

## Brief Course Outline

**Course Title:** **The Storyteller's Art II: Ecology and Catastrophe**

**Course Number and Section:**

ENGLISH

1028G 550

**Instructor Name(s):** Dr. Andrew Sargent

**Instructor Email(s):** asargen@uwo.ca

Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

### Course Description:

This course covers a wide range of texts that explore and question the divisions between nature and culture, human society and ecology, human history and “natural history,” human and animal, natural disaster and “man-made” disaster. Do these binaries hold up? What are the politics of creating and managing these categories? How does literature either challenge or reinforce the ways that we carve up the world into the “natural” and the “artificial,” “nature” and “human?” How does literature imagine ways of getting beyond these divisions, and/or show us how these spheres overlap and were therefore never real to begin with? In addition to questions of environmental justice and animal rights, this course will devote special attention to texts and media that concern ecological catastrophe, as it is often through such disasters that the true extent of the entanglement of humans and nature becomes apparent, as well as the costs of denying that entanglement. Throughout this course, students will engage with genres such as poetry, short story, the novel, and film, and develop critical reading skills and media literacy to help them navigate contemporary debates around pressing topics such as climate change and environmental destruction.

### Learning Outcomes:

1. Develop critical thinking and essay writing skills that will be applicable in further University courses
2. Engage with and analyze a variety of narrative media, including the novel, long and short poems, and film
3. Understand how narrative reckons with and shapes our relationship to the natural world
4. Identify in literary works key tropes and narrative patterns that inform our understanding of ecology
5. Understand how literary works of the past anticipate or participate in the logics of environmental destruction that affect our world today
6. Write logical, persuasive, and grammatical essays with clear and well-structured arguments

**Textbooks and Course Materials:**

Cherie Dimaline, *The Marrow Thieves*, Cormorant, 2017 (Cost: \$16.95) (Purchase: [https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=HC&term=W2024B&courses%5B0%5D=550\\_HC/ENG1028G](https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=HC&term=W2024B&courses%5B0%5D=550_HC/ENG1028G))  
(Students are welcome to purchase second-hand or alternative editions of this text)

**Methods Of Evaluation:**

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Participation		10%
News Article Analysis		10%
Short Paper		15%
Final Essay Proposal / Peer Review Assignment		10%
Final Essay		30%
Final Exam		25%

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.

Wednesday, January 22, 2025