Course Description: How has literature responded to what Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz refer to as the “shock of the Anthropocene”? If we have entered an historically unprecedented phase in human history wherein our species’ collective impact on planet Earth is analogous to what Michel Serres (and others) have described as a “geological” force (both in its scope and duration), how does this impact our inherited ideas regarding humanism, technology, sustainability and the future of the arts? What representational challenges does “dreaming” the Anthropocene pose for literature, and why are apocalyptic (rather than adaptive) visions of our ecological future so common? This course will examine contemporary literary responses to material and political dislocations associated with the Anthropocene, including global climate change, loss of biodiversity, exponential human population growth, the “Great Acceleration” of technology (including bio- and geo-engineering) and the hegemony of capitalist petromodernity.

We’ll be looking at definitions of the “Anthropocene” by theorists such as Bonneuil and Fressoz, Purdy, Moore, Clark, Kolbert, Tsing and others. We’ll also examine debates about when to locate the Anthropocene’s historical origins and objections to Anthropocene theory from critics who charge that it is universalist, technocratic and/or arrogantly reinforces (rather than challenges) anthropocentric subjectivity. A final overarching goal of the course will be to explore how literary responses to the Anthropocene overlap with but also differ significantly from earlier attempts to respond to our “postmodern” ecological condition.

Graded Work Please note: Papers must be hard copies – I do not accept e-mailed essays (if you are unable to attend class or your paper is late, please put hard copy of essay in my departmental mailbox in LA 133).

1) Papers: two essays will be due this semester, both of which include a research component. Please see assignments.

2) Group Presentation: Working with a peer, you will be leading our discussion on a text during one class. Please see separate assignment sheet which details requirements for presentations.

3) Class Participation and Attendance: Regular attendance (no more than 1 absence) and active participation are vital to your success in this course. “Active Participation” includes: a) coming to class having carefully read and annotated assigned texts b) sharing your thoughts about the readings during our class discussions c) asking focused
questions concerning the readings, indicating prior preparation d) responding to questions posed by your peers and/or instructor e) actively participating in group work f) coming to office hours to discuss issues we don’t have time to cover in class.

Course Policies

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism is a violation of trust. According to the Provost, “Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at: http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321.” Violators of the Student Conduct Code will receive an “F” for the essay and possibly for the course.

Accommodation: The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with DSS, please contact DSS in Lommasson 154. I will work with you and DSS to provide an appropriate accommodation.

GRADED WORK POINT TOTALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essays (including prospectus)</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation and Attendance</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**TOTAL:</td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
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WEEKLY SCHEDULE (subject to changes). M = Readings Available on Moodle

UNIT ONE: LATE CAPITALISM AND THE “END OF NATURE”

WEEK ONE: First Wave Ecocriticism and Romantic Ecology

Mon. 1/22: Introductory lecture; Glotfelty, Introduction to *The Ecocriticism Reader*
Wed. 1/24: Natural Sublime: Bate, “Towards Green Romanticism”; Hitt, “Towards an Ecological Sublime” (M)
Fri. 1/26: Shelley, “Mont Blanc” (M); Jeffers poems (M)

WEEK TWO: Postmodern Ecology and the Technological Sublime

Mon. 1/29: McKibben, from *The End of Nature* (M)
Fri. 2/2: Technological Sublime: Nye, “The Sublime Lift-Off at Cape Kennedy” (M)

WEEK THREE: *White Noise* and Postnaturalism

Mon. 2/5: *White Noise* Part I; Heise, from *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet* (M)
Wed. 2/7: *White Noise* Part II; Rozelle, from *Ecosublime* (M)
Fri. 2/9: *White Noise* Part III; Deitering, “The Postnatural Novel”

UNIT TWO: WELCOME TO THE ANTHROPOCENE – HUMANITY AS A GEO-HISTORICAL FORCE

WEEK FOUR: Defining the Anthropocene

Mon. 2/12: Lecture on the Anthropocene; Bonneuil/Fressoz from *The Shock of the Anthropocene* (M)
Wed. 2/14: Moore, from *Capitalism in the Web of Life* (M)
Fri. 2/16: Clark, *Ecocriticism on the Edge*: Chapters 1,4 and 7

**WEEK FIVE:** The Capitalocene and Global Pollution

Mon. 2/19 – NO CLASS (PRESIDENT’S DAY)
Wed. 2/21: Hohn, “Moby Duck” (M)
Fri. 2/23: Coleridge, *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (M); Hayes, *Rime of the Modern Mariner*

**WEEK SIX:** Climate Change Fiction (Cli-Fi)

Mon. 2/26: Lecture on Climate Change Fiction; Kingsolver, *Flight Behavior*
Wed. 2/28: Kingsolver, *Flight Behavior*
Fri. 3/2: Clark, *Ecocriticism on the Edge* – Chapter Nine – **Presentation #1**

**WEEK SEVEN:** Climate Change Fiction, continued

Mon. 3/5: Bacigalupi, *The Water Knife*
Wed. 3/7: Bacigalupi, *The Water Knife*
Fri. 3/9: Bacigalupi, *The Water Knife* + Purdy, from *After Nature* (M) -- ESSAY #1 DUE

**WEEK EIGHT:** Modernism and The Ecological Uncanny

Mon. 3/12: *Heart of Darkness*
Wed. 3/14: *Heart of Darkness*
Fri. 3/16: *Heart of Darkness*

**WEEK NINE:** The Anthropocene and the Ecological Uncanny

Mon. 3/19: *Annihilation*
Wed. 3/21: *Annihilation*; Carroll, “The Terror and the Terroir..” (M) – **Presentation #2**
Fri. 3/23: *Annihilation*

**WEEK TEN:** 3/26-3/30 -- NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK

**UNIT THREE: VISIONS OF EXTINCTION AND SURVIVAL**

**WEEK ELEVEN:** Deep Time

Mon. 4/2: Davies, from *The Birth of the Anthropocene*
Wed. 4/4: McKay, poems from *Slip/Strike* and *Paradoxides*; “Ediacaran and Anthropocene” (M)
Fri. 4/6: Poems, continued

**WEEK TWELVE:** Extinction and Eco-Melancholy

Mon. 4/9: Kolbert, from *The Sixth Extinction* (M)
Wed. 4/11: Mortimer-Sandilands, “Melancholy Natures, Queer Ecologies” (M) – **Presentation #3**
Fri. 4/13: Spahr, “Gentle Now” and other texts (M)

**WEEK THIRTEEN:** Post-naturalism and Eco-Apocalypse

Mon. 4/16: Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*
Wed. 4/18: *Oryx and Crake*
Fri. 4/20: *Oryx and Crake*; Rozelle, “Liminal Ecologies …” (M); - **Presentation #4**
WEEK FOURTEEN: Salvage Ecology

Mon. 4/23: Meeker, “The Comic Mode”
Wed. 4/25: Tsing, from *The Mushroom at the End of the World* (M)
Fri. 4/27: TBA

WEEK FIFTEEN: Can humanism survive the Anthropocene?

Mon. 4/30: Lunde, *The History of Bees*
Wed. 5/2: *The History of Bees*
Fri. 5/4: *The History of Bees* -- ESSAY #2 DUE