

AS.070.122 Climate Change and Everyday Life
Maryland 104
Monday 1.30-3.50
Instructors: Rochelle Tobias and Naveeda Khan

Contact Information

Rochelle Tobias
404 Gilman Hall
x 6-7512
rtobias@jhu.edu
Office hours: Tu 11-1:00
and by appointment

Naveeda Khan
409 Macaulay Hall
x 6-7274
nkhan5@jhu.edu
Office hours: Wed 2.15-3.30
and by appointment

Course Description

“[T]he last whale, like the last man, [will] smoke his pipe
and then himself evaporate in the final puff.”
—Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* (1851)

The UN has identified three broad areas to address the threat of climate change: mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. While the developed world has focused on the development of new technologies to reduce carbon emissions and thus to “mitigate” the effects of climate change, the developing world has been forced to “adapt” to changing climate conditions, which have affected the global south disproportionately. The prolonged drought in Syria is but one example of a crisis associated with climate change that has had significant geopolitical consequences. The potential for instability caused by climate change has led the UN to call for new forms of development that are more “resilient” to environmental stress, though it is unclear who would pay for such measures.

In this course we will examine the UN’s three-pronged approach to climate change with attention to issues such as geoengineering and the fate of the earth, carbon budgets and “green” financial instruments, environmental and economic justice, and biodiversity and the threat of extinction. Our inquiries, however, will not be limited to international climate policy and politics. We will also delve into the archives of films literature, political economy, philosophy, and anthropology to explore the resources these discourses make available for understanding some of the most pressing issues associated with climate change—issues such as habitation, adaptation, peril, uncertainty, and finally the planetary dimensions of human existence.

Course Requirements, Expected Outcomes, Grading Rubric

This course will meet once per week for two hours twenty minutes. Students must show up in class on time. They must have the weekly readings with them in hard copies as we will be reading texts closely. No technology will be allowed in class, unless specifically requested. Students are expected to do the readings assigned for the class and to actively demonstrate that they have done so through their

participation in discussions. Finally, they have to write three response papers of 5 double-spaced pages each on prompts provided by the instructors. Papers must be submitted over blackboard in .doc format. Course total will be out of 100 points with 25 points for class participation and 25 points for each of the papers for a total of 75 points. As this is a writing intensive course, students will be allowed to rewrite their first paper. The instructors retain the right in making the final course evaluation and providing grades.

Resources:

Students should take advantage of the Johns Hopkins Writing Center located at the Greenhouse Annex. You may make appointments at 410/516-4258 or email writingcenter@jhu.edu. For research purposes you should utilize the resources at Milton Eisenhower Library (MSEL) as much as possible. You may call 410/510-8335, email reference service, or pay the librarians a visit during library hours.

Note on plagiarism:

Any use of another person's ideas or words, taken directly or paraphrased, without citing the source is plagiarism. **This includes taking material from the Internet without citing the website.** Please speak to the instructor or refer to *The Chicago Manual on Style* if you have any questions on how to properly cite your sources.

Required Texts (In bookstore and on reserve in Eisenhower Library)

Spencer Weart, *The Discovery of Global Warming: Revised and Expanded Edition* (Harvard 2008)

Jonathan Lear, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation* (Harvard 2008)

Kōbō Abe, *The Woman in the Dunes* (Vintage 1991)

Required Articles or Book Sections (on e-reserve in Eisenhower Library and on Blackboard)

Michael Oppenheimer and Anne Petsonk, "Article 2 of the UNFCCC: Historical Origins, Recent Interpretations" in *Climatic Change* 73(3), 2005: 195-226

"Mitigation and Adaptation: Internal Tension"

Lisa F. Schipper "Conceptual History of Adaptation in the UNFCCC Process" in *RECIEL* 15(1), 2006: 82-92

Paris Agreement

<https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/109r01.pdf>

Tim Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy* (Verso 2013), Conclusion: No More Counting on Oil, 231-254

Peter Newell and Matthew Paterson, *Climate Capitalism*, Chapter 6 "Caps, Trades and Profits," 94-107

Mike Childs, "Privatising the Atmosphere: A Solution or a Dangerous Con?" in *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organization* 12(1/2), 2012: 12-18

David Keith, *A Case for Climate Engineering* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2013), ix-xviii, 45-72, 123-56

Clive Hamilton, "Geoengineering and the Politics of Science" *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 70(3), 2014: 17-26

Oliver Morton, *The Planet Remade: How Geoengineering Could Change the World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 100-23

Peter K. Haff, "The Far Future of Soil" in *The Soil Underfoot: Infinite Possibilities for a Finite Resource* ed. G. Jock Churchman and Edward R. Landa (Taylor and Francis Group, 2014), 61-72

Almuth Ernsting and Oliver Munnion with Rachel Smolker and Louise Somerville-Williams, *Last-Ditch Climate Option, or Wishful Thing: Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage. A Report by Biofuelwatch*, <http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/BECCS-report-web.pdf>, November 2015

Louis V. Verchot et. al. "Linking Adaptation and Mitigation through Agroforestry" in *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change* 12(5), 2007: 901-918

Joanna Cabello and Tamra Gilbertson, "A Colonial Mechanism to Enclose Lands: A Critical Review of Two REDD+ Focused Special Issues" in *ephemera* 12(1/2), 2012: 162-180

Clive Hamilton, *Earthmasters: The Dawn of the Age of Climate Engineering* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), Chapter 7

Franz Kafka, "The Burrow," in *The Complete Stories*, ed. Nahum N. Glatzer (New York: Schocken Books, 1971)

Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, tr. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 143-162

Lesley Head "Cultural Ecology: Adaptation-Retrofitting a Concept?" *Progress in Human Geography* 34(2), 2010: 234-242

Ben Orlove, "Human Adaptation to Climate Change: A Review of Three Historical Cases and Some General Perspectives" in *Environmental Science and Policy* 8(6), 2005: 589-600

Jeremy Walker and Melinda Cooper, "Genealogies of Resilience: From Systems Ecology to the Political Economy of Crisis Adaptation" in *Security Dialogue* 42(2):

143-160

UNEP Global Environmental Alert Service “Loss and Damage: When Adaptation is Not Enough”

http://na.unep.net/geas/getUNEPPageWithArticleIDScript.php?article_id=111

Jonathan Pickering and Christian Barry, “On the Concept of Climate Debt: Its Moral and Political Value” in *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 15(5), 2012: 667-685

Thomas Robert Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (Oxford World Classics 2008), Chapters 1, 2, 5, 18, 19

Paul J. Crutzen and Eugene F. Stoermer, “The ‘Anthropocene’” in Bill McKibben ed. *The Global Warming Reader* Penguin 2012: 69-75

Simon L. Lewis and Mark A. Maslin, “Defining the Anthropocene” in *Nature* 519, 2015: 171-80

Wes Jackson, “Agriculture—Tragedy or Problem with a Solution” in *New Roots for Agriculture*. New ed. Foreword by Wendell Berry. (1980; reprint, Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 61-65

Elizabeth Kolbert, “Welcome to the Anthropocene,” in *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (New York: Picador, 2016), 92-110

Friedrich Schelling, “The Unconditioned in Nature,” in *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature*, trans. with an Intro. and Notes by Keith R. Peterson (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004), 13-19

James Lovelock, *The Ages of Gaia: A Biography of Our Living Earth*, 2nd ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 15-41

Michael Pollan, *The Botany of Desire* (New York: Random House, 2001), 1-59

Required Films (On reserve in Eisenhower Library)

Jon Shenk’s *The Island President*

Benh Zeitlin’s *Beasts of the Southern Wild*

Kamar Ahmad Simon’s *Shunte Ki Pao* (Are You Listening?)

Jeff Orlowski’s *Chasing Ice*

Taggart Siegel and Jon Betz’s *Queen of the Sun: What Are the Bees Telling Us?*

Lars Van Trier’s *Melancholia*

Unit One: Climate Change, An Overview

February 1: Introduction

In Class Viewing of Jon Shenk's *The Island President*

February 8: Science in Action

Spencer Weart, *The Discovery of Global Warming: Revised and Expanded Edition* (Harvard 2008)

February 15: The UNFCCC Framework and Key Concepts

Prompts to be handed out in class

“Dangerous Anthropogenic Interference”

Michael Oppenheimer and Anne Petsonk, “Article 2 of the UNFCCC: Historical Origins, Recent Interpretations” in *Climatic Change* 73(3), 2005: 195-226

“Mitigation and Adaptation: Internal Tension”

Lisa F. Schipper, “Conceptual History of Adaptation in the UNFCCC Process” in *RECIEL* 15(1), 2006: 82-92

Paris Agreement

<https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/109r01.pdf>

Unit Two: Mitigation

February 22: Carbon Capital: Fossil Fuels, Cap and Trade

Tim Mitchell *Carbon Democracy* (Verso 2013), Conclusion: No More Counting on Oil, 231-254

Peter Newell and Matthew Paterson, *Climate Capitalism*, Chapter 6 “Caps, Trades and Profits,” 94-107

Mike Childs “Privatising the Atmosphere: A Solution or a Dangerous Con?” in *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organization* 12(1/2), 2012: 12-18

February 26: First Paper due (5 pages)

February 29: Geoengineering I – Solar Radiation Management

David Keith, *A Case for Climate Engineering* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2013), ix-xviii, 45-72, 123-56

Clive Hamilton, “Geoengineering and the Politics of Science” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 70(3), 2014: 17-26

Oliver Morton, *The Planet Remade: How Geoengineering Could Change the World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 100-23

Peter K. Haff, "The Far Future of Soil" in *The Soil Underfoot: Infinite Possibilities for a Finite Resource* ed. G. Jock Churchman and Edward R. Landa (Taylor and Francis Group, 2014), 61-72.

March 7: Geoengineering II – Carbon Capture and Storage and Reforestation

Almuth Ernsting and Oliver Munnion with Rachel Smolker and Louise Somerville-Williams, *Last-Ditch Climate Option, or Wishful Thing: Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage. A Report by Biofuelwatch*, <http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/BECCS-report-web.pdf>, November 2015

"Agroforestry as both Mitigation and Adaptation"

Louis V. Verchot et. al. "Linking Adaptation and Mitigation through Agroforestry" in *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change* 12(5), 2007: 901-918

"The Failure of REDD/REDD+"

Joanna Cabello and Tamra Gilbertson, "A Colonial Mechanism to Enclose Lands: A Critical Review of Two REDD+ Focused Special Issues" in *ephemera* 12(1/2), 2012: 162-180

Clive Hamilton, *Earthmasters: The Dawn of the Age of Climate Engineering* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), Chapter 7

March 14-20 Spring Break

March 21: Reflections on Geoengineering and the Figure of the Earth Prompts handed out in class

Franz Kafka, "The Burrow," in *The Complete Stories*, ed. Nahum N. Glatzer (New York: Schocken Books, 1971)

Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, tr. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 143-162.

March 22: Revision of First Paper due (5 pages)

Unit Three: Adaptation

March 28: Cultural Adaptation

Jonathan Lear, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation* (Harvard 2008)

In Class Viewing of Benh Zeitlin's *Beasts of the Southern Wild*

April 4: Adaptation to Climate Change

Lesley Head, "Cultural Ecology: Adaptation-Retrofitting a Concept?" *Progress in Human Geography* 34(2), 2010: 234-242

Ben Orlove , “Human Adaptation to Climate Change: A Review of Three Historical Cases and Some General Perspectives” in *Environmental Science and Policy* 8(6), 2005: 589-600

Jeremy Walker and Melinda Cooper, “Genealogies of Resilience: From Systems Ecology to the Political Economy of Crisis Adaptation” in *Security Dialogue* 42(2): 143-160

In Class Viewing of Kamar Ahmad Simon’s *Shunte Ki Pao* (Are You Listening?)

April 8: Second Paper due (5 pages)

April 11: Loss and Damage, A New Calculation?

UNEP Global Environmental Alert Service “Loss and Damage: When Adaptation is Not Enough”

http://na.unep.net/geas/getUNEPPageWithArticleIDScript.php?article_id=111

Jonathan Pickering and Christian Barry, “On the Concept of Climate Debt: Its Moral and Political Value” in *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 15(5), 2012: 667-685

Thomas Robert Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population* Chapters 1, 2, 5, 18, 19

Unit Four: Beyond Climate Change

April 18: The Anthropocene

Prompts handed out in class

Paul J. Crutzen and Eugene F. Stoermer, “The ‘Anthropocene’” in Bill McKibben ed. *The Global Warming Reader* Penguin 2012: 69-75

Simon L. Lewis and Mark A. Maslin, “Defining the Anthropocene” in *Nature* 519, 2015: 171-80

Wes Jackson, “Agriculture—Tragedy or Problem with a Solution” in *New Roots for Agriculture*. New ed. Foreword by Wendell Berry. (1980; reprint, Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 61-65.

Elizabeth Kolbert, “Welcome to the Anthropocene,” in *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (New York: Picador, 2016), 92-110.

In Class viewing of Jeff Orlowski’s *Chasing Ice*

April 25: Nature’s Agency

Friedrich Schelling, "The Unconditioned in Nature," in *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature*, trans. with an Intro. and Notes by Keith R. Peterson (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004), 13-19.

James Lovelock, *The Ages of Gaia: A Biography of Our Living Earth*, 2nd ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 15-41.

Michael Pollan, *The Botany of Desire* (New York: Random House, 2001), 1-59.

In preparation for class, see Taggart Siegel and Jon Betz's *Queen of the Sun: What Are the Bees Telling Us?* (on reserve)

May 2 (rescheduled class for study week): Labor of the Imagination: Destruction and Beauty

Kōbō Abe, *The Woman in the Dunes* (Vintage 1991)

In class viewing of Lars Van Trier's *Melancholia*

May 8: Final Paper due (5-7 pages)