

ENGL 262 / ENVI 262, MACALESTER COLLEGE, FALL 2023
T/Th 1:20-2:50
HUM 216

RURAL OUTCASTS

Professor Elkins, Macalester College



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OFFICE HOURS:
Monday 4-6pm
Old Main 206

Description

What does it mean to be an outcast? And why do outcasts often retreat to nature as a place of solace? In studying these out-of-the-way places, we will read books by writers who investigate the politics of place and cross-cultural experiences of our changing planet. Taking an intersectional approach to gender, race, class dynamics, and neurodiversity, this course combines study of modernist and contemporary British writing with considerations of the environment—an approach known as *ecocriticism* in literary studies. While you'll be introduced to ecocriticism and its intersecting theories of the environment, you will be encouraged to draw on your own interests and experiences with the natural world, in addition to trans-disciplinary approaches from natural history, biology, environmental studies, medicine, environmental psychology, and anthropology. We will also examine how nature takes metaphorical shape in literature, working as a group to understand how writers draw on the environment to express complex human emotions and interconnections with the non-human world.

This course satisfies the Internationalism General Education course requirement at Macalester and counts towards the Writers of Color requirement for the English major.

Required Texts

Lolly Willowes

by Sylvia Townsend Warner / Introduction by Alison Lurie
NYRB Classics ISBN: 9780940322165

A Line Made by Walking

By Sara Baume
Mariner Books ISBN: 9781328915818

The Hungry Tide

by Amitav Ghosh
ISBN: 9780618711666

The Hired Man

By Aminatta Forna
Grove Press ISBN 978-0802121929

The Peregrine

By J. A. Baker
NYRB Classics ISBN 9781590171332

The Living Mountain

By Nan Shepherd
9780857861832

Please purchase the assigned texts as physical books rather than e-books, and your other readings will be made available on Moodle. Please print any shorter readings (marked “pdf” on the syllabus) and bring them to class.

To print on campus, see the following information and locations:

uniFLOW online: Print, Scan and Copy: For students and ITS, Employment and Disability Services

- Go to <https://macalester.us.uniflowonline.com/>. Click **Macalester Login**.
- Upload the print job to your uniFLOW account.
- Send attachments to studentprint@macalester.edu.
- Pick up print job at a print release station.
- Printing is available at no cost for students.

uniFLOW Print/Scan/Copy Release Station Locations – color printers

- Campus Center 2nd floor
- DRC, Library lower level
- Humanities Lounge
- Leonard Center Atrium
- Library main floor has 3 MFDs
- Olin Rice HUB

Residence Hall locations

- Doty residence hall lounge
- Dupre residence hall lounge
- Bigelow residence hall
- GDD residence hall lounge
- Kirk residence hall lounge
- Wallace Lounge lounge
- Cultural House 002

Notebook/Journal: Keeping a course journal will be an important part of your learning this semester, so please get a designated notebook to write in for this course, which you can also use for in-class notetaking and reading notes.

An **Academic Writing course packet** will also be uploaded to Moodle. You are **not** required to print this out, but I hope you will find it useful. *Please do not circulate the course packet beyond the class.*

Grading Percentages:

Paper/Exam 1	20%
Hike Response	20%
Paper/Exam 2	20%
Final	20%
Participation	20%

You will receive an assignment prompt for each assignment, and you will get detailed feedback (and tips for incorporating it) along the way. Please pay careful attention to issues of format, submission specifications, and time stamps since all of these impact your grade.

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Course Particulars

Attendance: Attendance will be important not only for your learning, but also for our learning community. Students with disabilities should discuss their accommodations

with me early in the course to work out a plan that aligns with maintaining course expectations and learning goals.

Attendance Policy: You are allowed two absences no questions asked. However, please be in close touch with me (via email—either in advance or as soon as possible) about any absences beyond the second. Additional unexcused absences will result in a 1/3 letter grade reduction for each absence (a B will become a B-, a C+ will drop to a C, etc.). Excessive tardies will be marked as absences.

Participation: Participation is distinct from attendance and is also an essential part of this course. In-class discussions, on-line discussion forums (via Slack, email chains, etc.), ungraded writing responses to prompts, or mini-reports (where everyone shares something or says what they think), meeting during office hours, etc. will be factored into your participation grade. Engaging with our learning community — including by helping to create an environment where all of us can learn and think well about one another — will also be factored into participation.

Other Particulars: This semester, my in-person office hours will be on Mondays 4-6 pm (you can just come by—you do not need an appointment) or by appointment for both in-person meetings outside of office hours or virtual appointments—please email me in advance to schedule a time! **Please note that I will not be checking email after 5pm or on the weekends.** Masking: in the spirit of community care, I will provide high-quality masks each class period for students who do not have one and will discuss health and safety around the coronavirus on the first day of class.

Late work is not accepted unless you have requested, and been approved for, an extension in advance. I will be as flexible as possible, within reason, but in my experience pushing out deadlines can *add* stress, especially if it's more a matter of perfectionism or procrastination than an actual extension need. Late work also makes it difficult to give you feedback, which you will want to incorporate for the next assignment. Research on diversity and education suggests that open-ended and long-term deadlines have a disproportionately negative impact on student success and learning outcomes than short-term, scaffolded deadlines.

Netiquette: While I hope it's not the case, we may need to shift our learning online at some point, or we may be online with visiting speakers. The Macalester College Classroom Recording (MCCR) policy sets forth community expectations regarding the recording (whether audio, video, or streaming) of class lectures, discussions, office hours, and other course-related activity. As an academic community, we value the free exchange of ideas and the privacy of community members. We are also committed to providing appropriate accommodations to students who require recorded lectures as an academic adjustment for documented disabilities. The MCCR policy balances the legitimate uses of classroom recording, the intellectual property of the faculty, and the privacy of individual

students and faculty. The entire policy can be found here, <https://www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/>.

In other words, please do not record anything without prior and appropriate permission, and I will let you know if I record a class session.

You may want to familiarize yourself with some principles of internet etiquette (netiquette), especially since increased virtual learning, interviewing, and community organizing is far more common now and won't be going away. You know a lot of this already: mute yourself if you're not speaking, try to assemble a comfortable workspace and the tools you need to learn and communicate in a virtual environment, etc. I won't *require* you to put on your video, but please upload a photograph of yourself to your Zoom profile and please *plan to have your video on*. Please arrive to class on time, fully attentive, and ready to learn and support your peers or to engage with our visiting speaker.

Campus Policies and Resources

Honor Code: Students are expected to adhere to the principles of intellectual honesty outlined in the Macalester Academic Integrity guidelines and will be held responsible for any and all breaches of this agreement. Plagiarism is a grave academic offense, and one that I take very seriously. If you are ever tempted to copy something from the internet or are facing problems completing an assignment, please opt to talk with me rather than plagiarize. Examples of behavior that violates this policy, as well as the process and sanctions involved, can be found on the Academic Programs website: <http://www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/>.

MAX Center: The MAX Center is Macalester's academic resource center. I encourage you to take full advantage of any and all of the excellent resources they provide there, as they are committed to supporting all students to succeed at Macalester.

Visit <http://www.macalester.edu/max/writing/> for more information and to make appointments.

AI (Artificial Intelligence): Some courses may have nuanced guidelines for the use and citation of advanced automated tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools such as ChatGPT or Dall-E 2 or paraphrasing software) for college assignments and brainstorming. *However, in this class, your brainstorming, notetaking, in-class contributions, in addition to all work submitted, must be your own. AI, machine learning, and other automated text/image/sound/media-producing software is prohibited in this course.* Work generated by AI or related technologies presents major ethical concerns, even with proper citation. It may be inaccurate, biased, incomplete, and otherwise problematic (see emerging reports on "digital sweatshops"). In my classes, I'm excited about students developing independent, intersectional, and critical thinking, creativity, feminist and queer citation practices, and learning to examine ideas from multiple perspectives. Not only does AI reproduce errors and draw from a limited canon

of knowledge, it lacks critical thinking and fails to challenge errors and biases. Any academic integrity violation of this policy will be treated as plagiarism.

Technology: Cellphones and other electronic devices including smartphones, tablets, earbuds, etc. are **not allowed in the classroom**. Laptops are also prohibited unless you make special arrangements. Plug into class and help create a dynamic, interactive environment for inquiry and discussion. If we're using laptops during class, I'll let you know in advance.

Library: Working to integrate the disciplinary literature into your research can be a complex process. Consulting with the research and instruction librarians for the discipline(s) in which you are studying will save you time and help you discover better, more scholarly sources. You can make an appointment using the Ask Us page on the library website, which can be accessed at <https://www.macalester.edu/library/askus/>, or email your librarian(s) directly.

International Student Programs: If you are an international student and/or working with English as your second language, I encourage you to take advantage of the helpful resources that Macalester makes available at the International Student Programs Office. For more information, visit <http://www.macalester.edu/isp/>.

Disability Services: I am committed to ensuring access to course content for all students, including those with disabilities. If you have a disability, please meet with me early in the semester to discuss your accommodation plan. If you have not yet obtained a plan or are unsure if you have a disability that requires accommodation, please contact Disability Services: disabilityservices@macalester.edu, or call 651-696-6974.

Title IX and Mental Health:



Macalester is committed to providing a safe and open learning and living environment for all students, staff, and faculty. If you (or someone you know) has experienced any form of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, please know that you are not alone, and that help and support are available.

Please be aware that as a faculty member, I am a *non-confidential resource*, although I will keep anything you disclose to me *private*. This means that if I become aware of incidents or allegations of sexual misconduct, I am required to share the matter with the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinators. This College policy is intended to ensure that you receive the resources and support you need.

Even as you might be away from campus, or your needs change, resources are available for you if you need support related to sexual and/or relationship abuse.

If you would like to contact the Title IX office, Macalester's Title IX Coordinator is available and can assist you with supportive measures and referrals:

- Phone: 651-696-6258 Email: titleixordinator@macalester.edu
- Full list of Title IX contacts: <https://www.macalester.edu/title-ix/reporting/>

If you would like to talk to someone who would not have to share what you tell them with the Title IX office, *confidential* support resources through Macalester are also available to you:

- **Free, Urgent, Phone Counseling (Press 2) is available to Macalester students anywhere in the world, 24/7/365.** Speak to a licensed mental health counselor 24 hours a day by calling Hamre Center at 651-696-6275, then press or say option 2 when prompted.
- To make an appointment with one of our counselors or medical providers, call 651-696-6275 or email health@macalester.edu
- To contact support through the Center for Religious and Spiritual Life, call 651-696-6298 or email religiouslife@macalester.edu

Local and national resources are also available:

- [Ramsey County SOS Sexual Violence Services](#) offers confidential phone support at 651-266-1000 or you can use the [SOS Contact Form](#) (SOS is currently not offering face to face meetings)
- RAINN is a national resource with both confidential phone support and live chat: Find out more about [RAINN](#)
- [Futures Without Violence](#) offers community-specific services and safety plans, including identity-specific options such as Trans Lifeline and the DeafHotline.
- National Domestic Violence Hotline 800-799-7233 or text LOVEIS to 22522

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COURSE SCHEDULE:

*Note: We will often begin or end class with a close reading of a poem related to themes of eco-justice, the pastoral, or variations on “nature” poetry. I will provide copies of these poems for you.

Tuesday, September 5
First Day of class!

Thursday, September 7
“Literature and Environment” by Lawrence Buell, Ursula K. Heise, and Karen Thornber (pdf)

Tuesday, September 12
Lolly Willowses by Sylvia Townsend Warner pp. 5-67

Thursday, September 14
Lolly Willowses pp. 71-138

Tuesday, September 19
Lolly Willowses pp. 141-222

Thursday, September 21
selection from *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* by Jane Bennett (pdf)
selection from *Wild Things: The Disorder of Desire* by Jack Halberstam (pdf)

Tuesday, September 26
Film viewing (no class)

Thursday, September 28
Film: *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* (dir. Sciamma, 2019)—available on Hulu, Amazon Prime, Library reserves (please rent/check out and watch the entire film)

Tuesday, October 3
Exam Study Day (no class)

Thursday, October 5
Exam 1, Part 1 due by 5pm (no class)

Tuesday, October 10
Exam/Paper (final draft) due by 5pm (no class)

Thursday, October 12
The Hungry Tide by Amitav Ghosh pp. 3-145

Tuesday, October 17
The Hungry Tide 149-231
“Fractals” and “Interdependence and Decentralization” by adrienne maree brown
(pdf)

Thursday, October 19
The Hungry Tide pp. 232-333

Tuesday, October 24
Hiking/Sanctuary plans due via email by 5pm (no class)
Watch: “Metaphors We Live By by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYcQcwUfo8c>

Thursday, October 26
FALL BREAK (no class)

Tuesday, October 31
Happy Halloween!
Selection from *The Great Derangement* by Amitav Ghosh pp. 3-54 (pdf)

Hike/Sanctuary report due by Wednesday Nov. 1 at 5pm

Thursday, November 2
Today in class you will share your hike/sanctuary experience with your classmates:
please bring a visual aid (digital visual aids should be emailed to me at
aelkins@macalester.edu by Thursday morning at 9am)

Tuesday, November 7
The Hired Man by Aminatta Forna pp. 1-179

Thursday, November 9
The Hired Man pp. 180-245

Tuesday, November 14
The Hired Man pp. 246-293

Thursday, November 16
“A Village After Dark” by Kazuo Ishiguro (pdf)
Selection from *Dark Ecology* by Timothy Morton (pdf)

Tuesday, November 21

Paper/exam conferences (no class)

Paper/Exam 2 due by Wednesday Nov. 22 at 5pm

Thursday, November 23

No Class THANKSGIVING

Tuesday, November 28

The Peregrine by J. A Baker pp 9-102

Thursday, November 30

The Peregrine pp. 102-191

Tuesday, December 5

The Living Mountain pp. 1-59 by Nan Shepherd

Thursday, December 7

The Living Mountain pp. 60-108 by Nan Shepherd

Recommended but not required:

“Nightwalking” Parts 1-4 *Constellation Prize* (podcast)

“The Beholder” by Ali Smith (pdf on Moodle)

Tuesday, December 12

Last day of class! **Final Projects Due**

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