Community of Practice in Ecosystem Approaches to Health

### CoPEH-Canada

Communauté de pratique sur les approches écosystémiques de la santé

### Meaning and Motivation: Working with Narratives in Ecosystem Approaches to Health

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### **CONNECTS WITH:**

### All modules

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### INTRODUCTION

### **Description**

"Every structure is kept in place by stories.

The current narrative is crumbling.

Plant your story in cracks where existed before only steel.

This is how we will grow a living anthology."

-Mark Gonzales in Quinn (2024b)

It was March 2020. We were still wearing pyjama bottoms, but not comfortably. Our fingers had memorized the motions necessary to refresh our favorite (or rather habitual) source of COVID statistics. Our days were endless cycles of zoom and doom. At CoPEH-Canada, we were in the thick of planning our yearly hybrid field course. Our first instinct was to cancel the course all together. It was to be our 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of running this course on ecosystem approaches to health. For many of the organizers, myself included, it was normally a highpoint of the year. Amongst all the other losses, we were reluctant to lose this opportunity to collaborate across the country with like-minded colleagues. We were also aware that students and professionals might need an opportunity to connect and build relationships too.

But what was a course that taught about the importance of participation and land, without being able to meet people on the land?

It certainly was an enigma. Meanwhile, many of us had turned the new-found quiet into an opportunity to do more of what we loved, including reading. I, like many others, had maxed out my library card (and my children's cards at that) on March 13<sup>th</sup>. I was lucky enough to be in a neighbourhood with a lot of options for being in nature, but I acutely felt the sudden lack of interaction with humans other than my immediate family. The books I had swept off the shelves at the library, and the characters in them, became my friends (and also enemies).

We were quickly coming to the decision to hold the course, taking advantage of four years of a hybrid, cross-Canadian model and building out online innovations. I suggested 'assigning' a novel



for the course, as a way to bring the land and people into learners' lives. Not only as an antidote to the loneliness and isolation, but as an opportunity for real connection and insights into issues at the interface of ecosystems, society and health. Looking for books that could fit the bill was a true pleasure for me in the months of March and April.

The activity was so appreciated during the two years that we ran an online-only version of the course, that we decided to keep the readings in 2022, when we went back into the field. Since then, we have expanded our offering of narrative components in the course and this module is intended to share some of what we have developed with the world.

As alluded to above, the reading experience was not uniquely joyful. For anyone who has read <u>Small Game Hunting at the Local Coward Gun Club</u>, by Megan Gail Coles, one of the books in my pre-lockdown haul, you know that it is not a joy ride. The narrative experience is often not about settling things, but unsettling them. And I certainly was unsettled by that book.

We have learned through our now five years integrating narratives into our course that giving people a heads up about the journey is essential. Starting with a trauma informed approach, knowing that everyone's response is different, can help people position themselves and be in relation to the journey in a good way. Silencing has been so prominent in Western culture. Stories put us in relation to voices and places in ways that can be uncomfortable or traumatic. Yet connecting to land, place, and story helps us find a path toward expressing the trouble and the joy. Reading is a suspended space and helps us keep with the grief. It is a stirring of our ability to navigate pain. The opposite of a fix-it world or instant gratification. It is about being in relation with self, and self in relation to land and 'other.'

For the purpose of this module, we are working with published narratives. However, we want to acknowledge the value of the stories of the land, the stories of our ancestors, the stories that are not written but passed orally. It is important to consider the role of other types of narratives. Creation stories, for example, play a huge role in shaping sustainability and scientific thinking, both in Western and Indigenous knowledge systems.

There are also many forms of published narrative. Too many to be able to do all of them justice in this module. There is one memoir and several poetry collections offered in the material curated for this module. However, we focus mostly on fiction, and within fiction mostly on long-form, not because it is better than any other form, but because it is where we have some experience to share. We would like to recognize several amazing examples of hybridized forms, for example, Haraway's Staying with the Trouble (2016), Tsing's The Mushroom at the End of the World (2015), Kimmerer's Braiding Sweetgrass (2014), and Johnson & Wilkinson's (ed.) All We Can Save (2021) to name just a few.



We would also like to recognize that narratives and stories are more than a branch of the humanities. As the introductory quote by Mark Gonzales so eloquently states: stories are everywhere. Science and history, for example, follow a narrative structure (Haraway, 2010). The goal of working *intentionally* with narratives is to unsettle us and to harness their transformative potential (else narratives are used to control, pacify, and obscure - eg. Doctrine of Discovery, Code Noir, MAGA). Narratives matter: the stories we tell ourselves about who we are and where we are headed constrain the imagination, and delimit what is seen as (im)possible. As Amitav Ghosh said in his treatise on Climate Change and the Unthinkable, The Great Derangement (2017), "let us make no mistake: the climate crisis is also a crisis of culture, and thus of the imagination" (p.9).

Over the past few months of working on this module, I have realised that it will never be 'finished.' There is so much to say, so much to learn! Please accept this writing as what it is: a humble contribution in a contested space.

Dr. Jena Webb, Lead Author

### **Objectives**

To facilitate the intentional use of narratives in providing new perspectives on complex issues at the confluence of health, ecosystems and society, such as the climate crisis.

### **Guiding Questions**

- 1. What can attentiveness to narratives add to our understanding of complex (wicked) problems?
- 2. How does the form enhance empathy and when does it not?
- 3. How can narratives be used purposefully to create collaboration or consensus?
- 4. What does the narrative form add to our feeling of agency and incentives to move from knowledge to action?
- 5. How can fiction be used to build critical hope?
- 6. How can speculative fiction be used to imagine our way out of the wicked problems we face, or better navigate the predicament they present?
- 7. How can narratives be integrated into teaching on the climate crisis?

### **Working Terms**

Narrative; fiction; speculative fiction; hope/healthpunk; imagination; climate crisis; change making



### **Instructions**

This module is organized into four activities, two of which are ordinarily run over the period of a graduate studies intensive course. A note on how to adapt to shorter training sessions is provided at the end of each of the two longer activities.

**Note to facilitators**: Many of the topics dealt with in narratives relevant to Ecosystem Approaches to Health are difficult to talk about and can be experienced as traumatic. You may want to provide trigger warnings, although this practice has been critiqued (Bridgland et al., 2024). Consider instead to offer a reminder to participants to take care of themselves and their current situation when they choose a book and while engaging with this material. Taking a trauma and culturally sensitive approach to facilitating this work has benefits for participants. Here are two tools that can help with this from the 'Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures Collective' (https://decolonialfutures.net/)

- The bus within us
- The SMDR compass

### **Key content**

One of the principles, or patterns, of Ecosystem approaches to health (Ecohealth) is transdisciplinarity, the process of inviting different ways of knowing, thinking and problem solving into our lives and work. In light of this, we recommend that participants in the CoPEH-Canada course and webinar series on Ecosystem approaches to health engage with narrative forms of inquiry. This is offered as one of the many ways of learning about and interacting with the myriad facets in which environmental change shapes and is shaped by the actions of the human and more-than-human world, not only in the present day but also in the past and far into the future.

The climate, biodiversity, and pollution crises are increasingly viewed not only through a scientific and political lens, but a moral lens (Raghavendran et Wood, 2024). Literature has always been a place where we examine and experiment with life's great issues including mortality, accountability, experience, and aspirations to thrive in a complex world. Ghosh (2016) has cautioned against the overly individualistic nature of morality in literature. But others have emphasized the collective potential, "Art is the conscience of a society and we need more of that now," (paraphrased from Katsi'tsakwas Ellen Gabriel, 2024). Literature offers one entry-point into narrative forms of inquiry, alongside creation stories, memoirs, poetry, graphic novels and many others.

What can narrative forms offer to discussions about health and environmental issues, including the climate crisis, that other modes of discourse do not? Narratives are a way of presenting or understanding a situation or series of events that reflects and promotes a particular point of view or set of values (Merriam Webster, 2024). Narratives can help us understand what environmental changes *mean* to us (and to others), on a personal, emotional, experiential, and philosophical



level (Raghavendran & Wood, 2024). Fiction especially has the capacity to increase empathy by evoking an emotional response in the reader (Bal & Veltcamp, 2013). More specifically, narrative forms can be open to multiple interpretations and, by consequence, to a plurality of truths (which contrast with the positivistic desire for a single-truth) (Simpson, 2014). Further, art, in general, and narrative forms, in particular, can connect with the "metaphoric mind," not only with the "rational mind" which is often over-emphasized in academic spaces (Cajete, 1999).

Narratives offer the possibility to engage with the realities of people with very different lived experiences than our own, some of which are inaccessible to us. Literature, like so many intellectual fields, has historically been dominated by white, privileged male voices; however, in recent years there has been an increase in the publication of literature written by people who are from structurally marginalized groups. With care, it is possible to curate a reading list that provides access to these important and diverse voices. Doing so can support readers and learners to refocus on environmental justice and pathways to decolonise climate politics (Death, 2022). While representation is increasing in all genres, some are specific to portraying non-mainstream points of view, such as afrofuturism (Xausa 2024). Broadening out further we can seek books that imagine the world from the more-than-human perspective (see below) (Kuchta, 2022).

A key to a convincing narrative is keen observation, whether it be of the surroundings, and changes to them, or human behaviour and the unfolding of relationships. Keen observations offered by a skilled author help the reader build insight and understanding into the forces that motivate humans and how their actions impact themselves, their communities and the natural world. In order to produce believable stories, authors often spend years researching a place, period, perspective and topic.

Literature, as an expression of humanity's tendency to share and learn from stories, can help us understand the social constructions that have brought us to the situation that we are in and those that are currently keeping us here. They can also help us imagine a way out of these crises, while recognizing the limits of human imagination (see below). Solution-focused narratives with healthy (critical, grounded) optimism allow us to look for possibilities as well as ways to enact them. Elin Kesley, a Canadian academic, has coined the term evidence-based hope, distinguishing between 'hope,' based on increasing application of existing movements and initiatives, and 'wishing,' a passive reaction (Kesley, 2020). An entire new genre of speculative fiction, HopePunk, is moving in this direction. HopePunk is a term proposed by Alexandra Rowland, author of A Choir of Lies, to offset Grimdark, a particular subgenre of dystopian speculative fiction (think Game of Thrones). Mackenthun (2021) argues that "transition stories that narrate the rebuilding of the world in the midst of crisis are much better instruments in bringing about a human "mindshift" (Göpel) than disaster stories." A sub-genre of HopePunk - HealthPunk, defined as speculative fiction for the future of health - has been initiated by Filip Maric through a series of collections of stories and essays (see: https://healthpunk.co/). In this context, from Afrofuturism (Toliver, 2022; Imarisha & brown, 2015) to scenario planning (Kahane, 2012), cofutures (Chattopadhyay, 2021), 'health

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futurism' (Hancock, 1985; Poland, Parkes et al, 2020) and the global Healthy Cities movement (Behold & Hancock, 2014; Poland, Mashford-Pringle & Bowra, 2020), urban planning for sustainable futures (Lyons et al, 2013), storytelling for change in community organizing (Ganz, 2009, 2011), the 'Work that Reconnects' (Hathaway, 2016; Macy & Brown, 1998; Macy & Johnstone, 2012), the Natural Step's backcasting process (also used in the Alberta Futures Lab), the Transition movement (Hopkins, 2008; Barr & Pollard, 2017), Solarpunk (Shaner, 2022), and Indigenous storytelling traditions (Collier-Jarvis, 2022; Gosling, 2016; Nelson, 2008; https://indigenousfutures.net/), storytelling about the future, infused with hope rather than despair, is what is needed to guide us in the transition to a more life-enhancing future (Poland, 2020). A nuance to the hope discourse comes from Indigenous scholars who claim that their worlds are *already* post-apocalyptic and there is also an important tradition of afro-pesimisms to recognize.

A major contributor to ecological decline is an individualistic and capitalist mindset that encourages overconsumption. Conversely, it is widely recognized that the transformation that is required to repair ecosystems and halt further destruction will be structural and collective in nature. Storytelling is an ancient, collective act that encourages empathy, which will also be necessary for the transition (Raghavendran et Wood, 2023). Science fiction has been a rare bastion of collective conceptions of "humanity" and Hartley (2022) asks, "Can sci-fi inspire collective action at species scale?"

Perhaps the greatest value of narrative, particularly fiction, is that it invites the reader to suspend judgement and enter into the assumptive worlds of the characters and protagonists, something that in deliberative debate we are taught not to do. The reader enters with an openness that may be markedly absent in other non-narrative forums. It has been argued that "fictional energy utopias" can help policy makers and other pivotal implementers to identify and minimize current gaps in sustainable development narratives (Wuebben et al. 2023). More specifically, it has been suggested that greater dialogue between climate modelers and climate fiction would increase the bank of plausible climate futures to model, making the process more democratic and inclusive (Van Beek and Versteeg, 2023). Creative writing and storytelling techniques can be combined with 'health futures' approaches such as the Futures Cone (Hancock and Bezold, 2020) or the 'One Planet' approach (Hancock et al. 2020) to generate futures and scenarios.

Literature, ensconced as it is in our human perspective, should not be seen as a panacea. Some authors argue that human stories may be insufficient to address the crises we are living. Thus, there is a need to familiarize ourselves with the limits of our own ways of knowing, and also start engaging with more-than-human stories, like Indigenous creation stories. Simpson's work (2014) acknowledges the contributions of creation stories to nurture Nishnaabeg lands and culture. Haraway's (2016) stories about the Chthulucene help us work through the connections between speculative fiction and scientific fact. Andreotti's (2016) paper, (Re)imagining education as an uncoercive re-arrangement of desires, starts with the story of encountering a hummingbird in a state

of torpor. Andreotti then uses this story to discuss "how our system of schooling makes us shut down our senses to the world and focus our energies on what goes on in our minds" (p. 82). She argues that "the most important task of education is to sensitize us to the limits of the knowing and being we have been socialized into—it is not about what we don't imagine, but about what we can't imagine—as our imagination is restricted by our projective ontological referents" (p. 86).

Finally, whereas status quo means of instigating the changes needed for an ecological transition have clearly failed, some authors suggest that fiction can better convey the urgency of climate breakdown and therefore spur readers into action more effectively than scientific arguments have been able to (Kaur, 2023). Indeed, an experimental study showed that short fiction in which the protagonist displayed intentional pro-environmental behaviour led to greater intention to engage in pro-environmental action (Sabherwal and Shreedhar, 2022). Narratives of possibility are offered to counter the prevailing narratives of apocalyptic doom and gloom that centre a future dominated by climate chaos, scarcity, social and political upheaval, and societal collapse, not only because they catalyze proactive action (Hopkins, 2008; Macy & Johnson, 2012; Kelsey, 2020; Veland et al, 2018) but also to address burgeoning mental health impacts of climate change and ecological degradation (Clayton et al, 2017; Fritze et al, 2008; Cunselo & Ellis, 2018; Hayes et al, 2018, 2020, 2022; Hayes & Poland, 2018; Logan et al, 2021; Vamvalis, 2023). At a time when people can "more easily imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism" (Jameson, 1994), still true thirty years later, the current polycrisis can be seen first and foremost as a crisis of imagination (Poland, 2020). As Ta-Nehisi Coates wrote in his memoir The Message (2024), "Politics is the art of the possible, but art creates the possible of politics (p106)."

Integrating narratives on environmental topics into Ecosystem approaches to health pedagogy is a natural fit as many have the hallmarks of the six Ecohealth principles built in. From the outset, sharing stories is a transdisciplinary activity focusing on sustainability (by virtue of the choice of narratives). By choosing books by a diversity of authors and representing situations of environmental justice both the principles of equity and participation can be addressed. Some studies have shown, as mentioned above, that narratives could be useful in inciting people to act on the environmental front, making it a promising avenue for knowledge-to-action. And finally, narratives can help us deal with complexity and uncertainty, "Climate change may be a scientific certainty, but the magnitude of its impact on the future of humanity-and of the Earth's ecosystems-cannot be predicted with absolute precision, given the sheer number of factors involved...[story] mirrors the distressing precariousness of our present situation as a species teetering, with many other life forms, on the brink of a global disaster" (Caracciolo, 2020). Fiction's capacity to capture the complexities of relationships could be particularly helpful in forging new paths. Indigenous literature has been pushing the boundaries on 'relational realism,' "they foreground the interplay of realist narrative strategies and relational thinking to emphasise the creative potential of the novel in addressing climate change and the need for communities to come together to save the planet" (Fachinger, 2024).



### **ACTIVITIES**

### Activity 1: Creating didactic presentations integrating narratives Description

This activity provides two types of presentations that educators can share with learners, one that is *about* narratives and the other that uses narratives to illustrate a topic, in the example provided, climate change. One is not exclusive of the other. In fact, for transdisciplinary groups it is sometimes necessary to explain the 'why' of narrative readings up front. If this is the case, the presentation about narrative readings can be given early on in the learning experience, followed by a 'topics' presentation around mid-course. If you are doing the book club (activity 2) or HealthPunk short story writing (activity 3) one or both of these could book end the training programme.

### Presentation 1: Narrative Readings

### **Objectives**

This presentation would be designed to explore with learners the applicability of narrative readings to the understanding of complex relationships between health, society and ecosystems.

### **Directions**

Information from the Introduction to this module can be put into a slide presentation and readings on this topic can be assigned, for example Bal and Veltkamp, 2013; Caracciolo, 2020; de Leeuw et al 2017; Death, 2022; Farrales et al. 2022; Fachinger, 2024; Gislason et al. 2018; Hartley, 2022; Kaur, 2023; Mackenthun, 2021; Sabherwal and Shreedhar, 2022; Simpson, 2014; Van Beek and Versteeg, 2023; Wuebben et al. 2023; Xausa, 2024, which can be found in the references section. Several slides on the why of narratives can be found in the transdisciplinarity section of Presentation 2: How we talk about the climate crisis: Ecosystem approaches to health, the climate and narratives.

An outline, rich with examples from the selected narratives, such as the one provided below can guide skeptics through the ways in which narratives have legitimacy. It is preferable to include narratives that the learners (at least some in the group) are familiar with. So, for example, when we give this presentation, we provide examples from the books on the reading list (appendix A) that illustrate 'equity,' say. And then those books/passages that best illustrate 'participation,' and so on. For an example of how to use narratives that the learners are not necessarily familiar with, see the next section, Presentation 2: How we talk about the climate crisis: Ecosystem approaches to health, the climate and narratives.

- Why narratives?
  - Narratives are everywhere
  - Deepening of our understanding of issues, people and places as a result of authors' rigorous research



- As a way to engage with ethics
- Inquiry into the meaning of change
- o Empathy/emotional response
- o Diverse voices, including the more-than-human
- Keen observations shared by author
- Solution-focused potential
- Collective nature of storytelling, antidote to individualism
- o Broaden plausible climate futures for policy analysis
- o Potential to spur readers into action
- As a way to handle complexity, especially relational complexity
- Narratives and the Ecosystem approaches to health patterns
  - o Equity
  - o Participation
  - Transdisciplinarity
  - Complexity and systems thinking
  - o (Eco)system sustainability
  - Knowledge-to-action

To expand on the point made in the introduction of this module that narratives are everywhere, educators might find this useful. The ontological divide between Nature/Culture did not come from a vacuum. Instead, it is deeply related to religious creation stories in which a Judeo-Christian-Muslim God created the Earth (Nature) for Human enjoyment. At the time of the Enlightenment, when there was a shift from religious ways of governance and knowledge production, the sacred was partly crossed out, but Western science based its core epistemologies (e.g., positivist/realist, constructivist, criticalde) on the basis, leftover from Creation stories, that split Humans from the World. In other words, it is not only Indigenous knowledge systems that are based on Creation stories. This is also the case for much of Western science. Science and story have never been split. For more about the connection between Christianity and sustainability see Haluza-Delay (2000); about how realist, constructivist and critical epistemologies are all based on the ontological divide between Nature and Culture see Jackson (2018) and about the possibility to engage with non-modern worlds in their own ontological terms (in other words, how to engage with knowledge systems that come from different worlding stories in their own terms) see Blaser (2009).

### Presentation 2: How we talk about the climate crisis: Ecosystem approaches to health, the climate and narratives

### **Objectives**

This presentation does three things, not necessarily in this order. It provides information on the climate crisis from a health perspective; it illustrates how ecosystem approaches to health can be applied to the climate crisis; and it illustrates the climate crisis through narratives.

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### **Directions**

You can find the slides to the presentation <u>here</u>. The slide presentation provided is very long. It is intended to provide sufficient examples for you to be able to pick and choose from.

Selecting narratives. It would be difficult to present a book that you have not read, so the slides on the narratives in the presentation provided can serve as inspiration/place holders for you to fill in with your own selection of readings. Some of the discussion questions could be adapted to other stories. Climate fiction is a broad genre and does not necessarily entail catastrophic weather or sea level rise. Books about oil extraction and pollution are on one end of the climate equation, as are solution focused books. Some books examine current challenges by posing a parallel challenge in another world, such as The Fifth Season, by N.K. Jemisin. Some have said that all contemporary fiction is climate fiction and that silences about the climate crisis are also statements, but some genres deal more overtly with this topic than others, such as afrofuturisms (e.g. Parable of the Sower by Octavia E. Butler), solarpunk (anything Kim Stanley Robinson), hopepunk (anything Becky Chambers), and gothic fiction (Salvage the Bones by Jesmyn Ward; Mexican Gothic by Silvia Moreno-García (though this latter is pollution focused not climate)). Providing a spread across genres speaks to more people. Many of the climate focused narratives out there are depressing, and rightly so. Be mindful of providing some hopeful stories in the mix (while also making explicit what the widespread injunction to do so says about the role of 'hope' in contemporary eco-social narratives (Andreotti, 2022)). Hopepunk or utopian futures, such as A Psalm for the Wild-Built, by Becky Chambers, can do this and memoirs by people working toward change, such as Life in the City of Dirty Water, by Clayton Thomas-Müller, can also inspire people. Another way to do it is through humour, for example, The Ministry of Time, by Kaliane Bradley. It is nice to include local as well as global narratives if you are able to cover more than one selection, however, if you can only delve into one story, choosing one that is local or regional (or if there are none, national) has many advantages including relatability, opportunities for linking to outdoor activities (walk and talks), knowledge-to-action, etc..



### OUTLINE of the presentation:

- The climate crisis an environmental AND human issue
- Health impacts of the climate crisis direct and indirect
- Ecosystem approaches to health, the climate crisis and narratives
  - Transdisciplinarity
  - o Equity
  - Ecosystem sustainability
  - Complexity and systems thinking
  - Participation
  - Knowledge to action
- Concluding activity



**Presenting.** The presentation starts with a few slides of introduction outlining the health impacts of the climate crisis. Then the subject is deepened by looking at each of the Ecohealth principles in turn. The order of the principles in the presentation can be modified. The logic in the current order is to begin with transdisciplinarity as a way of introducing the importance of crossing boundaries, using literature as an example. This accomplishes two goals. It illustrates transdisciplinarity and makes an argument for the legitimacy of narratives. The current order then ends purposefully on knowledge-to-action as a segue to a concluding activity that inspires action and hope (see Concluding below). The principles in between have been presented in clockwise order on our Ecohealth patterns wheel beginning with equity, but could be mixed up depending on your goals and timing.

Each section on the six Ecosystem approaches to health principles has five to seven slides on the intersection of climate health and that principle, followed by slides on two narratives that we have read and suggested as stories that exemplify that principle in the context of climate and health. Just to give one example, in Flight Behaviour by Barbara Kingsolver the wintering ground of the monarch butterflies moves to Tennessee and a large number of actors representing different disciplines, sectors and interests get involved in understanding why and to protect them and profit off them. This story is an excellent example of transdisciplinarity in action. Two different ways of presenting the narratives are offered. The first slide provided on a given book would work well for groups that have not necessarily been reading the selection for the course. It gives more background on the plot and provides a selection to read from (in the notes). It is delightful to read from an actual paper book to the class. This provides a pause in delivery style and a move toward something that evokes sharing, sharing a story. Sitting while reading the selection is another neat tip to make the session feel memorable. It is good to prepare your selections ahead of time (see image 1). Each section on an Ecosystem approaches to health principle ends with a slide suggesting activities to carry out in class to reinforce the learning objectives and provide opportunity for discussion.



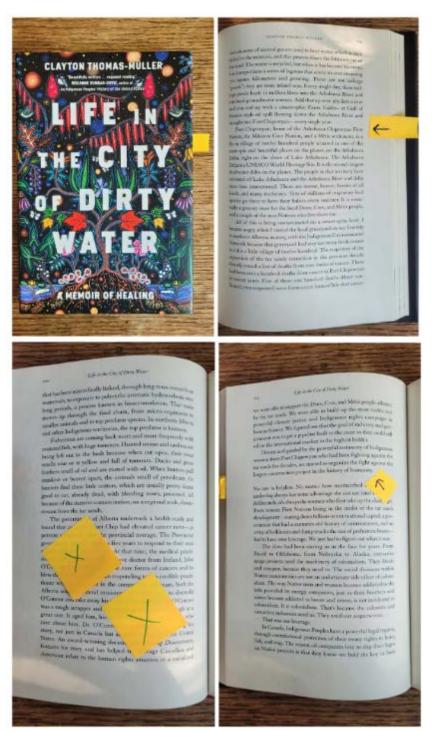


Image 1: Suggestion of how to set up a book reading. Panel 1 - the post-it tab sticks out for easily finding the beginning of the reading. Panel 2 - an arrow indicates which line to begin reading from. Panel 3 - if necessary, post-it notes block out text to skip. Panel 4 - a post-it arrow that does not stick out from the book indicates where to stop reading.



The second slide on the same book is currently masked and provides only a one sentence reminder of the book and then discussion questions for the group. This is intended for groups that have been carrying out the Narrative reading and book club activity (activity 2). It is also possible to combine the two approaches by deleting the one sentence summary on the second slide.

Since narratives are complex, the books offered as examples for each of the Ecosystem approaches to health principles often overlap with other principles. We have indicated the other principles that the selected books could represent in the notes of the first slide-duo on a book.

Concluding. Be mindful of the fact that discussions on the climate crisis can be demoralizing. Acknowledging this is important. Providing pathways toward action and voicing concerns is also important. This should not be left as a simple mention at the end of a presentation, but given time and weight. The second to last slide of the presentation provides several activities that can be done in class at the end of the presentation and before the discussion. Other activities are suggested after the presentation of each principle and could be adapted to concluding activities. Be sure to allocate the required time to the activity or at least to begin the activity with the completion being assigned for out of class work. A debrief of the activity can become part of the discussion that comes after it. If you are breaking the presentation up into several smaller presentations you could end each with one with one of the proposed activities.

**Note on scaling**: If you are giving an entire course on climate change, the presentation could be broken into up to seven parts — an Introduction and one session on each of the principles. An eighth session could conclude the course using activity 2 or 3 from this module. Similarly, if you are only doing a workshop, you could choose one of the principles and focus on that (see here a sample presentation focusing on equity).

Note on pedagogical form: In contrast to many of the CoPEH-Canada modules, this activity, being based on a presentation, tends toward passivity. If the group is reading a narrative for the course, this, in and of itself, is a collective experience and can be taken advantage of in constructive ways. The discussion questions provided in Presentation 2 are one way to make the presentation more interactive and collective. Make sure to leave enough time for a discussion to develop. See also 'Taking the discussion outside' in Activity 2 of this module. In addition to the activities suggested for concluding the entire presentation, along the way we provide suggestions for activities for concluding a presentation on each of the ecohealth patterns, to be used especially if this presentation is being turned into a syllabus for an entire course to break up the "lecture" style. Using these activities or consulting our other modules and integrating the activities presented there into the time in which the material in these didactic presentations are given would offer learners experiential learning as well. Additionally, for a health focused

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activity, Carpenter and Dinno (2024) describe a roleplay exercise based on Octavia Butler's story "Speech Sounds" in Episode 4: "Doing" Science Fiction & Public Health of their podcast series. Kuchta (2022) provides three activities based on the wild pedagogies movement to combine with classes on ecocriticism: Sensory engagement, Deep listening, and Cosmology diary.

**Note on what this presentation is not**: One thing this presentation does not do is provide the science behind climate change. It assumes that the learner would have already taken a climate change 101 type of course. If this is not the case, then you will want to add a session or a few slides on what is actually changing, by how much, how fast, etc.

### Activity 2: Narrative reading and book club

### **Description**

In this activity, narrative readings are pre-selected and the list is shared with participants for them to engage with beginning as soon as possible and throughout the training. The Book Club is an important part of the activity. Many of our current socio-ecological problems are rooted in the fact that Western society is very much turned inward, toward the individual (Andreotti, 2016), yet the transformations that are required of us to surmount or navigate our challenges will inevitably be collective. Throughout human history, storytelling has been a community activity and the "sharing" of stories about our relationship with the land is an important prerequisite to transformation (Simpson, 2014; Raghavendran and Wood, 2023). The Book Club component of this activity gets participants sharing their thoughts about the books and the themes in them.

### Aims/Goals

The aims of this learning activity are to:

- 1. Become immersed in a narrative that touches on themes presented in the course
- 2. Experience a place
- 3. Gain diverse perspectives on an issue
- 4. Reflect on the utility of narratives
- 5. Exchange with others on the narratives and their usefulness

### **Guiding Questions**

- What influence does the perspective of the narrator and the main characters have on the story that is told?
- What links can we make to the land through narratives?
- What does the narrative form evoke for readers that other forms can/do not?
- How can the form be harnessed in addressing complex problems?

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### **Directions**

TOTAL TIME: weeks for the reading and 30+ minutes for the book club

**OBJECTIVE:** To provide context for land-based learning, introduce learners to 'actors' through their stories and stimulate discussion around transdisciplinarity and the use of fiction in ecosystem approaches to health work.

### **OVERVIEW OF LEARNING ACTIVITY**

### STEP 1: Pre-selecting narratives.

Narratives for a course on Ecosystem Approaches to Health should:

- have strong connections to a specific place;
- provide insight into the lived realities of a person/people/non-human being interacting with an ecosystem;
- represent a diversity of perspectives; and
- connect with some or all of the ecosystem approaches to health patterns: social and gender equity, ecosystem sustainability, complexity and systems thinking, participation, transdisciplinarity and knowledge-to-action.

The place-based nature of books can reinforce land-based learning, whether it be in addition to field components or to add a taste of 'place' to on-line only training. Even speculative fiction, set in future or outer space worlds, can have important worldbuilding components that enhance learners' connection to place.

The publishing industry has been, and still is, heavily dominated by White settler perspectives. Aim to represent a variety of voices in the reading list. This can be made into a point for discussion.

Appendix A provides the titles of Canadian novels and poetry collections that we have used in our hybrid course on Ecosystem Approaches to Health from 2020 to 2024. We do not use all of these books in a given year. We tend to offer one or two novels and a poetry collection per site. Offering several types of narrative (e.g. novel, short story collection, poetry, memoir, graphic novel, etc.) provides multiple ways to engage with narratives, recognizing diversity in the interests of the learners. We have made an effort to select authors from a diversity of walks of life and at any given time we aim to have about half of the books written by authors from non-dominant groups.

The Presentation, How we talk about the Climate Crisis: Ecosystem approaches to health, the climate and narratives (activity 1) provides an additional eleven titles specific to Climate Change. Only one of the books in the presentation is also in Appendix A. Since our course is place-based learning in Canada, the books in Appendix A are all set in Canada, whereas six of the books on climate change in the presentation are not. Many of the books in Appendix A were either written in French or have been translated to French and several are only in French.



### STEP 2: Reading and touching on narratives

Sufficient time should be given to participants to interact with the narrative. In the case of novels, it is not always necessary that the book be finished in the time of the training since part of the exercise is to reflect on the form and its application to Ecosystem Approaches to Health. It is useful to come back to the narrative readings often, even if briefly. This can be done by consistently summing up each session of the course by touching on the themes from the session that are illustrated in the narrative(s). Alternatively, a presentation on the readings can be integrated into the course (see activity 1).

### STEP 3: Book Club (30+ minutes)

Once participants have had enough time to delve into their chosen reading, a 'book club' can be organized. The purpose of this is to exchange on the actual story and what participants have learned/reinforced through the readings. If several books have been offered, split the group into subgroups according to which narrative they read (or wish to discuss if they chose several). INSTRUCTIONS for discussion groups (times given are for the minimum 30-minute discussion):

- Introduce yourselves and state where you are at in the book (to avoid spoilers)
   (TOTAL time 5 minutes);
- Give a very general appreciation of the book (TOTAL time 5 minutes);
- Collectively choose which of the six Ecosystem Approaches to Health patterns the book best illustrates (equity, participation, complexity, knowledge to action, transdisciplinarity, (eco)system sustainability) (TOTAL time 10 minutes);
- Choose a quote, scene, character, or another element of the book in support of this claim (TOTAL time 10 minutes).
- Collectively discuss, if there is any part of the chosen narrative that is making you rethink an idea related to Ecosystem Approaches to Health (e.g., advance a concept, challenge an assumption) or engage with it in a different way (e.g., emotionally, bodily)?

Finish the Book Club back in plenary if you have made subgroups. Ask each group to state or put into the chat the principle chosen for their book and supporting evidence. If you have more time (or if you stayed in a large group and by way of conclusion), you can have a general discussion on the pertinence of fiction to Ecosystem approaches to health. The final point in the list above, could be used as a plenary discussion question.

**Taking the discussion outside**: If the training is happening in person, and time and weather permit, it is a good idea to take the discussion outside. The discussion questions can be shared ahead of time and either consulted on personal devices or printed out.

If the book chosen was local, the '<u>Upstream is a place</u>' activities can be modified to visit places mentioned in the book and specific discussion questions can be elaborated for each site. More general discussions can be had while transiting from one site to the next. Books like <u>Brother</u> by



David Chariandy and <u>Tiohtià:ke</u> by Michel Jean, which take place in large urban centers where universities are concentrated, Toronto and Montréal respectively, would lend themselves to this type of activity.

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

If you have more time for the book club, you can add more questions for discussion. These reflective prompts were inspired by the questions at the end of <u>Ice Walker: A Polar Bear's Journey through the Fragile Arctic</u> by James Raffan (2020) and are oriented toward environmental crises. If the book you chose showcases positive connections between health and ecosystems, they would need to be adjusted.

- 1. How much did you know about the land on which the book takes place before reading the book? Does the story change your perception of life on that land and the plight of the people and animals who live there?
- 2. Did the author argue that animals or ecosystems and humans are interconnected? How? Is a historic relationship of interconnection shown, and if so, how?
- 3. Through whose eyes is the story told? What effect did this have on you as you read the book?
- 4. How does the ecosystem (or components of, e.g. algae, snow, forest, mountain, etc.) become a character in the story?
- 5. Consider the history of the land and discuss the role of memory in the book.
- 6. Does the book take up an environmental issue? Which? How does it affect the characters in the book?
- 7. Is there a distinction made between natural dangers and human-made dangers in the book? How do each threaten the characters (remember that parts of the physical environment might have become "characters" in the book)? What does the book say of resilience? What does this say of the characters?
- 8. Were you worried as you read the book? How did you feel when they were in danger?
- 9. What do you think happens after the story?
- 10. What is the significance of the title of the book?
- 11. Besides the characters in the book, who else's future might be threatened? How has colonization and industrialization played into the changes taking place?
- 12. In recent years, we've seen an enormous shift toward environmental enlightenment with climate activists. At present, do you think we've made strides in protecting our earth? Is there more to be done? What do you think the author's position would be on this point?

**Note for scaling**: If you are integrating narratives into shorter training offerings you could assign a short story as a prereading and proceed as described or you could have the participants read a



poem or a piece of flash fiction during the session (or you could read the selection aloud). Two collections of short stories, <u>Glorious Frazzled Beings</u> by Angélique Lalonde and <u>Fauna</u> by Cristiane Vadnais are included in Appendix A. Several poetry collections are also listed. Many literary journals are increasingly featuring ecofiction. Here is a sample:

- Grist
- <u>humana obscura</u> (flash fiction)
- Flyway
- LMNL·SPCS
- <u>Pavillons</u> (In French)
- <u>Terrain.org</u> (also has <u>tools for teaching</u>)
- Wild Roof Journal

An academic paper that would be helpful in a shorter iteration would be Simpson's (2014). Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation.

### Activity 3: Writing and sharing HealthPunk short stories

**Note**: This activity is adapted, and presented here with permission, from the important work of Dr. Filip Maric in creating the <u>HealthPunk Vol 2</u> project, itself based on a first Volume of HopePunk stories, <u>PhysioPunk Vol 1</u>, and continuing afterwards to <u>Occupational Punk Vol 3</u>. Look out for future volumes on the <u>HealthPunk collective</u>'s <u>website</u>.

### **Description**

This activity offers participants the opportunity to apply what they have learned about narratives and imagination by putting pencil to paper to create their own narrative. Fiction has been used as a medium of sharing ideas since time immemorial and this activity is a good opportunity to get learners to provide and receive feedback to and from peers. If time does not permit, the activity can consist simply of the writing of the story, without the feedback component.

Healthpunk emerged as a subgenre of hopepunk, an approach to (re)imagine diverse futures for more socially and ecologically responsible health(care). Hopepunk follows on the tradition of utopias, as conceived by Margret Atwood (2015) who referred to Ustopias (the coexistence of utopian and dystopian elements) or Ursula Le Guin who spoke of ambiguous utopias (1974). Hopepunk explores the nuances of a better world, one that is not perfect. This approach opens space for dystopias as per Indigenous post-apocalyptic worlds and Afropesismisms. In this activity, learners are asked to write a fictional story located anytime in the future, in which the work of healthcare (very generally conceptualized) is deliberately focused on better responding to social and ecological challenges and supporting sustainable ways of living and relationships. In addition to Ecosystem approaches to health, a central theme of the story should be a focus on "promoting thriving rather than simply surviving." The stories do not need to shy away from

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the problems facing us and can offer a sober take on the recomposition of life in eco-socially damaging worlds (Tsing, 2015). Stories can also examine hope and types of hope – Hope as deceiver, Hope as object, Hope as sustainer, and Hope as catalyst (Kirkbride in Quinn, 2024a). Stories could also look to help us in navigating the tension between "desperate hope" and "reckless hopelessness" (see <u>Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures</u>). The worlds built in the stories for this activity don't have to be perfect, but they should offer a piece of a better world.

### Aims/Goals

The aims of this activity are to:

- 1. Apply what has been experienced about narratives
- 2. Receive feedback on a narrative
- 3. Provide feedback on peers' narratives
- 4. Reflect on the use of narratives in Ecosystem Approaches to Health

### **Guiding Questions**

- 1. What does it take to write one's own narrative?
- 2. What barriers do we have in setting our imagination free? Where do these barriers come from?
- 3. What does speculative fiction open up?
- 4. What changes when we project into the future?

### **Directions**

### **OVERVIEW OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

TOTAL TIME: a week

**STEP 1**: Learners are asked to write their own HealthPunk short story over a few days using the following instructions:

- Stories should be written in the science fiction/fantasy genre of Hopepunk, projecting health into the future.
- They should be no shorter than 500 words and should not exceed 1000 words.
- The use of references is possible but neither expected nor particularly encouraged.
- The evaluation will not be based on high literary expectations. Though style will be appreciated, the grading will focus on expressions of originality and creativity, and an understanding of the complex interconnections between health, society, and ecosystems, with links to ecosystem approaches to health principles.

For examples, three stories in <u>Healthpunk Vol2</u> were written by participants in the 2022 edition of CoPEH-Canada's hybrid course: <u>Soigner les Nouveaux Centaure / Caring for the New Centaurs</u> by Sandra Friedrich; <u>Homo Sapien</u> by Bailey Davis and <u>The Stand</u> by Melissa Bates.

**Note**: If this activity is being assigned in a course, it is helpful to discuss this assignment early on in the course with a due date later in the semester. The short story is an assignment that can be



informed by learners' experiences throughout the course, including case-study related work, reflective journaling, readings, including narrative readings, discussions, field visits, etc.

### **STEP 2**: Share short stories (several days)

This part of the assignment requires learners to read their peers' short stories and provide feedback to at least two colleagues **using the table presented below**. This feedback can be graded as part of the assignment.

- Short stories can be posted to a course Learning Management System (Moodle, Canvas, etc.).
- Learners can then be asked to either choose two stories that have not already received feedback to provide comments to or can be assigned two colleagues to provide feedback to.
- Guidelines like these developed by Dr. Margot Parkes can be provided to learners to help them formulate their comments.

### [to be shared with learners]

### Here are some guidelines to help you with peer feedback (see feedback grid below)

The aim of this assignment is to learn about ecosystem approaches to health through the process of giving and receiving feedback with other colleagues in a diverse peer-group (a process of *reciprocity*). Peer-feedback is an important part of professional life and this exercise provides you with an occasion to experience this, and also learn from others.

Feedback is an intrinsic part of communication always present, often in a non-explicit, non-voluntary way. Here we are focusing on explicit feedback, which can be defined as the sharing of reactions (cognition and emotion) with others about something they did.

Consider the following guides for feedback and use the table below to structure your feedback:

- a) Be timely, specific and constructive;
- b) Identify both strengths and opportunities for improvement;
- c) Try to be nuanced in your feedback and open ways for improvement rather than suggesting the thing to do;
- d) Commence your feedback by observation and description (What?). What happened? What did you see or observe?;
- e) Describe your "reflective process" (What reflections does this prompt? What if...?): What was your impression? Were you challenged? provoked? inspired? Did anything surprise you? Make sure to use "I" when expressing feeling ("I felt provoked by this" rather than "This is provocative");
- f) Interpret your feedback (So what?): What did you learn? What strengths and opportunities for improvement can you identify?;
- g) Encourage action and decision: What does this mean for future work? Do you have recommendations for which strengths should be cultivated or which opportunities for



improvement should be focused on? How has that influenced how you may approach similar tasks in the future?

The following table provides a series of questions as a very helpful way to structure your peer feedback.

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1. Commence your feedback with	
observation and description (What?). What	
Happened? What did you see or observe?	
2. Describe your "reflective process" (What	
reflections does this prompt? What if?):	
What was your impression? Were you	
challenged? provoked? inspired? Did	
anything surprise you? What if you changed	
something? What difference would this	
make? Make sure to use "I" when expressing	
feeling ("I felt provoked by this" rather than	
"This is provocative").	
3. Interpret your feedback (So what?): What	
did you learn? What strengths and	
opportunities for improvement can you	
identify? What can it mean for this project?	
Are there any lessons for your project?	
4. Encourage action and decision: (Now	
what?) What does this mean for future work?	
What could be done differently or developed	
in this work? What about applying actions or	
decisions for your own work.	
Other Thoughts/Comments?	

### STEP 3: Reflect on feedback

Encourage learners to dedicate time to reflect on the feedback they received. If time permits, this time can be allocated during the class/workshop. There are many ways to do this but two suggested here are:

- Ask the learners to apply the same reflective questions to the *feedback* they received. So, for example in 'what?' the learners would rephrase in their own words what they understand the feedback to be. Then 'What reflections did the *feedback* prompt?' etc.
- Learners can use the feedback they received to do a second draft of the story.



**Note for scaling**: If you are hoping to integrate some creative writing into a shorter workshop, you could adapt this activity so that learners are writing a few stanzas of a poem. Or they could work on the first paragraph of a short story, with the end of the story in their minds for working through after the workshop if they feel like it.

**Adaptation**: This activity could also be an opportunity for students to explore the potential linkages between the scientific facts they are constructing with their studies, and the speculative fiction capacity of this exercise. In other words, students could also be encouraged to explore the speculative capacity of their research stories (how can their research make us rethink deeply held assumptions?).

### Activity 4: The role of imagination and narrative on alt futures

This activity is slightly adapted from an assignment in Blake Poland's GGR434/CHL5126 Building Community Resilience course at the University of Toronto. With gratitude.

### **Description**

This activity explores what kind of ('critical') hope (Grain, 2022) is required, and what role fiction and 'storytelling for change' play in imagining "the more beautiful world our hearts know is possible" (Eisenstein, 2013) to prepare the ground for something other than self-fulfilling prophesies of doom and gloom.

### Aims/Goals

The goal of this activity is to contrast the explosion of doomsday films and books foretelling a bleak and frightening future with the works of some authors that have focused instead on imagining a more compelling life-sustaining/enlivening/hopeful future (and sometimes even a more-or-less plausible roadmap for how to get there).

### **Guiding questions**

- What can the classic novel *Ecotopia* (Callenbach, 1975) tell us about what a more enlightened and resilient future could look like?
- What role do storytelling case studies like *The Momentous Leap* (Wood, 2018), *The Geography of Hope* (Turner, 2007), the work of Bennett et al (2016), and Elin Kelsey's book *Hope Matters* (Kelsey, 2020) or Kari Grain's *Critical Hope* book tell us about how to get from here to there?
- Mindful of the need to anticipate unintended consequences and the 'dark side of hope', what can we learn from critics of hope such as Derek Jensen (Jensen, 2006; McBay, Keith & Jensen, 2011), Hornsey & Fielding (2016), and the author of *Green Gone*

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- Wrong (Rogers, 2010) that would inform efforts to inspire and catalyze proactive collective action to address the most pressing challenges facing humanity?
- How could or should narrative approaches be used to foster a more resilient (bounce-forward) future?

### **Directions**

**STEP 1**: Have everyone in the class read and reflect on chapter 8 of the *Transition Handbook* (Hopkins, 2008)

**STEP 2**: Have everyone choose one of the following to read: the classic novel *Ecotopia* (Callenbach, 1975), *Journey to Earthland* (Raskin, 2016), <u>We Did It! 2050, News from Gardenia</u> (Llewellen, 2012), *HealthPunk Vol.2 (Maric et al (eds), 2023), The Momentous Leap* (Wood, 2018), or an example of Afrofuturism or Indigenous storytelling

**STEP 3**: Convene a series of conversations between students to discuss what they are seeing and feeling as they go through this material, using the texts read in steps 1 and 2 and some of the references listed in the reference section on the importance of storytelling and narrative for co-creation of bounce-forward futures.

**STEP 4**: Have students write a joint paper that is a mix of personal and collective reflections on the power of storytelling for change. Have them reflect on the impacts of this work on them personally. Ask them also to examine the role and potential impact that narratives of a positive, equitable and life-enhancing future constitute as a valuable and needed 'storytelling for change' as an antidote to the glut of dystopian clifi (apocalyptic climate fiction). How does a positive narrative inspire action and uplift mental health and wellbeing? Contrast this with the impact of doomsday style messaging.

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### APPENDIX: COPEH-CANADA HYBRID COURSE READING LIST

### **Books set in Québec**



To the Forest

by Anaïs Barbeau-Lavalette, 2021 Literary fiction 200 pages

Against the backdrop of a pandemic and lockdown, the narrator bears witness to burgeoning relationships with the natural, and sometimes slightly fantastical, environment.

Kukum

By Michel Jean, 2019 Literary fiction 224 pages

A grandmother (Kukum) reflects on the changes she has witnessed to her adoptive people's way of life - the Innu - brought about by forced settlement, and the toll these changes have had on their wellbeing.



### Tiohtiá:ke

By Michel Jean, 2021 Literary fiction (French only) 240 pages

Élie is exiled from his Innu community and lives on the streets of Montréal where he meets a cast of characters, including the land, that contribute to his journey toward healing.

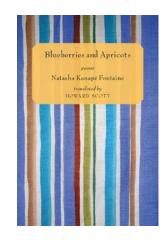




### Blueberries and apricots

by Natasha Kanapé Fontaine, 2018 Poetry *72 pages* 

"We will gather the invisible wealth lost between the cities will chain up the monsters of history."



## SANS TERRE

Sans Terre

By Marie-Ève Sévigny, 2016 Crime novel (French only) 264 pages

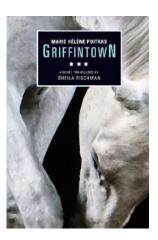
Gabrielle, an ardent environmentalist, gets mired in a crime beyond her usual civil disobedience and plunges into a world of corruption where everything is up for grabs, even the landscape.

### Griffintown

by Marie-Hélène Poitras, 2016 Modern western 288 pages

The lives Griffintown's horses and calèche drivers intertwine and their destinies are defined by a murder.

Will this old way of life survive the upheavals of modernity?



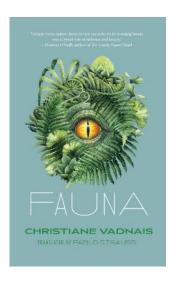


### Fauna

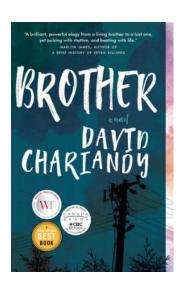
Christiane Vadnais, 2020 Short stories, speculative fiction 136 pages

A biologist faces the force of nature and some of the most ferocious species, but also the most vulnerable to current global changes.

Who will have the last word - nature or humans?



### **Books set in Ontario**



### Brother

By David Chariandy, 2017 Literary fiction 192 pages

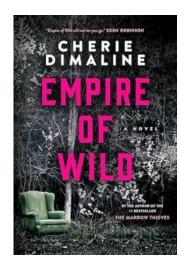
During an unusually hot summer, a
Trinidadian immigrant family living in
Scarborough becomes victim to police
violence. Years later, friends and family look
to heal the hurt for the increasingly
distraught mother.

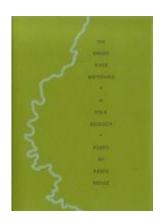


### Empire of Wild

By Cherie Dimaline, 2019 Fantasy/thriller 300 pages

A dispute between Joan, a Métis, and her husband over whether to keep or sell her land along the Georgian Bay ends mysteriously and leads them both to play pivotal roles, for and against, in a scheme to win First Nations people over to resource development.





The Grand River Watershed: A Folk Ecology

by Karen Houle, 2019 Poetry *80 pages* 

"Overhead, the southbound geese are triangulating,

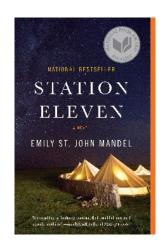
ragged skylines read like expiration dates."

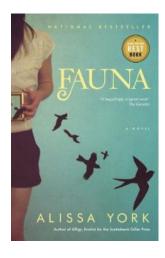


### Station Eleven

by Emily St John Mandel, 2015 Post-apocalyptic 352 pages

A traveling group of performance artists navigate the Great Lakes region in an era of post-pandemic societal collapse.





### <u>Fauna</u>

by Alissa York, 2011 Contemporary fiction 384 pages

The lives of these social misfits struggling with mental health and this urban wildlife population are intricately intertwined.

But who is helping who?

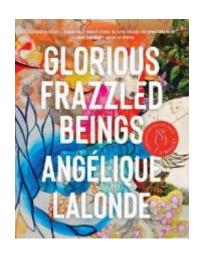


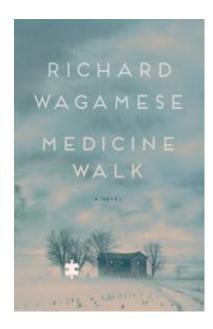
### **Books set in British Columbia**

### **Glorious Frazzled Beings**

by Angélique Lalonde, 2021 Short fiction 304 pages (small format)

This collection of short stories, written in the style of magical realism, reflects on how we have been estranged from the land and how rekindling our relationship with it as "home" can bring peace.





### Medicine Walk

by Richard Wagamese, 2014 Literary fiction 245 pages

When his estranged father calls to say he is dying, Frank embarks on a journey through the Nechako Valley with him in which "the kid" faces painful truths while being nursed by the land.

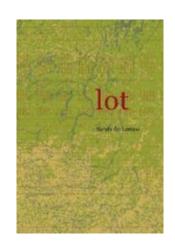


### <u>lot</u>

by Sarah de Leeuw, 2022 Poetry 169 pages

"Lot is about existing in relation to land and place.

Lot is about resilience and hope."



# SKEENA Strah de Leeuw

### Skeena

by Sarah de Leeuw, 2015 Poetry *96 pages* 

"Our babies will grow into men

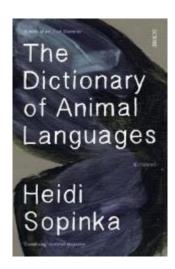
fat with the fish

you lover you mother you will feed them."

### **The Dictionary of Animal Languages**

by Heidi Sopinka, 2018 Contemporary fiction 308 pages

This fictional dictionary is "of species on the brink of extinction. By listening to wildlife, we gain understanding of animal communication, and the health of wildlife populations" and the tale is of one women's journey to produce the dictionary.





To see the books that we have used since 2024, check our <u>website</u>.

