

Garrard, Greg, ed. Teaching Ecocriticism and Green Cultural Studies. New York: Palgrave, 2012. Print.

Perhaps no subfield within literary studies has concerned itself with teaching more consistently than ecocriticism. Initiated by teacher-scholar-activists, ecocriticism has always conceptualized itself as both a scholarly and a curricular enterprise: indeed, Frederick Waage's *Teaching Environmental Literature* (MLA 1985) appeared several years before ASLE's formation in 1992.¹ Given the centrality of pedagogy to ecocriticism's identity, it is surprising—and puzzling—how few scholarly books focus explicitly on teaching ecocriticism. Some recent essay collections, such as Tom Lynch, Cheryll Glotfelty, and Karla Armbruster's *The Bioregional Imagination: Literature, Ecology, and Place* (U of Georgia P 2012) include selections devoted to pedagogy. Nevertheless, only a handful of studies systematically examine ecopedagogy. Fewer still tackle the tricky question of how we might measure its outcomes.

To some extent, the dearth of literature on teaching ecocriticism may reflect a tacit consensus among ecocritics that (of course) teaching is important and that (of course) developing students' ecological consciousness is its primary goal. More likely, though, this gap reflects changes in the field of ecocriticism itself, which has evolved in the past decade at a truly remarkable pace. In an earlier moment of "first wave" ecocriticism, would-be writers and editors could assume an audience with relatively similar institutional contexts and classroom objectives. As the 2008 MLA collection *Teaching North American Environmental Literature* attests, early literature and the environment courses tended to feature British and American nature writing, and tended to favor place-based or "field work" methods.² A fairly narrow canon and set of objectives prevailed. Today, however, "green" literature classrooms are just as likely to feature Margaret Atwood and Indra Sinha as Thoreau and Wordsworth—to be "glocal," rather than local, in outlook. Hence, it is difficult to generalize about what "teaching ecocriticism" entails, let alone offer prescriptive advice on *how* to teach ecocriticism.

Greg Garrard's *Teaching Ecocriticism and Green Cultural Studies* undertakes the formidable task of classifying today's varied ecocritical pedagogies. While the essays in this collection lack the quantitative rigor Garrard has called for elsewhere,³ they nevertheless offer thoughtful, theoretically-informed guidance useful to both newer and more experienced instructors. The collection is divided into three sections, which, as Garrard explains in his introduction, correspond to some of the major challenges confronted by ecocritical pedagogy (and by ecocriticism more broadly). Essays in the first section, "Scoping Scales," offer various takes on "scaling" ecocritical inquiry for different purposes. Scale in this

¹ Waage, Frederick. *Teaching environmental literature: Materials, methods, resources*. New York: MLA, 1985. Print.

² Lynch, Tom, Cheryll Glotfelty, and Karla Armbruster, eds. *The Bioregional Imagination: Literature, Ecology, and Place*. Athens: U of Georgia P, 2012. Print.

³ See Garrard's 2010 essay, "Problems and prospects in ecocritical pedagogy" and his 2007 essay, "Ecocriticism and Education for Sustainability."

context refers mostly to spatial scale; while matters of temporal scale are also important to “third wave” ecocriticism,⁴ the focus here is on updating place-based syllabi for the twenty-first century. Two of the essays in this section describe innovative courses that are place-based in a more traditional sense: Adrienne Cassel recounts a social justice-oriented course she teaches in Dayton, Ohio while Kevin Hutchings describes a course on British Romanticism that he teaches in Northern British Columbia. Though Hutchings’s essays might be most useful to people teaching Romanticism, Cassel’s essay offers a number of pragmatic suggestions for leveraging place to engage nontraditional students. Helpfully, Cassel discusses a complete assignment sequence, one that invites her students—many of whom are laid-off factory workers—to “recognize the connection between the places they live and the ‘good’ life they imagine that college will provide” (35). She argues convincingly that there is “room for critical thinking about [students’] local place” to occur “without the shaming that is often associated with asking students to engage in an ecological assessment of any aspect of their lives” (29).

A highlight of the “Scoping Scales” section is Erin James’s essay on a graduate seminar she teaches at the University of Nevada Reno on ecocriticism and postcolonial criticism. Even readers who do not teach graduate seminars will find this essay valuable not only because James offers an overview of key questions confronting “eco-poco” more generally, but also because the pedagogical dilemmas she discusses are generalizable. For instance, as she points out, one perennial challenge of teaching postcolonial texts is “asking students to engage with potentially unfamiliar terrains, languages and customs” (64); her suggestion that we move away from “reading for *environment*” to reading for “*environmentality*—that is, for evidence of the way a text’s language and form encodes a construction of . . . that text’s environment” is applicable to any number of situations in which students struggle with representations of place (66).

The second section of *Teaching Ecocriticism*, “Interdisciplinary Encounters,” features essays on literature and ecology, animal studies, and climate change genres, as well as an essay by Ursula Heise that builds on her landmark *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet* (Oxford 2008). Some readers may find Garrard’s conception of “interdisciplinarity” vague; the essays here are more about developing interdisciplinary reading lists than they are about truly interdisciplinary pedagogy. Still, like the selections in Part I, the essays in Part II contain inventive teaching ideas, particularly suggestions for how to use specific texts and artifacts in the classroom. Heise discusses how visual icons, contemporary travel writing, and contemporary fiction can be used to develop students’ ecocosmopolitanism; she argues for integrating “theories of globalization, transnationalism and cosmopolitanism with nonfictional prose as well as literary texts, since all three genres have served as important means of communication for environmentalist writers over the last two decades” (101-2). Also focusing on genre and its relationship to environmentalism, Garrard and coauthor Hayden Gabriel consider narrative’s role in representing climate change. As Gabriel and Garrard point out, there is increasing evidence to suggest that “doom and gloom” visions of environmental dilemmas do little to actuate today’s students, who feel alienated by exhortatory environmentalist rhetoric. They suggest, therefore, that we examine how “various genres, from TV news through Hollywood cinema to literary fiction and poetry . . . strugg[le] to represent adequately the scale and complexity of climate change.” By emphasizing both “the

⁴ Lawrence Buell is credited with first invoking the wave metaphor to describe ecocriticism’s evolution in his *The Future of Environmental Criticism* (Blackwell 2005). For a helpful overview of issues in third wave ecocriticism, see Scott Slovic’s recent essay, “The Third Wave of Ecocriticism: North American Reflections on the Current Phase of the Discipline” for *Ecozon@* 1.1 (2010).

achievements as well as the limitations” of media images, we can move students beyond mere awareness to a sense of empowerment (122).

The topic of *Teaching Ecocriticism's* final section is “Green Cultural Studies”; hence, its focus is less on literature and more on other media. Anthony Lioi develops a thoughtful critique of nation and period-based approaches to green cultural studies, arguing for a more comparative, multimedia approach to ecocriticism. The course Lioi describes puts new media into conversation with canonical texts; drawing on Henry Jenkins’s theory of “convergence culture,” Lioi makes a compelling case for moving beyond the traditional, static ecocritical canon and embracing the sometimes dizzying migration of content across media platforms. Especially illuminating is his discussion of pairing TV news clips of David de Rothschild’s recent “Plastiki” stunt with images from photographer Chris Jordan’s “Midway Project”: his account of students’ responses to this classroom exercise is among the most persuasive testimonies in the collection. Adrian Ivakhiv, meanwhile, focuses on the teaching of film specifically, putting film theory into conversation with ecocriticism. Ivakhiv teaches an ambitious course on “Ecophilosophy and Cinema” that aims to contextualize “film-making and viewing within the evolving history of sociopolitical relations and movements relevant to environmental thought” (146). Readers not formally trained in film studies would have difficulty actually implementing the strategies Ivakhiv describes; at the same time, his fascinating analysis of film’s “perceptual ecologies” is well worth reading for scholars in any field. *Teaching Ecocriticism* closes with a similarly intriguing essay by Timothy Morton. Written with characteristic irreverence, Morton’s essay proposes deconstruction as an antidote to postmodern cynicism and, therefore, as a potential ally to ecocriticism. “Far from dissolving everything into a void of insignificance,” deconstruction, Morton contends, “silences our tendency to put things in a conceptual box” (165). In this way, deconstruction works toward the same ends of ecocriticism—toward openness to ambiguity, to strangeness, and to being wrong. Although readers may not be prepared to embrace the challenge of teaching mediation in English 120, Morton’s point is still well-taken: there *are* good reasons to radically rethink the relationship between deconstruction and ecocriticism, just as there can be good reasons to radically reassess our teaching practices.

Altogether, the essays in *Teaching Ecocriticism and Green Cultural Studies* offer a valuable snapshot of ecopedagogy in the present moment. The classroom triumphs they capture point to exciting paths forward for teachers; they also point to certain challenges that teacher-scholars must confront. One issue that *Teaching Ecocriticism* does not address is the assessment of students’ learning, a matter that requires, or will very soon require, ecocritics’ urgent attention. As the pressure to measure students’ achievement bears down on all disciplines, especially in the United States, ecocriticism must find more forceful ways to show that ecocritical inquiry “works”—that it does indeed equip students with specific content knowledge, thinking skills, and values. At present, ecocritics rely mostly on anecdotal evidence to defend our courses: we point to students’ papers, to their comments in class, and to their self-reported behaviors outside the classroom: this is a problem that Bart H. Welling and Scottie Knapel allude to briefly in their essay on teaching animals studies.⁵ Yet if ecopedagogy of any form is to survive in today’s political and economic climate we would be advised to gather more substantive proof that teaching ecocriticism leads to specific positive gains. Ecocritics must initiate longitudinal studies of

⁵ Welling and Knapel acknowledge that “we have much to learn from our counterparts in the social sciences when it comes to assessing whether our animal studies classes are, indeed, as ‘transformative’ for our students as they have been for us” (113). They administer psychologist Hal Herzog’s “Animal Attitudes Scales” at the beginning and end of their course as a first step toward measuring students’ learning.

students' attitudes and behavior to determine how well courses in green cultural studies stick over time. Only then can we ensure the future viability of ecocriticism and green cultural studies as classroom subjects.

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Ladino, Jennifer K. *Reclaiming Nostalgia: Longing for Nature in American Literature*. Charlottesville: U of Virginia P, 2012.

Attitudes toward nostalgia among scholars of ecocriticism tend to range from ambivalence to hostility. Perhaps this has to do with the fact that ecocriticism itself at times borders on nostalgia for an imagined natural purity that is more cultural construction than historical reality. Jennifer Ladino, an assistant professor of English at the University of Idaho and former seasonal ranger in Grand Teton National Park, is keenly aware of this fact. But “the general skepticism toward nostalgia,” she writes, “has foreclosed a crucial question: Can it function progressively?” (XIII). Ladino’s project grows out of this question and “tracks the nostalgia-nature nexus [one that has been critically overlooked] from the end of the nineteenth century into the twenty-first in order to begin marking American literature in which nostalgia works as a productive force—an individual emotional experience, a source of collective consciousness, or a narrative catalyst that imagines ways to facilitate social or environmental justice” (XIII). The texts she explores—Zitkala-Ša’s *American Indian Stories*, Claude McKay’s *Home to Harlem*, Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*, Aldo Leopold’s *A Sand Country Almanac*, N. Scott Momaday’s “An American Land Ethic,” Don DeLillo’s *White Noise*, and Ruth Ozeki’s *All Over Creation*—reflect the many tensions that underlie America’s complex relationship to the natural world and its place in our personal and collective imaginations. Her choice of texts is sufficiently wide-ranging to convincingly justify her argument and demonstrate that the trends with which she is concerned have been pervasive across the American literary landscape.

The book’s introduction provides a useful history of nostalgia from both broad historical/critical and more specifically ecological perspectives. Ladino explains, for example, that “nostalgia was originally conceived as a bodily, and so a material, condition” (6). This fact grounds her broad project, which seeks to reclaim “nostalgia by foregrounding its nature—that is, by re-centering the environmental dimensions that were key to its first diagnosis—and by carving out a new discursive ‘place’ for nostalgia within scholarly discourse” (7). In doing so, Ladino makes a compelling contribution to ecocriticism and, more particularly, to green cultural studies (her preferred designation for her work). Her overarching argument relies upon her distinction between what she calls “anti-nostalgia,” which she aligns with texts that “work within an expository, theoretical genre of writing that seeks closure in the form of argument” (15), and “counter-nostalgic literature,” in which “nostalgia is the vehicle through which critique happens” (15). The counter-nostalgic literature she explores considers the issue of nostalgia alongside significant social, cultural, and historical factors, most notably “the displacements, forced migrations, and acts of violence that have resulted in both U.S. hegemony and a faltering democratic project within the nation itself” (7). Counter-nostalgia, we might say, is reflective if not overtly critical, though it is critical at times as well.

The book’s structure is unique, featuring short prefatory sections before each chapter that add context and depth to each literary analysis. The first of these, for example, “Having a Field Day: Authentic Indians and Patriotic Tourism in the Early National Parks,” chronicles the displacement of Indians who lived on lands that have now become incorporated into the national parks system. Through the Field Days that Ladino describes, in which Indians from the Yosemite region were brought together with tourists as “a park strategy to promote tourism in Yosemite during the late summer season” (19),

Indians themselves came to represent a certain nostalgia for “living off the land” and communing with nature in ways that the national parks were meant to represent. This section and the subsequent chapter on the work of Zitkala-Ša are a perfect starting point, as America’s relationship toward its native inhabitants so often underlies our discussions of nature as it intersects with nostalgia.

Ladino insists that “nostalgia performs a valuable critical function when it illuminates a traumatic event” (227), which is characteristic of the texts that she examines throughout. *Reclaiming Nostalgia* is particularly strong in that it offers compelling readings of these texts in their own right, while also effectively mapping their collective relationship with nature and nostalgia. Ladino is not only deeply knowledgeable about her subject matter from a scholarly perspective, but she uses her personal experience to great effect as well. She is both erudite and personal in the best of ways. All this makes for a highly readable book with relevance not only for ecocritics, but for those interested in American literature and culture more generally. As she points out in her conclusion, environmental scholars—including Laurence Buell and others—have taken special interest in “eco-memory” and have increasingly begun to consider its importance in relation to the progressive politics of ecocriticism more generally. *Reclaiming Nostalgia* stands to make a valuable and lasting contribution to this endeavor.

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Hansen, Peter H. *The Summits of Modern Man: Mountaineering after the Enlightenment*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2013.

Peter H. Hansen's *The Summits of Modern Man: Mountaineering after the Enlightenment* has an ambitious goal: to show how the history of mountaineering is tied to the idea of the autonomous individual, the "modern man" who is at the center of Western humanism. Hansen's book retells the histories of mountaineering—focusing particularly on ascents of Mont Blanc in the eighteenth century and, in a fine late chapter, of Mount Everest in the twentieth—to show how these ascents represent what he calls "the peculiar emphasis on chronological priority and individual autonomy characteristic of [. . .] European modernity" (3). As Hansen repeatedly reveals, attempts to climb to various summits are historically acts of usually intimate and often tense collaboration, yet narratives of the ascents are structured around the question "who was first?" because "the question envisages not mutual interdependence but an unencumbered self. Mountain climbing did not emerge as the expression of a preexisting condition known as 'modernity,' but rather was one of the practices that constructed and redefined multiple modernities during debates over who was first" (3).

In its first two-thirds, Hansen's book focuses primarily on famous attempts to climb Mont Blanc in the 1780s—by Jacques Balmat, Marc-Théodore Bourrit, Michel-Gabriel Paccard, and Horace-Bénédict de Saussure—and the often acrimonious, long-lasting debates about "who was first?" that surrounded their ascents. Given Hansen's topic in these chapters (extreme mountain climbing in the eighteenth century), it is unsurprising that much of his book focuses on historical men, but it should be noted both that he offers valuable discussions of the ascents of Mont Blanc by two nineteenth-century women, Marie Paradis and Marie Henriette d'Angeville, and also that he is throughout a careful analyst of the ways in which mountaineering is entangled with historical notions of masculinity. In his study of the ascents of the 1780s, Hansen examines at length and with a good deal of narrative verve the often internecine relations between Balmat, Bourrit, Paccard, Saussure, and their various supporters and detractors. To demonstrate how these climbs and narratives about them are related to various "modernities," Hansen places the ascents in interesting political and historical contexts: how during the French Revolution Mont Blanc "became a contested symbol for revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries, monarchs and emperors, peasant guides and romantic poets" (120); how British and continental Alpine clubs managed notions both of nationalism and masculinity (180-93); and how "efforts to climb" Mont Blanc "in the 1770s and 1780s braided together contemporary definitions of enfranchisement in Savoy, sovereignty in Geneva, and the encounter of competitive masculinities into novel aspirations to reach the summit" (62).

Hansen's understanding of history is subtle, as for instance when he cautions that the "early ascents of Mont Blanc resist incorporation into a singular narrative of the emergence of a particular category of individuality or 'modern man' because the very constructions of individual selves among Paccard, Balmat, Saussure, and Bourrit remained distinctively different. [. . .] The ascent did not embody one representation of enlightenment, modernity, masculinity, or individuality, but entangled competing and mutually constitutive contemporary visions of each" (117). Perhaps a bit too subtle: that is, although one is grateful that the author has eschewed any sort of oversimplified linear history of how modernity, enlightenment, individualism, or even mountaineering "got constructed," it is often difficult to piece together the exact relation of the famous instances of mountaineering to the ways in which Western

culture did come to understand itself as modern, enlightened, individualist. For instance, it's good for Hansen to remind us that Saussure makes an appearance in several of Immanuel Kant's works, including *The Critique of Judgment* (1790), but the exact relation between the celebrated mountaineer's ascent of Mont Blanc and the enlightenment ideas to which Kant is so central are only tenuously sketched in three brief paragraphs (111-113). Similarly, the literary figures associated with Mont Blanc—Alexandre Dumas père, Percy Bysshe Shelley, William Wordsworth, and so forth—make appearances, and Hansen offers often incisive comments on their works (Shelley comes off surprisingly, and looking surprisingly bad), but their cameos are so truncated (compared especially with the detailed treatment of the mountaineers of the 1780s) that the argument regarding the role of mountaineering in the broader development of European culture is less well-sustained than one could wish.

The last three chapters act as a sort of extensive epilogue to the study of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century mountaineering, and these last three chapters are excellent. Chapter 8, "History Detectives," focuses on how narratives of ascent to the summit of Mont Blanc are retold in nonfiction works, novels, and films from the 1890s to the 1950s, and the chapter constitutes a most useful piece of comparative study. Chapter 9, "Almost Together," for this reader the finest in the book, examines the ascent of Everest by Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay and how debates about which of them was first "recast the legacy" of climbers of Mont Blanc such as Balmat and Paccard; yet, as Hansen shows, the Everest controversies were also "rooted in the revision of sovereignty and masculinity at this particular postcolonial moment at the height of the Cold War" (246). Readers of *The Journal of Ecocriticism* will probably be most interested in the final chapter, "Bodies of Ice," which offers revealing discussions of climate change, retreating glaciers, and the Anthropocene. Hansen notes early on that, in the context of global climate change, the "conquest of nature so often anticipated or celebrated over the previous two hundred years"—for instance in the figure of the man on the mountain's summit—"appears to be highly ambivalent" (11), and throughout the book Hansen occasionally touches on environmental matters, such as the commodification of the Alps as a tourist destination or as a mining resource.

The last chapter, however, makes a particularly provocative argument regarding the adoption, by some environmentalists and ecocritics, of the term "Anthropocene" to describe the new geologic epoch in which we are now living, an epoch in which the course of planetary future has been altered by human actions. Those who find the idea of the Anthropocene compelling will likely find substantial points of disagreement with this section of Hansen's book, for instance with his apparent conflation of those who believe we are in a new period of geologic history with those who argue in turn for "human intervention to change the climate in the name of 'geoengineering'" (294), as well as the somewhat dismissive remarks that "manifestos" regarding the Anthropocene "adopted the unitary voice of *ex cathedra* pronouncements" (289) and the statement that the "Anthropocene is a slogan that wants to declare itself an epoch" (289). Yet his argument that the discourse on the Anthropocene (and more generally the discursive project to determine geologic epochs, of which project Hansen offers a valuable microhistory) actually participates in the discourse of humanism and its will to mastery of nature is both troubling and convincing.

From the angle of critical vision Hansen adopts in his book, the declaration that we are now living in the Anthropocene suggests that "modern man was no longer in the ascendant, but now occupied the summit position on earth" (289), or even exceeded it: "The Anthropocene offers the view from above the summit, indeed a view from above the earth" (295). For Hansen, the Anthropocene should be "understood as yet another alternative modernity, a deeply ambivalent assertion of human sovereignty" (290). This sort of careful and provocative thinking is *The Summits of Modern Man* at its best, and Hansen's study of mountaineering offers a salutary reminder to ecocritics and others that our most

admiringly biocentric statements are oft bound up with the discourses of modernity, and their inescapable effects on the environment.

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Nadeau, Robert. *Rebirth of the Sacred: Science, Religion, and the New Environmental Ethos*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

In the introduction to *Rebirth of the Sacred*, Robert Nadeau paints a terrifying image of environmental devastation while suggesting that much of the impending natural and biological degradation and damage might be minimized if practitioners of the five historical religious traditions could create a conversation that would stimulate change in major political and economic institutions (7). Throughout his monograph, Nadeau offers nine chapters that call for a reframing of current ecological conceptions, stressing the importance of integrating religious dialogue with scientific findings in the public discourses—local, regional, national, and global—about earth transformation and regeneration. Nadeau believes that the narrative of religion is much like that of science, for it is an embedded part of human activity. Thus he argues that religions must be a part of the ongoing scientific, political, and economic global dialogue about earth salvation, bringing with them a much-needed moral and ethical perspective to what he sees as a capitalistic and economically unethical system.

In his opening chapter, Nadeau shows how initiatives in higher education, such as an interdisciplinary study on religion and ecology at Harvard Divinity School in the latter half of the 1990s and the ongoing Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale University, have acknowledged the spiritual dimensions of earth preservation, thereby fueling the conversation between religion and science (14-15). Citing environmental problems, specifically global warming, Nadeau explains that technology has helped spread awareness of scientific facts of ecological issues, while still failing to motivate people to take widespread action. From human survival, to the politics of global warming, to new technologies, to science in the public sphere, to economic theories, to national histories, Nadeau looks at the relationship(s) between religion and institutions of power, highlighting how an effective dialogue could take place if practitioners of religious traditions engaged scientific findings within their earth theologies and ethics. However, before fully exploring this idea, he delves into the science of consciousness and how humans have evolved linguistically, showing how changes in language make new understandings, even religious understandings, of environmentalism possible (24).

While tracing the morphology of language, Nadeau explains how humans have systematically transformed agricultural and transportation systems, changing commerce, communication, and community on a global scale (42). Using these changes as a lesson, Nadeau suggests that humans have the potential, because of biological and technological transformation, to act in reflective ways that make it possible to experience “purpose and common understanding” (43). Thus the reflective nature of humans allows one to realize his or her place within the cosmos, which is why humans should have an openness to physics and other areas of science that help them understand more about the cosmos, the earth, and the environment (44). Outdated scientific assumptions about the “geopolitical reality” and the exchange of natural resources fail to take into consideration the interconnectedness of humanity (74-5). However, Nadeau suggests that new narratives are starting to explore how “everything is quite literally connected with everything else, and human and environmental systems are embedded in and interactive with one another on local, regional, and global levels” (74). Ultimately, Nadeau shows that this connectedness can help to formulate a global communal existence—one that is already “recognized in all of the great religions of the world as the most profound religious experience” (75) Tying mystical understandings about life to physics, Nadeau makes a case for a more unified relationship between

science and religion, stressing the compatibility of the two based on human processes and cognitive functions, both of which allow humans to make moral and ethical decisions.

The final four chapters of the monograph concentrate on older narratives about the reality and implications of politics and economics in order to show why major transformations are necessary for sufficient positive change in environmental crises, while also addressing the need for a larger dialogue between science and religion. Starting with a plea for a “supranational federal system” that has universal standards on ethical and moral behavior, which he believes cannot happen without the involvement of religious groups, Nadeau dedicates the final three chapters to the metaphysics of economic theory, which is “predicated on unscientific assumptions about the dynamics of market systems that effectively preclude the prospect of implementing scientifically viable economic solutions for environmental problems” (92). At the heart of the issue, according to Nadeau, is a deist view of God that helps push the pendulum of economic theory, driving an unequal system of capitalist greed, while exhausting natural supplies and resources (100-104). In the last two chapters of the monograph, Nadeau states that Americans are starting to embrace a neoconservative understanding of manifest destiny, suggesting that most of the populace in the United States believe unscientific facts about the economic markets, while also seeing economic theory as paramount to scientific truths about the environment (129). Essentially, Nadeau believes that America now worships at the shrine of a false god, one constructed out of economic theory and capitalist greed. In his final chapter, Nadeau lays out the entirety of his proposal for the integration of science and religion in public dialogues. In the vein of cognitive science research currently happening in religious studies, Nadeau proposes that there is a similarity between experiences that occur in major world religions (144-145). This shared experiential component provides, according to Nadeau, the basis for a worldwide movement towards religious environmentalism (146).

Throughout the monograph, Nadeau blends socio-political and economic critique with theories of cognitive science and ideas from phenomenological philosophy in order to argue for a more religiously aware environmental conversation. However, while Nadeau mentions the importance of including the “five great religious traditions” in these ecological conversations, he fails to mention explicitly which religious traditions should be included in this debate. Nadeau does cite both Protestantism and Catholicism, with very brief nods to Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism, but ignores other dominant religious groups. In essence, his argument is heavily pointed toward Christian practitioners, specifically those in the United States. Nadeau’s argument is clearly directed to American religious adherents and clergy in “Judeo-Christian” organizations (135). By limiting his organizational and geographical scope, Nadeau fails to acknowledge the work of other spiritual and religious groups and traditions that are interlocutors in the dialogue on ecological issues.

Rebirth of the Sacred is a compelling, albeit idealistic, vision of what could happen if the members of various religious traditions worked alongside scientists, economists, and politicians to form policies, initiatives, and movements that address ecological and socioeconomic crises. However, despite the focus on religious involvement with ecological issues, Nadeau gives very little attention to the religious, academic, and activist work currently happening, focusing instead on the economic theories and socio-political issues that he believes are fueling environmental problems. Given Nadeau’s emphasis on religious involvement with ecological issues, it is highly surprising that he fails to fully flesh out the connections between religious organizations and political and social institutions. It is even more surprising that Nadeau does not bring Eastern Orthodoxy into the conversation. This omission belies the importance of Orthodox ecological theology and activism in the public sphere, both of which are championed by His Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, one of the most vocal religious leaders

in global conversations about environmentalism and sustainability. Beyond this critical omission, however, Nadeau does offer a solid argument for an ethos that allows for full consideration of religion and science in the pursuit for earth preservation.

As a scholar of materialist ecotheologies, I would have heartily welcomed more about religious activism in this work, but the addition of such material would have drastically altered Nadeau's original thesis, so I understand the omission of such information. In all, this monograph is a useful primer for the historical and contemporary engagement of scientific ideas in the public sphere. In my opinion, *Rebirth of the Sacred* is a welcome addition to any scholarly library, and it would be an excellent selection for a graduate seminar on spirituality, nature, and public discourses about science. This work provides thought-provoking arguments about the role and impact of religion that will be discussed in the fields of religious studies, ecology, and ecotheology for years to come.

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Wohlpert, A. James. Walking in the Land of Many Gods: Remembering Sacred Reason in Contemporary Environmental Literature. U of Georgia P, 2013.

What does it mean for humans to dwell on the earth? Signaling the complex and multifaceted nature of A. James Wohlpert's approach, dwelling is used to signify the act of living on the physical land, as well as a contemplation of the philosophical meaning that it entails. This is the organizing premise that Wohlpert addresses in *Walking in the Land of Many Gods*. Situating his query as a response to the later philosophy of Martin Heidegger, Wohlpert takes the reader on an intriguing critical journey in which he examines three recent works of women's environmental literature read within the context of Native American knowledge and storytelling. The basis of Wohlpert's intervention emerges from his observation that the people and societies of Western culture have "lost" their "connection to the world" and "to Being itself" (35). The insights of Janisse Ray, Terry Tempest Williams, and Linda Hogan are posited as the basis for a progressive ecological consciousness, one in which readers are challenged to confront the question of "how might we re/replace ourselves in more meaningful ways?" (44). Although the book is organized as an ecocritical analysis of Ray's *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* (1999), Williams' *Refuge* (1991), and Hogan's *Dwelling* (1995), Wohlpert's interpretation is also strongly informed by the practical lessons that can be gleaned from the "continuously unfolding narratives" of Native American oral tradition that are grounded in a holistic conception of dwelling whereby human populations exist "in total connection to and undifferentiated from Earth and all their animate and inanimate surroundings" (31-32). It is precisely Wohlpert's capacity to unify an astute ecocritical analysis with social praxis that gives his approach its greatest relevancy.

The engagement with practical Native American knowledge, ceremony, and storytelling is employed by Wohlpert to extend the "great strength" of Heidegger's philosophy to consider how we might "reconstruct our dwelling, offering other ways of thinking and acting so that our physical placedness on Earth provides us with a deeper spiritual, emotional, and psychological experience" (19-20). A complex theoretical basis for this approach is delineated through the use of Heidegger's distinction of the terms, "beings," "being," and "Being" to fully encapsulate the generative ground of "earth" (14-15). Due to the cultural and epistemological developments spurred by Enlightenment thought, however, earth has become that holy and sacred entity that "has been lost to us because our technological horizon of disclosure has become totalized or absolutized . . . to the complete exclusion of other modes of disclosure" (15). Wohlpert enlists Indigenous knowledge by citing the work of N. Scott Momaday, Leslie Marmon Silko, and Keith Basso to illustrate Heidegger's critique of the totalizing Western intellectual practice of "Enframing," which is at the center of the dualistic view of being and experience as famously conceived by Descartes (21-22). The radically different way that Native American peoples know and experience reality is most broadly exhibited as an awareness of "the unity between themselves and the world that surrounds them" (33). While not explicitly cited in the text, Wohlpert's line of thought compliments a heteroholistic⁶ conception of Native American culture, while reinforcing the writings of

⁶ See Billy J. Stratton and Frances Washburn, "The Peoplehood Matrix: A New Theory of American Indian Literature," *Wicazo Sa Review*, 28:1 (2008): 82-118; and Billy J. Stratton, "Towards a Heteroholistic Approach to Native American Literature," *Weber the Contemporary West*, 29:2 (2013), 148-150.

Native scholars such as Tom Holm and Sean Teuton,⁷ whose work elaborates on the notions of interconnectivity to the land, community, and social transformation.

What follows from these observations over the next three chapters is Wohlpart's application of critical praxis as a basis for his close reading of Ray's, Williams', and Hogan's texts. In Chapter Three, for instance, titled "Restor(y)ing the Self," Wohlpart considers Ray's autobiography and natural history centered on her experiences growing up on a junkyard in Georgia as an act of "ecological restoration." The approach Wohlpart utilizes to access his chosen texts represent the strongest qualities of *Walking in the Land of Many Gods* and underscores an ability to synthesize the many disparate ideas into a cohesive and practical ecocritical vision. In the case of *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, he convincingly demonstrates how Ray's rejection of the destructive worldview that defined her upbringing can lead to a "ritual restoration" of a broken, but not lost, environment where a harmonious practice of dwelling can again be made possible (49). The invocation of Native ritual practice and the efficacy of words drawn from his readings of Momaday and Hogan to move beyond theoretical analysis is central to Wohlpart's project and demonstrates an understanding and earnest respect for the transformative nature of the knowledge invoked. The adoption of a heightened ecological sensitivity within an approach that merges criticism and praxis, "brings us back to the art of storytelling and the role of language in the restoration of the self and the land" (82).

Wohlpart continues to build upon these ideas in the following chapter through his reading of Williams' *Refuge*. As in his approach to Ray's text, he traces Williams' adoption of "a new consciousness, one of hope, intuition, and belief" as it emerges from the poignant meditation on her mother's fight with cancer, paired with the rise and fall of the Great Salt Lake and its effect on the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge (101). Understood within Wohlpart's praxis-oriented ecocritical framework, Williams' experiences, and the literary meditations they evince, take the form of "a work of ecological restoration and the reformation of the self" (86). According to Wohlpart, the power of Williams' book stems from

the way in which it not only reveals the Western worldview—Enframing, our technological horizon of disclosure that relegates all beings, the land and women included, to resource objects for our use and sets up distinct binary oppositions between men and women, culture and nature—but also reveals Williams's own embeddedness, her emplacement within that worldview. (89)

The awareness implicated in this critical analysis, one that stresses the consideration of diverse voices as a vital source of guidance, leads readers to a conception of interrelatedness similar to that found among Native peoples, which is sanctified through a respect for other life forms such as birds, as well as longleaf pines, snakes, wolves, and the essential power of ceremonial practice (97, 104). Furthermore, Williams' insights affirm the enduring influence of the gendered metaphors explored by eco-feminist approaches as in Annette Kolodny's *Lay of the Land*,⁸ revealing "the binary oppositions that frame our relation to the world and condition how we dwell, in turn creating a dualistic thinking that leads to the oppression of women and the degradation, the desacralization of the land" (125). Wohlpart's

⁷ Tom Holm, J. Diane Pearson, and Ben Chavis, "Peoplehood: A Model for the Extension of Sovereignty In American Indian Studies." *Wicazo Sa Review* 18.1 (2003): 7-24; Sean Kicummah Teuton, *Red Land, Red Power: Grounding Knowledge in the American Indian Novel*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.

⁸ Annette Kolodny, *Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975.

consideration of *Refuge* anticipates the next chapter, as well as the book's conclusion in which dwelling is oriented through a utilitarian engagement with "sacred reason" that calls for the restoration of a reciprocal relation with the earth.

The functional achievement of this optimistic vision represents the most significant challenge to Wohlpart's vision, the complexity of which becomes apparent in his analysis of Linda Hogan's *Dwelling*. While I greatly admired the level of engagement Wohlpart exhibits in his analysis of this "spiritual history," it is also in this chapter where the extent of the broader cultural barriers becomes clear. Of course, efforts to reconcile the divergent epistemological and ontological assumptions central to Western and Indigenous worldviews are fraught with difficulty, and yet Wohlpart gets quite close to the mark, theoretically. It is, however, in the realm of lived experience and the physical interactions human beings have with the natural world that the fissures between these competing, if not mutually exclusive, conceptions of Being are revealed. It is also within this broader historical context that the application of Heidegger's thought is the most strained, becoming an encumbrance to the creation of "a new language founded on emotion and the spirit that offers a new way of living in the world" (147). Wohlpart's understanding of the enormity of this challenge is apparent when he states: "the divide that we have created, that we so desperately want and need to heal, perpetuates itself in our technological and scientific approach to Earth, in our relegation of all beings to the status of mere objects for our use" (153). And while texts such as Ray's, Williams', and Hogan's can lead readers to vital insights as to how people can become more responsible stewards of the earth, for such efforts to be restorative in the way Wohlpart envisions would require the sweeping rejection of a way of life – scientific and technological, but also religious – that has been embedded in Western culture since the Enlightenment and before. While I agree that an "awareness of this other way of knowing and being in the world is central to ceremony and healing" (169), such a commitment must permeate our daily lives for transformative changes to take hold. Only then can the holistic promise held in the Native American conception of interconnectivity – expressed in the translation of the Lakota concept *mitakuye oyasin*, "All My Relations" – be truly realized.

These comments are certainly not offered to fault Wohlpart for the ambition and exuberance of his fine work, but to simply acknowledge the deeply embedded nature of the estrangement from the natural world that is an inextricable part of Western society and culture. Indeed, there is an enormous amount that can be learned about the restoration of balance and harmony by engaging with Native American knowledge, but this requires more than reading and thinking; such endeavors must also entail taking difficult actions to institute systematic and fundamental changes aimed at reversing longstanding governmental policies, while also challenging the vested interests of powerful multinational corporations. As Leslie Marmon Silko suggests in her novel, *Ceremony*,⁹ while mending what has been broken is not an easy task, healing and restoration can take place when we work together as relations against the efforts of agents of greed and destruction who seek to silence stories and desecrate the living world. Wohlpart's literary analysis surely puts his readers on this path, helping "to place us once again on the land so that we remember the myriad influences of plants and animals, sky and sun, rocks and valleys and trees and the flow and exchange of energy that is life turning over life" (179).

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⁹ Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*, New York: Penguin Books, 1977.

Waldau, Paul. *Animal Studies: An Introduction*. New York: Oxford UP, 2013.

Paul Waldau's *Animal Studies: An Introduction* is the first comprehensive articulation of the emergence of multiple disciplines that explore nonhuman animals. It therefore provides orientation in what can be a vertiginous and vast interdisciplinary study. From the first page onward, Waldau demonstrates how Animal Studies undermines, critiques, and finds alternatives for human exceptionalism. He identifies the "mental habits and patterns of speaking about other animals" throughout many disciplines (145)—patterns that uncritically bolster human exceptionalism and prevent breakthroughs in interspecies understandings.

As the book unfolds, Waldau identifies many fields that are "essential to fostering careful thinking about other animals in something other than a blatantly human-centered key" (112), but he sees "law, philosophy, and Critical Studies" as the three "early stars in the Animal Studies firmament." These three have been joined by a "bewildering array of other fields in the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities" (112), including History, Ethics, Literature and other Arts, Economics, Cultural and Indigenous Studies, Environmental Studies, Ecology, Veterinary Education, Religion, Peace & Conflict Studies, Ethology, Neuroscience, and more. Together, these fields "engage some segment or another of the more-than-human world and its nonhuman citizens" (112).

Waldau calls for humility in order to find a way to grapple with and explore the lived realities of actual, biological, nonhuman animals—a refreshing mantra in an academic climate that fosters intellectual competition. He provides several of the "central tasks" of animal studies that can cultivate a more humble approach as humans attempt to engage "other-than-human animals":

Give questioning a central role;

Reflect regularly on one's own thinking and claims;

Set an open table;

Foreground a developed sense of humility when in pursuit of "the facts";

Stay aware of social psychology and pathologies;

Give a place to nonanalytical thinking and ethics;

Recognize multiple approaches as part of human understanding of the world. (62–65)

These tasks have the potential to open up new "forms of education" that help humans "notice and take seriously actual biological creatures and their realities" (53).

Waldau sees animal law to be one of the crucial leaders in Animals Studies due in part to its origin. He tells of how students at Harvard began calling for a course on animal law and how, after Harvard offered a course in 2000 (he began teaching the course in 2002), the trend "multiplied rapidly through law schools across the nation" (114–15). This fact provides traction for Waldau to forecast how Animal Studies will impact culture, society, and academia over the next hundred years, for animal law deals

directly with public policy. Because much of the work in higher education is communal, the interdisciplinary communities may contribute to a sea-change in the way humans see themselves living on the earth that is “populated by other intelligences” (291). Such a perspective “will expand what [and who] counts” in terms of personhood, intelligence, a sense of self, law, ethics, and more (293).

No book can contain all the work of any field, but a couple omissions seem noteworthy. Waldau does not draw upon Donna Haraway’s *When Species Meet*—a crucial source in terms of taking seriously the lived realities of actual, biological animals. He also does not integrate Cary Wolfe’s work—one of the leaders in placing Animal Studies on the map within literary theory and scholarship. Wolfe just published *Before the Law: Humans and Other Animals in a Biopolitical Frame* (2012)—a work that indicates further Waldau’s stance that animal law is one of the leading fields of Animal Studies. Finally, Waldau does not mention the emerging field of animal rhetoric, which provides a better approach to understanding the contentious phrase “animal language.” Animal rhetoric provides a perspective to critique narrow definitions of language, thereby opening up space for other ontologies and other-than-human material semiotics.

These omissions, though, must be contextualized within the larger scope of the book’s project. Any one of the subfields could expand to a book-length exploration. The project invites future integration and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Animal Studies is a must read for any scholar invested in Animal Studies, for it helps orientate one’s work within larger constellation of this vast, interdisciplinary field. It may be difficult to use the book in a class if teaching a subfield of Animal Studies—such as a course on Animals in Literature. Certain passages and/or chapters could be drawn upon, or students could be directed to it for research. Because of its robust scope, the book deserves to be a primary text for an introductory course on Animal Studies. Now that the book exists, hopefully more courses devoted to Animal Studies will follow.

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Krupar, Shiloh. *Hotspotter's Report: Military Fables of Toxic Waste*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

Hot Spotter's Report is an expose into the efforts of the United States government to conceal and forget the domestic impact of its cold war history. Shiloh R. Krupar documents the criminal negligence involved in the clean-up efforts at two highly contaminated weapons facilities outside Denver, Colorado. First, Krupar examines a chemical weapons facility – come - nature preserve, the Rocky Mountain Arsenal (RMA), and secondly, the plutonium factory nearby at Rocky Flats (RF), likewise slated for conversion to a wild life refuge. Krupar also investigates the contempt shown for the welfare of the nuclear and chemical weapons workers who serviced these sites but have faced difficulties with claims related to sickness caused from exposure during weapons production. Krupar's text is composed of four sections, each more penetrating than the last. Krupar uses satire and “creative non-fiction” to combat the cynical use of nature as concealment for the contamination caused by cold war weapons production. Bringing attention to the history of these areas is essential, considering the less than enthusiastic efforts by state organizations to recognize the military-historical impact of the cold war on the domestic environment of the United States. Consider the sanitized approaches to history embodied by the RMA and RF websites

([http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Rocky Mountain Arsenal/about.html](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Rocky_Mountain_Arsenal/about.html)),
([http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Rocky Flats/about.html](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Rocky_Flats/about.html)).

In the *Hot Spotter's Report*, Krupar builds upon seven years of effort, reflected in journal articles published since 2007

(<http://explore.georgetown.edu/people/srk34/?action=viewpublications&PageTemplateID=360>).

Krupar successfully exposes the hypocrisy that surrounds the so-called “post-nuclear” ideology of nature as panacea for the irreparable domestic history of cold war devastation. Krupar's contempt for the disastrous efforts of the Department Of Energy's (DOE) “Legacy Management” protocol is refreshing, however Krupar's efforts at satire leave something to be desired. Satirical or “creative nonfiction” elements are abandoned after the second chapter. In her conclusion, Krupar identifies these efforts as “theatrical techniques” aimed at “mimicking and overidentifying with dominant discourses and institutions” (p 283). This reviewer found issue with the “creative non-fiction” elements mainly in that the cases Krupar considers are stranger than fiction and thus satire is unnecessary.

The relative weakness of these efforts is in part stylistic. The first chapter in particular falters with its presentation of the faux ENGO, “E.A.G.L.E.” report which is faced page for page by notation and endnotes. This makes for distracting reading, literally forcing the reader to work from right to left (and back again). After the second chapter, which begins with a satire of the bureaucratic boosterism that underscored handling of the Rocky Flats plutonium factory “clean up” effort, Krupar abandons “creative non-fiction” and spends the remaining 150 pages writing in the verbose style favoured by modern ethnography, scattered with references to Foucault and Baudrillard. Krupar's satirical efforts attempt to position the work as an element of “transnatural” art, the subject of the final chapter.

The first two chapters examine the use of nature to obscure the evidence of nuclear and chemical weapons production, however it is the third chapter that is the most hard-hitting. Krupar catalogues the

use of bureaucracy and scapegoating to throw the victims of on-site nuclear contamination under the rug. The process of “dose-reconstruction” which essentially fixes the burden of proof on the claimant, more often than not an ex-nuclear worker suffering from the trauma of cancer treatment, divests the state of responsibility. Krupar astutely observes the quasi-scientific “dose-reconstruction” process which is in large measure facade as the variables involved cannot be scientifically analyzed: the case of the “infinity rooms” at the Rocky Flats facility are the best example; rooms so contaminated accurate radiation measurements were impossible (p 138).

In the final chapter Krupar offers alternative approaches to the use of nature as panacea through the stories of two individuals with artistic responses to the self-inflicted devastation of the cold war. Krupar suggests ways in which Americans have attempted to integrate the nuclear-state complex into their daily lives.

First, Krupar relates the satirical efforts of the drag queen “Nuclia Waste” (www.nucliwaste.com/) whose mission is to increase awareness regarding the government's efforts to erase the existence of its nuclear manufacturing. Nuclia re-images Rocky Flats as her “Plutonium Palace” - modelled on Arrakeen, capital of the desert planet from Frank Herbert's *Dune* (p 236). Secondly, Krupar's concluding case, and perhaps the most poignant of book, is that of sculptor James Acord, specialist in transmutation. Acord used art to bypass the state-secrecy of facilities like the Hanford, Washington, Fast Flux Test Facility. Acord sought to use nuclear science to transmute radioactive technetium 99 into inert ruthenium 44 for use in granite sculptures (p 254-6). One of Acord's unrealized projects involved replacing the plutonium warheads in the US thermonuclear arsenal with granite simulacra- “artheads” - designed to cost as much as their weaponized predecessors. Krupar considered Acord's art an admission “that a permanent war economy might be the condition for life itself in the United States” (p 263). Acord's efforts within the legal framework led him to acquire a licence to possess uranium, however he was unable to complete his goal of industrial scale transmutation within his lifetime.

Although not mentioned in the book, potential hot spotters have plenty of opportunity for continuing research into the vanishing cold war legacy. For example, the zoo atop Cheyenne Mountain (<http://www.cmzoo.org/>), formally the location of the North American Aerospace Defense Command's (NORAD) bunker. Or the abandoned, Giza Necropolis-like, Stanley R. Michelsen Safeguard Complex (<http://srmsc.org/>), located in North Dakota, the single operational anti-ICBM facility built to conform with the 1972 ABM treaty.

Krupar captures the essence of the nuclear-state's historical problem, the ongoing effort of self-induced amnesia: the desire to forget that the cold war ever happened. The exploitation of nature and bureaucracy to sanitize the legacy of the cold war is an attempt to deny the monumental tragedy of the cold war, which in the official memory is considered rather a heroic American ideological victory. Krupar's research is thoroughly documented with a few detractions, notably several images which are unsourced. The book has a full index but no bibliography. Nevertheless, the *Hot Spotter's Report* throws a wrench into the amnesiac mechanisms of the nuclear state, and offers real alternatives. An essential study into the vanishing legacy of the cold war in American history.

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