Fall 2020 Course Description

Instructor: Susan Egenolf  
Course: ENGL 202  
Title: Environmental Literature

Description: This course foregrounds writings that focus on the relationship of human beings to the rest of the natural world. We will study a range of texts in the genres of fiction, creative non-fiction, film, graphic novel, essay, video games and poetry that examine this relationship between humans, other animals, and the natural world. Our texts include Jonathan Swift's “A Modest Proposal” (1729), Jeff VanderMeer’s The Strange Bird (2017), Michael Pollan's The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals (2006), Vannak Anan Prum’s graphic novel The Dead Eye and the Deep Blue Sea (2018) and Wall-E (2008 film). We’ll read essays by naturalists such as Annie Dillard, Rick Bass, and David Quammen and attend to visual representations of the natural world. We’ll also study the relationship of indigenous peoples with the natural world as expressed by writers Linda Hogan, Robin Wall Kimmerer, and in the Inupiat video game Never Alone (2014). We will read and analyze the course texts, making connections with contemporary environmental issues and lived experience in the natural world; we’ll also attend to different approaches of eco-criticism.

Proposed Readings: Jonathan Swift's “A Modest Proposal” (1729), Jeff VanderMeer’s The Strange Bird (2017), Michael Pollan’s The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals (2006), Vannak Anan Prum’s The Dead Eye and the Deep Blue Sea (2018) and Wall-E (2008 film). We’ll read essays by naturalists such as Annie Dillard, Rick Bass, and David Quammen. We’ll also study the relationship of indigenous peoples with the natural world as expressed by writers Linda Hogan, Robin Wall Kimmerer, and in the video game Never Alone (2014).