

ENST 4000 – SEMINAR IN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES  
THE POLITICS OF THE ANTHROPOCENE



“Airshow” by Fred Herzog, 1968 © Equinox Gallery, Vancouver.

“But where the danger is, also grows the saving power.”- Friedrich Hölderlin, 1803

“The future is unwritten.” – Joe Strummer, 2007

**Instructor:** Dr. David Hugill, Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, B448 Loeb Building,  
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**Teaching Assistant:** Emmelie Paquette, [EmmeliePaquette@cmail.carleton.ca](mailto:EmmeliePaquette@cmail.carleton.ca)

**Class Meetings:** Fridays, 8:35-11:25AM, Patterson Hall 111

**Office Hours:** By appointment.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

What are the political, social, ethical and cultural implications of living in an age where human activity has become the dominant force shaping the planet's climate and environments? Our aim this semester is to think critically about this question as we consider how societal institutions respond to environmental concerns, how various stakeholders understand environmental questions, and how environmental priorities are implemented in social, political and economic decision-making. To achieve this objective, we will take a deep analytical dive into the meaning and politics of "the Anthropocene."

ENST 4000 is an advanced seminar designed to give you an opportunity to build upon and apply the analytical skills and disciplinary expertise that you have acquired throughout the course of your university career.

You should expect the following from our work this semester:

- **Active Discussion:** This class is designed to be a discussion-based seminar. It is critical that you do the readings in advance and come to class prepared to discuss their contents. The success of this course hinges on active in-class engagement. The significant weight given to participation (25%) as a portion of the final grade is a reflection of this fact.
- **Challenging material:** The weekly readings (generally about 50-75 pages in length) are often challenging. Where it is possible to do so, you should start reading at least a few days in advance of the seminar. Ideally, all readings should be read twice.
- **Timely feedback:** I will do my best to return all assignments within two weeks of submission.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To develop an in depth understanding of the contested status of the idea of the Anthropocene
- To engage with cutting edge /contemporary research in the field of Environmental Studies
- To consider the political implications of human-driven environmental and climatic changes

## REQUIRED TEXTS

Required texts are available online (via the Ares portal on our class cuLearn page) and/or at the MacOdrum Library reserve desk. I strongly recommend purchasing physical copies of two course texts, both of which are available under our course number (ENST 4000) at Haven Books (43 Seneca Street), phone: 613-730-9888, email: [havenbooks@cuasaonline.ca](mailto:havenbooks@cuasaonline.ca)

They are:

1. Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin (2018), *The Human Planet: How We Created the Anthropocene* (Pelican Books, cheap version, **OR** Yale University Press, beautiful version).
2. Cormac McCarthy (2007), *The Road*, (Vintage).

Both books are also available for purchase online.

## COURSE CALENDAR

UNIT 1: What is the Anthropocene?	
<b>Week 1:</b> January 11, 2019	
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Introductory discussion of course policies</li> </ul> <p>Required Readings (distributed in class, no advance reading required):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer (2000), “The ‘Anthropocene’” in <i>The International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP: A Study of Global Change of the International Council for Science (ICSU) 41</i>, pp. 17-18.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 2:</b> January 18, 2019 ** <i>Intellectual biography to <a href="mailto:david.hugill@carleton.ca">david.hugill@carleton.ca</a> by noon on Wednesday January 16</i> ** <i>Sample handout provided by instructor</i>	
Defining the Anthropocene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin (2018), “The Meaning of the Anthropocene” in <i>The Human Planet</i>, pp. 1-17</li> <li>○ Jamie Lorimer (2017), “The Anthro-Scene: A Guide for the Perplexed,” <i>Social Studies of Science</i> 47(1), pp. 117-142.</li> <li>○ Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin (2018), “Defining the Anthropocene” in <i>The Human Planet</i>, pp. 295-327.</li> </ul>
Workshop 1	Asking Good Discussion Questions and Preparing an Effective Handout
<b>Week 3:</b> January 25, 2019 <i>Meet at National Gallery of Canada group entrance at 9:30 AM (tour with Andrea Kunard starts at 10:00 AM sharp)</i>	
Gallery Visit	<p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Andrea Kunard, “The Art Museum and the Anthropocene,” in <i>Anthropocene: Burtynsky, Baichwal, De Pencier</i> (ppp. 221-229)</li> </ul>
<b>Week 4:</b> February 1st, 2019 ** <i>Art Object Reflection due on cullLearn by class time**</i>	
Special Session: Abbreviated work period	Brief class meeting followed by work period with your handout group; no required readings
<b>Week 5:</b> February 8, 2019 ** <i>Group 1 Handout</i>	
History of the Anthropocene 1	<p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin (2018), “Globalization 1.0, “The Modern World” in <i>The Human Planet</i>, pp. 149-187.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz (2017), “Polemocene: Resisting the Deterioration of the Earth since 1750,” pp. 253-287.</li> </ul>
Workshop 2	Purging Clichés from Written Work
<b>Week 6:</b> February 15, 2019 **Group 2 Handout	
History of the Anthropocene 2	Required Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin (2018), “Globalization 2.0, The Great Acceleration” in <i>The Human Planet</i>, pp. 227-265.</li> <li>○ Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz (2017), “Thermocene: A Political History of CO<sub>2</sub>,” in <i>The Shock of the Anthropocene</i>, pp. 99-121.</li> <li>○ Jason W. Moore (2016), “The Rise of Cheap Nature,” in <i>Anthropocene or Capitalocene: Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism</i>, pp. 78-116</li> </ul>
<b>Reading Break - February 18-22</b>	
<b>Week 7:</b> March 1, 2019 **Group 3 Handout	
The Limits of the Anthropocene I	Required Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Eileen Crist, “On the Poverty of our Nomenclature,” in <i>Anthropocene or Capitalocene: Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism</i>, pp. 14-33.</li> <li>○ Donna J. Haraway, “Staying with the Trouble: Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chtulucene,” in <i>Anthropocene or Capitalocene: Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism</i>, pp. 34-76.</li> </ul>
Workshop 3	Writing an Effective Encyclopedia Entry
<b>Week 8:</b> March 8, 2019 **Special guest Dr. Michael Simpson will make a digital appearance in the final hour of class** **Group 4 Handout	
The Limits of the Anthropocene 2	Required Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz (2017), “Clio, the Earth and the Anthropologists,” in <i>The Shock of the Anthropocene</i>, pp. 47-64.</li> <li>○ Michael Simpson (2018), “The Anthropocene as Colonial Discourse,” <i>Environment and Planning D: Society and Space</i>, 1-19.</li> </ul>
Workshop 4	TBD
<b>UNIT 2: Interlude</b>	
<b>Week 9:</b> March 15, 2019	

Down a Dark Road (discussion and film screening)	<p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cormac McCarthy (2007), <i>The Road</i> (2007) {full text}</li> </ul> <p>Film</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>The Road</i> (2009); screened in class.</li> </ul>
<b>UNIT 3: The Politics of the Anthropocene</b>	
<p><b>Week 10:</b> March 22, 2019  **Group 5 Handout</p>	
What is to be Done? Degrowth vs. Green New Deal vs. Marshall Plan 2.0	<p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Robert Pollin (2018), “Degrowth vs. a Green New Deal,” <i>New Left Review</i> 112 (July/August), pp. 5-25.</li> <li>○ Max Ajl (2018), “Degrowth Considered,” <i>The Brooklyn Rail</i>, September 4<sup>th</sup>, available online at <a href="https://tinyurl.com/yaonqpsj">https://tinyurl.com/yaonqpsj</a></li> <li>○ Kate Arnoff with Kevin Anderson (2017), “Could a Marshall Plan for the Planet Tackle the Climate Crisis?,” <i>The Nation</i>, November 16, available online at <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y8lmwovt">https://tinyurl.com/y8lmwovt</a></li> </ul>
Workshop 5	TBD
<p><b>Week 11:</b> March 29, 2019  **Group 6 Handout</p>	
Migration and Displacement in the Anthropocene	<p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Todd Miller (2017), “The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Border,” in <i>Storming the Wall: Climate Change, Migration, and Homeland Security</i>, pp. 71-106.</li> <li>○ Betsy Hartmann (2010), “Rethinking Climate Refugees and Climate Conflict: Rhetoric, Reality and the Politics of Policy Discourse,” <i>Journal of International Development</i> 22 (2), pp. 233-246.</li> </ul>
Workshop 6	TBD
<p><b>Week 12:</b> April 5, 2019  **Encyclopedia Entries due on cuLearn by class time</p>	
Indigenizing the Anthropocene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Zoe Todd (2015), “Indigenizing the Anthropocene,” in <i>Art in the Anthropocene</i>, pp. 241-255, available online at <a href="https://bit.ly/1Rgoili">https://bit.ly/1Rgoili</a></li> <li>○ Leanne Simpson (2017), “Land as Pedagogy,” in <i>As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance</i>, pp. 145-174</li> </ul>

## EVALUATION

Assignment	Weight	Short Description
Participation	25%	Based on attendance, evidence of engagement with assigned readings, and active classroom participation.
Intellectual Biography	2.5%	A short introductory description of who you are and how you ended up here; must be emailed to <a href="mailto:david.hugill@carleton.ca">david.hugill@carleton.ca</a> by noon on Wednesday January 16. <b>No late assignments will be accepted.</b>
Art Object Assignment	12.5%	Short reflection (1000 words) on one work of art in the National Gallery's "Anthropocene" exhibit; must be uploaded to cuLearn by class time on February 1 <sup>st</sup> .
Group Handout /Discussion Leadership	10%	Handout based on weekly readings (maximum 1 page); must be uploaded to cuLearn a minimum of 24 hours before class on assigned day; discussion leadership on assigned day.
Argument Summaries (x3)	15%	Three concise (100 words max, per reading) argument summaries; must be submitted BEFORE class on relevant day. <b>No late assignments will be accepted.</b>  Eligible sessions: Week 2 (January 18), Week 5 (February 8), Week 6 (February 15), Week 7 (March 1), Week 8 (March 8), Week 10 (March 22), Week 11 (March 29), Week 12 (April 5).
Reflection Paper	10%	A short reflection paper (1500 words) on Cormac McCarthy's <i>The Road</i> .
Encyclopedia Entry	25%	A comprehensive encyclopedia-style entry on the word "Anthropocene" (1800-2500 words); due by class time

Please note:

- Late assignments will be penalized by 3% per calendar day (to a maximum of 25% total); no assignments will be accepted after two weeks beyond the original deadline (unless an alternative arrangement has been made)
- All assignments must follow the style guidelines outlined in the Chicago Manual of Style (16<sup>th</sup> edition or later); citations can be formatted in either the “notes and bibliography” or “author-date” style, so long as one of these options is used consistently throughout the document; there is a quick Chicago-style citation guide available here: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)
- All assignments will be assessed on the overall quality of presentation, including citation format, spelling, grammar, coherence of argument, etc.
- 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.

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Carleton University demands academic integrity from all its members. The Academic Integrity Policy (available at <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity>) governs the academic behaviour of students. Academic Integrity is defined as:

***“A commitment even in the face of adversity to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.” – Centre for Academic Integrity (1999)***

Academic dishonesty, in whatever form, is destructive to the values of the university, and risks harming the university’s reputation as place of learning and innovation. Furthermore, it is unfair and discouraging to those students who pursue their studies honestly.

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in “substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.”

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course.

## ACADEMIC ACCOMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

### **Pregnancy obligation**

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

### **Religious obligation**

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

### **Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. [carleton.ca/pmc](https://carleton.ca/pmc)

### **Survivors of Sexual Violence**

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: [carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support](https://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support)

### **Accommodation for Student Activities**

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

<https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: [students.carleton.ca/course-outline](https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline)