and exacerbate behaviors that maintain and escalate anxiety symptoms in minoritized youth. One such behavior is threat vigilance, or over-attentiveness to the environment in anticipation of experiencing adversity, which over time may result in avoidance, anxiety-like symptoms, and heightened vulnerability to chronic disease. Although some neurodevelopmental work has addressed effects of adversity (e.g., childhood trauma) on the neurobiology of threat vigilance in youth, effects of stressful experiences specific to ethnically and racially marginalized groups have received scant consideration in extant research. We address this gap with a longitudinal study of effects of ethnic-racial discrimination and threat of climate change in 10–13-year-old Mexican-identifying girls and their parents, a historically understudied population that encounters unique and compounding sociocultural and environmental stressors. During this period, many children start showing an interest in wider societal and global issues, like racial justice and climate change. We show initial qualitative data querying Latinx families about climate anxiety and use structural magnetic resonance imaging techniques to examine the direct and indirect pathways linking sociocultural and environmental stress exposure, anxiety symptoms, and threat neurocircuit structure. Ongoing work on the role of adaptive parental ethnic identity socialization as a potential buffer against effects of chronic stress exposure on neurodevelopment will be discussed.

Kalina Michalska is an Assistant Professor in the UCR Department of Psychology and the director of the Kids Interaction and NeuroDevelopment (KIND) Lab. She is also a member of the Program in Neuroscience and Department of Psychiatry. Dr. Michalska received her Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from the University of Chicago and completed postdoctoral training in the Section on Development and Affective Neuroscience at the National Institute of Mental Health.

## **Workshops**

### **Emily Laurens & Rachel Porter: Tarot as inspiration when witnessing ecological and societal breakdown.**

This online session with Feral Theatre will explore the use of the tarot as a tool for community building and mental health support in the context of ecological and civilisational breakdown. For people seeking ways to talk through emotional experiences, including climate and ecological emotions, the tarot offers a

visual language full of complexity and paradox. The 78 cards in the major and minor arcana collectively form a mirror for the psyche that can contain and articulate the nuances of lived experiences and struggles. There is a cultural tendency to project fears of difficult feelings or truths onto tarot reading, which is often viewed with suspicion and seen as unprofessional due to its non-linearity and unpredictability and its basis in intuition and the imaginal. Perhaps its non-linearity and metaphor represent a threat to the logic of capitalism! Yet its effectiveness in improving wellbeing is underpinned by current neuroscience. Young people and artists from diverse communities are making new tarot decks in response to structural racism, colonialism and climate change. These decks form an eclectic collective approach to world-building and making spaces for radical imagination that are badly needed now. We will look at the imagery on several contemporary and decolonial decks as well as the influential Rider Waite Coleman Smith deck. The archetypes of the tarot offer a psychological tool for exploring the here and now; workshop participants will undertake a quick, generative exercise, creating a climate emotions-related image inspired by the tarot

Feral Theatre's performance work explores themes around biodiversity change and eco-emotions. We made the immersive Funeral for Lost Species and founded Lost Species Day (2011), a voluntary initiative that invites participants to host or attend memorials and events for extinct and critically endangered species, communities and places.

Rachel Porter originally trained as an actress and theatre deviser with John Wright at Middlesex University. She later gained an MA at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in drama therapy. She is now a lecturer on that drama therapy training and an academic developing new ways of working, particularly with marginalised and disabled communities and with non-verbal communication. Rachel has developed a number of solo works performed in Belgium and the UK including Songs for Waiting and Silent Tarot. Lockdown periods encouraged her exploration of performing solo work through digital photography.

**Kate Schapira, Caroline Contillo and LaUra Schmidt: Embodying Possibility: Collective Care and Action. through Climate Emotions.**

Three longtime practitioners of collective care for the challenging emotions that the climate crisis can stir will guide workshop participants through tested practices of somatic awareness, story-sharing, and collective imagining. How do we make doing climate psychology research embodied work, so that it doesn't feel disjointed from reasons to do it and people who can use it? How can practices of embodiment, connection, and imagining expand our theories of change—and capacitate us to shape that change? Participants will hear the theory and try the practice, learning to view uncertainty as possibility, and opening to their emotional responses to the climate crisis to guide them into community responses grounded in equity, justice and repair. Presenters will facilitate the following exercises: Establish a flexible framing for emotional sharing and trauma reception, emphasizing participants' agency in how they respond to what they feel Share and hear each other's reasons for being part of the conference and the workshops (What brings you here today? What are you bringing here today?) Deliberately enter and move through an emotional and bodily response to knowing about the climate crisis, and to hearing about it; reflect on that experience together in smaller groups Visualize, and share our visions of, a more livable present and future Responsibly exit the conversation, saying what we'll leave behind and what we'll take

with us OPTIONAL: Enter the conversation with a wave of sound, to locate and hear each other and our collective strength

After 6 years of holding conversations about climate emotions with acquaintances and strangers in public places, Kate Schapira is writing a book, *Lessons from the Climate Anxiety Counseling Booth: How to Live With Care and Purpose in an Endangered World* (Hachette Go, 2024) of stories, questions and practices to transform those emotions into connection and action.

### **Megan Thiele Strong: Climate Alignment: Coping with the Reality of Climate Destabilization.**

The goals of this proposed workshop are to process and problem solve climate destruction through collective talk. Through dialoguing, participants do social justice work, process trauma and brainstorm action. To these ends, this space is designed to encourage participants to develop an increased awareness of institutionalized environmental harm, to learn different coping mechanisms to sit with this growing awareness and finally, to motivate personal investment in climate solutions. Below is an environmental justice framework based on sociological and interdisciplinary research that I use as a foundation for the workshop. The tenets anchor conversation while deepening an awareness of environmental harm.

#### Environmental Justice Tenets

- The status quo is not sustainable and institutionalizes or makes normal environmental destruction; Society guarantees we cause environmental harm, whether we acknowledge it or not.
- Anthropocentrism lives within us, both consciously and unconsciously.
- Our habits of consumerism result in commodity chains that link us all together with the burdens of environmental assault falling most heavily and disproportionately on class underresourced, BIPOC people, women, children, and the nature that we depend on for survival.
- The output bias in our system of production allows the people causing the most harm (read wealthy countries and their inhabitants) to not see the harm they cause.
- Our silence = complacency with a status quo that survives off the harm, destruction and death of our environment, its most vulnerable constituents and our future.

In sum, the facilitated conversation zone is expected to: facilitate awareness, offer coping, and encourage investment in sustainable practices.

Megan Thiele Strong, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of Sociology at San Jose State University, where she teaches Environmental Sociology. They are also a mother and an earth-loving and movement oriented radical. They know we are meant to queer the status quo.

### **Youth, futures, and reproductive anxieties.**

#### **Yuan Yuan: Reproductive Anxiety and Caring for the Young in Chinese Climate Fiction.**

Chinese climate fiction has been engaging with all kinds of eco-emotions, including anxiety, fear, hate, among many other forms. This presentation will take Chen Qiufan's "The Smog Society," Zero Carbon China, and Wu Mingyi's *The Man with the Compound Eyes* as examples to discuss the emotions

towards/of the young. Environmental deterioration, together with the economic unaffordability and the lack of human resources, makes Chinese young people more anxious about reproduction, as is represented in “The Smog Society.” The children’s book *Zero Carbon China* (2022) focuses on the entanglement of the Chinese national carbon policy and the Chinese teenagers’ endeavor to help realize this climate mitigation goal with the help of technology. *The Man with the Compound Eyes* is a more complicated reflection on the negative consequences of sea level rise on young Pacific islanders as well as the Taiwanese youngsters along the coastal areas. All three texts rely on the form of science fiction, and imagine the future risks the younger generations in the Global South may have to face. I employ Adeline Johns-Putra’s critical eudaemonistic framework to discuss the care for the young in the three texts, and examine the multi-faceted eco-anxiety revealed in Chinese cli-fi works. I also associate the discussion with Rob Nixon’s “slow violence” theory to question the climate justice in the postcolonial/neocolonial era. I intend to provide a perspective for eco-affect studies as a cli-fi researcher in China.

I’m an associate professor of English at University of Shanghai for Science and Technology, and a visiting scholar at UC Berkeley from 2018 to 2019. I’ve been focusing on climate fiction studies since 2018. Until now I’ve published five articles (one in English, the other four in Mandarin Chinese) on climate change literary criticism in Chinese journals.

### **Clemence Demay & Mathilde Krähenbühl: ‘Not wanting a child’: Emotions as a translation in climate change trials in Switzerland.**

In this paper, we explore how the argument of environmental childlessness is mobilized in climate change trials in Switzerland. Observing that the choice not to have children appeared recurrently in the judicial defence of climate activists, this paper aims to determine how notions of coming generations, kinship and family are mobilized to provoke an engagement of judicial actors and the public concerning the ecological crisis. Based on the analysis of written judgments and interviews with activists, lawyers and judges, we combine anthropological and juridical perspectives to explore different actors’ perceptions of ‘eco-reproductive’ concerns. While the occurrence of such concerns has retained significant attention from quantitative scholars, we suggest looking at their interplay in a small-scale climate politics case. The judicial arena is built upon the assumption that the law is separated from politics. ‘Ecoreproductive’ concerns being used to describe activists’ emotional states – and producing in return strong emotional responses from both the lawyers and the judges – these concerns are nevertheless seen as apolitical. Hence, we argue that environmental childlessness plays the role of an argument that translates the political to the judiciary for many actors. While the mobilization of reproductive anxieties in the judicial sphere transgresses the private-public dichotomy of emotional work, we discuss how it nevertheless reproduces its rational-irrational duality. Taking examples from the field, our presentation will cover these different aspects to discuss the role of emotions and ‘eco-reproductive’ concerns in climate trials in Switzerland.

Dr. lic. Iur, Clémence Demay, wrote a thesis dealing with civil disobedience’ cases in Switzerland, especially in Climate Justice cases. She is a member of the FRI Gender law and SGGF (Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Geschlechterforschung) networks. For more details see: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7394-3083>

Mathilde Krähenbühl is a PhD candidate in anthropology at the University of Lausanne. Her ethnographic research explores how environmentalism (re)shapes reproductive paths, what futures are imagined, and what arrangements ecologists build to have children when the context is considered unappropriated.

**Summer Gray, Brigid Mark, Corrie Grosse, and Julia Fine: The Role of Emotions in Motivating Youth Activism and Advancing Justice at the COP.**

Full of acronyms and bland policy language, The United Nations climate change negotiation process (COP) styles itself as a bureaucratic space and minimizes the emotional weight of the climate crisis. However, the COP is a nexus for activists' emotional experiences of climate change and climate (in)action. Youth activists, especially, have voiced their emotions in ways that expose injustice and invite progressive change within the COP process. Bridging literature on social movement theory, the sociology of emotions, and climate anxiety, we examine how the emotions of youth activists undergird their commitment to, interaction within, and theories of change for the global climate justice movement. Through collaborative event ethnography that spans nearly a decade of COP meetings (COP 19, 23, 25, and 27), including 55 interviews and participant observation, we trace the contours of the youth climate justice movement over time, with particular attention to perspectives from Indigenous and Global South youth. Our findings show that youth activists carry emotions developed through experiences in their local communities and movements into the global conference and movement; the global conference then informs future emotions, actions, and interactions in local communities. We further explore how this cyclical flow of youth climate emotions has changed over time, and discuss implications for overcoming the continued paralysis of the COP.

Summer Gray is an assistant professor of Environmental Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her research draws on perspectives from the humanistic social sciences to critically address social vulnerability and environmental injustice, particularly in contexts of climate disruption and sea level rise.

Brigid Mark is a Graduate Student in the University of Colorado Boulder's Sociology PhD Program. My research interests lie at the intersection of climate justice; social movements; race and Native sovereignty; and feminist and Indigenous qualitative methodologies.

Julia C. Fine is an NSF-SBE postdoctoral fellow focusing on language and social justice. Her current research examines communicative strategies of climate justice organizing, identifying effective ways of having conversations about the climate crisis and encouraging climate action. Her research interests also include Indigenous language reclamation, language, gender, and (a)sexuality, and social movements in online discourse.

Corrie Grosse is Associate Professor of Environmental Studies at College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University. She teaches and researches at the intersections of energy, climate justice, and activism and takes students to the annual United Nations climate change negotiations. Her 2022 book, *Working Across Lines: Resisting Extreme Energy Extraction*, examines how communities in Idaho and California work together to resist hydraulic fracturing and tar sands. Her current research examines Native-leadership in renewable energy – in other words, the solutions!

## **Eco-emotions in the public sphere.**

### **Lucy Drummond: The Infinite Scroll's Flattening Effect: Environmental Content on Instagram.**

The Infinite Scroll's Flattening Effect: Environmental Content on Instagram Social media presents a paradox for its users in regard to environmental content. First, users are learning more and at a quicker pace than ever before in the history of information. This includes exposure to numerous environmental problems, including climate injustice and disproportionality. However, social media applications such as Instagram produce what I call a flattening effect: all content - whether it be images of cute animals or homes being destroyed in a flood - is presented in the same two-dimensional fashion. This presentation seeks to explore the tension between the necessity of environmental education through social media apps and the lack of emotional infrastructure inherent in the logic of image-based social media. My use of logic here refers to the way in which social media content is optimized for advertising dollars rather than deep engagement. There are many affordances of digital media, including exposure to other viewpoints, the empowerment of marginalized identities, and the visceral communication of environment and climate information through image and video. However, the intricate emotional response that climate solutions and justice require can seldom happen through a two-dimensional screen.

Lucy Drummond (she/her) is a Ph.D. student at the University of Vermont working in the environmental humanities. Her dissertation centers on how the plastic industry furthers fossil fuel injustice. She holds an M.A. from New York University's Department of Media, Culture, and Communication, where her thesis explored the environmental, humanitarian, and philosophical stakes embedded in the global journey of the making of a smartphone.

### **April Anson: Ecofascism is and is Not a Metaphor.**

On May 13, 2022, the fiction of white genocide known as "The Great Replacement Theory" burst into public view following the live-streamed massacre at a supermarket in a predominantly Black neighborhood of Buffalo, New York. Armed with an assault weapon emblazoned with a racist slur, the eighteen-year-old self-identified ecofascist perpetrated the killings after posting a document justifying his violence. This text cites the 2019 texts penned by ecofascist murderers in El Paso, Texas and Christchurch, New Zealand, texts that are themselves largely copy-paste plagiarisms pulled from a long intellectual tradition that uses environmental concern to justify racialized violence, or ecofascism. Taking climate change as the new frontier condition, recent mass murderers all project themselves into an imagined future where they are the victim of invasion and use that imagined future to perpetuate violence. In other words, climate anxiety is fast becoming a pipeline to fascist environmentalism. The El Paso murderer's screed goes so far as to offer as fact the fear that "my whole life, I have been preparing for a future that currently does not exist." This paper will explore the ways that the fear that "the tides are threatening to wash away" certain subject positions not only fuels climate denial, as Jedediah Purdy explains it, but is fast morphing into a metaphor that merges climate anxiety with threats to white-bodies, where sea-level rise symbolizes a metaphoric collapse fueling the great replacement theory.

Dr. April Anson is an Assistant Professor of Public Humanities, core faculty for the Institute for Ethics and Public Affairs, and affiliate faculty in American Indian Studies at San Diego State University. She is



the co-founder of the Anti-Creep Climate Initiative, co-author of *Against the Ecofascist Creep*, and was a Mellon postdoctoral fellow at the University of Pennsylvania.

### **Rajani Bhatia & Anne Hendrixson: Kindling Green Hate through Eco- and Demographic Anxiety.**

In this paper we focus on the kindling of eco-anxiety in relation to demographic anxiety through use of population numbers in conspiratorial epistemologies, particularly via the so-called great replacement conspiracy theory (GRCT). The conspiracy transmits the idea that liberal elites are orchestrating mass immigration of non-white peoples to replace white populations on the decline. The fear of encroachment by brown and Black immigrants provoked by the GRCT can create a toxic mix when paired with already prevalent eco anxieties prompted by climate decline. Eco-emotions inform fascist collective and political action, particularly as it relates to green hate, and drive right-wing ideological conceptions of the environment which imbricate populationism and nativism. Younger conservatives increasingly reject outright climate denialism in favor of anti-immigration policy proffered as environmental disaster mitigation. In this, they skew the neo-Malthusian position of some climate scientists, who have pointed to population growth as a major driver of climate change and climate-related migration as a major consequence. Taken together, these trends fuel eco-fascist ways of thinking that call for space and mobility controls to protect “white” natural and cultural environments, which entrench reproductive and nativist hierarchy and oppressions of various kinds. They have even led to violence targeting communities of color such as the 2019 El Paso and 2022 Buffalo mass shootings. In addition to our focus on the provocation of anxieties via mainstream(ing) media, we will analyze climate emotions, in particular anger, contempt, and disgust that manifests as green hate as expressed in the manifestos of perpetrators of ecofascist violence.

Rajani Bhatia, PhD is Associate Professor of Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies at the University at Albany, State University of New York and author of *Gender before Birth: Sex Selection in a Transnational Context* (University of Washington Press, 2018).

Anne Hendrixson, MA is the Senior Policy Analyst for Challenging Population Control, a program of Collective Power for Reproductive Justice, a US non-profit. Anne researches, writes, and speaks on issues of population control, eugenics, and “overpopulation” politics.

### **Kirsti Maria Jylhä and Julia Mosquera: How to feel about climate change? An analysis of the normativity of climate emotions.**

Climate change evokes different emotions in people. Recently, climate emotions have become a matter of normative scrutiny in the public debate. This phenomenon, which we refer to as the normativization of climate emotions, manifests at two levels. At the individual level, people are faced with affective dilemmas, situations where they are genuinely uncertain about what is the right way to feel in the face of climate change (e.g., is it appropriate to feel hope despite the potentially catastrophic scenarios, or should we feel anxious instead?). At the collective level, the public debate reflects the existence of disagreement about which emotions are appropriate to feel in the climate context (e.g., perceptions that people feel ‘too scared’ or ‘too little scared’), sometimes accompanied by displays of blame. In this talk, we examine the normative reasons in favour of different climate emotions by combining normative criteria (e.g.,

rationality-based and consequentialist) from philosophy and psychology. We conclude that these criteria provide partial reasons for or against different climate emotions. Hence, the suitability of each criterion depends on various considerations, including the specific object that the emotion is directed to and the context. We suggest that emotional disagreement in climate contexts may generate distrust, potentially hindering cooperation for climate action. We also discuss the type of affective injustices that arise from the silencing of certain climate emotions, such as anger. We propose that we can ease challenges like these if we come to terms with the complex nature of climate emotions and their normative justification.

Kirsti M. Jylhä (PhD) is a researcher in personality and social psychology at the Institute for Futures Studies, Stockholm, Sweden. Her research has mainly focused on examining psychological responses to climate change (e.g., denial, emotions).

Julia Mosquera (PhD) is a researcher in practical philosophy at the Institute for Futures Studies, Stockholm (Sweden). Her research mostly focuses on the ethics of climate change, in particular in relation to future generations.

## **Pedagogical Practices.**

### **Alice Beban and Nicolette Trueman: Rooting education in practices of hope: A case study of He Kaupapa Tūmanako.**

In 2020, in response to the growing expressions of eco-anxiety and hopelessness we saw amongst young people, a small group of social scientists at Massey University, Aotearoa New Zealand, created an initiative with high school students: “He Kaupapa Tūmanako / Project Hope”. We sought to validate young people’s emotional responses to the climate crisis, and to bring together Indigenous Māori knowledge and Western sociological conceptions of hope. He Kaupapa Tūmanako approaches hope as a practice, and is built on the understanding that connection is an antidote to the struggles of our times: connection with other young people, connection with communities, and connection with whenua/land. Over the past three years, we have focused on building He Kaupapa Tūmanako into a suite of courses supported by student mentors that connect young people from around the world. In this presentation, we reflect on what our experiences of the course are teaching us about people’s diverse experiences of emotions, and the possibilities and limitations of engaging ecological emotions as transformative practice in education.

Alice Beban is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology at Massey University, Aotearoa New Zealand. She is an environmental sociologist, studying land rights, agricultural production and gender concerns to understand people's changing relationships with land and water.

### **Kelsie Fowler: Lessons from the girl boat: Treading in a plastic sea of grief and authoring ecological hope.**

Understanding how youth respond to learning about environmental exploitation, degradation and loss is essential work given the world we live in. Furthermore, many teachers are at a loss for how to support

students' varied eco-emotions as their environmental consciousness grows (Verlie et al., 2021; Phikala, 2020)—which often causes many educators to avoid teaching about the precarious state of our world. In this presentation we will examine three cases from a multi-year critical participatory ethnography of Mexican youth from a small fishing community studying and combating marine plastic pollution. Their responses to learning about marine destruction disrupt the dichotomy often assigned to ecogrief and ecological hope. Together they challenge us to understand that youth aren't simply drowning in grief or floating with hope—they live in a Pelagic Zone with all the ways of being and feeling existing at once. Additionally, their stories reveal what it looks like for youth to process ecogrief and attend to the parts of themselves that have been lost, or are anticipated to be lost, by authoring a hopeful and flourishing world, ocean, and personal future. Drawing upon the concept of “active hope” (Verlie, Clark, Jarrett & Supriyono, 2021), this presentation ends by considering ecological hope as an action of identity authoring (Holland et al., 1998; Johnson et al., 2010) and “worlding” (Haraway, 2016; Mitchell & Chaudhury, 2020) against narratives of eco-apocalyptic despair.

Kelsie Fowler works as a Postdoctoral Scholar in Climate Justice Education in the Institute for Science and Mathematics Education at the University of Washington. She also teaches the several of the Science Methods courses for the Teacher Education Program and has worked on several recent projects guiding teachers through moving their practice towards Anti-racism and Anti-coloniality. Her personal work aims to center environmental and multispecies justice, ecological hope and youth brilliance the critical participatory feminist methodologies.

### **Terry Harpold: 'They Don't See Me': Climate Anxiety under an 'Anti-Woke' Regime.**

Hurricane Ian's crossing of the Florida peninsula in late September 2022 forced the cancellation of a week's classes at the University of Florida. Though our region was spared the storm's worst, many in our community are originally from harder-hit areas in South Florida and the Caribbean, where their families suffered traumatizing losses. On the day that classes resumed, I cancelled assigned readings in my undergraduate “Literature of Resilience” course. We devoted the class meeting to sharing students' experiences of dread, grief, and earnest resolve to recover in the wake of the storm. It was a powerful moment of emotional solidarity. I am haunted, however, by an observation made by a Queer Cuban-Puerto Rican female student with family on both islands, who has been a steady source of wisdom regarding the burdens with which many of her peers struggle in this cultural moment. She said, “They” – meaning our state's political leaders – “don't see me. They refuse to see me. How can I depend on them to protect me from the weather?” “Florida,” Governor Ron DeSantis is given to repeat, “is the place where woke goes to die” Recent state legislation prohibiting progressive “indoctrination” has distorted out of all recognition secondary school teaching on topics related to race, indigeneity, and gender, and is beginning to have a similar effect at the state's public universities. A new law restricting what can be said in public schools about LGBTQ+ experiences – the notorious “Don't Say Gay” bill – may also have relevance to the design of higher education curricula. In the post-Dobbs era, Florida's draconian restrictions on women's reproductive autonomy are sure to tighten further if the Governor is reelected and begins his certain run for US President. My university's upper administration has, in all seriousness, floated the fantastic claim that because faculty are employees of the state's executive branch, we must conform our teaching and professional activities to the executive's positions. Yet, my students plainly feel the need to discuss racial, gender, and indigenous plurality, dignity, and justice. These are complex truths of their rich

and diverse lives and the lives of others they love and value. And they understand, and I cannot responsibly ignore, the roles of these truths in the “affective atmospheres” (Verlie) of climate crisis. Suppressing their discussion in the classroom has the effect, and perhaps even the design, of hiding away structural conditions of climate change that must be addressed openly if there is to be any hope of surmounting feelings of dread and powerlessness and imagining more just and compassionate futures. Rightward-careening moral panic is another, increasingly planetary, crisis that we face in this moment. It is an undisguised example of “the politics of emotion” and it is cruelly narrowing our ability to name and process anxieties aroused by the climate crisis. To its promoters that is a feature, not a bug. My students know this. I know this. But how can we genuinely foster, how can we sustain, forthright discussions of climate anxiety and strategies for dealing with it when we are reluctant or unable to discuss other notionally distinct – but in fact deeply entangled – messy interrelations of history and justice that also shape our emotional responses? In this presentation I have more questions than answers. I have a few practical, and a few speculative, recommendations. I hope to learn from others’ experiences of these challenges in the classroom.

Terry Harpold (<https://people.clas.ufl.edu/tharpold/>) is Associate Professor in the Department of English, University of Florida, and founder and Director of UF’s Imagining Climate Change initiative. His teaching and research are primarily in the environmental humanities, with emphasis on environmental justice and more-than-human ecopoetics.

## **Eco-fiction 2: Loss, erasure, and affective complexity.**

### **Barnali Sarkar: The spring that never existed: Water crisis, eco-anxiety and women’s sense of place in Emmi Itäranta’s “Memory of Water” (2012).**

Eco-anxiety as an emotional response to climate and ecological crises is inherently connected to the loss of a sense of place, powerlessness, grief, and the rhetoric of denial of climate crisis. Climate change denial, however, when rooted in inadequate ‘earth-sense’ and the ideology of domination of nature, adheres to patriarchal dualist paradigms, such as culture/nature, reasons/emotions, and men (culture)/women (nature), among others, that affect sense of belonging in a place. This research in its exploration of sense of place as mediated by both social coordinates, such as gender and class, and environmental challenges, such as water crisis, focuses on women’s understanding of the materiality of nature/water as defining spatial relations with reference to Emmi Itäranta’s climate fiction *Memory of Water* (2012). Building principally on feminist geographical conceptualization of gendered space, as proposed by McDowell, Sharp, and Blunt, the study will highlight the way hegemonic dualist paradigms constrict spaces for women and certain human groups in the face of ecological catastrophes and government monopoly over natural resources. Therefore, the recalibration of women(water)/men(culture) binary is crucial, as the study will explicate, in developing a sense of place that regards climate emotions as a cornerstone for climate actions and ethical environmental practices. Moreover, drawing on materialist ecofeminist perception of biological human body as affected by water crisis and toxic water, as Alaimo, Gaard, and Shiva argue, the study will further scrutinize the way the protagonist’s awareness of human-water spiritual interrelations alleviates her climate anxiety through a reappraisal of her nature-culture sense of place.

Dr Barnali Sarkar is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Eastern Finland. Her research interests include interdisciplinary sub-disciplines of environmental humanities and human geography. She is currently working on a project that explicates various dimensions of human–nonhuman encounters in contemporary novels.

### **Sonakshi Srivastava: In(ter)ventions: Technologies of Preserving Nonhuman Life in the Anthropocene.**

“There’d been a lot of fooling around in those days: create-an-animal was so much fun, said the guys doing it. It made you feel like God.” (Oryx and Crake) When Paul Crutzen ushered the “homo sapiens” into the postmodern world, declaring, “We are now in the, the Anthropocene”, a transition was marked by signposting time, where the human species mutated from Homo Sapiens into Homo Dominatus, influencing, and dictating the present as well as the future of the planet by bio/technoscripting their presence on the various life forms. This paper reads such influence that humans have on their nonhuman counterparts by taking into consideration two key texts – R.K Narayan’s “The Man-Eater of Malgudi”, and Philip K. Dick’s “Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep”. A re-animation of animal species is enacted in the aforementioned texts – taxidermy in the former, and electric cloning in the other. While taxidermy hinges on the past (dead animals are preserved), and electric cloning on the future, the two find common ground in the attempt to re-represent, to “restore to origin” (Haraway) what is gone, or feared to be extinct – they serve as means of preservation. In Narayan’s novel, Nataraj develops a kinship with the temple elephant, and attempts to save it from the clutches of the poacher-cum-taxidermist, Vasu, and in Dick’s novel, Iran, the wife of the hunter Deckard grieves the loss of intimacy with “real” animals, ready to look after an electric toad by the end of the novel, my project is to consider these ties of kinship, and the associated fear of loss as the launchpad of my enquiry. The paper attempts to navigate through the ties and emotions of kinship, and how it informs the technologies (taxidermy, and electric cloning) that serve as a means of repossessing what is feared lost – an animal, or the entire species in the mentioned texts. Taking from Haraway and Aloï, I aim to understand the implications of such interventions as means to counter anthropogenic mass-extinctions, and erasures, and the possibilities of emotions like eco-grief that open up avenues to imagine “cultured” zootopias.

Sonakshi Srivastava is a writing tutor at Ashoka University, India. She researches on the Anthropocene, Affect Theory, and Game Theory. She was also an Oceanvale Scholar for the Spring-Autumn session at Kirori Mal College, University of Delhi, where she researched on the representation of dis/abilities in the face of unnatural disasters.

### **Mohamed Louza: Eco-anxiety in Mohsin Hamid’s Exit West.**

This paper examines the discrepancy of eco-anxiety in the prominent Pakistani novelist Mohsin Hamid’s Exit West and the way the main characters endure eco-collapse. On the one hand, the protagonists Nadia and Saeed go through anxiety and fear in a threatened city of the Global South. On the other hand, this anxiety has ecological roots that go beyond the here and now of the storyworld. Exit West, published in 2017, portrays life in a time of huge changes, uncertainty and turmoil. As a consequence, the idea of risk and eco-collapse causes anxiety and trauma for those who are at the front lines of poverty and ecological threats of drought, dust storms, floods, militarism, land clearing, mining and extraction. From this

viewpoint, the present paper addresses how Saeed and Nadia navigate a tremendous environmental crisis as well as critique the discourse of oppositions that creates environmental catastrophe in the Anthropocene. It could be argued that eco-anxiety is inescapable for the poor inhabitants of the Global South. That is to say, they are unprepared, vulnerable and invisible victims of what Rob Nixon calls ‘slow violence’.

Mohamed Louza, doctorate degree, is Assistant Professor of English at the Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Cadi Ayyad University of Marrakech. He is working on the nexus between ecology and literature. His major fields of interest include ecocriticism, postcolonial ecocriticism, environmental justice, urban ecocriticism and narrative theory.

### **Saba Pirzadeh: Climate Breakdown and Mourning in Amitav Ghosh’s Gun Island.**

Amitav Ghosh’s novel *Gun Island* highlights the great derangement of climate change through its articulation of the connections between different scales of climatic breakdown. The novel blends mythology and adventure to trace the bookseller, Deen’s efforts to decode a 17th century legend. Deen’s journey across the globe makes him encounter the depleted Sundarban mangroves, to the Los Angeles Forest fires to a flooded Venice and make him witness the horrors of anthropogenic climatic mutations, thereby necessitating a closer look at the ethico-political implications of Deen’s journey. Building upon this idea, this paper analyses Deen’s chronicling of aqueous ecocide—cyclones, hydro-acidification (Bangladesh), floods (Venice)—that subjects human and animals to geomorphological degradation and biopolitical destruction on a global level. In doing so, the paper establishes anthropogenic climate change as a driver of multi-species extinction which unfolds as a longer, drawn-out process and engenders mourning. Interpreting climate change as the work of mourning allows us to learn from the deaths of bodies beyond our species to unite in individual and global response. Conclusively the explication of climate breakdown in *Gun Island* highlights the intensified entangled oppressions of people, place and planet and invokes mourning as an ethically productive emption that galvanizes us to work for a new ethical and political future to counteract the destruction and degradation of our non-human kin.

Saba Pirzadeh is assistant professor of English and Environmental Literature at Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan. Her ecocritical scholarship has appeared in *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *Interventions*, *Parergon*, *Routledge Handbook of Ecocriticism and Environmental Communication* and *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and the Anthropocene*.

### **Affective materialities beyond the human.**

#### **Rahul Ranjan: Grief in the Climate: Entanglements and Anthropocene in the Himalayas.**

Emerging literature on the Himalayas attests to the alarming rate of changes in the landscape caused by climate change and anthropogenic activities. These changes often manifest in disasters that claims lives, destroy ecology, and produce effects in the long-term impairment of community resilience. In the past few years, within the Himalayas and sites of fragile ecologies across the world, we have been witnessing more frequent episodes of these ‘climatic events’ – creating an alarming need for attending to climate

change. While there is an incipient and emerging legal model – especially the rights to river judgment of 2017, Uttarakhand, which upholds harm and injury principle in spirit, whereby rivers are accorded legal personality; it also remains elusive to the anthropogenic interventions such as dam and road construction in the fragile ecology of Himalayas. This paper makes two crucial standpoints by drawing on emerging literature on climate change and the narratives from a recent episode of the disaster in the upper Himalayas in Uttarakhand. First, the disaster narratives in the form of reportage and news chronicles often simplify the complex impact of anthropogenic development on the socio-ecological lifeworld of the community. Often, climate change becomes a shorthand for externalising the localised forms of effects produced by projects impacting humans, non-human, and their ecology. Second, the primal force of human stories – loss, migration, and uncertainties- is indexed as additional information to the larger climate stories. In exploring these concerns, I argue that grief – as an emotion – is a structuring affect that forms a continuous bond for survivors of climatic disasters. Their stories of loss, pain, separations, and continual grief can inform the legal landscape to recognise varied forms of vulnerabilities and the public debates on climate change and rivers in India.

Rahul Ranjan is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow for the “Riverine Rights” project based at the Oslo Metropolitan University and funded by the Research Council of Norway. He is the author of “The Political Life of Memory”, (2023) published from the Cambridge University Press.

### **Maureen Kinyanjui: Exploring Emotions to Understand Human-Elephant Coexistence in a Changing Environment.**

Emotions are sources of diverging views on resource management and inform the development of policies. They are part and parcel of power-laden relationships and are instrumental in understanding how power is negotiated in conflicts between humans over wildlife conservation. Elephant conservation in post-colonial Kenya is characterised by power differentials, control, asymmetrical access and distribution of costs and benefits. People who share landscapes with elephants bear the cost of living with them and receive minimal benefits. Recently, conflicts have intensified because of the rising effects of climate change, particularly prolonged periods of drought, causing elephants to leave protected areas and venture into community lands in search of food and water. These recent developments significantly impact the emotional well being of community members struggling to manage drought and share spaces with wildlife. However, environmental and conservation interventions focus on building resilience and tolerance. Human emotions are rarely acknowledged yet are critical to understanding the realities of the local community members' daily lives in a changing environment. Based on qualitative data collected in 2020 and 2022, I will use a case study of the human-elephant conflict from the Sagalla community in southern Kenya to illustrate how emotions are integral to understanding the psycho-social effects of climate impacts such as drought in a landscape where humans compete for resources with elephants. Secondly, I will explore how environmental emotions caused by the intensifying climate effects inform elephant conservation decisions in Sagalla and with what effects on elephant conservation politics within the community.

My name is Maureen Kinyanjui, I am a third-year PhD Candidate at the University of Edinburgh in Conservation Science. My PhD research explores the exercise of power in elephant conservation spaces

and how emotions are embedded in individuals' daily interactions and inform their decision-making processes.

### **Loretta Pyles: Tracking Rewilding Imaginaries: Ecopsychological Archetypes in an Age of Climate Change**

The human rewilding movement endeavors to re-establish connections between humans and the more-than-human world through particular ways of being, knowing and doing, like forest bathing, ancestral skills, animal tracking, and herbalism. “Rewilding” is a contested term in that the very idea of the “wild” is stitched in the fabric of patriarchal colonizer capitalism. As such, a study of self-identified rewilders reveals the imaginaries and slippages of the bodies, hearts and minds of actors who are impacted by neoliberal capitalist violence while looking for another way forward. This ecopsychological study reports on interviews with rewilders residing in the U.S. analyzing their motivations for and lived impacts of rewilding in the context of climate change, environmental degradation and species loss. Childhood experiences in nature inform these rewilders’ adult commitments to living more sustainably, freedom of movement/wandering, awe/wonder, play/creativity and soul revival on the land. A reported feeling of belonging in nature was common, with tensions between, on one hand, an American transcendentalist fantasy of solitude/self-reliance and, on the other hand, prefigurative transformative experiences with other humans in nature and/or with non-human relationships in nature. Participants describe interconnectedness and reciprocity with nature, though some went further by calling for a new paradigm that de-centers humans and/or calls for removal of enclosures. There was a common theme of nature as a holding environment, a felt sense of embodiment in nature, the forest as family, transpersonal experiences that include visits from ancestors, and spirituality as necessarily intertwined with the materiality of place. These “mother earth” narratives point to an ecofeminist emergence worthy of attention. However, the danger of mothering in an old paradigm, wherein woman/mother is objectified and we take from her what we need – emotionally, spiritually or materially – may perpetuate the continual extractivist view of nature. The reference to “nature as therapist” is prominent yet a therapist-client relationship is not exactly egalitarian or reciprocal. Thus, while people are awakening their senses, finding healing, and relating to the non-human world deeply, the ontological paradigm of nature as “other” remains in many rewilders’ consciousness. Most participants report coping with some form of trauma, chronic health condition or mental health challenge and identify their deepened relationship with the natural world as a motivation for and source of healing. They are giving back to the land and guiding others, growing food, or engaged in some form of pro-social behavior in relation to rewilding. Embodying the “wounded healer” archetype, they are attempting to heal the deep wounds of separation from nature and anthropogenic-caused loss and destruction. Some also acknowledged the scary, unknown, wild and magical dimensions of the natural world, perhaps pointing to a reconnection with more textured dimensions of archetypes. Some participants confronted this through competency development in ancestral skills, e.g. hunting, foraging, farming, and species identification. I present these rewilding narratives as means to further understanding of the rewilding movement, its complexities and contradictions, and its inner psycho-spiritual workings. The research has implications for social movement work for eco-justice and climate action, ecologically sustainable communities, and nature-based therapies.

Loretta Pyles, Ph.D. is Professor at the School of Social Welfare, University at Albany. Her scholarship centers on environmental disasters, racial and economic justice, integrative healing and rewilding. She is



the author of *Progressive Community Organizing: Transformative Practice in a Globalizing World*, 3rd ed. (Routledge, 2021) and *Healing Justice: Holistic Self-Care for Change Makers* (Oxford, 2018).

**Sophie Chao: When Everywhere Becomes Nowhere: The Affective Infrastructures of Plantations on the West Papuan Oil Palm Frontier.**

In the last decade, Indigenous Marind peoples inhabiting the Indonesian-controlled region of West Papua have seen over one million hectares of their customary lands and forests converted to industrial oil palm plantations. These transformations are radically rupturing Marind's intimate and ancestral relations to kindred plants, animals, and elements. They are also generating a distinctive and disturbing modality of plantation-being – one in which, as Marind put it, “everywhere becomes nowhere.” Drawing on long-term ethnographic fieldwork and prior investigative research conducted in West Papua, this contribution will examine how Marind experience emergent plantation landscapes as infrastructures of affective excess and estrangement, known primarily through the fleshly immediacy of their own and other species' bodies. Focusing in particular on Marind experiences and discourses of sensory alienation and spatial disorientation, the contribution invites attention to the primacy of bodily affects in producing plantations as site of trans-temporal, trans-spatial, and trans-species haunting. In doing so, the contribution will center the affective hold of ecological crises through the ghostly relation between what-once-was and what-now is, as these manifest in the form of meaningful voids, uncanny encounters, unspeakable terrors, and fleeting impressions. In the process, anthropogenic formations like the plantation conjure ruination, alienation, destruction, and loss not solely as a consequence of their proliferation but as their very form. The contribution will examine the implications of Indigenous plantation affects on the West Papuan oil palm frontier for understanding the intersections of crisis, justice, and emotions in plantations as landscapes of empire.

Sophie Chao is Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) Fellow and Lecturer in the Discipline of Anthropology at the University of Sydney. Her research investigates the intersections of Indigeneity, ecology, capitalism, health, and justice in the Pacific.

**Melanie Dennis Unrau: Feeling Rough: Oil-Worker Poetics and the Structures of Feeling of Energy Transition.**

What does it feel like for energy workers to live in the early days of an energy transition away from fossil fuels? Drawing on my book-length literary study of poetry collections written by oil workers in Canada, this paper highlights three feelings the poets identify and theorize for themselves, considering the implications of these “ugly feelings” (Ngai) for just transition. The first is disidentification, a mode for both performing and undermining toxic ideology that I have already identified (drawing on theories by Michel Pêcheux, José Esteban Muñoz, and Judith Butler) in Peter Christensen's *Rig Talk* (Thistledown, 1981) and Mathew Henderson's *The Lease* (Coach House, 2015). The second is “contrary infatuation”—the feeling of holding conflicting attachments or of loving something that is bad for you—a feeling similar to Lauren Berlant's “cruel optimism” that is theorized by poet Dymphny Dronyk in her collection *Contrary Infatuations* (Frontenac House, 2007). The third feeling is shame, expressed most explicitly by Naden Parkin in *A Relationship with Truth* (self-published, 2014), who writes, “My face stays straight but inside [it's] cave-ins / There's shame in my veins for remaining a layman”—a feeling I study by

drawing on feminist and queer theories of shame from Sara Ahmed and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick to Brené Brown. The paper considers how the cultural politics of these three emotions are mobilized by the oil lobby, the petrostate, and the climate-justice movement—and how these feelings might contribute to building just energy futures.

Melanie Dennis Unrau is a Banting Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Regina and a Research Affiliate and Visiting Fellow at the University of Manitoba. Melanie writes poetry and studies poetics and extraction. Her monograph “The Rough Poets: Petro-poetics and the Tradition of Canadian Oil-Worker Poetry” is on contract with McGill-Queen’s University Press. Her co-guest-edited special issue of *Canadian Literature* journal on “Poetics and Extraction” is also forthcoming. Melanie is a former editor of *The Goose* journal and *Geez* magazine.

## **Emotions in climate justice activism.**

### **Robin L Murray and Joseph K Heumann: “Why Should I Study for a Future I Won’t Have?”: Activism and Eco-Trauma in I Am Greta.**

For us, Nathan Grossman’s 2020 documentary *I am Greta* shows viewers the epitome of the eco-hero, a role Thunberg embodies as a passionate teen able to stir her peers to act as climate crusaders through her moving speeches and strong dedication. But the documentary takes its narrative deeper, showing us the eco-traumas underpinning Thunberg’s courage and setting it apart from other climate activist portraits. By revealing these eco-traumas, *I am Greta* expands and improves on the teen persona driving the documentary’s action and offers a way to broaden definitions of both the climate hero and climate fiction film and make room for gendered teen perspectives. *I am Greta* embraces a broader feminist teen climate activist persona demonstrating responses to climate change that address far-reaching climate justice issues and more personal eco-trauma, all made possible by the young, gendered perspective driving them. Adding a young adult component complicates this drive toward gendered resistance, providing the sense of urgency espoused by Greta Thunberg and her chiefly feminist acolytes along with a credible picture of the eco-trauma underlining that drive. In this paper, we argue that *I am Greta* draws on intersectional feminist responses to unleash gendered voices missing from climate crisis conversations in the Anthropocene and offers an authentic representation of both the crisis and the anxiety it produces. We assert that this feminist climate documentary moves responses beyond the unattainable eco-heroic toward real-world answers to climate despair.

Robin L. Murray is Professor Emeritus of English, Film Studies, and Women/Gender/Sexuality Studies (Eastern Illinois University) and continues to teach film courses.

Joseph K. Heumann is Professor Emeritus of Communication Studies (Eastern Illinois University) and continues to teach film courses. They have co-authored seven ecocinema books.

### **Vito Giannini: Narratives and emotions of youth participants and activists in climate justice movements in Italy.**

Awareness of the climate crisis, supported by scientific research and the recent pandemic emergency that highlighted the interconnectedness and fragility of natural ecosystems, has led socioenvironmental activists to increasingly reflect on the global impacts of anthropogenic activities. Climate transnational movements (FFF and XR) define greenhouse gas emissions as the cause of global warming and connect climate change to other forms of social and environmental injustice, highlighting the negative impacts on the most vulnerable people and groups. If the state is challenged to solve the climate emergency and avert the worst, individual responsibility and lifestyle politics take on significance given the need to act urgently and on multiple levels. In this narrative, mixed feelings of hope in changing things, distrust towards political-economical institutions and concern over the coming catastrophe emerge. Based on the perspective of emotions in social movements, the aim of the study is to understand the climate protests by exploring the relationship between narratives and emotions, both in the perception of climate change and in mobilization. The analysis shows the presence among participants and activists of unpleasant emotions (concern, anxiety, impotence) in the perception of climate change, in contrast to the emotions of resistance (hope, joy, but also anger and indignation) that favor collective political action. The analysis is based on 186 face-to-face questionnaires conducted during the March 25, 2022 Global Climate Strike, and 15 semi-structured interviews with protest participants and climate movement activists, in the city of Bologna, Italy.

Vito Giannini, PhD in Sociology at the University of Bologna, Italy. His research interests are mainly in political participation, activism and the sociological and cultural analysis of emotions. He is currently working on the relationship between identity and emotions in the prefigurative practices of youths struggling for social, environmental and climate justice.

### **Trevor Lies and Alyssia Vallejo: Climate change emotions as a collective process: insights from research with environmental activists.**

Most research on climate change emotions has examined them on an individual level. We ask what the consequences are of constructing climate emotions as a collective (versus individual) process, and how do collectives maintain emotional atmospheres amid the climate crisis? Across two studies, we considered the implications of community and ecological embeddedness for the experience of climate emotions among environmentally engaged community members. Study 1 was a focus group study that considered the experience of climate emotions (particularly climate anxiety) and community among local activists. In contrast to our focus on climate anxiety, anger and sadness featured most prominently in focus group discussions. Many participants also stressed the importance of community resilience and connection amid the climate crisis. Study 2 was a survey study that explored relationships between community and ecological embeddedness and the experience of climate anxiety among activists and the general public. Results demonstrate that whereas community embeddedness was associated with decreased anxiety for activists (but not the general public), ecological embeddedness was associated with greater anxiety for the general public (but not activists). Climate anxiety was also associated with environmental justice support among both groups. We discuss the role of environmental engagement and community embeddedness in crafting and maintaining collective orientations to the climate crisis.

Trevor's research integrates insights from cultural psychology and decolonial theory and applies them to pressing issues in environmental psychology. He employs mixed methods to investigate how culture and

identity influence conceptions of environmental justice, environmentalism, and perceptions of climate change.

Alyssia received her BGS in Psychology from the University of Kansas in 2021. She is interested in researching how sociocultural worlds shape environmental identity, the human-nature connection, and pro-environmental behavior.

### **Harrison Schmitt: Understanding and Addressing Emotional Distress in an Environmental Justice Community.**

Communities of color and low-income communities disproportionately face a variety of environmental hazards, which have wide-ranging physical and mental health impacts. Such environmental justice (EJ) issues entail a complex interplay between politics, public health, sociology, geography, and psychology. I present a case study of the psychological impact of EJ issues in the predominately Latinx/low-income community in southside Tucson, AZ, USA. Beginning in the 1950s, this community was served contaminated drinking water for nearly 30 years. Many people in this community are still living with not only the physical health impacts, but also the emotional distress of these exposures. In my research with this community, I have sought to not only document the emotional impacts of living through EJ issues, but also to identify pathways toward community resilience through collective efficacy and action. In this presentation, I will trace the trajectory of our research efforts across 5 years of collaboration with grassroots activists and public health professionals, present results of our ongoing research, and offer key insights gleaned from this community-engaged, mixed-methods, and interdisciplinary work on EJ. I argue that we can apply insights from research on current EJ issues to understand and address the psychological impacts of climate change.

Harrison Schmitt is a doctoral candidate in Social Psychology with a minor in Public Health at the University of Arizona in Tucson. He is also a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow. His research centers on how culture shapes the ways that people cope with and make meaning from experiences of suffering. His dissertation focuses on the psychological impact of living through environmental justice issues like water contamination. He will be starting as an Assistant Professor at Skidmore College in upstate New York in the Fall of 2023.

### **Alice Poma: The Emotional Dimension of Mexican Climate Activism.**

In the symposium I will share our findings on the role of emotions in the new wave of the climate movement in Mexico (2019-2022). Based on the sociocultural approach to emotions (Hochschild, Norgaard) and Jasper's theory on emotions and protest, we are identifying the most relevant emotions in the Mexican climate activism, which include, several unpleasant emotions related to climate change (Eco-anxiety, powerlessness, guilt, climate pain, among others) and other generated during the experience of protest such as disappointment or frustration. "Climate emotions" are felt by activists as well not-organized-citizens, and we are studying how activists cope with them thanks to some pleasant emotions, which are generated during collective action, particularly reciprocal emotions (love, admiration) and emotions of resistance (indignation, pride, anger, enthusiasm, joy). So, we will share also some strategies of emotion work through which climate activists are managing unpleasant emotions, as well we could

highlight come gender and class pattern in the construction of these emotions. Using the methodological pluralism, the data are being collected through participatory observation, surveys and in-depth interviews, between 2019 and 2022. Our research not only allows us to understand more deeply the biographical experience of climate activism, but also to know the strategies for managing emotions that can also be reproduced in non-activist people. This contribution will help to highlight the need to study emotions in different cultural contexts in order to understand how we can cope with the emotional impacts of climate emergency both in the Global North and South.

PhD in Social Sciences and full time Researcher at the Social Research Institute of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (IIS-UNAM). Her current research project is about the role of emotions in climate activism in Mexico. Her main lines of research are: emotions, social movements and socio-environmental and climate activism.