



University of
Kent

Sustainability in English

Writing the Climate Crisis: Encounters with the Anthropocene ENGL8007

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What is the Anthropocene? What does it mean to have our geological era renamed specifically for the impact that humans have had globally on the planet? This module digs deep into the history of our modern world by asking questions like: where did the Anthropocene first emerge? When might it be said to have begun? Why does it matter?

By reading, interrogating, and using poetry, prose, fiction, and other media, this module will look at how writers, and creatives from across the globe and through history (from the medieval to the present), interpret and respond creatively to environmental breakdown.

Covering theoretical ground that frames climate crises and their associated ecological catastrophes as a consequence of colonialism and capitalism, the module will include discussions of how resource extraction, fossil-fuel use, and the spread of industrialisation have seen the exploitation of people, non-human animals, and land, creating a global 'eco-apartheid' based on lines of race, class, gender, and ethnicity

It will explore how the human-made environment is changing our world but is also having an identifiable impact (detectable across all five continents) on human physiology, psychology and mental health. It looks at how the arts have interpreted climate crises, and how climate crises have shaped the arts.