

northwestern university
DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY

Quarter/Year	Course Number	Day/Time	Instructor
Spring 2019	ART-HIST 369 / HUM 370-6 / ENVR_POL 390-0-23	R 2-5	Zorach
Course Title	Degree/Distro Fulfillment		
Special Topics in Contemporary Art: Black Ecology	300-level Modern- Contemporary distribution requirement		



Taking inspiration from Nathan Hare’s 1970 essay “Black Ecology” and Félix Guattari’s 1989 essay “The Three Ecologies” (which discusses ecology in relation to environment, society, and human consciousness and also includes a memorable comparison of Donald Trump to invasive algae), this course addresses the question of eco-aesthetics in relation to environmental justice with a focus on the experiences, political struggle, and art making of people of color in the U.S. and internationally. We will read fiction and scholarly writings, view artworks, and participate in one or more environmental projects. The class will also host several guest speakers (artists,

scholars, and activists). It will also involve several field trips during class time—potentially extending into the early evening—and/or on weekends.

Image: Artist Rob Blackburn Painting An Outdoor Wall Mural At The Corner of 33rd and Giles Streets In Chicago, 10/1973. Photo by John White for Documerica

Required Textbooks	Assessments
Octavia Butler, <i>Parable of the Sower</i> , 978-0446675505. Carolyn Finney, <i>Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors</i> , 978-1469614489. Robin Wall Kimmerer, <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i> , 978-1571313560. Optional: Lauret Savoy, <i>Trace</i> 978-1619028258	Weekly short writing assignments, participation, final group project (a collective proposal for a creative intervention on behalf of environmental justice)