

Global Futures, Local Imaginaries:



Piloting New Constellations of Research and Practice in the Public University

Tuesday, February 25
4:30 pm
Murray Hall 302



**Joni Adamson, President's Professor of
Environmental Humanities, Department
of English & Director, Environmental
Humanities Initiative, The Julie Ann
Wrigley Global Institute of Sustainability,
Arizona State University**

In this lecture, I will move from icy, melting Arctic landscapes to the recent fires in New South Wales, Australia, estimated to have killed over a billion and a half animals, and from an urban “Observatory” at the Arizona State University Tempe campus to Vatican City in Rome, where Pope Francis has been encouraging people of faith to think about the “integrated” humanities and sciences. I will briefly describe the environmental humanities, a fast-accelerating field in most public universities that networks the human and social sciences to explore why human beliefs and values, how humans organize themselves, and what they are willing to invest to achieve their goals are factors that lie largely outside scientific calculation (Holm, Adamson et al.). Given that the humanities have long focused on what sustainability scientists often refer to as the “human factor,” I’ll explore why many environmental humanists are moving beyond the traditional contemplative or reflective scholarly outcomes of their individual fields (the book, the essay) and towards research collaborations with scientists and social scientists that are re-framing complex conversations about “managing the planet” in a new era of “the human” often referred to as the “Anthropocene.” I’ll briefly discuss the reasons why emerging discussions among humanists and social scientists are challenging the notion of “management” and instead pointing to notions of “building relationships” at various scales, local, regional, planetary.

Joni Adamson is President’s Professor of Environmental Humanities in the Department of English and Director of the Environmental Humanities Initiative (EHI) at Arizona State University. Her work has been supported by many awards, including most recently, the Benjamin N. Duke Fellowship at the National Humanities Center in the Research Triangle of North Carolina, United States. She is Director of the North American Observatory of the Humanities for the Environment global network, and served the largest environmental humanities organization in the world, The Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE), as President in 2012.

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