

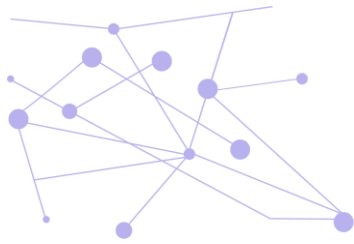


UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK ECO-HUMANITIES
RESEARCH GROUP

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES AND PROGRAMME OF EVENTS
SPRING 2024

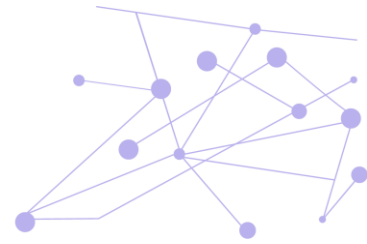


Organised with the support of the UCC Environmental Research Institute and the Future Humanities Institute



UCC FUTURE Future Humanities

Securing **Our Future** Through
Research Excellence



ECO-HUMANITIES RESEARCH GROUP PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES 2023-24

All lectures take place online (via Zoom). Please register through Eventbrite to receive the Zoom meeting link. These lectures are open to all, and you are warmly invited to attend.

For further details about the lectures listed below, including abstracts, speaker biographical information and Eventbrite registration links for the lectures, please see pages 3-7 below.

Thursday 25th January 2024: 4.00-5.15pm (GMT)

Jesse Peterson (University College Cork)

Ecologizing Death through an Ecohumanities Approach

Thursday 8th February 2024: 4.00-5.15pm (GMT)

Bron Taylor (Rachel Carson Centre for Environment and Society)

Exhibitionism: Animism, Kinship & Conservation at Science & Art Museums around the World

Thursday 2nd May 2024: 4.00-5.15pm (IST/DST/BST)

Dawn Collins (University of Wales Trinity St. David)

Tibetan Ritual Traditions and Planetary Healing

Thursday 6th June 2024: 4.00-5.15pm (IST/DST/BST)

Caitriona Ni Dhuill (University of Salzburg), Hanna Bingel-Jones (University College Cork) and Tina-Karen Pusse (University of Galway)

Rewilding philologies, rewilding pedagogies: Practising the languages, literatures and cultures disciplines with ecological awareness

SPRING 2024 PUBLIC LECTURES

Thursday 25th January 2024: 4.00-5.15pm (GMT)

Jesse Peterson (University College Cork)

Ecologizing Death through an Ecohumanities Approach

Register here: [Register here](#)

Scholarship on death typically focuses on the death of humans, overlooking the wider socio-ecological factors involved in processes around death. However, situating death within an ecohumanities approach carries potential to expand and enrich our understanding of nature as a matter of ‘deathly concern.’ In this lecture, Peterson will present on ecohumanities and death, highlighting emerging themes and contributions from the newly published (9 Jan. 2024) volume, *Death’s Social and Material Meaning Beyond the Human*, edited by Jesse D. Peterson (UCC), Natashe Lemos Dekker (UL), and Philip R. Olson (VT). Published as part of the Death and Culture Series by Bristol University Press, this volume explores death beyond the human to reveal complex interconnections among human and more than human creatures, entities, and environments. Using examples from this publication—such as the death of waterbodies (Peterson, 2024), the ‘ecological afterlives’ (Olson, 2024; Gould et al., 2024; Holleran, 2024) of the human dead, or the agency of parasitic and microbial lives (Zanzu, 2024; Hoerst, 2024; Yopez & Johnson, 2024)—Peterson will discuss and reflect on the social, cultural and political importance of nonhuman death, the relational materiality of the human corpse, and concerns over ‘ontological security’ (Giddens, 1984) offered by novel forms of care and labour.

Dr Jesse D. Peterson (he/him) works as a Lecturer with the Radical Humanities Laboratory and Department of Geography at University College Cork. He researches societal relationships to ecological challenges using transdisciplinary methods, having focused on issues related to oceans and biodiversity. His research addresses topics such as the production of ocean health and pollution, more-than-human relationships, socio-ecological death, citizen science, biodiversity data, and innovation in research methods, with publications in peer-reviewed journals, edited collections, literary magazines, and museum exhibits, such as *Geohumanities*, *The Digital Environmental Humanities Handbook*, *Green Letters*, *Minerva*, *saltfront* and more.

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Thursday 8th February 2024: 4.00-5.15pm (GMT)

Bron Taylor (Rachel Carson Centre for Environment and Society)

Exhibitionism:

Animism, Kinship & Conservation at Science & Art Museums around the World

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/eco-humanities-research-group-public-lecture-from-bron-taylor-tickets-818214982037?aff=oddtcreator>

In recent decades scholars from diverse disciplines in the Arts and Sciences have been advancing animistic spiritualities, kinship feelings toward non-human organisms, and eco-organicist/Gaian worldviews, in order to promote proenvironmental attitudes and behaviors. Providing evidence from Europe, Africa, and the Americas, I provide photographs and video excerpts from such venues to argue that curators at many of the world's museums, while sometimes influenced by such scholars, have become influential promoters of such 'dark green' nature spiritualities, values, and behaviors. By so doing they provide paths to spirituality, meaning, and purpose that are especially relevant for those who have left behind the world's still predominant religions. These venues offer religious forms that echo some longstanding religious and mystical perceptions while enriching and reinforcing them with scientific understandings. These spaces also function as shrines and pilgrimage sites for whose sharing deep feelings of belonging and connection to nature.

Bron Taylor is an interdisciplinary environmental studies scholar whose research and writing explores, through the lenses of the sciences and humanities, the complex relationships religion, ecology, ethics, and the quest for sustainability. His books include *Dark Green Religion: Nature Spirituality and the Planetary Future* (2010), *Avatar and Nature Spirituality* (2013), and *Ecological Resistance Movements* (1995). He is also editor of the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature* (2005) and the *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*. Taylor is Professor of Religion and Nature at the University of Florida and a Fellow of the Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society in Munich, Germany. In 2017 he was recognized with a Lifetime Achievement award by the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture. See also www.brontaylor.com and at Twitter/X @BronTaylor

Thursday 2nd May 2024: 4.00-5.15pm (IST/DST/BST)

Dawn Collins (University of Wales Trinity St. David)

Tibetan Ritual Traditions and Planetary Healing

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/eco-humanities-research-group-public-lecture-from-dawn-collins-tickets-818318983107?aff=oddtcreator>

This lecture will explore the value that understandings and practices of Tibetan ritual healing traditions may have for planetary healing. It will focus on deity yoga practices, with a particular focus on those relating to the Indo-Tibetan deities Avalokiteśvara, Paṇṣavarī and Tārā. Some innovations and continuities between contemporary developments of these practices and their more ancient counterparts, rooted in ancient Tibetan religious traditions, will be examined through the lens of their use for healing. How these practices are embodied in waking life, dream, and death processes will be examined in relation to their intended effect beyond ordinary understandings of the individual to influence at planetary levels. In this regard, some ways in which they were employed by contemporary Tibetan Buddhist practitioners in response to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic will be discussed. The value of such traditional practices in answering the urgent global call for planetary healing will be explored.

Dawn Collins holds a PhD from Cardiff University focusing on Tibetan landscapes and ritual healing. She is a tutor on the MA Ecology and Spirituality and the MA Cultural Astronomy and Astrology at the Sophia Centre for Cosmology in Culture, the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. She is a Research Fellow of the Foro di Studi Avanzati Gaetano Massa (FSA), Rome, Italy (Gaetano Massa Research Institute for Advanced Study of the Humanities) and works as a freelance editor, most notably, on the editorial team of 84,000: Translating the Words of the Buddha. Her research is informed by her practice as a dance artist and as a practitioner of traditional massage therapies.

Thursday 6th June 2024: 4.00-5.15pm (Ireland Standard Time (IST/DST))

Caitriona Ni Dhuill (University of Salzburg), Hanna Bingel-Jones (University College Cork)
and Tina-Karen Pusse (University of Galway)

**Rewilding philologies, rewilding pedagogies:
Practising the languages, literatures and cultures disciplines with ecological awareness**

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/eco-humanities-research-group-public-lecture-june-2024-tickets-818347267707?aff=oddtcreator>

What sense does it make to speak of ‘rewilding’ disciplines that were never wild to begin with?

This paper explores the implications of ecological crisis for the philologies -- the classical and modern languages, literatures and cultures disciplines. We ask:

- What spaces can be found within the study of languages, literatures and cultures today to reflect on, resist and begin to remake disciplinary, professional and pedagogical practice in light of the multiple socio-ecological predicaments of our time?
- What distinctive perspectives do the philologies bring to the urgent task of undoing ecocidal cultural and political-economic commitments to infinite ‘growth’, runaway consumption and habitat destruction (including the destruction of human habitats through monocultural models of development)?
- How do the perspectives and resources of the philologies help to foster ecological awareness and eco-centric orientation in students and scholars alike?

In their current professionalised form, the philologies, like most academic disciplines, can be understood as products of the industrial age, enmeshed with fossil-fuel culture across all their modes of production, dissemination and practice (including the production of the subjectivities of their practitioners). The paper envisions the university as an unrealised site of deep-reaching societal and personal transformation towards more liveable relationships with human and non-human others within the damaged, increasingly fragile web of life, and asks what the contribution of the philologies can be to such transformation. While indebted to the by now prolific dialogue between ecocriticism, the environmental humanities and Anthropocene theory, the approaches explored in this paper seek to move beyond established paradigms of academic productivity to explore more ecologically reflexive -- perhaps ‘wilder’ -- modes of working, reading, thinking and teaching.

Caitriona Ní Dhúill is a Professor of Modern German Literature at the University of Salzburg. She studied German and Music at Trinity College Dublin, where she gained her PhD in 2005 with a dissertation on gender relations in modern utopian and dystopian writing. Her research interests are in modern German and European literature since 1870, literature and ecological consciousness, slowness as a mode of resistance, and screen-free practice in

the humanities. She helped to found the Centre for Culture and Ecology at Durham University in 2018 and the Eco-Humanities Research Group at UCC in 2021.

Hanna Bingel-Jones' research interest is in German literature from 19th century to the present, with a special focus on literary ecology and ecocriticism, narrative studies, GDR literature, and the relation between theology, religion and literature. She studied English and German in Giessen and Sheffield. She completed her PhD in Literary Studies at the *Graduate Center for the Study of Culture* at Giessen University, taking a narratological approach to representations of religious faith and transcendence in contemporary American prose fiction. She also taught internationally at the University of Volgograd (Russia), Belfast, Berlin and Leipzig, and is currently teaching literary studies and language at the UCC German Department.

Tina-Karen Pusse is Head of the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures at University of Galway, a member of the Academic Council, Board Member of the *German Studies in Ireland* Association, Co-Editor of the Periodical *Germanistik in Ireland*, Co-Chair of University of Galway's International Staff Network, alumna and evaluator of the *German National Merit Foundation*, and Secretary of the *Royal Irish Academy* committee *Language, Literature, Culture and Communication*. She studied German Literature and Philosophy at Albert-Ludwigs University Freiburg and Paris VIII (MA 2000), and was awarded her Dr phil from Cologne University in 2004. Before joining University of Galway in 2008, she was teaching German Literature and Media Theory at Cologne University. After publishing in the area of laughter theory, autofiction, gender studies and early 20th century poetry, she developed a specialism in Environmental Humanities, where she publishes and hosts conferences and postgraduate summer schools since 2011. Recent publications focus on the anthropocentrism/ecocentrism divide, representations of the ecological uncanny, prepping cultures, and on the metabolism of cities. With her current project: *Ecologies of Scale: Art, Economy, Community*, she is a research delegate of the ENLIGHT European University Alliance.