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**Qualifying Exam Bibliography: Eco-Social Art for Rebuilding a Multispecies Commons**  
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# Eco-Social Art for Rebuilding a Multispecies Commons

## Theories and Methods for Biocultural Remediation through Urban Ecology and Art

This bibliography is meant to buttress and deepen my work at the intersection of socially engaged art and urban ecology. My focus on the entanglement of humans and weedy plants leads me to bring together voices and disciplines that can provide guidance and insight on cultivating ecological justice and multispecies solidarity in the face of rapid environmental change. Through my public fieldwork practice I'm getting a hands on perspective in how ecological consciousness can be magnified through novel forms of engagement with habitats and lifeforms that are often overlooked and undervalued. Drawing on the texts and artworks gathered here, I see this work as a form of biocultural remediation, where broken relationships with the land can be restored and new ones invented. The texts and artworks collected here help me interrogate my own position, privilege and abilities with regard to this task. They also help me better envision the responsibilities of the artist who contests Western, human-centric notions of progress in favor of multispecies flourishing.

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## OUTLINE INCLUDING TEXTS AND ARTWORKS:

### 1. **Public Fieldwork and Ecopolitical Interventions:** Socially engaged art meets critical eco art

*This section includes precedents, frictions, and best practices from fields of artistic practice that relevant to my own research and practice. These fields include land art, eco art, bio art, and socially engaged art, which are approached here with a focus on practicing artists and the theorists and critics who write about them in ways that help illuminate my focus on interdisciplinarity, critical social engagement, and intervention.*

#### **A. Eco-Art and its Discontents: From romanticization to entanglement**

*Here I'm interested in forms of eco-art that avoid reinscribing a dichotomy between humans and nature, instead interrogating naturalcultural entanglement without romanticizing nature as victim, mother, or antagonist.*

“The Yes Men: Dow Chemical Apologizes for Bhopal.” *Beautiful Trouble*. Accessed September 18, 2018. <http://beautifultrouble.org/case/dow-chemical-apologizes-for-bhopal/>.

Benson, Etienne. “Environment between System and Nature: Alan Sonfist and the Art of the Cybernetic Environment.” *Communication 13*, no. 1 (September 11, 2014): 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.7275/R5HT2M7T>.

An exploration of the tension of between nature and system in emergent environmentalism, this article shows how the early work of artist Alan Sonfist is emblematic of how systems thinking and more traditional conservation rhetoric both clashed and enriched one another in the early 1970s.

**Demos, T. J. *Decolonizing Nature: Contemporary Art and the Politics of Ecology*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016.**

In this overview of contemporary environmental art, Demos uses political ecology as a means of analyzing the function and efficacy art that addresses the intersection of social, political and ecological issues. He applies a decolonial lens that attempts to ground best practices in relation to climate justice and equity, drawing on voices from the global South and North, bringing together activism, ecology, visual culture, and geography.

Haenggi, Andrea. “Urban Weeds as Agency.” Transart Institute/Plymouth University. Accessed December 16, 2017. <https://weedychoreography.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/mfa-506-final-andrea-haenggi.pdf>.

In this masters thesis, Haenggi, one of my Environmental Performance Agency Collaborators, makes the case for urban weeds as co-producers of knowledge gained through multisensory ways of interacting with overlooked urban ecosystems. Outlining her approach to working socially with plants and humans, she presents scores, drawings

and project documentation intermixed with theoretical references and collaboratively authored texts.

Harper, Glenn. "Center for Land Use Interpretation: Learning from the Cultural Landscape." In *The New Earthwork: Art Action Agency*, edited by Twylene Moyer and Glenn Harper, 201–2. Hamilton, NJ; Seattle, WA: International Sculpture Center, 2012.

— — —. "Tim Collins and Reiko Goto: Art Has Everything to Do with It." In *The New Earthwork: Art Action Agency*, edited by Twylene Moyer and Glenn Harper, 118–20. Hamilton, NJ; Seattle, WA: International Sculpture Center, 2012.

Jeremijenko, Natalie. "OneTree." In *Signs of Life: Bio Art and Beyond*, edited by Eduardo Kac, Roger F. Malina PhD, and Sean Cubitt, 301–3. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2009.

Kóvskaya, Maya. "Else All Will Be Still: Dematerialization and Rematerialization in the Ecological Photography of Ravi Agarwal." *Take on Art* January-June, no. 18 (2016): 52–58.

Approaching environmental art from an Indian context, Delhi-based critic and theorist Kovskaya analyses the work of Ravi Agarwal, who examines ecological crises in India through a primarily lens-based practice that Kovskaya identifies as in sync with Haraway's concept of naturecultures and the entanglement of human and more than human lifeways.

Lacy, Suzanne, ed. *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*. Seattle, Wash: Bay Pr, 1994.

Describing the field of new genre public art, Lacy digs into various interpretations of what it means to make public art, re-inscribing "public" as a necessarily social and relational term. She defines it in opposition to traditional monolithic public sculpture that intervenes in public space in potentially undemocratic ways (as in Richard Serra's Titled Arc). She places an emphasis on artistic practice that take place with and for underrepresented and marginalized communities.

Lippard, Lucy R. "Down and Dirty." In *The New Earthwork: Art Action Agency*, edited by Twylene Moyer and Glenn Harper, 11–14. Hamilton, NJ; Seattle, WA: International Sculpture Center, 2012.

Lipton, Amy, and Patricia Watts. "Public Art Ecology: From Restoration to Social Intervention." In *The New Earthwork: Art Action Agency*, edited by Twylene Moyer and Glenn Harper, 52–61. Hamilton, NJ; Seattle, WA: International Sculpture Center, 2012.

**McKee, Yates. "Art and the Ends of Environmentalism: From Biosphere to the Right to Survival." In *Nongovernmental Politics*, edited by Michel Feher, Gaëlle Krikorian, and Yates McKee, 583–639. New York: Zone Books, 2007.**

Marxist art historian Yates McKee outlines how environmentalism and related visual culture have evolved from the 1960s to early 2000s, analyzing significant examples of visual expression ranging from large scale protest imagery to intimate social practice projects.

Reynolds, Rebecca Lee. "The Anti-Sculpture Park? Or, How Site-Specific and Ephemeral Art Questioned the Sculpture Park." In *Artpark 1974-1984*, edited by Sandra Q. Firmin, 109–207. Buffalo, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010. <https://www.abebooks.com/9781616890193/Artpark-1974-1984-Sandra-Q-Firmin-1616890193/plp>.

This exhibition catalog looks at the seminal years of a summer residency program held on a postindustrial site facing the Niagara Falls Gorge. It includes Rebecca Lee Reynolds' essay "The anti-sculpture park?", which continues the line of questioning opened up by land art regarding the move away from object-based work and towards site-specificity, but extends it to include concerns around audience, community, and land use history that are essential to my conception of Public Fieldwork.

Smithson, Robert, Ingrid Commandeur, and Trudy van Riemsdijk-Zandee. *Robert Smithson: Art in Continual Movement*. Amsterdam: Alauda Publications, 2012.

Purportedly ambivalent about the nascent environmentalism of his day, Smithson's version of ecology was all about entropy and fracture rather than organic wholes, an understanding of ecology that resonates more today than ever. His insistence on the gallery (the site of display, of human expression), as the "non-site", incomplete without its referent, is resonant now, as we figure out how to connect local habitat and abstract global flows of climate and power in meaningful ways.

Weintraub, Linda. *To Life!: Eco Art in Pursuit of a Sustainable Planet*. First edition. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012.

## **B. Interdisciplinarity: theories and models from sci art and bio art**

*This subsection contains a collection of texts that offer a variety of approaches to interdisciplinary collaboration and politically engaged practice. Drawn from fields typically described as sci art and bio art, it includes writing by practitioners and scholars.*

Ackroyd, Heather, and Dan Harvey. "Chlorophyll Apparitions." In *Signs of Life: Bio Art and Beyond*, edited by Eduardo Kac, Roger F. Malina PhD, and Sean Cubitt, 202–10. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2009.

An account from the artists' perspective on how art-science collaborations can push science in new directions, focused on Ackroyd and Harvey's adaptation of photographic processes to living grass media.

**Born, Georgina, and Andrew Barry. "Art-Science: From Public Understanding to Public Experiment." *Journal of Cultural Economy* 3, no. 1 (March 1, 2010): 103–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17530351003617610>.**

Born and Barry, scholars of interdisciplinary practice, put forth a model of art-science collaboration centered on the "public experiment", in which disciplines come together in a way that generates new knowledge and new publics, changing both art and science in the process. Beatrice da Costa's *Pigeon Blog* is used as a case study that doesn't just translate scientific concepts, but rather generates new knowledge and new communities

that can react to and interact with existing knowledge and communities in a way that is revelatory and critical.

Critical Art Ensemble. *Aesthetics, Necropolitics and Environmental Struggle*. First edition. Autonomedia, 2018.

CAE's latest publications uses the concept of "necropolitics" to explore the status of environmentalism and ecology in the face of contemporary environmental crises. Interfacing with Foucault's concept of biopolitics, they emphasize the need to face the dark side of population growth and extinction, positioning art as well-situated to intervene and engage with the contradiction laden dilemmas of the 6th extinction.

— — —. "Contestational Biology." In *Nature*, edited by Jeffrey Kastner. Documents of Contemporary Art. London: Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 2012.

Da Costa, Beatriz. "Reaching the Limit: When Art Becomes Science." In *Tactical Biopolitics: Art, Activism, and Technoscience (Leonardo Books) (Hardback) - Common*, edited by Beatriz Da Costa and Kavita Philip, 365–86. MIT Press, 2008.

Also published in their book *Molecular Invasion* this short essay by CAE affirms their commitment to a critical, interrogative approach to carrying out art-science projects in the public view with public participation, with the goal of unearthing and exposing the political, economic, and social ideologies that drive far-from-neutral or objective scientific developments.

**Da Costa, Beatriz, and Kavita Philip. "Introduction." In *Tactical Biopolitics: Art, Activism, and Technoscience (Leonardo Books) (Hardback) - Common*, edited by Beatriz Da Costa and Kavita Philip, xvii–xxii. MIT Press, 2008.**

Describing the influences and commitments tied up in the newly defined field of "tactical biopolitics", Philip and Da Costa draw on Foucault and DeCerteau, but also on the field of Tactical Media, emphasizing a focus on power and knowledge at the intersection of life, science and art, alongside challenging disciplinary boundaries and notions of expertise.

Philip, Kavita. "Art and Environmentalist Practice." *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 19, no. 2 (n.d.): 69–74.

Responding to the claims of another theorist who presents transcendental experience as the most impactful mode of environmental art, Philip presents other possibilities for art practice that attends to eco-crises, race and social inequality. She provides examples of artists who work in modes other than what she sees as recurring narratives of the tragic and the redemptive. These artists are able to balance aesthetic rigor and incisive political critique, positioning their work as an effective "boundary object", a "node of multiple sites of knowledge production".

Toland, Alexandra, and Gerd Wessolek. "Merging Horizons: Soil Science and Soil Art." In *Soil and Culture*, edited by Edward R. Landa and Christian Feller. Springer Science & Business Media, 2010.

### C. Socially Engaged Art: From Dada to social practice

*This subsection is included as means of historicizing aspects of more recently emerging environmental art forms that incorporate participation and public intervention while also presenting some important critiques of how socially engaged art functions, whether as activist-oriented disruption, thoroughly coopted institutional darling, or both simultaneously.*

**Bishop, Claire. *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. Original edition. London; New York: Verso, 2012.**

This text applies a critical lens to the presumed emancipatory potential of what Bishop terms the "post-studio practice" of "participatory art". Providing a historical and philosophical context for socially engaged art, she addresses the field's roots in Futurism and Dada through to its development into an international phenomenon that has been ascendant since the 1990s, problematizing the tendency to set aside aesthetics in favor of inclusive, conciliatory ethics.

Bourriaud, Nicolas. *Relational Aesthetics*. Les Presses du réel, 2002.

Bourriard fleshes out his concept of "relational art" in this frequently referenced, oft criticized text describing a particular flavor of "convivial" participatory art that was ascendant in the 1990s. Critiqued (most visibly by Claire Bishop), for its conciliatory, non-contestational approach to sociopolitical status/identity/climate, it remains part of the conversation around the status and efficacy of participatory, socially engaged art today.

Clifford, James. "On Ethnographic Surrealism." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 23, no. 4 (1981): 539–64.

Clifford looks at how surrealism and ethnography connected in Paris between the two world wars, chronicling ethnography's transition from a more fluid to a more institutionalized form. He describes modernity's relationship to the "other" as a crucial element of research at this time, defining ethnography as this time as related to collage, a kind of "participant observation among defamiliarized cultural reality (making the familiar strange)", and describes how the surrealist ethnographer "delights in cultural impurities", as both disciplines share an abandonment of distinction between high and low, vulgar and sublime

Debord, Guy. *Society Of The Spectacle*. Detroit, Michigan: Black & Red, 1977.  
Harper, Glenn, and Twylene Moyer, eds. *Artists Reclaim the Commons: New Works-New Territories-New Publics*. Perspectives on Contemporary Sculpture, vol. 5. Hamilton, New Jersey: ISC Press, 2013.

In this critique of social relations under Capitalism, Debord analyses the "society of the spectacle", an overwhelming ecology of images that desensitizes and alienates, fracturing society. He outlines modes of *détournement* that allow artists and others to break through the spectacle to reclaim reality.

**Helguera, Pablo. *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Techniques Handbook*. Bethesda, MD: Jorge Pinto Books, 2011.**

Helguera draws on histories of performance, pedagogy, ethnography and sociology alongside artistic precedents to frame possibilities, challenges and best practices in socially engaged art (SEA), reiterating the need for artists working in this vein to pull from many disciplines. His approach resonates with me in that he presents SEA as a practice with strong affinity to the field of education requiring parallel skills and approaches from inquiry-based methods and participant engagement to facilitation of discussions and hands-on activities.

Loa, Valentina Rojas, and Christen V. Wissel. "Urban Social Sustainability and Socially Engaged Art Practice: Two Lit Reviews." Goldsmiths, TUM, 2013. [http://www.urbandialogues.de/uploads/pdf/biotopes/9UB\\_RojasLoa\\_Wissel\\_Socially\\_Engaged\\_Art.pdf](http://www.urbandialogues.de/uploads/pdf/biotopes/9UB_RojasLoa_Wissel_Socially_Engaged_Art.pdf).

Sholette, Gregory, and Lucy R. Lippard. "Delirium and Resistance: Art After the Social Turn." In *Delirium and Resistance: Activist Art and the Crisis of Capitalism*, edited by Kim Charnley, 210–67. London: Pluto Press, 2017.

Analyzing the problematic but inevitable entanglement of socially engaged art and late Capitalism, Sholette attempts a "tactical détournement" to lay bare, disrupt, and reroute normalized assumptions about how this kind of art functions socially and politically. Drawing on critiques like those of Bishop, Sholette focuses in this chapter on looking back at the failures and successes of social practice projects (and the sociopolitical context in which they occurred) as a means of charting a future less paradoxically beholden to the very systems many practitioners claim to critique.

Sholette, Gregory, and Nato Thompson, eds. *The Interventionists: Users' Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life*. 2nd edition. North Adams, Mass.: Cambridge, Mass: MASS MoCA, 2006.

#### **D. Aesthetics, perception, and ecological degradation: making art in the so-called Anthropocene**

*This section is an attempt to address my fascination with observing and interpreting the world through art in concert with my concerns around creating aesthetically compelling objects and experiences in a moment of ecological degradation. Rendering ecological degradation and slow violence perceptible through art requires a delicate balance of beauty and hope alongside the mission to reveal ugly situations that are often hidden from view. The theorists included here (and many others sprinkled throughout this bibliography) provide various frameworks for understanding why this pursuit is worthwhile, and possibilities for how to do it effectively.*

Davis, Heather, and Etienne Turpin. *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters Among Aesthetics, Politics, Environments and Epistemologies*. Open Humanities Press, 2015. [https://doi.org/10.26530/OAPEN\\_560010](https://doi.org/10.26530/OAPEN_560010).

An overview of how contemporary artists are approaching the current environmental crises intermixed with various scholarly approaches to thinking through the aesthetic,



philosophical, and political implications of the 6th Extinction and the so-called Anthropocene.

— — —. **“Art & Death: Lives Between the Fifth Assessment & the Sixth Extinction.”** In *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters Among Aesthetics, Politics, Environments and Epistemologies*. Open Humanities Press, 2015. [https://doi.org/10.26530/OAPEN\\_560010](https://doi.org/10.26530/OAPEN_560010).

This introductory chapter, including a summary of the Anthropocene debate, deals largely with the difficulties associated with perceiving environmental change. The authors frame environmental degradation as essentially an aesthetic, sensorial phenomenon, one which art, depending on how it is practiced, is well equipped to help us perceive and process.

Morton, Timothy. *Ecology without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics*. First Edition edition. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009.

**Phillips, Perdita. “Artistic Practices and Ecoaesthetics in Post-Sustainable Worlds.”** In *An Introduction to Sustainability and Aesthetics: The Arts and Design for the Environment*, edited by C. Crouch, N. Kaye, and J. Crouch, 55–68. Boca Raton, Florida: Brown Walker Press, 2015.

Phillips creates a useful lexicon for categorizing modes of environmental art based a set "sensibilities" she finds in play across multiple artists' practices, while remaining attentive to the need to do more than create images and narratives that reveal or foretell apocalypse, a mode of environmental thought she terms "zombie environmentalism".

#### **E. Artworks representing themes and issues in 1A-1D (largely North American and European 20th-21st Century practices, with some infusions from Asia, Africa, Latin America)**

Allora, Jennifer, and Guillermo Calzadilla. *Landmark (Foot Prints)*. 2002 2001. Photographic documentation of performance. <http://artmuseum.princeton.edu/collections/objects/58068>.

Cited by McKee in "The Ends of Environmentalism" as a new form of sociopolitically engaged land art, the photographs in this series document participants in the project trespassing on a US Navy base in Vieques, Puerto Rico, in an act of civil disobedience. The artists were involved in a long term struggle for land reform and environmental justice on the island of Vieques, which was used as a US bombing range.

Alves, Maria Thereza. *Seeds of Change*. 1999-ongoing. Installation. <http://www.mariatherezaalves.org/works/seeds-of-change?c=47>.

An example of politically engaged environmental art working with living seeds and plants to explore issues around migration, colonization, and globalization.

Balkin, Amy. *This Is the Public Domain*. 2003-ongoing. Conceptual artwork. <http://www.thisisthepublicdomain.org/>.

A conceptual artwork grounded in physical space, this project is an attempt to create a permanent international commons. The concept, physical land, and process all become

part of the project, which touches on issues around private property, legal strategies, mineral rights, and collective land ownership.

Beuys, Joseph. *7,000 Trees*. 1982. Installation.

Beuys' concept of Social Sculpture is an important precursor to my own focus on eco-social art and public fieldwork. This piece in particular, with its focus on urban ecology, civic engagement, a long time frame for slow change, and geographic distribution in public space, feels particularly relevant to my practice.

Chin, Mel. *Revival Field*. ongoing 1990. Installation.

An influential example of art-science collaboration forming new knowledge, Chin's groundbreaking work combined plant-based bioremediation with slow, site-specific sculpture in a way that demonstrated the agency of efficacy of plants in absorbing toxic heavy metals.

Critical Art Ensemble, Beatriz da Costa, and Shyh-shiun Shyu. *Free Range Grain*. April 2003. Performative action. <http://critical-art.net/?p=79>.

A performative intervention meant to expand public literacy and capacity around the issue of GMO foods, CAE's Free Range Grain provides an example of their "contestational biology" framework in action.

Da Costa, Beatriz. *Pigeon Blog*. 2006. Participatory project.

An example of a multi-pronged "public experiment" that generated new knowledge and new publics for the important environmental justice issue of air pollution in a novel and accessible form that involved multispecies co-production with local pigeon fanciers.

Denes, Agnes. *Wheat Field*. 1982. Installation. <http://www.agnesdenesstudio.com/works7.html>.

An iconic intervention that relates to the legacy of heroic earth art but alters it by creating a productive landscape in an accessible setting that changes over time through the contributions of plants and people who grow and tend respectively.

Future Farmers. *Soil Kitchen*. 2011. Participatory project. <http://www.futurefarmers.com/soilkitchen/>.

A participatory project combining soil science, environmental justice, and food sovereignty, this site-specific intervention in an urban neighborhood in North Philadelphia is a good example of socially engaged art that draws on multiple disciplines to address an intersectional environmental issue.

Mattingly, Mary. *Swale: A Floating Food Forest*. 2016-ongoing. Participatory project.

Mendieta, Ana. *Siluetas Series*. 1973-77. Performance.

Mosher, Eve. *High Water Line: Visualizing Climate Change*. 2007-ongoing. Performative action. <http://highwaterline.org/>.

Simun, Miriam. *Agalinis Dreams*. 2014. Multisensory experience/installation.

Smithson, Robert. *Asphalt Rundown*. 1969. Earthwork. <https://www.robertsmithson.com/earthworks/asphalt.htm>.

Sonfist, Alan. *Time Landscape*. 1965-ongoing. Earth, indigenous trees, bushes and flowers. [http://www.alansonfist.com/landscapes\\_time\\_landscape\\_description.html](http://www.alansonfist.com/landscapes_time_landscape_description.html).

Ukeles, Mierle Laderman. *Manifesto for Maintenance Art, 1969!* 1969. Text work.

## 2. **Intersectional Environmentalism & Multispecies Ethics** (redefining nature towards multispecies ecological justice)

*This section provides a critical examination of the development of American environmentalism, in some cases in contrast to the environmentalism of Europe and the so-called Global South. Drawing on feminist theory, postcolonial and decolonial studies and the environmental humanities, these texts come together to advocate for an intersectional approach to environmentalism and ecological justice that is context-responsive rather than universal. Also important to this discussion are historical and contemporary perceptions of nature, and the recent rise in posthuman and multispecies approaches to environmental thought.*

### A. **Environment & Feminist Theory: Ecofeminisms, Feminist posthumanism, Feminist Science Studies**

Alaimo, Stacy. "Ecofeminism without Nature?" *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 10, no. 3 (September 1, 2008): 299–304. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616740802185551>.

An exploration of the implications (positive and negative) of aligning feminism and environmentalism, through a review another article that looks at ecofeminism as an "engaged mode of theory" and attempts to dispel charges of essentialism. She applauds this attempt, but critiques the way nature and environment are "backgrounded" in the article.

Bellacasa, María Puig de la. *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More than Human Worlds*. University of Minnesota Press, 2017. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/j.ctt1mmfspt>.

Here Bellacasa rethinks care in a multispecies context, in conversation with its uses in feminist theory and science and technology studies. Case studies focus on caring for living soil in a permaculture setting, which relates to my work with soil and plants.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." *The University of Chicago Legal Forum* 140 (1989): 139–167.

In an influential paper that coined the now popular term intersectionality, Crenshaw describes how flattened protected categories systematically oppress black women, not just in legal antidiscrimination cases, but also in feminist and antiracist scholarship. She calls for a multidimensional axis for black feminism that takes into account multiple, intersecting forms of oppression based on gender and race.

**Gaard, Greta. *Critical Ecofeminism*. Lexington Books, 2017.**

Gaard reboots and reframes ecofeminism, building on the movement's roots, especially the work of Australian feminist philosopher Val Plumwood, while addressing critiques around essentialism, representation and equity in the face of global and local environmental crises. Dialoguing with posthuman and multispecies scholarship, she finds common influences springing from ecofeminist theory and draws out the strengths of ecologically engaged intersectional feminism in the current moment.

**Haraway, Donna J. *When Species Meet*. University of Minnesota Press, 2008. <https://www.upress.umn.edu/book-division/books/when-species-meet>.**

— — —. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. First Edition edition. Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2016.

Jackson, Zakiyyah Iman. "Animal: New Directions in the Theorization of Race and Posthumanism." Edited by Kalpana Rahita Seshadri, Michael Lundblad, and Mel Y. Chen. *Feminist Studies* 39, no. 3 (2013): 669–85.

Jackson challenges posthumanism regarding what she sees as the field's ongoing commitment to rational modes of knowing based in enlightenment humanism, calling for posthumanism to put other ways of knowing on the table right beside western scientific and cultural-academic knowledge.

**Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. "A History of Weediness." In *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton University Press, 2011.**

Through the lens of ethnographic work carried out among semi-nomadic agroforesters in the Indonesian rainforest, Tsing explores how the rigid dichotomy of wild/"empty" land versus cultivated/"developed" land is necessary for certain forms of colonization, in that it obscures gradations between wild and cultivated, making it tenable to erase lifeways that don't neatly subscribe to either pole. This obscuring mechanism hides a whole system of social-ecological inhabitation of the forest, a weedy agroecology in which humans interact with the forest as a simultaneously social and ecological space that is never fully cultivated or fully wild.

— — —. "The Buck, the Bull, and the Dream of the Stag: Some Unexpected Weeds of the Anthropocene." *Suomen Antropologi: Journal of the Finnish Anthropological Society* 42, no. 1 (March 2017): 3–21.

— — —. *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015.

**B. Critical Plant Studies: recent genesis and application to art, connection animal studies and multispecies ethnography**

De Blois, Ariane. "Beyond Zoocentrism: An Interview with Giovanni Aloï." *Esse Arts + Opinions*. Accessed April 2, 2018. <http://esse.ca/en/beyond-zoocentrism-interview-giovanni-aloï>.

Aloï lays out his impressions of the history of animal studies and its relationship to anthropocentrism in modern and contemporary art, then fleshes out how non-human studies have expanded in recent years, moving beyond zoocentrism in ways that inform and intermix with environmental art.

**Gibson, Prudence. *The Plant Contract: Art's Return to Vegetal Life*. Brill Rodopi, 2018. <https://brill.com/abstract/title/35267>.**

Applying the emerging field of critical plant studies to look at recent art practices that engage the vegetal, Gibson draws on Michael Marder's concept of plant agency and difference. She cites a range of artistic project that shift human thinking about plants, leading to a greater sense of entanglement with and responsibility to more-than-human others.

Kirksey, Eben, ed. *The Multispecies Salon*. Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2014.

Marder, Michael. "Plant Intentionality and the Phenomenological Framework of Plant Intelligence." *Plant Signaling & Behavior* 7, no. 11 (November 1, 2012): 1365–72. <https://doi.org/10.4161/psb.21954>.

— — —. *Plant-Thinking: A Philosophy of Vegetal Life*. Columbia University Press, 2013.

Myers, Natasha. "Sensing Botanical Sensoria: A Kriya for Cultivating Your Inner Plant." Centre for Imaginative Ethnography. Accessed September 1, 2018. <http://imaginativeethnography.org/imaginings/affect/sensing-botanical-sensoria/>.

Nealon, Jeffrey T. "Preface." In *Plant Theory: Biopower and Vegetable Life*, 1 edition. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2015. <http://www.sup.org/books/extra/?id=23486&i=Preface.html>.

Drawing on and expanding the Foucauldian critique of biopower, Nealon asks how this critique functions if vegetal life becomes part of the equation

Pollan, Michael. *The Botany of Desire: A Plant's-Eye View of the World*. New York, NY: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2002.

Wohlleben, Peter, and Tim Flannery. *The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate—Discoveries from a Secret World*. Translated by Jane Billinghurst. First English Edition edition. Greystone Books, 2016.

**A. The Evolution of Environmentalism: emergence, stasis, arrival of the so-called Anthropocene (focus on North American context with some decolonial and postcolonial international perspectives)**

Carson, Rachel, Linda Lear, and Edward O. Wilson. *Silent Spring*. Anniversary edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002.

A foundational work in the formation of the American environmental movement, Carson's work continues to resonate for its prescient approach to ecology as a multispecies system and for her resolutely interdisciplinary approach to taking on big industry and agriculture.

Cronon, William. "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." In *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, edited by William Cronon, 69–90. New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 1995.

This influential essay continues to inform debates about how the myth of wilderness influences American attitudes towards conservation, preservation and environmental justice.

Guha, Ramachandra. "Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique." In *Environmental Ethics*, edited by Craig Hanks, 71–83. Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

Guha makes a salient critique of deep ecology from the perspective of a "sympathetic outsider" worried that the movement universalizes something that is deeply American and would be problematically imperialist and colonizing were it to be exported around the world. After summarizing the tenets of deep ecology he contrasts them with the environmentalism of the global south, showing how they grow from different roots, especially with regard to American conceptions of wilderness and recreation.

**Heise, Ursula. *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.**

Heise makes the case for eco-cosmopolitanism, a form of ecological awareness that does not fetishize an enduring attachment to a specific place or piece of land, but rather respects nomadism and global connectivity, as essential aspects of contemporary environmental awareness. Writing from an eco-critical perspective, she draws on the work of writers, filmmakers, and visual artists to illuminate her arguments, well also citing well known theorists of environmental thought and social systems, from Gary Snyder to Ulrich Beck.

**Kimmerer, Robin Wall. *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*. Milkweed Editions, 2015.**

Through telling a range of stories about her own research in botany and biology and her life as an indigenous woman in the dominantly white, male field of science, Kimmerer explores how traditional ecological knowledge and scientific ecological knowledge can

complement one another, using her connection to plant-people as a lens and jumping off point.

Kirksey, Eben. *Emergent Ecologies*. Duke University Press, 2015.

Mann, Charles C. *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*. 1st edition. New York: Vintage Books, 2006.

In this text Mann outlines recent archaeological research that further rebukes the fallacy that the Americas were pristine, un-peopled wilderness before Europeans arrived. Particularly relevant for my own work with constructions of nature and wildness is the evidence he presents around around the biocultural histories of Amazonian forests. Based on soil and seed-based archeology, he describes how they were actually gardened food forests in which humans and plants producing forest products valuable to humans lived in reciprocal exchange.

— — —. *1493: Uncovering the New World Columbus Created*. Reprint edition. New York: Vintage, 2012.

Here Mann chronicles the exchange of plants, animals and humans post-1492 by tracing products and organisms that had a significant role to play in the Columbian Exchange. Most relevant for my research is a chapter on Sweet Potatoes in Eastern Asia, and the spread of forest plantations in China.

Marris, Emma. *The Rambunctious Garden: Saving Nature in a Post-Wild World*. Reprint edition. New York: Bloomsbury USA, 2013.

Mathews, Freya. “From Biodiversity-Based Conservation to an Ethic of Bio-Proportionality.” *Biological Conservation* 200, no. Supplement C (August 1, 2016): 140–48. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2016.05.037>.

Merchant, Carolyn. *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution*. Harper Collins, 1990.

**Moore, Jason W. *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital*. New York: Verso, 2015.**

**Nixon, Rob. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2011.**

Contrasting so-called first and third world environmentalism in order to uncover the durational, often invisible causes and effects of inequitably distributed environmental devastation, the author sees creative writing as a means to better understand and illuminate these processes and those who struggle against them.

Okuyade, Ogaga. “African Cultural Art Forms, Eco-Activism, and (Eco)-Logical Consciousness.” In *Eco-Critical Literature: Regreening African Landscapes*. African Books Collective, 2013. <https://muse.jhu.edu/chapter/972636/pdf>.

Shellenberger, Michael, and Ted Nordhaus. "Post-Environmentalism." In *Land, Art: A Cultural Ecology Handbook*, edited by Max Andrews, First Edition edition. Edinburgh: Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manuf, 2006.

An updated response to the authors' controversial 2003 NY Times Op Ed arguing that mainstream American environmentalism has been so ineffective galvanizing widespread public support that it should be declared dead and rebooted under another name.

Young, Ayana. *Robin Wall Kimmerer on Indigenous Knowledge for Earth Healing /35 (Encore)*. For the Wild. Accessed August 7, 2018. <http://forthewild.world/listen/robin-wall-kimmerer-on-indigenous-knowledge-for-earth-healing-35-encore>.

### 3. Disturbance Ecologies and Urban Livability: Perspectives from ecology, urban studies and science studies

*This section focuses on sources from the ecological sciences, offset with context and analysis from science studies and urban studies texts that look at ecology, biology and urban environments (where ecosystems are in a constant state of disturbance). Emphasis is placed on practices and theories from these fields that are relevant to contemporary urban life, offer multispecies perspectives and/or provide tools for the advancement of social and ecological justice. This includes community-based or "citizen" science, referred to here as grassroots science.*

#### A. Urban Ecology: domestication, weediness and novel ecosystems

*This subsection includes theories and concepts from urban ecology that have influenced my approach to interacting with and sharing my enthusiasm for urban ecosystems. Whether described as novel ecosystems or feral or weedy landscapes, these anthropogenically disturbed sites are unprecedented, as far as we know, in the history of Earth and need to be studied and understood for myriad reasons. Even so, they remain controversial in the ecological sciences and divisive in a broader cultural context.*

Bramanti, Lorenzo, and Giovanni Santangelo. "Ecology through Time, an Overview." *Rivista di biologia* 99 (2006) N. 3, no. 3 (2006): 395–424. <https://doi.org/10.1400/57247>.

A brief review of the history of the discipline of ecology, emphasizing its multidisciplinary approach, key to its evolution from the mid 20th Century to today, including its struggles to be understood as a legitimate discipline, ongoing challenges to getting access to data on a large scale as humans increasingly impact the landscape, and exciting directions and developments in the field moving forward.

Branas, Charles C., Rose A. Cheney, John M. MacDonald, Vicky W. Tam, Tara D. Jackson, and Thomas R. Ten Have. "A Difference-in-Differences Analysis of Health, Safety, and Greening Vacant Urban Space." *American Journal of Epidemiology* 174, no. 11 (December 1, 2011): 1296–1306. <https://doi.org/10.1093/aje/kwr273>.

Writing from a public health and epidemiology perspective, the authors describe the impacts of urban greenspace based on a study of "treated" and "untreated" vacant lots across a decade in Philadelphia. They find that "treated" or "greened" vacant lots (which



have been "cleaned up" according to a defined standard) have positive results with regard to gun violence and the day to day health of residents.

Cook-Patton, Susan C., Scott H. McArt, Amy L. Parachnowitsch, Jennifer S. Thaler, and Anurag A. Agrawal. "A Direct Comparison of the Consequences of Plant Genotypic and Species Diversity on Communities and Ecosystem Function." *Ecology* 92, no. 4 (April 1, 2011): 915–23. <https://doi.org/10.1890/10-0999.1>.

In this ecology study of biodiversity and genetic diversity among communities of evening primrose plants, the author finds that both genetic diversity within species and biodiversity among species is important for supporting insect diversity. Evening primrose is a plant I work with frequently. It thrives in urban areas, and is often discounted as a weed. As we move through the bottleneck of the 6th mass extinction, it's important to understand the many kinds of diversity that help make a strong, stable ecosystem. A study like this proves that, once again, plants are harboring more complexity that meets the eye.

**Gould, Stephen Jay. "An Evolutionary Perspective on Strengths, Fallacies, and Confusions in the Concept of Native Plants." *Arnoldia* 58, no. 1 (1998): 2–10.**

Gould analyses the biology and evolutionary status of native vs. introduced plants, debunking many deeply held but illogical assumptions about the primacy and superiority of nativeness. In the process he unearths troubling parallels with derogatory rhetoric around human migration.

**Hobbs, Richard J., Eric S. Higgs, and Carol Hall. *Novel Ecosystems: Intervening in the New Ecological World Order*. New York, UNITED KINGDOM: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2013. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rpi/detail.action?docID=1120678>.**

Kremer, Peleg, Zoé A. Hamstead, and Timon McPhearson. "A Social–Ecological Assessment of Vacant Lots in New York City." *Landscape and Urban Planning* 120, no. Supplement C (December 1, 2013): 218–33. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2013.05.003>.

Lidström, Susanna, and Simon West. "An Interdisciplinary Perspective on Invasive Alien Species." *PLOS Ecology Community* (blog). Accessed December 16, 2017. <http://blogs.plos.org/ecology/2017/10/18/an-interdisciplinary-perspective-on-invasive-alien-species/>.

**MacDougall, Andrew S., and Roy Turkington. "Are Invasive Species the Drivers or Passengers of Change in Degraded Ecosystems?" *Ecology* 86, no. 1 (January 1, 2005): 42–55. <https://doi.org/10.1890/04-0669>.**

**Plumwood, Val. "Decolonising Australian Gardens: Gardening and the Ethics of Place – AHR." *Australian Humanities Review*, no. 36 (2005). <http://australianhumanitiesreview.org/2005/07/01/decolonising-australian-gardens-gardening-and-the-ethics-of-place/>.**

Pasquali, Michela. "Beyond Gardens." Edited by Giovanni Aloï. *Antennae: The Journal of Nature in Visual Culture*, no. 18 (2011): 6–10.

**Pearce, Fred. *The New Wild: Why Invasive Species Will Be Nature's Salvation*. Reprint edition. Place of publication not identified: Beacon Press, 2016.**

Pickett, Steward T. A., Mary L. Cadenasso, Daniel L. Childers, Mark J. McDonnell, and Weiqi Zhou. "Evolution and Future of Urban Ecological Science: Ecology in, of, and for the City." *Ecosystem Health and Sustainability* 2, no. 7 (July 1, 2016): n/a-n/a. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ehs2.1229>.

Tredici, Peter Del, and Steward T. A. Pickett. *Wild Urban Plants of the Northeast: A Field Guide*. 1 edition. Ithaca: Comstock Publishing Associates, 2010.

## **B. Urban land use politics: Public space & connection to place, the commons, multispecies cohabitation**

Cadena, Marisol de la. "Uncommoning Nature." In *Supercommunity: Diabolical Togetherness Beyond Contemporary Art*, edited by E-Flux, Julieta Aranda, Brian Kuan Wood, and Anton Vidokle, 423–32. London; New York: Verso, 2017. <http://supercommunity.e-flux.com/texts/uncommoning-nature/>.

Foster, Sheila. "City as an Ecological Space: Social Capital and Urban Land Use, The." *Notre Dame L. Rev.*, January 1, 2006, 527.

An analysis of how property law relates to the ecological reality of flows of toxins and effects of intensive land use. The author asks questions about how social capital plays a role in the way urban commons (the common flow of ecological systems across property) are accounted for and regulated.

Harvey, David, Andrew Herod, Melissa Wright, and Nik Heynen. *Social Justice and the City*. Revised edition. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009.

Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. 1 edition. Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 1992.

**Paperson, La. "A Ghetto Land Pedagogy: An Antidote for Settler Environmentalism." *Environmental Education Research* 20, no. 1 (January 2, 2014): 115–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504622.2013.865115>.**

In this critique of settler environmentalism and its role in environmental education in urban environments, the author provides an outline for how educators can follow a decolonial path, offering "storied land" as a framework that is more suited than "place" to dealing with issues of land justice. The author describes the framework as a "decolonizing cartography", suggesting that alternative ways of seeing and knowing the land will help educators avoid the settler logic of "terra sacer, or sacred/accursed land" often used "to describe ghettos as wastelands ripe for rescue by ecological settlers."

Robbins, Paul, and Julie Sharp. "Turfgross Subjects: The Political Economy of Urban Monoculture." In *In the Nature of Cities: Urban Political Ecology and the Politics of Urban Metabolism*, edited by Nik Heynen, Maria Kaika, and Erik Swyngedouw, 1 edition. London; New York: Routledge, 2006.

**Stoetzer, Bettina. "Ruderal Ecologies: Rethinking Nature, Migration, and the Urban Landscape in Berlin." *Cultural Anthropology* 33, no. 2 (May 30, 2018): 295–323. <https://doi.org/10.14506/ca33.2.09>.**

**C. Science Studies: Grassroots science, ecology, environmental justice, and multiple ways of knowing**

**Alaimo, Stacy. *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.**

A feminist, materialist analysis of how non-human, non-biotic materials have agency and intermix with human bodies, entangling what we typically think of as a division between "humans" and "nature", and how those divisions and overlaps collide in science and politics.

Bakke, Monika. "Art for Plants' Sake? Questioning Human Imperialism in the Age of Biotech." *Parallax* 18, no. 4 (November 1, 2012): 9–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2012.713196>.

In the context of accelerating interest in plants both as the subjects of experimentation in biotech and as sentient beings to whom we owe ethical consideration, Bakke reviews artistic practices involving living plants. In the projects reviewed, she finds a means of approaching ecological and philosophical questions that can help bridge "bottom-up" and "top-down" approaches to human-plant ethics. In the process she explores issues around anthropocentrism, domestication and natural and post-natural genetic selection, while also musing on role of artist as caretaker, oppressor and subversive.

Bastian, Michelle, Owain Jones, Niamh Moore, and Emma Roe. "Towards a More-than-Human Participatory Research." In *Participatory Research in More-than-Human Worlds*. Taylor & Francis, 2016.

This collection explores methods for combining participatory research & emerging more-than-human approaches as one method for building a more just multispecies world in the face of environmental crises. This chapter recounts a series of "speculative field experiments" designed to test ways of working with nonhumans as research partners.

**Corburn, Jason. *Street Science. [Electronic Resource]: Community Knowledge and Environmental Health Justice. Urban and Industrial Environments*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005.**

A collection of case-studies of community-driven science brought together under the framework of "street science", and framework that emphasizes the value of local

knowledge and agency in identifying and addressing issues around public health and environmental injustice.

Gómez-Barris, Macarena. "Beyond the Extractive View: Decolonial Futures." *Social Text Online* (blog), June 7, 2018. [https://socialtextjournal.org/periscope\\_article/decolonial-futures/](https://socialtextjournal.org/periscope_article/decolonial-futures/).

Gomez-Barris summarizes her research around "The Extractive Zone" and expands it to reflect on the artists, activists and scholars gathered in this collection of Social Text articles. She emphasizes methods for "challenging and subverting the extractive logics" that have been in place since 1492 but have intensified in the last 40 years.

Rathwell, Kaitlyn, and Derek Armitage. "Art and Artistic Processes Bridge Knowledge Systems about Social-Ecological Change: An Empirical Examination with Inuit Artists from Nunavut, Canada." *Ecology and Society* 21, no. 2 (May 6, 2016). <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-08369-210221>.

Stengers, Isabelle. *Another Science Is Possible: A Manifesto for Slow Science*. Translated by Stephen Muecke. 1 edition. Cambridge; Medford, MA: Polity, 2018. [https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libproxy.rpi.edu/lib/rpi/detail.action?docID=5226119#goto\\_toc](https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libproxy.rpi.edu/lib/rpi/detail.action?docID=5226119#goto_toc).

Stengers makes the case for a science that is less oriented towards conquest and destruction in favor of one that reconnects with a sense of adventure and discovery. Describing the professionalization of science by referring to Whitehead's characterization of "minds in a groove" she questions the style of rapid, competitive knowledge production that has become the status quo in much university and commercial research today.

**Subramaniam, Banu. *Ghost Stories for Darwin: The Science of Variation and the Politics of Diversity*. 1st Edition edition. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2014.**

Asking what practicing feminist science might look like, STS scholar and biologist Subramaniam recounts her experiences in genetic research with plants and the intersections between her cultural background, status as a woman of color practicing science, and the way issues of diversity and difference are approached within ecology and culture at large.

Verran, Helen. "A Postcolonial Moment in Science Studies: Alternative Firing Regimes of Environmental Scientists and Aboriginal Landowners." *Social Studies of Science* 32, no. 5–6 (December 1, 2002): 729–62. <https://doi.org/10.1177/030631270203200506>.