

**Carleton University - Winter 2026
EACH 4000A Seminar**

**World Endings & World ReBuilding: Decolonial Environmental & Climate
Humanities***

Prerequisite: EACH 2000 and third year standing.

Professor Emeritus, Brenda Vellino**
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***With gratitude to the Knowledge Keepers and Land and Water Protectors--Past, Present, and Future--on these traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin Anishnaabe Peoples where we gather to learn.**

****Course Outline and Course Materials Copyrighted to Professor**

Course Description: This course invites students who are curious about learning from decolonial, environmental, multi-species, and climate change humanities perspectives. Across the term, students will investigate decolonial approaches to the anthropocene/climate crisis; multi-species studies adjacent to Indigenous kinship approaches; and Energy Humanities approaches adjacent to Indigenous land and water protection stances in response to settler colonial extraction. Across the semester, we will engage different creative forms and genres of environmental, climate, and Indigenous representation—poetry, stop motion animation, oral storywork, speculative fiction, non-fiction essays, and a play. These will invite enquiry into what modes and forms best invite meaningful engagement with urgent environmental and climate justice questions for our times. In addition to readings & viewings, we will have **opportunities for experiential learning**, including a **class trip to an eco-thriller play, *Cicadas*, on April 7th at the National Arts Centre (student tickets, \$15)**. Several brainstorming and maker's workshops will be built into class-time to allow collaborative, small group development of research-informed, community-engaged projects focused on environmental, climate, and relational responsibility questions. The **maker's workshops** will include two hands-on art building sessions in the Book Arts Lab in the library.

Climate Statement: We recognize that climate change disruptions impact peoples and multi-species worlds unevenly across many planetary regions, territories, and communities due to racialized capitalism and extractive colonialism. In this class, we will of necessity consider these impacts as part of the larger project of sharing and creating knowledge. Committed to learning through conversation, reading, inquiry, and reflection, we will undertake to use these methods to grapple together with the physical, emotional, economic, and social implications of unfolding environmental destabilization and disruption. As well, we will attend to alternative proposals for world building from decolonial, land-based Indigenous perspectives.

Three Required Books for Purchase: Available at Black Squirrel Books on Bank St.

- Rita Wong and Cindy Mochizuki. Perpetual (2015). **\$18.95**
- Cherie Dimaline (Metis/Anishinabe). *Marrow Thieves*. **\$19.95**
- Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg). *A Short History of the Blockade: Giant Beavers, Diplomacy, and Nishnaabewin* (U of Alberta, 2021). **\$12.99**

Additional Readings and Viewings:

Assignments:

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| Attendance/Participation: | 10% |
| Best 3 of 4 Reading Responses (In-class writing) | 30% |
| Experiential Learning Response to NAC play (April 7) | 10% |
| Collaboratory Co-Authored Proposal | 10% |
| EACH Collaboratory Project: (April 3) | 30% |
| Self-Contribution/Group Assessment (April 3) | 5% |

To pass this course, you must complete all assignments and submit them on time (with exceptions for illness). A student missing 50% (6) or more classes will not be able to pass the course (unless there are extenuating health or other circumstances discussed with the professor in advance).

****Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.**

Course Schedule

Week One: World Endings and World Building in the Environmental Humanities

- **Readings:** Robyn Maynard's "Letter to Leanne Simpson," *Rehearsals for Living*, p. 7-28. **E-book in Carleton library (this allows only 1 user at a time, so read it and sign out to allow for the next user).**
- **On Environmental Humanities:** Deborah Bird Rose et al. "Thinking Through the Environment, Unsettling the Humanities." *Environmental Humanities*, 2012: pp. 1-5. **See PDF.**
- **On Land Acknowledgements:** Lynn Gehl (Algonquin, Pikwakanagan FN). "Is Acknowledging Indigenous Territory Enough?" *Policy Options*, 2017: <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/fr/magazines/july-2017/is-acknowledging-indigenous-territory-enough/>
- Rita Wong. "Moving From Land Acknowledgements to Healing the Land." *Rabble.ca*: <https://rabble.ca/environment/moving-from-land-acknowledgements-to-healing-the-land-on-earth-day/>
- **On Remapping & Re-Orientation:**

- “Coming Home to Indigenous Place Names Map”: See attached PDF in Brightspace.

Week Two: Multi-species Studies, Kin Studies

⇒ In-Class Writing Reading Response One

- **Creative Text for Purchase:** Rita Wong & Cindy Mochizuki. *Perpetual* (a graphic novel poem). **Please bring to class!**
- **Multispecies Studies:** Thom Van Dooren et al. “Multispecies Studies: Cultivating Arts of Attentiveness.” *Environmental Humanities* 8.1 (2016): **Read only pages 1-12.** https://epub.ub.uni-muenchen.de/37872/1/10.1215_22011919-3527695.pdf
- **Kin Studies:** Kyle Whyte (Potawatomi): “The Ethics of Kinship.” *Kinship: Belonging in a World of Relations*, Vol. 5, 2021. **ARES**
- Robin Wall Kimmerer (Potawatomi). “Nature Needs a New Pronoun,” *Yes! Magazine*, 2015: <https://www.yesmagazine.org/issue/together-earth/2015/03/30/alternative-grammar-a-new-language-of-kinship>

Week Three: Tree Studies as Kin Studies

- **Part I: Short winter tree walk along the Pasappedjiwanong River. Meet up with prof. by the Nesbit Biology Building entrance to the River pathway, heading towards Brewer Park.**

Part II: Discussion (classroom)

- **View Stop Motion Animation:** Amanda Strong (Métis), Dir. with Leanne Simpson (Michi Saagiig/Anishinaabeg) : “Biidaaban” (The Dawn Comes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWjnYKyUB8>
- **Short Readings:** Mary Sisiup Geniusz (Anishinaabe). “The Primacy of Plants,” and “My Grandmother Cedar: Nookomis-gizhik.” *Plants Have so Much to Give Us, All We Have to Do is Ask: Anishinaabe Botanical Teachings*. Pp. 14-17, 37-41. **Carl. Library on-line access to E-book.**
- **Plant Intelligence: Robin Wall Kimmerer (Potawatomi):** “Hearing the Language of Trees,” *Yes! magazine*, Oct. 2021: <https://www.yesmagazine.org/environment/2021/10/29/hearing-the-language-of-trees>

Week Four: Decolonizing the Anthropocene

⇒ In-Class Writing Reading Response Two

- **Screen Stop Motion Animation**, Amanda Strong, Dir. with Richard Van Camp, “Inkwo: For When the Starving Return” (2024):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGuM4eK0-WQ>
- Kyle Powys Whyte (Anishinaabe). “Climate Change: An unprecedentedly Old Catastrophe.” *Grafting*, 2018:
<https://www.blackwoodgallery.ca/publications/sduk/grafting/climate-change-an-unprecedentedly-old-catastrophe>
- Heather Davis and Zoe Todd (Métis), “Decolonizing the Anthropocene.” *Grafting*, 2018:
<https://www.blackwoodgallery.ca/publications/sduk/grafting/decolonizing-the-anthropocene>

Week Five: Building an Environmental & Climate Humanities Collaboratory

Part I: Julia Stirling (Just Food, Food Futures Youth Council): “Re-Imagining What is Possible for Climate Action Workshop”

Part II: Collaboratory Discussion & Brainstorming On Projects and Methods:

- Adrienne Maree Brown. “What is Emergent Strategy?” *All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis*. (2020): pp. 37-38. **See PDF on Brightspace.**
- Max Liboiron (Métis), on research as exchange, “Exchanging,” in *Transmissions: Critical Tactics for Making and Communicating Research*, 2020, pp. 1-19. **See PDF on Brightspace.**
- Gabriella Velasco, Caroline Faria, and Jayme Walenta, “Imagining Environmental Justice: Zine Making as Creative Feminist Geographic Method,” *GeoHumanities*, 2020, pp. 347-370. **Read just first two pages pp. 347-349** for insight into how zines can be a creative form of research and public facing art. **See PDF in Brightspace.**
- **Listen to Ayana Johnson, “How to Find Joy in Climate Action”:**
https://www.ted.com/talks/ayana_elizabeth_johnson_how_to_find_joy_in_climate_action?campaign_id=54&emc=edit_clim_20231121&instance_id=108301&language=en&nl=climate-forward®i_id=110504410&segment_id=150660&te=1&user_id=772052277e770496d1074209d4e37880

Week Six: Meet in the Book Arts Lab for maker’s workshop (Carleton library)

Winter Break Week:

Week Seven: World Endings and World Building: The Marrow Thieves

****Content Advisory: Depictions of sexual and other violence. Take breaks and make sure to practice self-care**

⇒ **In Class Writing Response Three**

- **Book to Purchase:** Cherie Dimaline. *The Marrow Thieves*.** (This is the Big Book for the course! Plan your reading!)

=> **Collaboratory Project(s) Proposal with Group Members Due, 9 p.m. on Brightspace.**

Week Eight/March 6: Collaboratory Maker's Meeting in Groups: Meet in Book Arts Lab

Week Nine: Energy Humanities, Windigo Infrastructure, Bitumen Kinship

- Energy Humanities website: <https://www.energyhumanities.ca/>
- Winona LaDuke and Deborah Cowen. "Beyond Windigo Infrastructure." *The South Atlantic Quarterly* (April 2020): 243-268. **PDF on Brightspace.**
- **Creative Text:** Warren Cariou (Métis), "Tar Hands: A Messy Manifesto." *Imaginations*, 2012: <http://imagination.glendon.yorku.ca/?p=3646>
- Warren Cariou, "Petrography and Bitumen Poetics." *Canadian Literature*, 251, Dec. 2022. PDF on Brightspace.

Week 10: World Building through Collective Action

⇒ **In Class Writing Response Four**

⇒ **Book to purchase & Bring to Class:** Leanne Simpson: *Short History of the Blockade*.

Week 11: Collaboratory Maker's Meetings

- ⇒ **Final Formatting and Editing Meeting: Meet Groups in Classroom**
- ⇒ **Final Projects Due: April 3rd in Class (or TBD)**

Week 12: Presentation of Final Projects to Class with invitation to public and/or Final Project Showcase for the public: Date TBD with Class

April 7th: Experiential Learning Event: Attend the Eco-Thriller Play, *Cicadas*, with Class at the National Arts Centre