LITERARY ENVIRONMENTS: PLACE, PLANET AND TRANSLATION

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ARC CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE
HISTORY OF EMOTIONS

AUSTRALASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR LITERATURE

KEYNOTE
PRESENTERS

ALAN BEWELL

PLACE, EMOTION, AND THE COLONIAL TRANSLATION OF NATURES

Abstract

Through a discussion of colonial natural history and John Keats's *Lamia*, this paper will emphasize the degree to which colonial natural history can be understood as being inherently a translational activity available to analysis from the perspective of translation theory. I will argue that the experience of translation, the feeling of being in translation, of having been translated to a new place where strange things seemed somehow familiar, or familiar things took on an uncanny strangeness, the feeling of being between-worlds that were themselves in motion, was not restricted to colonial encounters with other cultures, but also fundamentally shaped, in diverse ways, how people, during the colonial period, related to the natures around them. My hope is that this paper will contribute to the important work that is currently being done on the history of emotions by suggesting the manifest ways in which translation shaped how both settlers and indigenous peoples came to understand the natural world.

Biography

Alan Bewell is a Professor of English at the University of Toronto. His primary teaching and research field is British Romanticism, with additional interest in Literature and Colonialism; Postcolonial Theory; Ecology and Environmental History; and Science, Medicine, and Literature. Much of his recent work has been focused on the manner in which the ecological impact of British colonialism upon global natures is reflected upon late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature. In *Romanticism and Colonial Disease* (1999), he examined the impact of the global spread of colonial diseases upon British literature between 1780 and 1850. His most recent monograph, entitled *Natures in Translation: Romanticism and Colonial Natural History* (2016), discusses the manner in which the global transport and exchange of plants, animals, and natural commodities shaped how the British came to understand themselves, English nature, and the natural world. Professor Bewell is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, a Guggenheim Fellow, and a recipient of the Northrop Frye Award at the University of Toronto for excellence in teaching and research.

URSULA HEISE

PLANET OF CITIES: URBAN ENVIRONMENTS AND NARRATIVE FUTURES

Abstract

In 2008, humanity crossed a historical boundary: more than 50% of the global population now lives in cities, and future population growth will mostly occur or end up in urban areas. This means that humans' most important habitat now and for the future is the city, a historical shift that entails important ecological as well as social and cultural consequences. "Planet of Cities" will focus on the new interest in urban ecology in disciplines as varied as architecture, biology, design, literary studies, political science, and urban planning through the lens of narrative. How are the city and its relation to nature being envisioned in contemporary fiction and film? What narrative strategies work and which ones fail when it comes to imagining the environmental futures of rapidly growing cities? How do stories focusing on the present and future of cities integrate human and nonhuman actors and networks? The presentation will approach these questions theoretically and through a comparatist analysis of urban narratives from different regions and languages, with a particular focus on science fiction.

Biography

Ursula K. Heise is a Professor of English at UCLA and a faculty member of UCLA's Institute of the Environment and Sustainability (IoES). She is a 2011 Guggenheim Fellow and was President of the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment (ASLE) in 2011. Her research and teaching focus on contemporary environmental culture, literature and art in the Americas, Western Europe and Japan; theories of globalization; literature and science; and the digital humanities. Her books include *Chronoschisms: Time, Narrative, and Postmodernism* (1997), *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global* (2008), *Nach der Natur: Das Artensterben und die moderne Kultur [After Nature: Species Extinction and Modern Culture]* (2010), and *Imagining Extinction: The Cultural Meanings of Endangered Species* (2016).

STEPHEN MUECKE

THEORISING LITERARY ENVIRONMENTS

Abstract

Literary texts live and die through the environments in which they are nurtured. When cradled in networks of devotion, or at least attachment, literary forms not only survive, but can expand their spheres of influence. I like to think of this expansion as reproductive: not only Benjamin's 'mechanical reproduction', but also organic, generative and multispecies reproduction. Expanding, or rather extending human capacities is the 'business' of literary experimentation, but we are never quite sure where 'the human' and 'capacity' begin and end. Examples from oral literature and poetry will describe chains of reference, chains of affect, technological extensions and those necessary hiatuses—risks of reproduction—that remind us that aesthetic creation is best conceived of not as communication (bridging subject and object), but something more like the miracle of germination.

Biography

Stephen Muecke holds the Jury Chair in the School of Humanities at the University of Adelaide. Formerly he was Professor of Ethnography at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, where he was part of the Environmental Humanities programme. He has written extensively on Indigenous Australia, especially in the Kimberley, and on the Indian Ocean. He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities and a Faculty member, Global Center for Advanced Studies, Switzerland. Seminal works include *Reading the Country: Introduction to Nomadology* (with Krim Benterrak and Paddy Roe, 1984), *No Road: Bitumen All the Way* (1997), and *Ancient & Modern: Time, Culture and Indigenous Philosophy* (2004). He is the author, editor or translator of 19 books, and 31 refereed articles since 2000, and is also a creative writer (fictocritical writing, poetry) with several shortlistings and prizes.

JEROME ROTHENBERG

TECHNICIANS OF THE SACRED: ETHNOPOETICS AND THE NEW INDIGENOUS POETRIES

Abstract

Coincident with the publication of an expanded fiftieth anniversary edition of *Technicians of the Sacred*, I will explore the early history of ethnopoetics for which that book was one of the early starting points. Drawing from the new introduction to the book I will begin with the emergence in the 1950s and 1960s of a specifically delineated "ethnopoetics" as a collaborative work of poets and scholars to which I was a close witness and active participant. I will then propose a linkage to the survival and revival of many indigenous languages and poetries in the early twenty-first century, with a sense that change rather than stasis has been at the heart of these poetries as well as of our own.

Biography

In the words of Kenneth Rexroth, "Jerome Rothenberg is one of the truly contemporary American poets who has returned U.S. poetry to the mainstream of international modern literature. At the same time, he is a true autochthon. Only here and now could have produced him—a swinging orgy of Martin Buber, Marcel Duchamp, Gertrude Stein, and Sitting Bull. No one writing poetry today has dug deeper into the roots of poetry." A major, critic, editor and translator of the 20th and 21st centuries, his work is at the forefront of radical modernism and global poetics. He has published over 50 collections of poetry, including landmark titles such as *Poland/1931* (1974) and *A Seneca Journal* (1978), and has edited some of the most important poetry anthologies of the last 100 years, including *Technicians of the Sacred: a Range of Poetries from Africa, America, Asia, Europe, & Oceania* (1967, 1985, 2017), and *Poems for the Millennium* (1995-2015).

DELEGATES

CLAIRE ALBRECHT

SOLASTALGIC POETRY: A STUDY IN LOSS

Abstract

In 2003, Australian environmental philosopher Glenn Albrecht coined the term *solastalgia*. It refers to the loss and dis-ease felt as a result of ecological destruction, degradation and desecration, in a physical, mental, emotional and even spiritual sense. Poets and artists for centuries have mourned the loss of the natural places which formerly gave them solace , and conjured expressions for the pain they feel from this displacement. From Wordsworth to contemporary NSW poet Berndt Sellheim, the destruction of one's home environment has inspired a poetry of loss. Looking through the lens of place poetics and *solastalgia* , we can begin to understand how our physical place informs our mental and emotional stability, and how easily this can be broken when our environment begin to fall apart around us. Climate change, deep cut coal mining, fracking, rising tides, coral bleaching - these major environmental changes affect us nationally and internationally, and for some these are immediate and personal changes. But something as small as a new development where once there were flowers; an endangered species disappearing from the local bushland; the vegetable patch dying in unseasonable, unceasing heat - all these can diminish what has given us *solace* , and cause us to feel what Albrecht has termed *solastalgia* .

Biography

Claire Albrecht is writing a Creative Writing Honours thesis around poetic notions of place at the University of Newcastle. She has been published with Runway Conversations and featured as a poetic critic at This Is Not Art 2016. Claire has been offered a provisional Postgraduate Research Scholarship at UoN to complete a PhD in Creative Writing. Her work is informed by an ecological consciousness and sense of place.

SAM ARMATYS

THE BOUNDARIES OF THE DOG-HUMAN RELATIONSHIP IN MARIE NDIAYE'S LADIVINE

Abstract

In Marie Ndiaye's work it is not uncommon for people to change from one thing into another. In her novel *Trois Femmes Puissantes* (*Three Strong Women*) women turn into birds, in La Sorciere a witch turns a man into a snail, and in the short story *La Femme change en buche* (*The Lady Changes into a Log*), a woman does just that. While metaphor plays a role in some of these metamorphoses, the human boundary is so fluid across Ndiaye's catalogue, that symbolism is not always easily derived, or even central to the process. Here I will look at *Ladivine*, with specific focus on the dog-human interplay within the text.

Donna Haraway speaks about the 'naturalcultural legacy' of the dog-human relationship in her *Companion Species Manifesto* and states that 'dogs are not surrogates for theory; they are not just here to think with' (6). In *The Post Human* Rosi Braidotti further elucidates that we need to 'devise a system of representation that matches the complexity of contemporary non-human animals and their proximity to humans' (70). Drawing on these theorists and others, I will investigate *Ladivine* to determine the texts ability to contribute to such a system.

Biography

Sam Armatys has recently completed her Honours thesis at Griffith University. She has had work published in *LiNQ Journal, Overland*, *Pure Slush* and *Art Ascent*.

HARRY AVELING

THE SHADOW OF THE ABSENT FATHER: POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF A COLLECTION OF VIETNAMESE FOLK TALES IN FRENCH AND ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Abstract

Pham Duy Khiem (1908-1974) was a Vietnamese born graduate of prestigious Ecole Normale Superieure, Paris, and served as Ambassador to France of the Republic of Vietnam between 1955 and 1957. He wrote two collections of Vietnamese folktales, published together as *Légendes des terres sereines* in Paris in 1951. The paper will describe the political aspects of publishing Khiem's work in French and in translation in France, Vietnam and India. It will also consider the barely acknowledged uses that have been made of Khiem's stories in French and English.

Biography

Harry Aveling, PhD (NUS) DCA (UTS), holds an adjunct appointment as a Professor in the School of Languages, Literature, Culture and Linguistics at Monash University. He specialises in Southeast Asian literature and Translation Studies.

JANIS BAILEY, DI JAMES AND THE CALANTHE COLLECTIVE

'O BACK TO MY RED (TAMBORINE) MOUNTAIN': DOING POETRY IN COMMUNITY

Abstract

Poet and activist Judith Wright spent over thirty years of her life either living on, or being closely associated with, Tamborine Mountain – from the late 1940s to the early 70s. Eight of herpoetry volumes – and many other writings – were published in that period, and she began her career as an environmental activist there, founding the Wildlife Preservation Society and campaigning on the Cooloola and Great Barrier Reef campaigns from her Mountain base. But her legacy has not been well-known in the place where, by her own admission, she was happiest in her personal life, and did much of her path-breaking literary and environmental work. Community memory needed to be recovered. So, since the centenary (in 2015) of Judith's birth, Tamborine Mountain people have sought to rekindle awareness and appreciation of Wright. A play (*Hearts Ablaze*) was written and produced locally, and the poetry of Wright and others has been activated in theatres, cafes, Landcare sites, national parks, pubs, the library and the streets. A local poet (90 year old Raymond Curtis) has been republished after a long hiatus, via a crowd-funding campaign. Organised by a loose group called The Calanthe Collective (Calanthe being a rare white native orchid after which was named the Wright/McKinney home), these events provide a case study of what a community-generated 'literary' event might look like. This paper underlines the continuing relevance of Judith Wright's work and the writings of her partner, philosopher and writer Jack McKinney; the 'value' of literature-in-community; and the joys and challenges of 'doing poetry in place'. Not a literary festival per se, this is an organically evolving, do-it-yourself, multi-arts phenomenon at the local level, rooted in one of the landscapes that so inspired Wright. Along with New England, Cooloola and Braidwood, Tamborine Mountain is a key part of the Wright songline which evokes landscape (and much more) in a unique and enduringly beautiful way. The project reaches out into the current and past cultural life of the Mountain, to strengthen local identity and creativity for the future. The presentation is mostly via photographs, with some commentary.

Biography

Janis Bailey has been an industrial relations practitioner and academic. Her focus is now on community projects, particularly community theatre and poetry. Dianne James has had a career in membership-based not-for-profit organisations, and has long been involved in community singing groups, including a new one recently started on Tamborine Mountain. The Calanthe Collective is a grassroots community cultural initiative, based on Tamborine Mountain, which fosters poetry (writing and performance) and allied arts. It is inspired by the lives and work of poet and activist Judith Wright and her partner, philosopher and writer Jack McKinney.

SUSAN BALLARD

NETWORK AND NATURE; OR, FROM THE PLANT TO THE PLANETARY

Abstract

The oldest plant in the oldest botanical gardens in the world is the Goethe palm in Padova's Orto Botanico. Named after Goethe's discussion of the palm in his short book *Metamorphosis of Plants* (1790) the Mediterranean fan palm (*Chamaerops humilis*) was planted in this spot in 1585. Goethe's text was a work of organic nature, an attempt to revisit fixed structural classifications of plants and animals, and replace this with a new more poetic approach to morphology. Today, plants play a key role in material and ecological relationships. Sharing the new air of the Anthropocene, it is possible to imagine that Goethe's connected micro-variations may be a way to understand the atmospheric transformations of climate change. Alongside Goethe's meditations on the fan palm, I place a selection of contemporary artworks that consider planetary relationships as relationships between plants and animals. Together these works suggest an aesthetic way of knowing that is not only responsive to change and transformation, but also proposes a new form of atmospheric planetary aesthetics.

Biography

Susan Ballard is a Senior Lecturer in Art History, and convener of MECO, the Material Ecologies Research Network, at the University of Wollongong, Australia. Su's research examines the histories of machines and nature in contemporary art with a particular focus on artists from Australasia. Recent publications include essays on species extinctions, Google Art Project, earthquakes, robots, sympathy, machine aesthetics and utopia. In 2015 she co-wrote *A Transitional Imaginary: Space, Network and Memory in Christchurch*. In 2013 she curated the major exhibition *Among the Machines* for the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, NZ. http://suballard.net.nz

KAYA BARRY

INTERACTIVE CLIMATE DATA AND ALTERNATIVE ARTICULATIONS OF POLAR LANDSCAPES

Abstract

The Anthropocene era has signalled drastic shifts in how we conceptualise and measure scales of action. However, the scientific data and representation of environmental crisis are difficult to translate and understand for general audiences. Countless scholars in the humanities and social sciences call for alternative portrayals of environmental 'crisis' as it plays out on scales that are beyond human temporality. New techniques for re-presenting the climate change are needed that move past traditional scientific diagrams and data or aestheticised landscapes. This paper explores the relationship between climate data articulation and the imagery of polar landscapes. I focus on declining sea ice, which increasingly is gaining attention in global media, yet is challenging to comprehend due to the vast polar areas in question. Using a projected artwork that the audience can interact with, which draws the latest data and satellite imagery from NASA on sea ice levels of the Antarctic and Artic, I investigate the tensions between these two kinds of environmental imaginaries: scientific data and figures, or idealised 'wilderness' landscapes. I argue that problems arise in static and conventional presentations of data, and that alternative and interactive approaches are needed to encourage informed and engaged public knowledges on climate change.

Biography

Kaya Barry is an artist-researcher interested in the fields of creative arts, tourism mobilities, and environmental humanities. She teaches in new media theory and practice at Griffith University and is an Adjunct Research Fellow with the Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research.

CHANTELLE BAYES

LET THE ANIMALS SPEAK: LITERARY RENEGOTIATIONS OF THE ROMANTIC ANIMAL

Abstract

Writers of the Romantic tradition sought, as one of their aims, a reconciliation with nature. Animals provided a source of connection through which writers could explore the human/ non-human relationship. Building on this, writers such as Herman Melville used anthropomorphic animals to explore the human/ animal boundary and advance the idea of animals as conscious and agential beings in stark contrast to the mechanistic view of nature in some seventeenth and eighteenth century scientific texts (Donald Worster 1994). These Romantic (and Post-Romantic) re-imaginings sought to bring humans closer to nature but also served to reinforce misconceptions, anthropocentric notions of the non-human, and in some cases, has justified damage to non-human others or their environments. In this paper, I examine *Only the Animals* by Ceridwin Dovey, a contemporary novel which documents the lives and deaths of animal narrators caught up in human conflicts. I explore the ways Romantic and Post-Romantic notions of the animal are drawn on and renegotiated in this text to create a complex world of human/animal relations. I also consider the influence of posthumanist thinking on representation, domesticity and the human/non-human relationship with reference to the work of Donna Haraway, Marc Bekoff and Cary Wolfe.

Biography

Chantelle Bayes recently completed a creative writing PhD from Griffith University examining literary representations of urban nature. Her research interests include eco-criticism, urban nature, contemporary literature and the legacy of Romanticism.

KATHLEEN BIRRELL

JURIDICIAL ENVIRONMENTALITIES, LITERARY ECOLOGIES

Abstract

This paper is concerned with differing, yet mutually constitutive, narratives of environment and climate change, and their juridical and literary expression and translation. Now broadly conceived as an object of global discourse, governance and law, the impending 'catastrophe' of climate change is generative of a particularly global narrative. Imagining climate change, however, and its historical, epistemological, sociocultural and regulatory dimensions, requires a concurrent engagement with the local and its narratives. This engagement, moreover, reveals not the habitual subordination of the local to the global, the cultural to the scientific, and the literary to the juridical, but a generative resistance and constitutive relation between these.

Accordingly, this paper will consider these apparently competing, yet mutually constitutive, narratives: those concerned with the universalising imperatives of international climate change governance and law, and those concerned with the possibility of resistance to such governance, and the articulation of alternative ontologies and epistemologies. Through a reading of Alexis Wright's *The Swan Book*, this examination will be framed by a broader discussion of the resistant and strategic capacity of storytelling, and the imaginative expression of an emergent Indigenous 'cosmopolitics'.

Biography

Kathleen Birrell is a McKenzie Postdoctoral Fellow at Melbourne Law School. Her research is strongly interdisciplinary, encompassing critical legal theory, philosophy of law, and law and literature, as well as environmental and climate change law, human rights law, Indigenous peoples and the law, property law, and native title. Her postdoctoral project investigates intersections between the global imperatives of climate change governance, human rights, and the resistant narratives of Indigenous and local communities. She completed a PhD (Law) at Birkbeck, University of London, and an LLB and BA at The University of Melbourne, and has taught at both institutions. Her recently published book is entitled *Indigeneity: Before and Beyond the Law* (Routledge, 2016).

PHACHARAWAN BOONPROMKUL

"SAO HAI" BY DAEN-ARUN SAENGTHONG: THE SACRALIZATION OF NATURE AND THE DILEMMA OF PRESERVATION BY TRANSFORMATION

Abstract

"Sao Hai" (2003) is a short story that retells the myth of the crying pillar, a female spirit believed to have dwelt in an ironwood for a millennium before the tree was hewn down and transported to the capital, Bangkok, to serve as the city pillar in 1782. Transforming this oral, provincial myth into a literary text, the renowned Thai author Daen-arun Saengthong adds depth to the myth of Sao Hai by personating the compelling figure of this grieving goddess, now a sacred tree trunk worshipped by locals in Saraburi province. Noting the absence of any ecological agenda in either of the versions of the Sao Hai story, the paper critiques the socio-political and environmental implications of the quest for the city pillar. Its central argument concerns the contradictions in the sacralization of nature, which are inseparable from the dominant royalist-nationalistic discourse in Thai literature and culture. The paper also enquires into the acts of transformation—materially that of the tree and aesthetically that of the story—in relation to environmental conservation at large. At the same time, questions are raised regarding the author's representation of the non-human and the story's prevailing note of loss.

Biography

Phacharawan Boonpromkul received a B. A. and an M.A. in English from the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. She is currently teaching at the Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thammasat University, Thailand. Her areas of interests include ecocriticism, postcolonial literature, women's literature, and late 19th Century literature.

LOUISE BOSCACCI

ATMOSPHERIC RIFFING: MANIFESTO OF A SYNDISCIPLINARIAN

Abstract

There it is: that throb into the solar plexus of a deep thrumming electric-edged staccato delivered in steady, constant refrain. Listen. A Tawny Frogmouth somewhere in the old messmate midcanopy, drumming low in the temperate crepuscular interchange between day and night. It is a twilight tawny at work in the base affective register of a twice-daily transition zone. In this here and now when paused listening syncs with each intake and expiration of breath, planetary atmosphere—the gas envelope of immersion and breath-making—is also invisible in its molecular animation work. It presents visually in this encounter-exchange as light on the run; all warm colours from salmon to sepia heading southwest, leaving ink-wash dusk to drop into the eastern horizon and beckon the blue-black night sky. Yet, this ensemble exchanges, wit(h)nesses, and composes together in a passage of space and time: tawny twilight aff-thrum, oxy-carbonwater breath, atmosphere unbounded and earth-blown. If radical pertains to the root, the germinal and the generative, the ensemble riffs out an aesthetics of radical interconnectivity in an epoch of a transforming climate and its unpredictable touch-down effects and affects. It is a modality and a manifesto of the syndisciplinarian. This paper riffs on that manifesto.

Biography

Louise Boscacci is an interdisciplinary researcher and artist in the environmental humanities with a particular interest in translations of the meetings of affect, aesthetics and ecological flux in the Anthropocene. She is an honorary postdoctoral research fellow in the Material Ecologies Research Network, University of Wollongong (PhD 2016), and a lecturer in contemporary ceramics and art theory at the National Art School, Sydney. Conference panel presentations in 2016 were delivered at *Global Ecologies – Local Impacts*, Aslec-ANZ, Sydney, and *The Work of Art*, AAANZ, Canberra. https://louiseboscacci.net/

ALANA BREKEMANS

TRANSLATING TRANSITIVE ENVIRONMENTS – AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF SETTLER-DESCENDENT WEATHER NARRATIVES IN NORTH WEST QUEENSLAND

Abstract

Extreme climatic conditions and capricious weather events are central to the Australian imagination and feature in many depictions of rural life.

This paper explores how cultural constructs of climate interface with everyday narrative, bodily practice, and somatic experience in a rural Queensland community. I examine ways settler-descendants of mixed cultural heritage give meaning to and materialise climatic phenomena. In particular, I ask how one makes present a climatic event (e.g. drought) when indexical signs (e.g. dry earth) have been erased by later climatic phenomena (e.g. rain). How does one communicate, sense, and make sense of a weather-world at flux? What does narrative have to do with this?

I argue for the importance of ethnographic research on how people narrate not only major climatic events but also the perceptual dialectics of presence and absence in the periods between major climatic events.

Biography

Alana Brekelmans is a PhD Candidate in anthropology at the University of Queensland. Her research examines settler-descendent relationships with the environment through the lens of embodiment and narrative.

ANTHONY BURKE

BLUESCREEN BIOSPHERE: THE ABSENT PRESENCE OF THE BIOSPHERE IN INTERNATIONAL LAW

Abstract

Following a line of critique developed in the "Planet Politics" manifesto (*Millennium*, 44:3 2016) this paper investigates and critiques the metaphysical strategies that underpin international environmental law, rendering the global ecology exploitable under the guise of its protection.

In film and television production, the blue screen is a flat surface upon which, through the mediation of computer technology, a new real can be created in its place. It enables what Jean Baudrillard called simulation—a virtuality which appears more real than the real and comes to assumes its place. Through a critical reading of the major texts and regimes of global environmental law, the paper questions whether the biosphere—as a vital and entangled planetary system of life and things with intrinsic integrity and value—is visible and made actual in international environmental law, or is instead rendered disturbingly virtual.

By considering both the textual/metaphysical transmutation of the biosphere and ecosystems into 'resources' owned and determined by states, and the practices enabled by these regimes, the paper asserts that biosphere is merely a blue screen simulation, its ontic complexity obscured behind a drama of human and corporate ends. Given the propensity of the Earth system towards ever more radical and devastating change, such a political metaphysics creates dangers that we can no longer afford to ignore.

Biography

Anthony Burke is a political and international theorist, and Professor of International and Political Studies at UNSW Australia, Canberra. His most recent publications include *Uranium* (Polity Press, 2017) and with Stefanie Fishel, Audra Mitchell, Simon Dalby and Daniel Levine, "Planet Politics: a Manifesto from the End of IR", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 44:3, 2016.

CHLOE CALLISTEMON

TRANSMUTING METAPHOR IN TRANSMEDIA BIRD POETRY

Abstract

As the understanding of metaphor has shifted from a purely literary device, to a cognitive process, so its construction can be applied back to the literary in different media and hybrids, e.g. text, visual, sound, touch, video, interactive web. While nontext metaphor has been explored to some extent in visual poetry, it has not been expanded to newer and hybrid media, or examined explicitly as a structure of thought with identifiable components able to be engaged by different media and their associated senses. This study places the bird as a central, extensively-used symbol into dialogue with the versatility of metaphor as both a minute and inclusive structure of poetry and thought; and trials the construction of metaphors using a variety of media as carriers of semantic content within individual transmedia poems. Metaphor is a rich interface between literature, technology and cognitive science, and is increasingly valuable as borders between disciplines diffuse and non text-based communication develops. As microcosms of thought, poems have unique potential to express changing ways of thinking as well as the thoughts themselves, whether as words, visuals, touch, any of the senses, or the slippage in meaning between them all.

Biography

Chloë Callistemon is a photographer, filmmaker and writer. Her poetry and multimedia have been published in journals and anthologies including *Cordite Poetry Review*, *Rabbit*, *Australian Poetry Journal*, *Australian Love Poems* and *Contemporary Australian Feminist Poetry.* She is a PhD candidate at Griffith University, Queensland.

IAN CAMPBELL

DISPERSAL AND SPREAD OF AUSTRALIA-DERIVED SPECIES OF TREES, INCLUDING EUCALYPT AND ACACIAS, INTO URUGUAY IN THE 19TH-20TH CENTURIES: THE LITERARY LINKS WITH THE POETRY OF CHILEAN POET, PABLO NERUDA (1904-1973) INTERNATIONAL LAW

Abstract

This paper explores aspects of the dispersal and spread of Australia-derived tree species, especially eucalypts and acacia varieties, into Uruguay in the 19th-early 20th centuries with specific reference to plantings associated with the development in the early 20th century of coastal resorts (*balnearios*) in the towns of Atlántida and Punta del Este, Uruguay. Today, in many regions of Uruguay Australia-derived species are a prominent feature of the landscape, either in plantations, townscapes or in coastal headland or dune areas. In the Lussich Arboretum in Punta del Este an estimated 25% of tree species are of Australian species origins.

In the early 1950s the Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda, and his later wife, Matilde Urrutia, sojourned in some of the localities along the Uruguayan coast. Of particular literary interest are the references Neruda makes to 'eucalypts' and 'acacias' in his 1956 floral chapbook album (*herbario*), "Oda a las flores de Datitla", which he constructed with Matilde Urrutia, using floral, tree-leaf and grass specimens collected from the local Atlántida area between 1952 and 1956, and supplemented with hand-written lines of his poem, "Oda a las flores de Datitla," as a gift to his Uruguayan friend, Alberto Mántaras and his wife.

Posthumously, the chapbook *herbario* appeared in annotated and facsimile form in an album published in 2002 in Santiago, Chile by Corporación Sintesys, a scientific/technological consulting company, which now added botanical nomenclature of the species Neruda and Matilde incorporated in their 1956 (unpublished) gift to their Uruguayan friends. This included the leaf specimen from a *eucalyptus l'herit* tree that was growing in the Atlántida area near the shores of the La Plata estuary in the 1950s.

Thus, the paper explores this intertwining of literary linkages against the broader context of the changing historical landscapes in coastal Uruguayan landscapes, occasioned by the gradual introduction of Australia-derived (and other non-native) tree species.

Biography

Ian Campbell, an Honorary Research Associate, Department of International Studies: Languages and Cultures, Macquarie University is currently researching the literary/cultural afterlife of Pablo Neruda, including those aspects linked to his sojourns in Uruguay. Ian's post-graduate research was in Indonesian Studies, with a book publication (2008), *Contemporary Indonesian Language Poetry* from West Java and a journal publication (2012), 'Post-Nerudaism in Indonesia: Tracing and Memorializing Neruda in the Dutch East Indies (1930-1932) and Beyond' in *Antipodes*.

DEIRDRE COLEMAN

WALTER D. DODD: NATURAL HISTORY COLLECTING IN THE "DEEP NORTH"

Abstract

Walter D. Dodd (1891-1965), son of the 'Butterfly Man of Kuranda' Frederick Parkhurst Dodd (1861-1937), belonged to a pioneering family of far north Queensland naturalists who collected and sold thousands of tropical insects to wealthy clients overseas. The Dodds also sent numerous specimens to museums and collectors in Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide, thus bringing Queensland's insect life to the attention of southeast Australia. In 1912, at the age of 21, Walter Dodd secured a contract with the South Australian Museum to collect mammals, birds and reptiles from some of Australia's last frontiers: Houtman's Albrolhos, Hammersley Range, the Kimberley, the Tiwi Islands, Arnhem Land, Cape York, and the McIlwraith Ranges. With the anthropologist Edward Charles Stirling as Director of the Museum, Dodd was also urged to expand his repertoire of natural history specimens to include aboriginal crania and other skeletal remains. Over twenty years later, in 1935, he published a series of 32 nostalgic newspaper columns in *The North Queensland Register* about his adventures. Entitled 'Meanderings of a Naturalist', these jocular, blokey reminiscences about the frontier's so-called 'bad old days' recall his life in the bush with buffalo hunters, settlers and aboriginals, presented in a format which strikes us today as deeply racialist. But allusions to the fictional ex-slave, Uncle Remus, and his animal folklore provide a curious 'deep south' counterpoint to Dodd's violent narrative of collecting in Australia's northern frontier.

Biography

Deirdre Coleman's research interests lie in literature, colonialism, slavery and natural history. She is the author of *Romantic Colonization and British Anti-Slavery* (Cambridge UP, 2005) and *Henry Smeathman, flycatcher: Natural History, Slavery and Empire in the late Eighteenth Century* (Liverpool UP, 2017).

EVELYN ARALUEN CORR

WHAT WILL WE LEAVE OUR DAUGHTERS: INDIGENOUS WOMEN WRITING CLIMATE CHANGEINTERNATIONAL LAW

Abstract

In 2014 Marshallese poet Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner addressed the United Nations Climate Change Summit in New York with a poem for her daughter, Matafele Peinam, which swore to protect their home from the catastrophic effects of rising sea levels. Globally, Indigenous ways of living and practicing culture are already suffering from the effects of human-induced climate change. Inheritance is a pervasive political and poetic theme across contemporary writings from Indigenous women of Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific. In exploring these representations and historical connections in the work of Jetñil-Kijiner, Ellen Van Neerven, Alexis Wright, and others, this paper seeks to explore diverse forms of transferral and continuity across fluid modes of literariness. Situated in dialogue with the transindigenous methodologies of Chadwick Allen and Alice Te Punga Somerville, this work enters into a broader project to disrupt structures of erasure and dispossession in the treatment of Indigenous womens' writing.

Biography

Evelyn Araluen Corr is a poet and activist completing a PhD on Indigenous literatures at the University of Sydney. She is the coordinator of Black Rhymes Aboriginal Poetry Night in Redfern. Her work has been published or is forthcoming in *Overland*, *Southerly*, *Cordite* and *Continuum*. Born and raised on Dharug country, she is a descendant of the Bundjalung nation.

JENNIFER CRONE

TRANSLATING THE ENVIRONMENT IN LOUISE GLUCK'S A VILLAGE LIFE

Abstract

In the opening poem of Louise Gluck's book length poetry sequence *A Village Life*, a mill worker sees '[i]n the window, not the world but a squared off landscape/ representing the world'. Like Kant's subject who can only know the world through representations and can know nothing about its actual objects, at night, when the framed world becomes dark, the miller lets the world go. But in the second poem, 'Pastoral', the world, in the form of 'the mountain' has its own formidable and incomprehensible agency: 'No one really understands/ the savagery of this place,/ the way it kills people for no reason,/ just to keep in practice'. In *A Village Life*, human character and experience is shaped in response to the earth, in a process requiring humans to continuously translate their environment. These dialectical encounters trace the villagers' often uneasy and ambivalent relationships with the natural world they depend upon, commented on by apostrophes in the voices of bats and earthworms. The neo-Romantic environmental sensibility of *A Village Life* suggests that the world's outer objects are not so easy to let go as the mill worker believes.

Biography

Jennifer Crone is currently a PhD candidate in the English Department at the University of Sydney, researching poetic tradition and Louise Glück. She was awarded a Master of Letters (Creative Writing), University of Sydney, in 2015, and is a recipient of the University's John Bell Prize for Shakespeare Studies. Jennifer also holds a Bachelor of Arts (Communications) from the University of Technology, Sydney. In 2016 Jennifer presented papers at the Historical Poetics Symposium, Western Sydney University and the Romantic Climates Symposium, Sydney University, and her poetry book *Our Lady of the Fence Post* was published by University of Western Australia Publishing.

GEORGE DAMALAS

THE CHURCH ANIMAL IN MODERN FICTIONCHANGEINTERNATIONAL LAW

Abstract

In light of the figure of Friedrich Nietzsche's Death of God, late nineteenth and early twentieth century literature began to ask probing questions about the exclusivity of the relation between the human and the divine. For instance, in works by Franz Kafka, Djuna Barnes and Rudyard Kipling, there is a re-shaping of the notion of the divine as a category based not exclusively on a relation to the human spirit, but also to animal ontology. Sacred space emerges as a privileged topos in which modern literature orientates the animal toward the divine, forging their symbiosis, pursuing their strained connection as a symptom, perhaps, of the dissolving relation between God and the human. Thus, modern fiction's representation of the church animal does not counter God's departure, but nor does it arbitrarily overlook the significance of the immateriality of the spiritual life. Rather, this figure of the church animal has only one desire: to transform the quality and value of that life by incorporating into its structure an urgent sense of the primacy to be given to the materiality of the everyday.

Put plainly, the profane church animal is one strategy deployed by modern fiction to prevent the absolute dissolution of the divine, a method or practice that enables it to escape or break away from, to register the loss of, the exclusivity of the relation between the human and the divine. In making this claim, I'm thinking of the figure Jacques Derrida calls "divinanimality", defined as the "ahuman", a "place of alterity…radical enough to break with…all humanity". Following Derrida, I argue that these representations open up a space of otherness in which the notion of the divine is stretched to its very limits, as if almost to become ahuman. If its exclusive relation to the divine was one of the primary means through which humanity had traditionally defined itself, the procession of the animal into sacred space re-shapes the divine in light of a *relation between* the species, between immateriality and materiality, transcendent spirituality and everyday corporeality.

Biography

George Damalas is a PhD Candidate in the Department of English at the University of New South Wales, Sydney. His research considers the intersections of literature, critical animal studies, philosophy and theology in nineteenth and early twentieth century aesthetic culture and practice. George has previously completed a Masters by Research in English Literature at UNSW on literary representations of animal sound in this historical period, and has also presented at a recent international conference on Jacques Derrida's philosophy of the animal.

CHRIS DANTA

THE FABLE OF EXTINCTION: TED CHIANG'S "THE GREAT SILENCE"

Abstract

According to novelist Amitav Ghosh in his recent book *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*: "Climate change is often described as a 'wicked problem.' One of its wickedest aspects is that it may require us to abandon some of our most treasured ideas about political virtue: for example, 'be the change you want to see.' What we need instead is to find a way out of the individualizing imaginary in which we are trapped." For the literary writer, the individualizing imaginary is a technical not simply a philosophical or a political problem. Stories are often most effectively told from an individual's point of view. But, as Ghosh argues, this technique can be taken too far: "the contemporary novel has become ever more radically centered on the individual psyche while the collective … has receded, both in the cultural and fictional imagination." So how should the literary writer negotiate the problem of the individualizing imaginary in the age of the Anthropocene? To address this question, I turn to Ted Chiang's short story "The Great Silence." Chiang's story, which originally formed part of a 2014 video installation by artists Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla called *The Great Silence*, is told from the perspective of a Puerto Rican parrot whose species has been brought to near-extinction by human activity. Chiang's parrot-narrator discusses the irony of humans using giant radio telescopes such as the one at the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico to detect extra-terrestrial life, when they are surrounded by intelligent nonhuman life. It begins: "The humans use Arecibo to look for extraterrestrial intelligence. Their desire to make a connection is so strong that they've created an ear capable of hearing across the universe. But I and my fellow parrots are right here. Why aren't they interested in listening to our voices?" What Chiang's story shows is that the individualizing imaginary—in this case, the fictionalized consciousness of a member of a dying species of parrot—can be used to capture the essential dilemmas of scale and perspective that we face in the time of climate change and species extinction.

Biography

Chris Danta is Senior Lecturer in English at UNSW, Sydney and current president of the AAL. He is author of *Literature Suspends Death: Sacrifice and Storytelling in Kierkegaard, Kafka and Blanchot* (Bloomsbury, 2011) and co-editor of *Strong Opinions: J. M. Coetzee and the Authority of Contemporary Fiction* and *Mindful Aesthetics: Literature and the Science of Mind*. He has published essays in *New Literary History*, *Modernism/modernity*, *Textual Practice*, *Angelaki*, *SubStance* and *Literature & Theology*. His new monograph *Animal Fables after Darwin: Literature, Speciesism, and Metaphor* is forthcoming with Cambridge UP in 2018.

PETER DENNEY

THE SOUNDSCAPES OF JOHN CLARE AND WILLIAM COBBETT

Abstract

The radical activist and journalist, William Cobbett, and the labouring-class poet, John Clare, were both committed to a notion of the rural environment as animated by the noise of popular culture. Such an image of the countryside had been a source of celebration by poets and political commentators in the early eighteenth century, but it had become increasingly unfashionable due to the strong association between nature and quietness, which accompanied the transition to modernity, whether in the form of Romanticism or agricultural improvement. Of course, Clare frequently took solace in the silence of nature, while Cobbett often viewed the land in utilitarian terms, privileging productivity over sociability. Nevertheless, in their different ways, and usually with a great deal of ambivalence, these very dissimilar individuals both drew on an older conception of agrarian life and its supposed political virtues to claim that a preference for quietness was synonymous with the triumph of despotism. Claiming to speak for labouring people, they sought to revive a positive valuation of noisy rural activity, either to register the loss of a past sense of vitality and social harmony or to promote a more egalitarian future.

Biography

Peter Denney is a senior lecturer in history at Griffith University. He has published essays on various aspects of the long eighteenth century in Britain, including religious satire, political radicalism, popular culture and the poetry of rural life. His current research interests focus on the senses in the literature and history of the Romantic period, and he is currently writing a book on soundscape and landscape from Defoe to Cobbett.

JONATHAN DUNK

CELAN AND KINSELLA: NEGATIVE LYRICISM AND DISPLACEMENT

Abstract

Responding to the recent compilation of John Kinsella's Graphology sequence, this paper will clarify my argument elsewhere that Graphology articulates the central pivot of his poetics – that between a gesture towards the haptic or cadent presence of immanent place and nonhuman autonomy, and a deconstruction of the mechanisms, and purchase of textual production. The implications of this helical or parallactic structure will be discussed with reference to the poetic tradition I have called negative lyricism, drawing from Keats, Rimbaud, Miklós Radnóti, and Paul Celan particularly. This form finds its most thorough explication in Derrida's conceptualism of communicative metaphysics – and as such I will also discuss its implications towards the theoretical divide between the social production of space, epitomised in geocriticism, and the immanent alterity of the environment, more conventionally articulated by ecocriticism. Moreover, in working-against, rather than wholly eliding the Cartesian structures of lyricism, Kinsella's linguistic disobedience augurs the truly rare possibility of ethical dialogue between settler poetics and Aboriginal authority.

Biography

Jonathan Dunk is the Kenneth Reed Postgraduate scholar at the University of Sydney, his poetry, criticism, and fiction have been published in the *Australian Book Review*, *Meanjin*, *Southerly*, *Plumwood Mountain*, *Rabbit*, *Mascara*, and shortlisted for the Overland VU prize. He lives on Wangal country.

CRISTOBAL ESCOBAR DUENAS

ANIMAL DWELLINGS: THE BODIES OF CONTEMPORARY THEORY AND SEL'S DOCUMENTARY FILM SWEETGRASS

Abstract

This paper deals with the bodily turn experienced across the humanities and documentary cinema in recent history. I explore how for both human animals and nonhuman animals the world exists as a meaningful place, thus understanding each other as mutual participants in the process of life. The interplay is addressed from the similar philosophical set of problems in contemporary theory and film practice. To illustrate the point I draw upon Gilles Deleuze's concept of "becoming-animal" in order to rethink the status of animality in audiovisual culture. His theoretical influence, among many other contemporary scholars attracted by animal experiences will help me to persuade for a new strategy to bring into both (film) theory and (film) practice a more undomesticated type of relationship among species. As a cinematic peer to this philosophy I review the documentary film *Sweetgrass* (US, 2009, Lucien Castaing-Taylor) from the Sensory Ethnography Lab of Harvard University. Here I claim that the documentary endorses a potential to record animal life from an optical reality that is not strictly centred on human form; a post-humanistic approach promoting a cinematic style that helps to desubjectivize our own experience as humans and signifiers.

Biography

Cristóbal Escobar is a sociologist from Universidad Católica de Chile and M.A in moving image by the University of Melbourne. His research interests dwell in the areas of cultural studies and film theory. At present, he works as an editorial member for the Yearbook of Moving Image Studies in Germany and guest edits *Revista de Cine laFuga* forthcoming issue "cartographic cinema" in Chile. Cristóbal is currently based at University of Melbourne completing his PhD thesis in Screen Studies under the supervision of Professor Barbara Creed.

MICHAEL FARRELL

WHAT IS SEEN AND WHAT IS SAID TO BE SEEN / THE MIMESIS OF LISTENING

Abstract

The question 'what is Australian about the Australianness of Australian poetry?' is both perennial and stupid (commonly raised in reviews of *Best Australian Poems*). And for some reason, the idea of Australian literature as a minor one has never really caught on. More to the point is the reading context of a poem: its place(s) and time(s). This paper considers two poems that have had quite a going over, but which I am optimistic can yield yet more insights about (Australian) place, and the (im)possibility of its representation: John Shaw Neilson's "The Orange Tree" and Charles Harpur's "A Midsummer Noon in the Australian Forest". This paper may only approach the issues implicitly, however, being concerned, in particular, with the poetics of sight – what is seen, and what is said to be seen; and voice – how this is relayed within the poem, and to the reader; and, also, the part played by mimesis, in relation to listening, with reference to Walter Benjamin, and contemporary theorists Rene Girard and Michael Taussig. I am also interested in the possible framing of the tree and forest as simulacra in these poems.

Biography

Michael Farrell has published several books of poetry as well as chapbooks. *Cocky's Joy*, shortlisted for the Prime Minister's Award for Poetry in 2016, is his first book available on iTunes. He co-edited an anthology of Australian gay and lesbian poets, *Out of the Box*, with Jill Jones (2009). His scholarly book, *Writing Australian Unsettlement: Modes of Poetic Invention 1796-1945* (2015), theorises a new approach to the history of colonial poetics. He wrote the lyrics for the Dick Diver song 'Waste the Alphabet', and edits the small poetry magazine *Flash Cove* (flashcovemag@gmail.com).

STEFANIE FISHEL

OTHERING ECOLOGY: THEORIZING SUBJECTIVITY IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

Abstract

This paper argues for two modes conducive to theoretical shifts that could support non-anthropocentric forms of knowing and related governances: Humans must experience and express understanding of 1) the need to nurture affective attachment to the nonhuman; and 2) the skills to accept radical vulnerability as a basis for legal and normative change in environmental governance. In western tradition—Roman law, Christian theology, and secular philosophy—subjectivity has been understood as a distinction between the person and the thing, the subject contrasted to the object, the human to the animal. Often, the very way in which we understand our personhood, or humanness, creates a simultaneous violence to that which is nonhuman, that which is object (abject). This understanding of the human subject as the opposite to "things" and "objects" has led to pernicious, destructive, and even murderous results. A radical ontological shift is needed to break these anthropocentric modes of inquiry and thought to address the damage such categories do in the age we name the Anthropocene. I contend that imaginative, less human subject-centered ways to understand ourselves as ecological subjects are needed to bind and codify a more expansive idea of human nature and its attendant rights and responsibilities.

Biography

Stefanie Fishel is a theorist and assistant professor of Gender and Race at the University of Alabama. She is the author of the book *The Microbial State: Global Thriving and the Body Politic* (2017) and co-author of "Planet Politics: A Manifesto from the End of IR" in *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. She researches and writes at the intersection of race, gender, and environment with an emphasis on new materialism, posthumanism, and critical animal studies.

JANE FRANK

IRONBARK AND STONE: PLACE AND BELONGING IN THE NATURE NOVELS OF INGA SIMPSON

Abstract

This paper discusses Sunshine Coast writer Inga Simpson's nature writing in three recent novels – *Where the Trees Were* (2016), *Nest* (2014), and *Mr Wigg* (2013). It addresses Simpson's self-categorisation as a nature writer, and her repeated motif of the sacredness of trees – whether it be with relation to ornithology, Indigenous cultures, fable and fairy-tale or childhood mythology – to allow three introspective protagonists to reach new understandings of universal themes – loss of love and innocence, ageing, inheritance, childlessness, sexuality, death, ancient cultures, cultural integrity and preservation of the environment - playing out in an Australian context. It examines how Simpson integrally links these themes to the characters' interactions with trees in the landscape. The paper considers Simpson's anti-Gothic stance when presenting the landscape in her novels, yet also demonstrates the way her more 'realist' depictions of place evoke unease surrounding the issue of white belonging in Australia. Simpson's identification of self with the tree metaphor – particularly the Australian ironbark – is pivotal to the quiet power of her fiction's exploration of belonging in the Australian landscape.

Biography

Jane Frank teaches writing and cultural studies in the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science at Griffith University. She is currently adapting her PhD research for a book titled *Rejuvenating Regional Culture: A Study of the International Book Town Movement*, to be published in a new series on sociology and the arts by Palgrave Macmillan in early 2018.

AMEER FURAIH

CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC RESISTANCE IN THE POETRY OF KATH WALKER (OODGEROO NOONUCCAL) AND LEROI JONES (AMIRI BARAKA)

Abstract

One of the premises of the philosophy of colonization is the maintenance of dominance of the colonizer's language and culture upon the colonized peoples. Aboriginal Australian and African American peoples are representative examples, though these peoples had dissimilar experience of colonization. The cultures and languages of these peoples experienced a systematic destruction because of the "official" application of the assimilation policy in both countries. Aboriginal and African American civil rights activists during the 1960s and beyond played a significant role in maintaining their people's cultures and languages.

The paper tries to demonstrate the role of Aboriginal and African American civil rights poets in restoring their people's cultures and languages. It attempts to show how Aboriginal Kath Walker (later Oodgeroo Noonuccal) (1920 - 1993) and African American LeRoi Jones (later Amiri Baraka) (1934 - 2014) adopts an almost similar poetic strategy in their cultural and linguistic resistance (i.e. the contextualization of their peoples' cultures and languages), which is an anticolonial literary endeavour. The paper will show how these poets' (post)colonial experience contributes to their political awareness and involvement, and, in return, plays a role in shaping Aboriginal and African American literary environments. Selections from Walker's *My People: A Kath Walker Collection* (1970) and Baraka's *SOS Poems: 1961-2013* (2014) will be comparatively discussed to illustrate the commonality in the poetry of those two ethnically different poets.

Biography

Ameer is a PhD candidate at Griffith University, working under the supervision of Prof. Chris Lee and Dr. Stuart Cooke since 2015. Prior to Griffith, he received his Masters degree in Modern American poetry from the University of Baghdad (Ibn-Rushd) in 2008, and joined the English Department in 2010. His current research primarily investigates Australian Aboriginal and African American poetry of the Civil Rights movement and beyond.

ALEXANDRA GALLAGHER

STEPHAN HALES AND SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE – A MIASMATIC

Abstract

On August 16th 1776, Stephen Hales, English botanist, clergyman, chemist, inventor of pneumatic trough and ventilation system, wrote in a letter to a French farmer that, "I have lately at the desire of the Lord Mayor of London, put large ventilators whose midriffs are each 8 feet long and four feet wide, into Newgate, the principal Gaol of London whether they are found of great benefit to refresh the Prisoners…" It is well known that European concerns during early Industrialisation included breathable air quality. There was French and English support for preventing outbreaks of 'Gaol Dystemper' caused by cramped, insanitary prison conditions, on land and transportation ships. Prisoners were seen as passive vessels who received the breath of life from God or the breath of ill health from the atmosphere around them.

Less discussed is how the topics of ventilation and incarceration appear in early Romantic literary writing.

This paper will argue that Samuel Taylor Coleridge's less studies dramas contain such identifiable literary miasmatic transference. Plays with revolutionary concerns and prison settings include the Fall of Robespierre, Osorio and translations of Schiller. Their usage of foul-air motif, ultimately reveal a moral and political relationship between self and the external world.

Biography

Alex is a Masters by Research Student at the University of Sydney.

ROD GIBLETT

THE PARIS OF THE SOUTH

Abstract

Melbourne for some is the Paris of the south with its faux mini Eiffel Tower atop the State Theatre Centre, its bustling Parisian-style arcades and laneways and its 'Paris end of Collins Street.' Melbourne was also founded, like Paris, in a swamp on the banks of a river. Both the Seine and Yarra are lazy, muddy and serpentine rivers. The banks of both rivers on which their cities were founded were also marshy. Using the work of Walter Benjamin, I argue that Melbourne as 'the Paris of the south' is what he calls 'a dialectical image' consisting of the what-has-been of Melbourne as marsh and of the now of recognizability of Melbourne as metropolis. This image is situated between the filthy marsh and the miry city. Marsh and metropolis come together dialectically in the image of Melbourne as marsh metropolis. 'The dialectical image' for Benjamin is 'the primal phenomenon of history' that 'extends into the present' and 'by virtue of its very oblivion.' In this paper I also argue that this present extension occurs in tropes for the urban underside as exemplified in Fergus Hume's bestselling nineteenth century detective novel, *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab*, set in 'Marvellous Melbourne.'

Biography

Rod Giblett is the author of many books including: *People and Places of Nature and Culture* (Intellect Books, 2011); *Black Swan Lake: Life of a Wetland* (Intellect Books, 2013); and *Canadian Wetlands: Places and People* (Intellect Books, 2014). His latest book is *Cities and Wetlands: The Return of the Repressed in Nature and Culture* (Bloomsbury Press, 2016). He is currently researching and writing a book entitled *Modern Melbourne: City and Site of Nature and Culture*. For more information go to: https://muriuniversity.academia.edu/RodGiblett

PAUL GILES

ANTIPODEAN ANTHROPOCENE IRONIES: AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE AND THE PLANETARY CLOCK

Abstract

Taking its title from an installation designed by Lorenzo della Volpaia in 1510, this paper engages with contemporary environmentalist theory—as developed by Donna Haraway, Bruno Latour, Ursula K. Heise, Rob Nixon, Srinivas Aravamudan, Jane Bennett, and others—to suggest how the Anthropocene can usefully be understood as (among other things) a rhetorical concept. It consequently traces ways in which such representations have influenced the construction of art marked in various ways by the prospect of climate change, even among those (e.g. David Hockney) sceptical of such formulations. By correlating this with the way planetary time has been framed in postmodernist Indigenous painting, and by juxtaposing this with projections of Indigenous time in the work of critical theorists such as Andrea Smith, Elizabeth Povinelli, and Mark Rifkin as well as Australian poet Judith Wright and novelist Tim Winton, this paper argues that antipodean scales of time, through their conjunction of radically divergent temporal frames and their disruption of a linear sequence predicated upon a teleology of cause and effect, can work substantively to reorganize the patterns of Western culture across a more extensive course.

Biography

Paul Giles is Challis Professor of English at the University of Sydney. He was previously Professor of American Literature at Oxford University (2002-2009) and President of the International American Studies Association (2005-2007). His most recent books are *Antipodean America: Australasia and the Constitution of U.S. Literature* (2014); *The Global Remapping of American Literature* (2011); *Transnationalism in Practice: Essays on American Studies, Literature, and Religion* (2010).

JAMES GOURLEY

CLI-FI AND PANIC: THE ISLAND WILL SINK AND CLADE

Abstract

The 21st century proliferation of incidents of extreme temperature and extreme rainfall as a result of human-induced climate change – along with the emergence of the Anthropocene concept – provoke a sober reaction in many. The magnitude of human influence on the planet, affecting both geology and weather systems, is frightening evidence of the unintended consequences of industrialisation and urbanisation.

The overwhelming response to these new realities is reasonable and rational, with multiple national commitments to more environmentally-friendly society and industry, and a global climate change agreement that seeks to limit temperature rise to 2°C and facilitate greater investment in renewables. Despite these, there is a significant view that these measures are insufficient, and that a tipping point has been reached.

This paper considers two Australian cli-fi novels, Briohny Doyle's The Island Will Sink and James Bradley's *Clade*, which combine the rational response with something irrational: panic. By the use of panic as both emotive response to climate change and as a structuring device for narrative, both novels claim an urgency that is significantly less evident in governmental responses.

Biography

James Gourley is a Lecturer in English at Western Sydney University. He is the author of *Terrorism and Temporality in the Works of Thomas Pynchon and Don DeLillo* (2013).

ROD GRANT

CROW COUNTRY: THE AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPES OF KENNETH SLESSOR

Abstract

This paper will examine the ways in which Slessor evoked a mood of cultural enervation through his depiction of the Australian landscape. His poetry from the 1930s, with its fascination for degraded and moribund native settings, was written within a national ethos of youthful potentiality, an attitude granted perfect expression in the pages of *Smith's Weekly*, which was edited by Slessor from the middle of the decade. In 'Crow Country,' 'Talbingo' and 'North Country,' Slessor imagines wasted landscapes that metaphorically locate a human disconnection from creative tradition. In so doing, he offers a counter narrative to the story of national vitality told in his journalism.

Biography

Rod Grant is a PhD candidate in the English Department at the University of Sydney.

MAIA GUNN WATKINSON

PLACING INVISIBLE WOMEN: ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL SPACE AND POWER IN TWO WORKS BY ANA PATRICIA MARTÍNEZ HUCHIM

Abstract

When Ana Patricia Martínez Huchim, a Maya ethnographer from Yucatán in Southern Mexico, began writing creative works in 2005 she did so with the intention of revealing the lives of women and men that were invisible in Maya oral tradition. In this paper I explore the natural environment as a critical element in this project. In particular, I examine two of her creative texts published in 2013 in the Maya and Spanish languages that unveil the relationship between space, women and social exclusion: the collection of stories *U ka'ajsajil u ts'u' noj k'áax / Recuerdos del corazón de la montaña* and the short narrative *Divagación* from the collection *U yóol xkaambal jaw xíiw / Contrayerba*. For the female protagonists of these stories, the natural environment oscillates between social spaces of belonging and estrangement. An ecocritical examination of these two works prompts reflections on both the social relationship of Maya women to the local environment and the workings of power and language in cultural constructions of space.

Biography

Maia is a PhD candidate at UNSW Sydney. She gained a BA (Hons) in Spanish and Latin American Studies and Women's and Gender Studies in 2011 at UNSW. For her honours thesis she examined feminine archetypes in the work of two Mexican cabaret performers, Jesusa Rodríguez and Astrid Hadad. Her PhD research focuses on contemporary Maya literature from the Yucatán Peninsula in Southern Mexico.

MATTHEW HALL

"NO BIRDSONG HERE": MARALINGA, NUCLEAR TESTING AND RADIOACTIVE IMMORTALITY IN ALI COBBY ECKERMANN'S "THUNDER RAINING POISON"

Abstract

The proposed presentation will examine the repercussions and risks associated with nuclear power, waste and weaponry as an ontic and ontological threat to Country, as represented in Eckermann's contemporary protest poetry. Focusing specifically on the nuclear testing site of Maralinga, South Australia, which Eckermann identifies as a site of familial belonging, personal trauma and ecological catastrophe, this presentation will analyse the concept of Country as extending the temporal and spatial axes of land and life. Referencing a long history of Australian Indigenous poetry which protests nuclear threats, Eckermann's 'Thunder Raining Poison' will be read for its representation of eschatology and the nuclear imaginary. The ecological threat encountered in the poem and its potential for ontological devastation will present radioactive immortality as a threat to the very system of belief which incorporates subjective, transhistorical and mythological concepts into the land. In referencing Country, Aboriginal poetics offers an ontological and epistemic system, both material and spiritual, through which mythopoeic creation stories, totemic systems and landforms conjoin to signify a multi-dimensional system of belief, consciousness, kinship and life-force. This idea of Country will be analysed as suffering under the threat of nuclear devastation and displaying material, spiritual and ontological effects.

The presentation intends to form a brief introductory note to the poet as well as to the sculpture of the artist Yhonnie Scarce, with which this poem is identified.

Biography

Matthew Hall holds a PhD from the University of Western Australia, where he wrote a dissertation on J.H. Prynne. Cambridge Scholars Publishing released his monograph *Violence in the work of J.H. Prynne* in late 2015. Hall continues to publish widely on British late-modern and contemporary poetry and poetics, including recent essays and chapters on Andrea Brady, Peter Larkin and *The English Intelligencer*. He is the author of *Hyaline, Royal Jelly* and *False Fruits* and the long-standing Feature Editor at Cordite Poetry Review.

ALEXANDRA HANKINSON

ON THE SHAPES OF TREES: ROMANTIC AND CONTEMPORARY READINGS OF ARBOREAL FORM

Abstract

In the opening essay of *Remarks on Forest Scenery; and Other Woodland Views* (1791), the English art critic and theorist of the picturesque William Gilpin commented 'It is no exaggerated praise to call a tree the *grandest*, and most *beautiful* of all the productions of the earth.' The reason for this beauty, he explained, lay in the varied character of their forms: though the smaller parts of a tree – the spray, leaves, blossoms and seeds – were the same in trees of the same kind, the larger parts were wholly different: 'you never see two oaks with an equal number of limbs, the same kind of head, and twisted in the same form: and it is from these larger parts, that the *most beautiful varieties* result.' While Gilpin's remarks were inspired by aesthetic rather than physiological considerations, they nonetheless hinted at a problem that intrigued Romantic botanists: what accounted for the intricate shapes of trees? How did trees build their bodies and grow?

Focusing on representations of arboreal growth, development, and grafting in the writings of Erasmus Darwin, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Thomas Knight and a number of contemporary evolutionary biologists, this paper will describe how, for eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century naturalists and poets, learning to read arboreal form ecologically involved recognising not only the degree to which trees were fundamentally different to animals but also how profoundly they were shaped by experience. More than quintessential symbols of organic harmony and wholeness, trees were complex, modular and morphologically distinctive organisms for which, in Bernd Heinrich's words, a 'local explanation' could be found 'for the heft and warp of every twiglet.'

Biography

Alexandra Hankinson is a PhD candidate in the Department of English at the University of Sydney. Her research focuses on late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century representations of organic life in literature and science with a special focus on the role of metaphoric activity in Romantic natural history and poetry. She is a member of the Romantic Studies Association of Australasia and of the Sydney Intellectual History Network's Long Eighteenth Century Reading Group. Her specific interests include: Erasmus Darwin; Samuel Taylor Coleridge; history of life sciences since 1750; and science communication.

DANIEL HEMPEL

COLONIAL MELANCHOLY IN AUSTRALIA: SUBJECTS, ENVIRONMENTS AND PEOPLES

Abstract

My paper addresses the intriguing fact that during the early-colonial period in Australia, a remarkably large number of British colonisers felt a sense of melancholy about the continent and their place within it. The paper asks the question: to what extent did melancholy in early-colonial Australia operate as a shared cognitive model structuring the European encounter with an entirely alien environment? Agamben, who traced melancholy's genealogy in its dual form as mood and malady, speaks of the 'topology of the unreal that melancholy designs' (26). Given that melancholy took on quasi-epidemic proportions in early-colonial Australia, what kind of 'topology of the unreal' mapped the experience of white Australia's beginnings? In other words, how did melancholy assist in 'reading' the Australian environment with its seemingly topsy-turvy flora and fauna? Furthermore, since melancholy has been identified as a proto-Romantic sensibility, my paper also addresses the question how the self-fashioning as a 'melancholic' positioned the coloniser within the world of early-colonial Australia. Particular emphasis is put here on melancholy's ambiguous function in articulating the power structures between coloniser, colonised land and native people(s).

Biography

Daniel Hempel is a recent PhD graduand of the University of New South Wales, Australia, and holds an MA in European Literature from the Humboldt University of Berlin. His PhD project examined Australia's place in the utopian imagination, particularly in terms of its interplay between utopia and ideology. His main research interests are: Australian literature; utopian theory; ecocriticism.

NAOMI HORRIDGE

THINGS THAT GO THUMP

Abstract

Casual conversations about the weather can act as a prototypical model of poetic interplay between Indigenous and Settler knowledges: 'the structures of connection, response and contact which form the local' (Harrison, *Who Wants to Create Australia?*, 78–79). Attention to the weather sets up rhythms of repetition connecting poem to world. The notion of a prototype also allows a model to be exceeded.

Kate Fagan, analysing Martin Harrison's 'White-Tailed Deer', hears 'the thump, the door closing, the click that passes you by – ', as signaling 'both continuity and break' in the poem as ecosystem. I take the question in 'White-Tailed Deer' 'a neighbour – what are they doing out there?'. Thumps heard in the Kununurra night push the boundaries of the model and interrupt my efforts at settling to sleep, to express the political demands of sovereignty and the autochthonous voice of Country. Haraway draws on Trinh Min-ha to suggest that 'even inappropriate/d others seem to be interpellated - called through interruption' (Haraway 70) When this call is a knock on the door, a head thumping on a wall from next door, a tin roof blown off or a rock falling, what is the responsibility of the interrupted other?

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Biography

Naomi Horridge is a Creative Writing PhD candidate at the University of Adelaide. She lived in Kununurra, in the East Kimberley, for three and a half years and is currently working on a book of poems drawing on her time in this place.

DANIEL HOURIGAN

AFFECT AND ENVIRONMENT IN THE BAS-LAG NOVELS OF CHINA MIÉVILLE

Abstract

In 2009, Paul Kincaid noted that the New Weird was an ill-defined and mostly British Isles authored genre of fantasist literature inhabited by the likes of China Miéville and Hal Duncan. At the same time, Nalo Hopkinson delivered a critique of the lack of racial diversity in speculative fiction at the International Conference of the Fantastic in the Arts. This question of diversity has been directly addressed by, among others, Miéville who has, in addition, professed his dislike of gardens. Yet the weird ecologies on show in his Bas-Lag trilogy show a kind of new materialist gardening of human beasts that realises the dangers that heteronomy brings to such diversity, from the punishments of the Re-Made to the social collectives of pirates and political renegades. This discussion offers a reading of how physical and political environments and their affects fold in upon one another in Miéville's first trilogy.

Biography

Daniel Hourigan researches the intersections of law, literature and philosophy. His *Law and Enjoyment: Power, Pleasure and Psychoanalysis* appeared with Routledge in 2015. He is a Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Southern Queensland, an Associate Editor of the Edinburgh Critical Studies in Law, Literature and the Humanities book series soon to be published by Edinburgh University Press, and a board member of the Law, Literature and the Humanities Association of Australasia.

NICHOLAS JOSE

THE STORY OF "MOON-BONE"

Abstract

'A 'WƆnguri-'Mandʒikai Song Cycle of the Moon-Bone' was published in Oceania in 1948, 'by Ronald M. Berndt'. It drew on field-work in North-eastern Arnhem Land that Berndt carried out with his wife Catherine Berndt in 1946-47. In presenting the song cycle, so the article explains, 'words are recorded as they were sung', with an interlinear translation, a brief synopsis and notes. A 'general translation' follows that 'is the poetic rendering of the songs'. Those 13 general translations have since been gathered and published as 'The Moon-Bone Cycle', in Jerome Rothenberg's seminal anthology *Technicians of the Sacred* (1968), in Rodney Hall's *The Collins Book of Australian Poetry* (1981), Les Murray's *New Oxford Book of Australian Verse* (1986), Alice Oswald's *The Thunder Mutters: 101 Poems for the Planet* (2005) and many other places. What do we know of how this influential work came into being? Recent work in the Berndt archive at the University of Western Australia sheds some light on the process of creative transmission, while raising further questions.

Biography

Nicholas Jose has published seven novels, three collections of short stories, a memoir and essays, mostly on Australian and Chinese culture. He was general editor of the *Macquarie PEN Anthology of Australian Literature* and Visiting Chair of Australian Studies at Harvard University, 2009-10. He is an affiliate of the Writing & Society Research Centre, Western Sydney University, and Professor of English and Creative Writing at The University of Adelaide, where he is a member of the J M Coetzee Centre for Creative Practice. His most recent book is *Bapo* (2014).

SEBNEM KAYA

ECHOES OF BEATRIX POTTER'S ECOPHOBIA

Abstract

Beatrix Potter (1866-1943), while still a child, was kept away from the outside world – a restriction her mother, apprehensive of germs, imposed – and therefore learned at an early age that even an animal too minute to be visible could be potent enough to spoil human physiology and way of life, which left an indelible, though latent, mark on her environmental psychology, as hinted at by her artistic output.

Potter's stories for children look like a repository of subliminal messages suggestive of ecophobia, surfacing in the form of a tendency to represent animals as conjoining humans to comprise an uncomfortable mix. The illustrations she drew to supplement these stories and her handwritten picture letters, too, reveal signs of a mind not altogether at ease with non-human nature when read in line with the principles of visual literacy.

This paper, drawing on biographies of Beatrix Potter as well as her oeuvre, proposes to revisit the author/illustrator's approach to nature, pointing to the possibility that Potter's love of nature commonly taken for granted as pure was in fact adulterated with fear, an adverse feeling apparently attributable to the environment in which she grew up.

Biography

Dr. Şebnem Kaya graduated from the Department of English Language and Literature, Hacettepe University, Turkey, where she also received her MA and PhD. She is mainly specialised in contemporary Anglo-Irish drama, but her fields of interest and publication also include cultural studies, history, and ecocriticism. Her current affiliation is with the Department of English Language and Literature, Hacettepe University where she works as assistant professor.

LAURA KENNY

READING AND WRITING PLACE IN REALIST FICTION AS AN ACT OF TRANSLATION

Abstract

Works of realist fiction can be divided into three categories: those set in a real named place, those set in a fictional named place, and those set in an unnamed place that might or might not be real. In this paper I argue that regardless of which category a work of realist fiction belongs to, place is created through a dialogue between author, character, and reader. Authors form a picture of place which they put into words, which are then filtered through the perspective of individual characters. Finally, readers bring their own experiences and preconceptions with them when they enter into the dialogue. Authors, characters, and readers may or may not speak the same 'language of place.' Therefore I argue that reading and reading and writing place in realist fiction can be seen as an act of translation. This paper explores the complexities of the creation and translation of place through an analysis of three contemporary Australian realist novels, one from each of the categories: *The Promise Seed* by Cass Moriarty (2015), *The Anatomy of Wings* (2009) by Karen Foxlee, and *One Foot Wrong* (2008) by Sofie Laguna.

Biography

Laura Kenny is a PhD candidate in Creative Writing and Literary Studies at Queensland University of Technology. Her research looks at representations of childhood trauma in contemporary Australian realist fiction with a focus on how the experience of childhood trauma affects a character's relationship with place. Laura writes poetry and prose. Her poetry has been published in *Right Now* and *Pressure Gauge Journal*. Her fiction has been shortlisted for the Josephine Ulrick Literature Prize and published in the *Review of Australian Fiction*.

ERIKA KERRUISH

MARS ROVER'S TRANSLATION OF THE MARS ENVIRONMENT

Abstract

This paper examines the relationship of robots to their surrounds and the way this relationship is translated into human terms. These questions are examined through considering the well-documented example of Mars Rover, a robot designed to go into a hostile environment to send back data and perform tasks. While designed for particular purposes by humans, the robot's relationship to the environment has qualities distinct from that of humans. This relationship is then translated to its human co-workers.

This translation is examined from the perspective of an ontology that assumes the continuity between organisms, things and environment, a continuity divided by processes of perception (Merleau-Ponty 1968). In the case of Mars-Rover-human relationships these perceptual processes are digital and machinic, as well as organic. They incorporate the material, symbolic and technological (Hoel and Carusi 2014 81) and newly delineate participants. Mars Rover's translation enacts aesthetic, cultural and political ideas and values, drawing on social imaginaries woven through with imperialism, colonization and corporatism, as well as the embodied imagination (Vertesi 2012; Messeri 2016). The translation also transforms the human terms into which Mars Rovers' relationship to the environment is rendered. Better understanding these processes is increasingly important as robotic machines populate diverse environments in which humans may be present to a greater or lesser extent.

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Biography

Erika Kerruish teaches cultural studies in the School of Arts and Social Sciences at Southern Cross University. Her research examines expression, perception and affect in technologies such as robotics, film and video art. She is a co-editor of the journal *Transformations*.

NICK KEYS

THE WALPIRI IN DAVID ANTIN'S THIRSTY CAMEL: THE TANAMI COMES TO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Abstract

This paper looks at talk poet David Antin's ecological critique of California with particular attention to his use of the Walpiri of the Tanami Desert as an example 'software technology solutions to ecological problems'. Faced with the quandary of needing water, those who chart a water hole route from the least reliable to most reliable source are using the software solution. Those who engineer a dam & piping system solve the problem with hardware. Although Antin never visited the Tanami (his understanding of them comes from Mervyn Meggit's *Desert People: A Study of the Walpiri Aborigines of Australia*) the clarity of the example and Antin's metaphor merits discussion, especially in relation to the resonances between environmental crises in California and Australia.

Biography

Nick Keys is a writer based in Sydney. He works in live presentation formats: audio poetry, situated writing & occasional oratory. He recently founded the Centre For Deep Reading (deep-reading.org).

SAMANTHA LANG

LE QUATTRO VOLTE: ENVIRONMENTAL PHILOSOPHY FOR THE "ANTHROPOSCREEN"

Abstract

Le Quattro Volte, a film by Angelo Frammartino, takes its title from Pythagoras, who, in the 6th century BC spoke of each of us having four lives within us – the mineral, the vegetable, the animal and the human – "thus we must know ourselves four times". Shot in Calabria, in a small village, Frammartino constructs a world where humans are relegated to a less dominant position than is customary: the animal, vegetable and mineral realms are granted as much dignity as the human one.
In this paper I will argue that Frammartino employs an aesthetic and narrative decentralising of the human in order to reveal a connection between being and non-being, making visible the invisible on screen. Through the prism of environmental humanities – the director's approach can be viewed as a 'post-human' one, and his work part of an emerging eco-cinema.
By staging encounters between people and those 'nonhuman' aspects of the Earth excluded by coloniality/modernity dualisms (e.g. animals, animal-spirits, mythological creatures, shaman, the very Earth itself) the director reframes 'nature in an active voice' and offers new ways of seeing (and being). Frammartino's film, I will assert, contributes significantly to 'storytelling for survival' in the Anthropocene.

References

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Biography

Samantha Lang works through her production company Handmaid Media. She is international film director, writer, and visual artist who has worked in Australia, France and the US over the last 20 years. Her films have screened at major international festivals such as Sundance, Toronto, Locarno, and have received international recognition at the highest level, competing at the Cannes Film Festival for the prestigious Palme D'Or. Her areas of interest are eco-cinema, environmental humanities, slow cinema, gender studies. In 2015 Samantha was elected as President of the Australian Director's Guild with a mandate to create greater diversity across gender, race and class in the sector.

CHRIS LEE

"COOKING FOR ONE AND ANOTHER:" WRITING AS FOOD SHARING IN ROGER MCDONALD'S SHEARER'S MOTEL

Abstract

In *Shearer's Motel* (1992) Roger McDonald gives an autobiographical account of the mid-life crisis that gave new impetus to his literary career in the mid 1990s. The writer leaves his life as a father and husband on a small pastoral property in the central highlands of New South Wales (Braidwood) to seek a new identity in the (in)dignities of itinerant, rural work. His objective is understood as the need to heal a troubling division in the writing subject and a solution is sought through three interrelated lines of enquiry. In this paper I want to trace the second of these lines in which he seeks the respect of a gang of Maori shearers by cooking for them. Cooking, like writing, is a cultural practice that involves the anticipation of an audience and the decision to cook is bound up with this writer's search for an appropriate form and an appreciative audience.

Biography

Christopher Lee is a Professor of English in the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Sciences at Griffith University. This paper is drawn from a forthcoming monograph on the work of Roger McDonald. His most recent book, *Trauma and Public Memory*, is an edited collection of essays with Jane Goodall published in the Palgrave Macmillan memory study series in 2015.

ANDREW LILLEY

THE UNHEIMLICHE MANOEUVRE: THE TRANSHUMANIST UNCANNY IN DELILLO'S LATE FICTION

Abstract

Jeffrey Lockhart, the narrator of DeLillo's *Zero K* (2016), finds himself in a secret compound where the rich are trying to buy immortality through cryonic preservation, to be revived as 'ahistorical humans' (p.130): 'Our devices enter the body dynamically and become the refurbished parts and pathways we need in order to live again' (p.128). Lockhart has an uncanny encounter with a mannequin: 'It scared me, a thing without features, naked, sexless, no longer a dummy dress-form but a sentinel, posing forbiddingly… There was a tension in this encounter and I walked on warily' (p.132). The twist is that the experience is uncanny not because the mannequins too closely resemble humans, but that the volunteers, preserved in pods, seem too close to the mannequins: 'an ancestral version of the upright men and women in their cryonic capsules' (p.133).

For Lacan (2014), anxiety is deeply imbricated with the uncanny. When the Real comes too close, the lack constitutive of the subject temporarily fails: 'lack happens to be lacking' (p.42). This paper will elucidate Lacan's revision of anxiety, and explore how DeLillo's 21st century novels isolate the uncanny in an advanced technological atmosphere.

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Biography

Andrew Lilley is a PhD candidate at Swinburne University. He is currently working on his dissertation on the intersection of 21st century literature and Lacanian psychoanalysis.

JONO LINEEN

PERFECT MOTION: WALKING, WRITING AND CREATIVITY

Abstract

This paper looks at the relationship between walking and the creative translation, especially through writing, of our environment. Walking affects creativity and the way we write in three general ways:

1. Through humanity's evolutionary connection to it. *Homo Sapien's* long rise from four-legged to two-legged animal has created a million-year relationship between bipedal motion and creativity. There are two ways that that association manifests in us every day:
    a) Biochemically by releasing a cascade of chemicals that increase our openness to creative endeavours.
    b) Through the generation of a flow state. Flow is the most creative state human can achieve, the evolution of this state is directly related to walking.
2. Through its ability to enable humans to perceive the world in ways that enable us to interpret reality in personal and original ways. Examples include:
    a) Walking as a vehicle of embodied cognition
    b) Walking and its relationship to our perception of time
    c) Walking and its ability for us to perceive the world as outsiders.
3. Through its relationship to the human narrative:
    a) Foot bound journey narratives are one of the earliest and most powerful genres of human storytelling

Walking is one of the foundational ways in which we experience and interpret the world. Our bodies are made for walking and in so many ways our minds have developed to think at four kilometres an hour.

Biography

Jono Lineen is a creative writing PhD student in the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science at Griffith University. He has previously worked as a curator at the National Museum of Australia, a humanitarian relief worker with Medecins Sans Frontieres, a forester, a full-time ski racer and a stay at home dad. Jono has published two books, *A River Trilogy* and *Into the Heart of the Himalayas*, both memoirs on the relationship between humans and the environment.

JOSHUA LOBB

HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

Abstract

"Head in the Clouds" investigates the birds as imaginative tools to express human responses to the Anthropocene. Freya Mathews writes that engaging with other animals "enables us to imagine how odd or arbitrary our human priorities might appear from a non-human perspective" (Mathews 1997, 5); Birds, in particular, offer a different perspective. As Julia Martin observes: "Birds move. They fly. The bird's eye sees the world from above as well as from below" (Martin 2007, 74). Is there a way we can deploy these representations to affect changes to the ways we understand the crisis of the Anthropocene? How might situating ourselves within the atmosphere above the planet encourage human engagements with our planetary responsibility?

The paper traces the representation of birds in a range of texts, including: folk and fairy tales; narratives about the Crusades; and the poetry of Seamus Heaney and Mark Treddinick. Treddinick writes: "You cannot stand on sky, but you can be in it as you can in water or in sleep...this will do, this walking with only one's head in the clouds" (Treddinick 2007, 137).

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Tredinnick, M. 2007. "Days in the Plateau" *Kunapipi*. 39:2, 135-141.

Biography

Joshua Lobb is a Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of Wollongong and a member of the Material Ecologies research network. His stories have appeared in *The Bridport Anthology, Best Australian Stories*, *Animal Studies*, *Text* and *Southerly*. His novel, *Remission*, won the LitLink Unpublished Manuscript Award in 2014, as well as two residential fellowships at Varuna. He is currently working on *The Flight of Birds*, a collection of linked stories about the interactions between humans and birds. Joshua holds a PhD on the novel form from UNSW and has published on Creative Writing pedagogy and narrative theory.

SUE LOVELL

CRITICAL POSTHUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS AS EMBODIED, EXTENDED COGNITION IN T. C BOYLE'S A FRIEND OF THE EARTH

Abstract

Critical posthumanist narrative techniques generate shifts in reader consciousness concerning the Anthropocene and challenge the unified, humanist subject of the European Enlightenment. In the context of epistemological shifts in understandings of subjectivity, critiquing what we know, how we know and what we can be are therefore central activities. Critical posthuman narrative brings non humans into play in ecological networks where 'the other', as animal, plant or mineral, is also important. Technologisation is not ignored, but neither is it prioritised. Using a posthuman imaginary, critical posthuman narratives can illuminate the challenges of living through forms of subjectivity increasingly contingent upon global structural and environmental determinations without an ethical focus on flourishing, and with new material power of their own.

Boyle's novel is a cli-fi dramatisation of climate change. This paper examines how the narrative works with critical posthumanist consciousness. I examine his narrative strategies using Nancy Easterlin's understanding that, "textual structures themselves mimic the movement of the mind toward knowledge" and that during reading this movement, "coheres with the epistemic process of a person's moving through a geographical domain" (2012 193). I argue that the novel represents posthuman consciousness as a form of embodied and 'extended cognition'. (Clark 2011)

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Biography

Sue Lovell teaches into Ethics, Literature and Academic Writing courses at Griffith University in the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Sciences. Her research interests include narrative theory, embodiment, affect and performativity in narratives specifically in the field of critical posthumanism. She is particularly interested in developing an understanding of posthuman narratives in terms of subjectivity and identity.

JENNIFER MACKENZIE

CLIMATE AND THE IMAGINATION: AMITAV GHOSH'S THE GREAT DERANGEMENT

Abstract

Amitav Ghosh's recent book on climate change, *The Great Derangement*, is both a meditation on climate change and its historical connection to the power of colonialism and Empire, and also a challenge to writers of fiction (including himself) to address the issue in greater depth. As well as its imminent danger to the planet, Ghosh argues that "The climate crisis is also a crisis of the imagination." This paper will consider the relationship between *The Great Derangement* and Ghosh's fiction, in particular *The Hungry Tide*, where geography and climate become virtually characters themselves, and *The Ibis Trilogy*, which has as one of its many themes the depredations brought upon peoples and geographies by global trade and in particular, the trade in opium and the nineteenth century Opium Wars in China. As a writer who has focused on the rich history of river and ocean travel in Asia and the drama of these waterways, *The Great Derangement* sees Ghosh questioning his own craft, and in investigative mode examines the cultural and geographical history of climate change. He addresses climate denial, and the importance of imagining other futures, and different ways of living and thinking.

Biography

Jennifer Mackenzie is the author of *Borobudur* (Transit Lounge, Melbourne, 2009), republished in Indonesia as *Borobudur and Other Poems* (Lontar, Jakarta, 2012), and is currently working on a new collection, *Map/Feet.* She also reviews poetry and fiction from and about the Asia Pacific region. Jennifer has presented her work at many festivals and conferences in Asia, including the Ubud and Irrawaddy Festivals, and recently completed a writing residency at Seoul Art Space_Yeonhui in March and April of 2016. She has a Masters' Degree in History from the University of Melbourne on the historical fiction of the Indonesian novelist, Pramoedya Ananta Toer.

CAITLIN MALING

A CONSTANT COLLAGE: RETHINKING THE POESIS OF WILLIAM STAFFORD

Abstract

William Stafford described the process of his poetic making as daily and constant. Poems sent out for publication were not discrete units but things snipped off from an ongoing unspooling. Criticised heavily during his lifetime for emphasising the processual aspects of poesis over the end product of the poem, Stafford's work emerges in the early 21st century as an unlikely and underrecognised forerunner for a certain type of ecopoetics. This paper considers how Stafford's work and his statements of poetics interact with models of ecopoetics stressing making, particularly ideas of attentiveness, receptivity and reciprocity in the embodied act of poesis. Beyond the individual phenomenological level of the poet at work in the poem, Stafford's wider framework challenges the idea of individual authorship, inviting considerations of how he engages with a collaged, composite, or in Jed Rasula's term composted, authorship.

Biography

Caitlin Maling is a PhD candidate and poet at the University of Sydney. Her work considers the intersection of ecopoetics and pastoral in contemporary American and Australian ecopoetics. She currently teaches seminars in the undergraduate creative writing program at the University of Sydney.

CHRISTIE MARGRAVE

ECOFEMINISM IN FRENCH WOMEN'S PRE-ROMANTIC FICTION

Abstract

Scholars are only just beginning to analyse ecocritical aspects of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French literature; yet a wealth of material lies in this area, particularly in women's writing of the period. Merchant's statement that '[t]he ancient identity of nature as a nurturing mother links women's history with the history of the environment and ecological change' rings true in Cottin's *Malvina* and *Amélie Mansfield* and in Staël's *Corinne*, in which the eponymous heroines are tied, both emotionally and in terms of personal histories, to natural landscapes. These heroines are to be disposed of as patriarchal society requires, and they ultimately die when they find themselves unable to rebel. However, it is when mankind's greed and assumed superiority over nature destroy Amélie's grove, Malvina's garden and Corinne's Roman landscape, that we see the heroines' deaths follow. In this way, Cottin and Staël show that ecological neglect and deforestation highlight the oppressive treatment of women. Souza's *Adèle de Sénange*, on the other hand, illustrates how a woman can find her true place in society when the destruction of one ecological system for the foundation of another is refused.

References

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Biography

Christie Margrave is a Lecturer in French and Translation Studies at the Cardiff University in Wales, where she has worked since September 2015. Prior to this she worked as a Lecturer in French and Latin at Bangor University. Christie obtained her PhD in French Studies from the University of St Andrews in 2015. Her doctoral thesis was entitled *Women and Nature in the Works of French Female Novelists, 1789-1815*, and it analysed the portrayal of natural landscapes in novels written by Mme Cottin, Mme de Genlis, Mme de Krüdener, Mme de Souza and Mme de Staël. A monograph, which she is currently finalising, based on the thesis, is due to be published by Legenda (Oxford) in 2017.

FIONA MCKEAGUE

GHOSTS WHO WALK: LESSONS FROM THE DISPLACED HISTORY OF MINIMAL IMPACT BUSHWALKING IN AUSTRALIA

Abstract

Since the formal introduction of 'minimal impact' to the Australian bushwalking lexicon in the early 1980s, 'leave no trace' ethics have been adopted nation-wide as standard best practice by walkers, walking clubs, and national park management. These principles constitute codes of behaviour for a range of prescriptive activities and behaviours, informed by a blend of scientific perspectives, aesthetic values, and etiquette.

Paradoxically, in order to achieve the minimum possible impact on the local environment, these practices frequently *displace* their social and ecological consequences to other locations, affording protection for one landscape at the expense of another.

The story of 'minimal impact' bushwalking offers a useful window into compelling but deeply problematic ecological ideologies and meta-narratives which endorse a de-peopled vision of 'natural' landscapes, and the erasure of Indigenous peoples and traditional ways of solving social and resource dilemmas. As a consequence, we are encouraged to view aspects of the non-human world as not only separate from humans but also separate from each other. This paper considers the implications of this ethos in light of accelerating global challenges of the Anthropocene that increasingly demonstrate the interconnectedness of landscapes, species and earth systems, and in which Western colonisers are only beginning to consider human well-being as function of our relationships with ourselves, one another, and the planet.

Biography

Fiona McKeague is an avid tea drinker, a recalcitrant student, self-taught illustrator, enthusiastic bushwalker, and undisciplined occasional contributor to local media and mediocre zines. In her own thought-work she draws on her experience as a bushwalker and hiking guide to situate gender, whiteness, culture, class, colonialism, and capitalism within the 'natural' and de-peopled environments - landscapes that are deeply layered with human history, emotion, memory, and practice, and yet are often viewed as free of human culture. She currently works as a Research Assistant with the Place, Evolution, and Rock Art Heritage Unit (PERAHU) on the ARC funded laureate project 'Australian rock art history, conservation and Indigenous well-being.' She is also an associate member of the Australian Anthropological Society.

MEREDITH MCKINNEY

TRANSLATING CLASSICAL JAPANESE TRAVEL WRITING: A JOURNEY

Abstract

My work as a literary translator of classical Japanese texts brings up constant questions about the possibilities and limitations of this act of simultaneous multiple mediation — between two very different languages, two very different cultures, and two very different times. The work I am currently engaged on, an anthology of Japanese literary travel writing spanning a thousand-year period (7th-17th centuries), provokes further thoughts on the extreme fluidity of cultural perceptions of landscape and their literary expression.

A 20-minute paper could not hope to do more than highlight a few of the key issues outlined above. The particular focus of the paper would be on the crucial mediating roles played by language, cultural and literary tradition to embed the human travellers of these texts in the landscape's natural world. This mediating role is in turn further extended to include the language, cultural and literary traditions through which the translator must work in an attempt to bring the 21st century English-speaking reader into a vital relationship with the texts' foundational experiences.

Biography

Merdith holds a PhD in classical Japanese literature from the Australian National University, where she is currently an Honorary Associate Professor. She has lived and taught in Japan for 20 years before returning to Australia in 1998. Subsequently she has published 12 translations of classical and modern Japanese literary works, including four in the Penguin Classics series. She is currently completing an anthology of classical Japanese literary travel writing, tentatively titled 'Travels with a Writing Brush: a Thousand years of Japanese Literary Travel Writing from Manyôshû to Bashô' (due out from Penguin Classics in 2019). www.meredithmckinney.com

MICHAEL MEADOWS

MYTHS, MEMORIES AND OBSESSIONS: WRITING ABOUT LANDSCAPE

Abstract

This paper will draw from a long-running project started in 1998 to compile a history of European engagement with mountain landscapes in eastern Australia. In 2015, I self-published a book, *The Living Rock*, that focussed on Australian climbing history. It was drawn from a vast collection of archival papers, newspaper accounts, personal diaries, photographs and interviews with around 60 participants, all of them former climbers — a melange of biography, history and journalism. In this paper, I will draw from my experiences in researching, writing and publishing that book to explore aspects of the 'myths, memories and obsessions' (Schama 1995) that imagine landscape, along with the ways in which it is 'transformed by words, phrases and ways of telling' (Bonyhady and Griffiths 2002). Paramount in this analysis is the place of memory, 'as much a product of the present as it is a projection of the future' (Gutman, Brown and Sodaro 2010).

Biography

Michael Meadows has worked as a journalist and media researcher since the late 1970s. He spent most of 2015 completing a 17-year-long research project into Australian climbing history, resulting in a self-published book, *The Living Rock*. Throughout his academic career he has maintained a passion for mountain landscapes, Indigenous affairs, journalism and community media.

PETER MINTER

DECOLONIALITY AND GEOPOETHICS IN MEENAMATTA LENA PUELLAKANNY: MEENAMATTA WATER COUNTRY DISCUSSION

Abstract

Thinking through a 'geophilosophy' informed by Indigenous philosophy and expression, Joan Retallack's 'poethics' and Walter Mignolo's plea for an epistemic delinking from coloniality and the emergence of subaltern modes of reason, this paper will make a close reading of *meenamatta lena narla puellakanny: Meenamatta Water Country Discussion*. *A Writing and Painting Collaboration* between Palawa elder, writer and activist Pura-lia Meenamatta (Jim Everett) and painter Jonathon Kimberley. In poetry and artworks that produce a singularly Indigenous episteme while demonstrating a refined, highly flexible transcultural ecopoetics, *meenamatta lena narla puellakanny: Meenamatta Water Country Discussion* is an exemplary expression of uniquely Australian forms of decoloniality and environmental philosophy. Translating between cosmologies, painterly gesture, and poetic language, the collaboration's radical intimacies and exteriorities contribute to the emergence of a radically transcultural 'geopoethical' framework.

Biography

Peter Minter is a poet, editor and publisher living in Sydney, where he is a Senior Lecturer in Indigenous Studies at the University of Sydney. His work has been anthologised in various Australian and international anthologies, and has appeared internationally in *Poetry Review*, *Verse*, *The Atlanta Review*, and *The Literary Review*. In 2006 he published his fifth volume of poems, blue grass. He was founding editor of the *Varuna New Poetry* broadsheet, a founding editor of *Cordite Poetry and Poetics Review*, co-editor of *Calyx: 30 Contemporary Australian Poets*, and co-editor of the *Macquarie PEN Anthology of Aboriginal Literature*.

ELEANOR MORECROFT

SCIENCE, NATURE AND HISTORY: WITCHCRAFT IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY PERIODICALS

Abstract

Although the modern field of Western witchcraft and demonology studies began in twentiethcentury academia, nineteenth-century British periodicals show evidence of a burgeoning interest in the subject, as well as an increase in knowledge and source materials. Then, as now, writings on witchcraft express a desire to understand, through the lens of witchcraft prosecutions, how early modern peoples related to each other and to their surroundings. Since witchcraft involved the subversion, and often *in*version, of nature, environmental factors such as climate, extreme weather events, and perceptions of wilderness, contributed to anxieties about witchcraft in early modern communities. For nineteenth-century writers, the growth of scientific knowledge, and therefore knowledge of nature, represented a vital step in human progress: a victory for truth and education over ignorance and superstition. Beliefs in demonology and witchcraft represented the worst manifestations of superstitious, pre-modern Western cultures, and served as a chastening reminder of human weakness, the destructiveness of fear, and the value of scientific and historical knowledge. Through analysis of a selection of articles in British periodicals, this paper will investigate what may be learned from such sources about how relationships between science, knowledge, and nature functioned in nineteenth-century popular culture.

Biography

Eleanor Morecroft has a PhD in History from the University of Queensland. She has research interests in British national-imperial culture c.1780-1930, including historical and military writings, print culture, antislavery and other social and political reforms, monuments and memory.

WARWICK MULES

"SAY IT, NO IDEAS BUT IN THINGS": POETICS AS WORLD-FORMING

Abstract

This paper will begin with a meditation on the poetic refrain "say it, no ideas but in things" repeated numerous times in William Carlos Williams's epic poem "Paterson." The poem is an exploration of the relation between the city of Paterson in New Jersey, USA, and what it might become when the poet draws from his experience of it and translates it into poetic language; as if what is at stake in the poem is the city's future imagined through the sense of *another world* emerging as the poem unfolds. In Walter Benjamin's terms, the poet poetizes the city; turns it into another life emerging in-between the real city and the poem itself.

I want to argue that poetizing such as we find in Williams's poem offers a posthumanist way to address the human relation to the non-human in the era of the Anthropocene, with the realisation that we no longer control nature but are deeply embedded in its becoming. This insight, which has become an axiom of eco-thought, needs to be seen in the light of another compelling insight: that we are also entwined in the *techne* that allows us to see things in that way. Our relation to nature is doubly bound up in being part of and separate from nature. The task of poetics is to make us see this double bind as a question of *world-forming* (Nancy), where the poetic imagination works to release the human relation to itself through techne, thereby opening up new worlds in the more-than-human earth in all of its cosmic connectivity.

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Biography

Warwick Mules is Adjunct Associate Professor in the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Southern Cross University. He is the author of *With Nature: Nature Philosophy as Poetics through Schelling, Heidegger, Benjamin and Nancy* (2014).

RUBY NIEMANN

"IT MEANS YOU": WRITING, IDENTITY, AND THE DESTABILISED NATURE OF HUMANITY IN MARGARET ATWOOD'S MADDADDAM TRILOGY

Abstract

This paper looks at the connection between symbolic thinking, acquisition of literacy, and the humanity granted to the Crakers by the organic humans in Margaret Atwood's MaddAddam trilogy. Over the course of the trilogy, the Crakers, a race of genetically modified posthumans created by Jimmy's childhood friend Crake, are granted varying degrees of humanity over the course of three books, moving from entirely non-human to being proven to be socially, ethically, and biologically (e.g., reproductively) compatible with humans. Building off of theories put forth by Calina Ciobanu, Andrew Hoogheem, and J.B. Bouson about the importance and use of religion, narrative, and writing in Atwood's trilogy, I make the case that, rather than showing merely an evolving perception of the Crakers by the remaining human characters, the acceptance of the Crakers' by the humans is instead reliant on access to narrative and symbolic thought, shown most predominantly through the ability to write. The relation between humanness and such non-biological practices as literacy and narrative indicates a construction of the human that moves beyond the organic into a posthuman future.

Biography

Ruby Niemann is a PhD candidate in English at the University of Adelaide. Her research interests include theories of the Anthropocene, eco-criticism, and female novelists of the 20th and 21st centuries. Her thesis focuses on the 21st century novels of Margaret Atwood.

CARLY OSBORN

THE ECOLOGY OF TRAGEDY IN TWO AMERICAN NOVELS

Abstract

After the Second World War, America was fertile ground for a revitalised utopian idealism, based on the tenets of the American Dream. But as the threat of cold war escalated, and the gaudy trinkets of mass consumerism failed to satisfy, suburban America became a site of disillusionment, decay, and cultural crisis.

My paper is a reading of two late-20th-century tragic novels in this context: Jeffrey Eugenides' *The Virgin Suicides*, and Rick Moody's *The Ice Storm.* In each of these novels, the promised utopia of suburbia becomes instead a place of environmental crisis: rows upon rows of dying streetside trees, ornamental ponds choked by algae, floods that pour into pristine living rooms, and an apocalyptic snowstorm. Applying the theory of René Girard, I consider the representation of suburbia as a place of discontent, a site of communal crisis specifically described in ecological terms. This 'ecology of tragedy' is a place both real and imaginary, created and perpetuated by communal imagination, myth, and storytelling. I argue that these novels are informed by a tragic tradition of ecological imagination, and that such literature contributes to our ongoing perception of the spaces in which we live.

Biography

Carly Osborn is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. Her recent publications include the edited collection *Does Religion Cause Violence?* Eds. Hodge, Cowdell, Fleming & Osborn (Bloomsbury 2017). She has won multiple awards including the South Australian Emerging Historian of the Year and the University of Adelaide Doctoral Research Medal.

KELLY PALMER

THE BEACH AS (HU)MAN LIMIT IN GOLD COAST NARRATIVE FICTION

Abstract

For Australian locals, the beach has slipped from its mythic status as healing bath or relaxing escape, and rather 'remains a very ordinary, everyday setting'. The Gold Coast beaches in particular oscillate in the cultural imagination between this everyday experience and a tourist's paradise of 'sun, surf and sex'. While these narratives of selfhood and becoming, egalitarianism, and sexual liberation punctuate the media, Gold Coast literary fictions instead reveal the beach as a site of danger, wholly personifying the unknown. Within Amy Barker's *Omega Park* (2009), Melissa Lucashenko's *Steam Pigs* (1997), and Matthew Condon's *Usher* (1991), the beach is a 'masculine' space for testing the limit of the coastline and one's own capacity for survival. This paper conducts close textual analysis on the aforementioned novels and surveys other Gold Coast fictions alongside spatial analysis of the Gold Coast coastline. These fictions suggest that the Gold Coast is neither simply a 'Crime Capital' in the cultural imagination, but a mythic space with violent memories, opening out onto an infinite horizon of conflict and estrangement.

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Biography

Kelly Palmer was raised on the Gold Coast and now tutors, lectures, and is a PhD candidate in creative writing and literary studies at the Queensland University of Technology. Her research explores low-income residents' experiences of Gold Coast and how dominant stereotypes of place foster belonging or alienation across intersections of class, gender, and race.

ELLIOT PATSOURA

"THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS": GEORGES BATAILLE'S VEGETAL VISION OF NATURE

Abstract

Between 1927 and 1932, the French novelist and theorist Georges Bataille penned a number of short pieces that treated seemingly incongruous phenomena—a car, clock, sewing machine, the equator, crime, and others—as particular expressions of broader planetary and solar movements. "Each," Bataille writes, "can be put forward as the principle of things"; that is, as distinct but formally equivalent expressions of "the decisive movements of nature." Bataille's 1929 essay, "The Language of Flowers," expounds on the flower as one such phenomenon. For Bataille, the flower expresses an "obscure vegetal resolution" that problematises rather that buttresses the idealisation of nature as harmonious spectacle. Standing not as "the faded expression of an angelic ideal, but as a filthy and glaring sacrilege," the flower is put forward as a particular expression of nature's oscillating movement between noble elevation and sordid decline.

This paper draws on polemical responses to "The Language of Flowers" and the broader adoption of Bataille's thought in studies of the Anthropocene, to orient a critical assessment of Bataille's vegetal vision of nature, situating it with respect to contemporary calls for a discourse "rooted in vegetal life."

Biography

Elliot Patsoura is a doctoral candidate in the School of Culture and Communication at The University of Melbourne. His research examines the resonances between Freudian psychoanalysis and Schellingian Naturphilosophie.

ROBYN MAREE PICKENS

CONVERGENCE AND EVERYDAY COMPLICITY: THE TRANS-CORPOREAL ECO-POETICS OF JULIANA SPAHR

Abstract

By writing an expanded relational 'self' that falls "into leaf scars" (trans-corporeality), *and* inhabits the military-industrial complex (everyday complicity), Juliana Spahr's transcorporeal eco-poetics *embody* key environmental posthumanist ideas of anti-human exceptionalism, and the permeable species barrier (Stephen Hobden), Rosi Braidotti's radically immanent, expanded relational selves, and Donna Haraway's tentacular sympoeisis.

Drawing on the environmental posthumanist theories of Braidotti and Haraway, this paper examines Juliana Spahr's eco-poetics of trans-corporeality, where snails, honeycreepers, detaching ice shelves, the military-industrial complex, and collective responsibility are pumped through human bodies. The unitary, bounded human is torn into what posthumanist scholar Braidotti describes as "radical immanence:" an embodied and embedded constellation of selves that are porous and open, yet unevenly constituted, active, and acted upon. Specificities of place and injustices are not reduced to apolitical pan-universality.

This situated complicity is present in Spahr's eco-poetics not merely through collective assemblages of new trans-corporeal realities and imaginings, but in poetic techniques including the refrain, pluralised pronouns, and sequential repetition. This paper explores the relationship between these techniques and Spahr's trans-corporeal eco-poetics as emblematic of an environmental posthumanist ethos.

Biography

Robyn Maree Pickens is a PhD candidate in the Department of English at the University of Otago / Te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo.

BARBARA PINI

IMAGINING RURALITY: INTRODUCING CHOOK-LIT

Abstract

This paper details the emergence of a new genre of women's writing that has only recently emerged in Australia, but has gone on to become an international phenomenon. The genre has been labelled 'chook-lit', as like its progenitor, chick-lit, it focuses on the romantic tribulations of contemporary single women in a comedic manner. Unlike chick-lit, which is set in global cities, chook-lit is set in rural communities. In general, chook-lit authors cast city life as distinctly different from rural living and in negative terms. At the same time they incorporate into their narratives many of the social economic and environmental problems facing rural Australia such as drought, suicide, environmental degradation, the mining/farming nexus, violence and drug and alcohol abuse. In this presentation I detail the key tropes of chook-lit highlighting the ways in which the genre both utilises and resists dominant romanticised imaginings of rural places.

Biography

Barbara Pini is a Professor in the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Sciences at Griffith University. She is interested in rural spaces and the ways in which rurality intersects with other social locations to create inclusions and exclusions. Her most recent work has examined representations of rurality, social class and youth in documentary films and rurality and sexuality in Young Adult Fiction.

MARTIN RICE

WHO DETERMINES NEW WORDS? THE CONTEMPORARY CASE OF THE "ANTHROPOCENE" MISNOMER

Abstract

It would seem sensible if not obvious for those who specialise in the origin and meaning of words to be major contributors to discussions of any proposed new term of such global and future significance as that of 'The Anthropocene'. Yet the literary community appears to have had little say in the matter. Sociologists have been vocal in their protests that the use of this new term is loaded with unintended implications and potential for negative outcomes. This brief paper considers the scientific origins of 'Anthropocene', its current scientific status, the ways it has already been used and abused, together with some wider philosophical, anthropological, and sociological implications. My intention is to help raise the consciousness level of the literary community to some rarely discussed implications of a term that has been seen as inherently attractive and is undoubtedly popular. What explicit and implicit content are we communicating when we refer to the 'Anthropocene' age or era?

Biography

Marty Rice is an interdisciplinary adjunct research fellow in the Griffith School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science. He has a PhD in Arts from Griffith and a PhD in Biology from Birmingham, UK. His main current work is the reestablishment of a balanced and rational discourse between the sciences and the arts and society.

ALWYN ROUX

A MESH OF STRANGE STRANGERS IN JULIANA SPAHR'S WELL THEN THERE NOW

Abstract

In this paper, I will examine a few poems by Juliana Spahr in *Well then there now* (2011) by employing theoretical concepts from Timothy Morton's book *The ecological thought* (2010). The poems in Spahr's poetry collection deal with the interconnectivity of all human and non-human beings. For instance, in the penultimate sonnet of the section "Sonnets", the interdependence of all things are represented as follows: "We arrived and everything was interconnected:/ as twining green maile shrub,/ as huehue haole./ Our response was to uproot and to bunker." The speaker illustrates how human beings on their arrival finds all things interdependent and compares it to the vegetation on the Hawaiian islands, but lamentably humans (Westerners?) disturb the vegetation through their counter operation to uproot and bunker. The poems in Spahr's collection especially relate to Morton's definition of "the ecological thought" as a "practice and a process of becoming fully aware of how human beings are connected with other beings – animal, vegetal, or mineral" (2010:107/2088). In this paper, I will make use of some of the concepts that Morton sets out in his ontology about the interconnectivity of all things, such as "the mesh" and "the strange stranger", to read Spahr's poems in *Well then there now*.

Biography

Alwyn Roux holds a PhD degree in Afrikaans and Dutch literature and is in the process of completing an MA dissertation in Creative Writing at the University of Stellenbosch. At present, he is employed as a lecturer in literary theory at the University of South Africa (UNISA), where he has been teaching since 2012.

GABRIELLE ROWEN-CLARKE

SEE THE ANIMALS FEED: JOYCE'S DUBLINERS AND THE TRAUMA OF ENGLISH ECONOMIC AND AGRICULTURAL RATIONALISATION

Abstract

Mid-nineteenth century Dubliners were both spectators and victims of starvation, disease and inadequate Famine relief. One generation later, James Joyce's Dubliners in *Ulysses* have a collective memory of 'The Great Hunger' and the violence of subjugation. They are a traumatised intra- and intergeneration of the post-Famine era, still experiencing the violence of 'progress'. In addition to the more direct consequences of the Famine, Irish historian David Lloyd considers the 'spatial' aspects of Irish subjugation and the fractured 'mental geographies' of land reform. Joyce's Dubliners still seem to be paralysed, wandering aimlessly around Dublin like the dispossessed and banished victims of the Famine sixty years before. In addition to exploring recent developments in Irish historiography, this paper contributes to the current in Joycean studies to examine Joyce's engagement with the historical and political. This paper explores the mindless eating of the 'famished ghosts' and the meagre meal of soup poor Dubliner children rely on, alongside the soup relief scheme of the Famine. The destruction of traditional communal bonds that fostered trust and cooperation, and the humiliation of Famine food relief is embodied in Dubliners, and perpetuates their continued subjugation.

Biography

Dr. Gabrielle Rowen-Clarke is a tutor in English Literature at Griffith University and an instructor for a number of Griffith OUA units. Her thesis examined the fraught topic of food in post-Famine Ireland in the work of James Joyce, and used an eclectic methodology and interdisciplinary approaches to examine the complexity of relationships with food. Her research focus is James Joyce, particularly his political, social and historical concerns, although she is also interested in the resonance of the Famine in other Irish literature. Gabrielle is planning an edited collection on Food in Modernism.

JOHN RYAN

THE BOTANICAL IMAGINATION: HUMAN-PLANT COMMUNICATION AND POETIC COLLABORATION IN THE NEW ENGLAND TABLELANDS

Abstract

Recent developments in plant science emphasize the sensitivities of vegetal life, especially the capacity to learn, remember, integrate information for adaptive fitness, make decisions based on prior experiences, and undergo affective states. The idea of vegetal percipience, however, stretches back to Charles Darwin's exacting attention to plant movement (which led him to postulate the existence of a root-brain) as well as Jagadish Chandra Bose's development of novel instruments to render visible the endemic semiosis of botanical life—what he termed "plant-script" or "plant-autographs."

Set regionally within the Tablelands of NSW and invoking principles of plant-human communication, this paper investigates the potential of poetry to engage, evoke, and elicit the sensitivities of vegetal life. Rather than constructing plants as objects of representation, I consider the possibility of creative exchange with vegetal life in which "plant-script" contributes to the production of a poetic work. Extending the notion of collaboration in the environmental arts to include nonhumans, the paper draws in particular from Nancy's concepts of being-with and being-singular-plural in highlighting the potential of creative practice to prompt new social, biological, political, and imaginative perspectives on plants.

Biography

John Charles Ryan holds appointments as Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the School of Arts at the University of New England in Australia and Honorary Research Fellow in the School of Humanities at the University of Western Australia. His teaching and research crosses between the environmental and digital humanities. He is the author, co-author, editor, or co-editor of numerous books, including the Bloomsbury title *Digital Arts: An Introduction to New Media* (2014, as co-author), *The Language of Plants: Science, Philosophy, Literature* (2017, as co-editor and contributor), and the monograph *Plants in Contemporary Poetry: Ecocriticism and the Botanical Imagination* (forthcoming).

MEG SAMUELSON

LITTORAL LITERATURES AND THE ANTHROPOCENE: STUDIES OF COASTAL SETTINGS IN NARRATIVES OF THE AFRICAN INDIAN OCEAN SHORE

Abstract

This paper is part of an enquiry that seeks to make a strong argument for setting as constitutive of narrative form while presenting a case for the category of 'littoral literatures' as a unit of analysis (versus the categories of nation, region or world literatures). Based on studies of fiction set along the African Indian Ocean shore, the larger project introduces and elaborates the concept of "amphibian aesthetics" as a narrative form that is elicited by coastal settings and translocal in orientation while sensible to the prodigious and implacable forces of the Anthropocene. The paper I propose to present at this conference will focus particularly on how ways of telling from these ecotones engage some of the narratological and political challenges issued by this anthropocenic age.

Biography

Meg Samuelson recently joined the Department of English and Creative Writing at the University of Adelaide and she is a research associate of Stellenbosch University in South Africa. She has published widely on southern and eastern African literatures and in Indian Ocean studies, including the book *Remembering the Nation, Dismembering Women? Stories of the South African Transition*, and her current book projects in progress are the provisionally titled 'South African Literatures: Land, Sea, City; Amphibian Aesthetics: Writing the African Indian Ocean Littoral; Photographic Culture in Zanzibar, 1868-2018' (with Pamila Gupta); and, 'Surf, Sand & Seaweed: Reframing the South African Beach' (with Glen Thompson and Paul Weinberg). Her research interests also include world literary debates and Anthropocene thought in the postcolonial south, and she has an emergent interest in elaborating the "blue southern hemisphere" as conceptual category for literary and cultural studies.

MOIRA SHEPPARD

THE POSTHUMAN-NEO-RAWLSIAN LITERARY ANIMAL

Abstract

This paper will examine how reading the literary animal from a posthuman standpoint creates a space for the reader to explore the ideas and anxieties that arise when extending subjectivity to nonhuman animals. It will draw together the critical posthuman tenet that argues for the decentring of the human with that of Mark Rowlands' neo-Rawlsian contractarianism. Rosi Braidotti argues that 'posthuman ethics for a non-unitary subject proposes an enlarged sense of inter-connection between self and others, including the non-human or 'earth' others, by removing the obstacle of self-centred individualism' (pp.49-50). A posthuman-contractarian position enriches posthuman theory by reinforcing ideas about the interconnectedness of disciplines, species and the world. Highlighting this interconnectedness can offer a greater diversity for the analysis of the literary animal. Rowlands' contractarianism helps identify what is morally right and wrong when creating a set of moral codes in regards to extending subjectivity to nonhuman animals. He argues that the knowledge of which species one belongs to is to be excluded behind the veil of ignorance: 'Since you don't know who you are going to be, in choosing what is best for yourself you also choose what is best for everyone' (2009, p.156). This posthuman-neo-Rawlsian position allows the individual to explore how the literary animal challenges the cultural narratives which seek to shape and dictate the animal-human relationship. This paper will explore how this position challenges the anxieties that arise at the thought of extending subjectivity to nonhuman animals.

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Biography

Moira Sheppard is an ICU/Emergency veterinary nurse and is currently undertaking her PhD candidature in literary studies at Griffith University. Her thesis will examine how posthuman analysis of literary animal-human transformations challenges cultural constructs and it will explore the social and literary anxieties that arise when extending subjectivity to nonhuman animals.

GAVIN SMITH

LAND, LABOUR, AND LOSS: FROST AND LAWSON ON ECONOMIC LANDSCAPES IN THE SHADOWS OF INDUSTRIAL TRANSFORMATION

Abstract

Robert Frost and Henry Lawson are well-known for their depictions of rural and country life, in the US and Australia respectively. Neither, however, can be said to be wholly Modern, nor wholly Romantic in their representations of the landscape and its human occupation. Both men lived through a period of social and economic change that transformed the human and natural environments, which influenced their treatment of both the natural and social environment in their works. Industrialisation and urbanisation led to increasing economic inequality and to alienation from meaningful work. The concentration of people in urban centres isolated them from the natural environment.

Both Frost and Lawson sought to maintain contact with the land through their writing. Yet their representations of the natural landscape, in particular against the backdrop of industrialisation, are often characterised by the strained relationship between a socially and economically transformed humanity and the natural environment drifting further and further into background of human imagination. While there is an attempt to reclaim the dignity of the relationship between man and nature in Frost and Lawson, the reality of social and economic transformation casts a ever darker shadow over their respective representations of the natural environment.

Biography

Gavin Smith received his PhD from Western Sydney University in 2014. His thesis involved a reconstruction of the poetic theories of Robert Frost along pragmatist (Jamesian and Deweyan) lines. Since graduation, Gavin has taught in at WSU in English and academic literacy, while pursuing his research interests. His research currently focusses on the comparative study of Frost and Lawson, and the aesthetic philosophy of John Dewey, particularly as it applies to poetic and literary experience.

CHRYSTOPHER SPICER

"TOUCHING THE EDGES OF CYCLONES" – THEA ASTLEY AND HER APOCALYPTIC WINDS OF REVELATION

Abstract

Thea Astley once commented that, "everybody is living on a cyclonic edge," and that many of her characters were "always touching on the edges of cyclones." In Queensland literature, cyclones often appear as tropes of epiphany and apocalypse, where a new world is revealed out of the destruction of the old. In Astley's novel, *A Boat Load of Home Folk*, her characters discover while trapped on an island by a cyclone that such storms can rage within as well as without. Astley places these characters not only at the edges of cyclones but also at the very eye of the storm, where place and time and the individual assume unique meanings as the characters attempt to survive their inner storms as well as the one raging about them. In this way *A Boat Load of Home Folk* becomes a moral fable in which the elemental apocalypse of the cyclone is an instrument of judgement and retribution but also an epiphany of revelation.

Biography

The author of a number of books on Australian cultural history and American film history, including *Clark Gable: Biography* (2002), *Great Australian World Firsts* (2012), and *The Flying Adventures of Jessie Keith "Chubbie" Miller* (2017), as well as significant contributions to the *Encyclopedia of Melbourne* (2006), Chrystopher Spicer has taught in the areas of writing and communication in both Australia and America. He currently teaches creative and academic writing at James Cook University while undertaking PhD research that is investigating the cyclone as a trope of epiphany and revelatory apocalypse in Queensland literature. His most recent paper is, "The Cyclone Which is at the Heart of Things: The Cyclone as Trope of Place and Apocalypse in Queensland Literature," *eTropic*, 15.2 (2016), 58-68.

ANNE STUART

IS AN EARTH ETHICS POSSIBLE BASED ON A TERRAPHILIA HYPOTHESIS? HOW READING A POEM CAN BE MEDIATED BY PHILOSOPHY

Abstract

This paper will read responsibility to earth as an ethics of terraphilia. If an ethics of earth, based on complex relationality is possible, can poetic language mediate the encounter toward the radically different Other? Through an interpretation of Kathleen Jamie's poem "The Whale-watcher" by way of Emmanuel Lévinas's ethics of obligation, this paper examines the theory that a philosophy of respons(ibility) is claim made upon me by the other. I will show how the reader in Jamie's poem becomes obligated to a respons(ibility), prior to any possibility of making a choice to take responsibility. With no *ego*logical argument to justify evading this call; no matter how responsible I have already been, I cannot be responsible enough. This seeming Lévinasian burden is neither debt nor dependence, as there is no other who can substitute for the self-other relation. One way to interpret the Lévinasian claim of responsibility is as a call, in ways that reveal an ethics of obligation to otherness and hence to earth as Other in its vulnerability. This is at heart an environmental ethic of terraphilia.

Biography

Anne Stuart is a doctoral candidate in the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science at Queensland's Griffith University. Her doctoral project seeks to read the poetry of Scottish environmental poet Kathleen Jamie through the lens of the philosophy of Emmanuel Lévinas; and read the poetry of French materialist poet Francis Ponge through the prism of Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutical imagination. Her primary research interests include phenomenology, hermeneutics, ethics, new materialism and ecopoetry. Anne is a poet and won the Griffith University School of Humanities Poetry Prize in 2015.

HELEN STUBBS

NATURE, EMOTION AND THE SUPERNATURAL

Abstract

How important is it that people have feelings toward nature, and how can those feelings be invoked? Conservation psychology says that caring for nature – giving a damn – is essential (Clayton, 2015: p 18).

Writers, skilled in the art of developing relationships between invented beings and a reader, can apply their knowledge to building relationships between a broad concept, such as nature, and an audience; however there are several barriers to doing so, such as the broadness of nature and its lack of sympathetic weakness and strengths. As a character, nature might be described as wooden.

There is an ideal conduit and bridge for the relationship between people and nature. It's the prism through which acts of nature were once creatively interpreted: the supernatural. While we don't necessarily believe that fairies, gods and ghosts exist, their interactions within narrative simmer in consciousness, reinforcing the position of nature as a player at the table; as a character, or characters, we care about.

Biography

Helen Stubbs (B.Arts. (UQ), B. Acc. (UniSA), CPA) is reading Honours at Griffith University, researching the supernatural as a conduit evoking emotion toward nature. Her fiction and features appear in anthologies and magazines including "Uncontainable," in *Apex Magazine*, "The Stormchilds," in *Winds of Change*, and "Where to find glow worms on the Gold Coast," in *More Gold Coast*. She's a keen bushwalker and obstacle course racer, as explorations and adventures within the forest are key to her process.

NIKE SULWAY

THE SPRING TIDE HAS TEETH: DARK ECOLOGY IN KAREN RUSSELL'S "FROM CHILDREN'S REMINISCENCES OF THE WESTERN MIGRATION" AND "HAUNTING OLIVIA"

Abstract

In his 2007 work, *Ecology Without Nature,* Timothy Morton argues for the ways in which art can be a vehicle for expressing dark ecology: the 'irony, ugliness, and horror' (Morton 2007, 16) of a world in which all beings are always already enmeshed in an ongoing ecological catastrophe. Morton further argues that 'All life forms are the mesh' and that 'death and the mesh go together … because natural selection implies extinction' (Morton 2012, 29).

This paper 'enmeshes' Morton's ideas about the role of art in expressing or embodying dark ecology, with the New Weird's more uneasy or uncanny sense of the relations between beings and landscapes. It provides an exploration of the messy relations between these two fields of thought via an examination of the relation between beings and landscapes in Karen Russell's '*from* Children's Reminiscences of the Western Migration' (2006), and 'Haunting Olivia' (2006).

Biography

Nike Sulway is the author of several novels, including *Rupetta*, *The Bone Flute*, *The True Green of Hope*, and *What The Sky Knows*. Her works have won or been shortlisted for a range of national and international awards, including the Tiptree Award, the QLD Premier's Literary Award, the Commonwealth Writers Award, the Children's Book Council of Australia's Book of the Year Awards, the IAFA Crawford Award, the Aurealis Awards and the Norma K Hemming Award. Her most recent novel, *Dying in the First Person*, was released by Transit Lounge in 2016. She teaches creative writing at the University of Southern Queensland.

MENGTIAN SUN

GLOBAL AND LOCAL: GLOBALIZATION AND WASTE IN CHINESE SCIENCE FICTION

Abstract

Ecological issues nowadays are increasingly interrelated to the development of modern technology and global connectivity, in terms of not only the consequence of ecological problems like global warming, but also the causes. Science fiction, as a literary genre that is preoccupied with the imagination of science and technology and its influence on human society, is especially ideal for engaging with techno-political ecological issues. Many critical attentions have been given to Anglophone ecological sf novels like Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl.* However, non-western ecological sf has been largely neglected. This essay looks at Chen Qiufan's *The Waste Tide* (2013), a Chinese sf novel, whose central concern is e-waste management—an ecological problem which is both local and global. The novel gives detailed descriptions of the e-waste recycling industry in Guiyu, China. On the one hand, the novel emphasizes that the ecological consequences of e-waste management is extremely localized; on the other, it also points out that there is no such place as "away", that what we excrete will always come back to haunt us. I argue that the novel reveals the fundamental contradiction between global neoliberal capitalism and global environmental justice.

Biography

Mengtian Sun is a PhD student in English and Theatre Studies at the University of Melbourne. Her PhD thesis is a comparative study of Chinese and Anglophone sf, in which I look at how the encounter with the "other" is imagined differently, and argue that these differences result from China's unique experience of modernity.

CLAIRE THOMAS

CONTROLLING THE "WILDERNESS": LITERARY INTRUSIONS IN WALLACE STEGNER'S CROSSING TO SAFETY

Abstract

Thirty years after the publication of *Crossing to Safety* (1987), the last novel written by American environmentalist and author, Wallace Stegner, this paper considers the novel's preoccupation with literary texts and their relationship to the purported 'wilderness'.

Crossing to Safety reflects Stegner's long-acknowledged interest in the transformations of the American environment. The primary rural location in the novel – Battell Pond – is an echo of Thoreau's own pond, Walden, and shares its inevitable failure as a pastoral sanctuary. As Leo Marx writes in *The Machine in the Garden* (1964), 'the Walden site cannot provide a refuge, in any literal sense, from the forces of change.' Similarly, Stegner defines Battell Pond as Eden, but it is an Eden that has been bulldozed and built up.

My reading seeks to extend the understanding of 'the ruined garden' beyond the disturbances of technological industry. The written text – quotations, models and archetypes – also defines the natural world. In particular, I will consider the guidebook used during the novel's camping trip in rural Vermont: 'Charity's got Pritchard in her pack to tell us how to survive in the wilderness.' This text, written to facilitate human appreciation of non-human nature, operates inversely as another 'machine in the garden': a distorting attempt at human mastery.

How does a novel like *Crossing to Safety* still resonate? Can its concerns with local ecology translate to a global imaginary? In its traditional literariness and its shallow ecological insistence on 'nature' as a discrete space for human replenishment, how might its literary environment be understood today?

Biography

Claire Thomas lectures in the English and Theatre Studies program in the School of Culture and Communication at the University of Melbourne, with particular interests in postcolonial literature, the environmental humanities, feminism, creative writing, and nineteenth-century literature. Her PhD considered the metaphorical use of the tropes of travel in George Eliot's *Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda*, and Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady*. Claire's first novel, *Fugitive Blue*, won the Dobbie Award for Women Writers and was longlisted for the Miles Franklin Literary Award in 2009.

SHANNON TODD

"ONCE A TREE HAS TASTED BLOOD IT WON'T FORGET THE TASTE FOR LONG": NATURE FIGHTS BACK IN JANNI LEE SIMNER'S BONES OF FAERIE AND HOLLY BLACK AND TED NAIFEH'S THE GOOD NEIGHBORS – BOOK ONE: KIN

Abstract

Bones of Faerie (2009) and *The Good Neighbor's – Book One: Kin* (2008), both works of YA fantasy, can be classified according to Mendlesohn's notion of "intrusion fantasy" in that they depict a human world that is fighting invasion from a fairy realm. This paper shall examine the ways through which the natural environment is rendered a manifestation of fairy power within these works, with the rampant vegetation that consumes urban centres emblematic of the supernatural invasion. In the post-apocalyptic novel *Bones of Faerie*, the landscape bears the scars of a devastating war between humanity and Faerie; crops resist harvest and trees hunt human flesh. Comparably, in the graphic novel *Kin*, as the faeries plot to take over the city, vines are depicted engulfing buildings and cars. By presenting nature as an aggressor, these texts clearly call into question humanity's relationship with the natural world. It shall be argued that, at this critical juncture in the Anthropocene, works such as *Bones of Faerie* and *Kin* not only play a crucial role in encouraging young people to contemplate their own relationship with the environment but also to interrogate broader issues such as the exploitation of Earth's resources and nature's ability to retaliate.

Biography

Shannon Todd is currently undertaking a PhD in Creative Writing at the University of Newcastle. Her area of research is the adaptation of Celtic fairy lore into works of contemporary young adult fantasy fiction and she is currently writing her own young adult fantasy novel as part of this investigation. In 2016, Shannon had the pleasure of presenting her research at the 43rd Annual International Conference of the Children's Literature Association in Columbus, Ohio, USA and the Australian Children's Literature Association for Research Conference at Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, New South Wales.

CLARA TUITE

PERFECT STORM, BLACKEST SPRING: MANFRED'S WRECKS

Abstract

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which hath strength to kill;
From thy own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring;
...
But nothing rests, save carcasses and wrecks,
Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.
(*Manfred, A Dramatic Poem*, 1817)

Writing from Venice to his publisher, John Murray, in July 1817, about the mixed reception of his recently published work, *Manfred, A Dramatic Poem*, Lord Byron referred to "my Magician" as "one of the best of my misbegotten — say what they will." My paper explores *Manfred* as a brilliant misbegotten, an example of Byron's magical catastrophist writing of cosmic vision and scientific imagination that harnesses new theories of the earth and space to conjure futures past and channel the relativity of time.

Tracing the early stages of Byronic exile in Switzerland, in the wake of Byron's separation from Lady Byron in April 1816, I engage *Manfred* as a spectacular work of catastrophist thinking that emerged from the infamous "year without a summer" of 1816. Reading this wittingly farcical Gothic melodrama through the perspective of the emotional apocalypse Byron was weathering in the wake of the separation, I consider how the storm of scandal and emotional torment is intimately related to and mediated by the volcanic winter storms of the year without a summer.

My paper asks what is the compositional logic by which an environmental geography connects to an emotional geography, at this place and time of Switzerland in the summer of 1816, and beyond?

Biography

Clara Tuite is Associate Professor of English at the University of Melbourne. Her most recent book is *Lord Byron and Scandalous Celebrity* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), which was awarded the Elma Dangerfield Prize by the International Association of Byron Societies. Among other projects, she is currently editing *Byron in Context* (CUP, forthcoming 2018). She is the current Vice President of the Australasian Association of Literature.

COREY WAKELING

NARCISSUS AND THE POLITICS OF THE LOCUS AMOENUS

Abstract

In the context of environmental and ecological textual practices, narcissism is the central problematic of the poetic genre called the pastoral. The myth of Echo and Narcissus in Ovid's rendering in *Metamorphoses* happens to be a critique of such narcissism in the pastoral scene also known as the *locus amoenus*. This critique is replayed in contemporary poems by key Australian poets Gig Ryan and Peter Minter, the pastoral myth updated to present-day iterations of narcissistic self-identification with nature. Two figures with unstable relation to the genre of the pastoral, my paper proposes to examine how historical problems of poetic genre as adumbrated by Leo Marx and William Empson and in particular are both inherited and interrogated by the poets in question. In my view, Ryan and Minter offer examples of contemporary pastoral ecstasy where transformations of the subjective involve a contrary politicisation of identification with the natural, defying the conventional harmonics of the genre.

Biography

Corey Wakeling is a Lecturer at Kobe College, and received a PhD in English and Theatre Studies from the University of Melbourne in 2013. He has published essays in journals such as *TDR: The Drama Review*, *Performance Research*, *Westerly*, *Cordite Poetry Review*, *Plumwood Mountain*, and *Fusion Journal*. He is also a poet, with a new book of poems, *The Alarming Conservatory*, appearing in 2017.

JESSICA WHITE

STORIFYING SCIENCE: TRANSLATING ENVIRONMENT THROUGH ECOBIOGRAPHY

Abstract

What can the writing of a 19th century English lady of leisure transplanted to the first European colony in south-west Western Australia have to say about our environment? More than one might initially think. This paper examines how the mode of ecobiography, a form of life writing which represents the imbrication of a self with their environment, can represent the critical importance of the lives upon which we depend. Using the story Georgiana Molloy, who through her botanical endeavours became known as Western Australia's first female scientist, it illuminates how European classification systems and land management methods were applied to an environment to which they were grossly unsuited, and how the ramifications of this are resounding today.

In doing so, it demonstrates how stories can be used to convey scientific information which is critical to our survival in the Anthropocene. It argues that creative writing is useful to the translation and communication of environmental concerns to new audiences, both within and outside the academy.

Biography

Jessica White is the author of *A Curious Intimacy and Entitlement*. Her short stories, essays and poems have appeared widely in Australian and international literary journals and she has won awards, funding and residencies. She is currently an ARC DECRA postdoctoral fellow at The University of Queensland, where she is writing an ecobiography of 19th century botanist Georgiana Molloy.

ANNE-MAREE WICKS

NOTES ON NEW WEIRD ATMOSPHERES IN BISHOP AND LINK

Abstract

This paper examines whether H.P. Lovecraft's descriptions of 'atmosphere' – as a platform for achieving the great desideratum of weird fiction – remain relevant to the ways in which a selection of new weird stories by K. J. Bishop and Kelly Link create and/or combust Lovecraftian atmosphere. In his Notes on *Writing Weird Fiction* (1937) Lovecraft explains that there must be particular attention taken in achieving the correct atmosphere: it presents "a subtle illusion of the strange reality of the unreal." If weird fiction does not achieve this atmosphere, moreover, Lovecraft argues that the narrative environment is rendered unconvincing. The aim of this discussion is therefore to identify atmosphere as presented in the new weird fictions of K.J. Bishop's *The Art of Dying* (1997) and Kelly Link's *The Faery Handbag* (2005).

Biography

Anne-Maree Wicks is a first year PhD student of English literature at the University of Southern Queensland. Due to her research efforts she has since become part of USQ's 'Unleash Your Fearless' talent campaign. Her current research focuses on New Weird literature's concerns of genre and form, and exploring the concept of trauma figures within the New Weird by contemporary women writers.

EMILY YU ZONG

A PLANETARY DEVOLUTION OF READING LITERATURE

Abstract

"Planetarity" gradually supersedes globalisation and cosmopolitanism to become an ethical mode of collectivity suitable for remedying our world crises induced by global capital, the nation-state, and the Anthropocene. In this paper I trace the recent theorisation of "planetarity" in literary criticism by scholars such as Spivak. I argue that "planetarity" is invoked as a timely theoretical container in three ways: a return to the shared eco-environment as a basis of commonality; a political focus on differentiation and alterity; and the transformation of universal humanity through radical alterity. By reading the Filipina Australian writer Merlinda Bobis's novel *Locust Girl* (2015), I explore how the novel's depictions of climate change and non-human otherness are exemplars of planetary aesthetics. The "becoming" metamorphosis of the novel's girl protagonist, the "locust girl," embodies a racial, sexual, and ecological challenge to dualist thinking and imagines an alternative world built upon monist, planetary thoughts. Here, magical realism and fable are used as forms of knowledge production, enabling an examination of the textual materiality of planetary literature. These perspectives present "planetarity" as a more capacious frame of understanding literature and literature's ontological significance.

Biography

Emily Yu Zong is a recent PhD graduate and an honorary research fellow at the School of Communication and Arts, the University of Queensland, Australia. Her research interests include ethnic Asian studies, gender and sexuality, and comparative and world literature. She has published articles in *Journal of Intercultural Studies* and *JASAL: Journal of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature*.


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