

CALL FOR PAPERS:

ENVIRONMENT AND/AS MOURNING

AN EDITED BOOK COLLECTION

BACKGROUND

Human activities and human-induced climatic and environmental changes are increasingly causing the destruction and degradation of natural environments, and the death and loss of natural environments and non-human entities through the destruction of ecosystems, biodiversity, non-human bodies and entities, species, soundscapes, and landscapes. With this loss, comes mourning for non-human entities and for the natural environment: the destruction of forests and farmlands; the scarring of lands from tar sands projects; the levelling of mountain tops and creation of open pits from mining; the pollution of rivers and lakes; the loss or degradation of forests from logging; the deaths of other creatures; the melting of ice caps; human-induced extinction of many other species; and the changes in landscapes around the world because of climatic shifts and variability.

Although ecological grief and mourning are experienced by individuals worldwide, this environmentally-based sense of loss remains largely absent and marginalized in broader public and academic discourses. Indeed, while human loss is predominately featured, the grief and mourning of environmental loss has not yet enjoyed a substantial seat at the discursive table. Mourning, however, can be an important and powerful theoretical construct that has the potential to transcend anthropocentric values and become the mechanism through which we can begin to ground a different ecological ethic premised on shared interspecies loss and grief and on the recognition of non-humans as fellow vulnerable beings.

By extending the analysis of mourning and melancholia beyond the human to other kinds of natural bodies and processes—animal, vegetal, mineral, hydrological, geographical, and geological—and framing environmental loss as the work of mourning, we are made viscerally aware of the fragility and vulnerability of the non-human entity or process that has either been lost, or is in the process of being lost. This recognition of the vulnerability of the non-human also highlights our own vulnerability, both as a mortal body and as a body that is vulnerable to the loss of environmental others. Mourning, then, may have the potential to act as an intersubjective, interspecies link that can promote concerted political action through the extension of grievability beyond human bodies to include non-human entities and to promote new ecological ethics premised on the recognition of shared vulnerability and shared mourning.

Understanding the political, theoretical, and lived potentials of mourning, this work seeks to redress the absence of ecological-based mourning in academic and public discourse, and through a collection of contributions from numerous perspectives, including theoretical perspectives and case study research, to extend the concepts of mourning, grief, loss, and melancholia beyond the human.

Questions may include, but are not limited to:

- How can we extend grievability and mourning beyond the human?
- How do individuals and collectives experience and respond to environmental grief and loss?
- What has been lost in the natural world, and what do these losses mean?
- What are the implications of marginalizing or silencing this ecological loss?
- How are environmentally-based grief and loss shared and expressed by humans and non-humans?
- What is the role of the work of mourning in responding to environmental change and degradation?
- How do other species mourn loss?
- What can we learn from the mourning of other species?
- What are the implications of environmentally-based mourning or melancholia?
- What are the political or ethical implications of framing environmental change and degradation within the context of mourning?
- Can we create an ecological ethic premised on the work and labours of mourning?

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION PROCESS

Submissions are invited from any global or geographic region, and representing numerous disciplines and areas, including but not limited to: geography, environmental studies/sciences, literature, psychology, environmental design, environmental politics, ethics, landscape studies, environmental history, environmental behaviour, environmental philosophy, sustainability studies, Indigenous studies, conservation ecology, biodiversity, and human-nature relations.

Interested authors are invited to submit an abstract for a proposed chapter **by September 1, 2012** to the collection editors **Ashlee Cunsolo Willox** (ashlee.cunsolo@mail.mcgill.ca) and **Karen Landman** (klandman@uoguelph.ca).

Abstracts should be between **300 and 400 words in length**, and clearly articulate the themes of environmentally-related grief, loss, mourning, and/or melancholia.

Abstracts should include:

- Name and contact information of the author(s), including institutional affiliation and email address;
- A brief introduction and background to the topic;
- The theoretical framework and/or research questions and methodology or practice used;
- The main conclusions;
- The implications of this paper for future political, action, or research directions (where applicable).

In addition, please submit a curriculum vitae, including a list of previous publications, with the abstract.

Please note: all submissions must represent previously unpublished work and data. Selected authors will be notified by the end of September 2012, and will be invited to contribute a full-length chapter (approximately 30 pages in length or 8000 words) by **May 15, 2013**.

All chapters will be peer-reviewed by the collection editors, as well as by at least one other external reviewer before submission to publishing house Editor for publisher peer-review process.

EDITOR BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Ashlee Cunsolo Willox is a social science and health researcher, focusing on the climatic and environmental determinants of Indigenous health, the social justice implications of health inequality, environmental ethics, and human-nature relations. Most recently, and through community-based participatory research, Ashlee works collaboratively with Indigenous colleagues in the Canadian North to identify community research and health needs within the context of climate change, and to work towards locally-appropriate and culturally-relevant adaptation strategies. Ashlee is currently working as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at McGill University in the Department of Geography, studying the linkages between climate change and mental health, the ethical implications of documenting and disseminating Indigenous knowledge, and the connections between the environment and mourning and melancholia. **Email:** ashlee.cunsolo@mail.mcgill.ca

Dr. Karen Landman an Associate Professor in the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development at the University of Guelph. Her academic background is varied, including horticulture, landscape architecture, planning and development, and cultural geography. She has a twenty-year experience in landscape design and planning practice outside of the academy, and a broad interest in the theoretical discussions on landscape change. Karen's research interest is essentially focused on human/environment relations, with a primary interest in how culture shapes nature—giving us landscape—and how nature shapes culture in return. **Email:** klandman@uoguelph.ca