

Description for ENGL 830A “Shakespeare”

Kelly Stage

Spring 2023

This course examines Shakespeare’s engagement with the “greenness” and early modern ecologies. As we survey a variety of Shakespeare, such as—but not limited to—*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *As You Like It*, *The Tempest*, *King Lear*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Winter’s Tale*, we will explore the way the plays use and engage the “natural”—fields, forests, oceans, wilderness, and “new worlds”—weather, animals, and elements of biosphere in spinning out comedies, romances, and tragedies. Our approach will also intersect with other methodologies; for example, ecofeminism will be a key intervention. Our investigations may consider what practices and controversies are present in the way rural and urban characters interact; how to trace the pastoral genre in light of politics, history, and ecology; the use of natural resources and the pressures of economic and political powers as they are manifested in Shakespeare, the coding of “nature” and “the natural” in light of gender and sexuality, and how we might rethink the parameters of the Anthropocene. Students will read recent ecocritical work by writers such as Robert Watson, Jeannine Addison Roberts, Jeffery Theis, Erica Fudge, Bruce Boehrer, Jennifer Munroe, Lynne Bruckner Dickson, Simon Estok, Edward Berry, Gabrielle Egan, Greg Garrard. Students wishing to pursue this course for Women’s and Gender Studies will be invited to focus their projects through intersection with feminist, gender, or trans studies and ecocritical methods.