THE GREEN TITAN

A NEWSLETTER OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES PROGRAM AT CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON

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It's decorative gourd season! We don't know about you but we're excited it's fall because that means the holidays are just around the corner.

In this October issue, we encourage sustainable holiday practices by sharing some tips on reducing gourd waste, we highlight Dr.Nicole Seymour and her recently published book, *Glitter*, and feature environmental studies graduate student, Steve Anticona who offers advice to students on navigating the program. Additionally, with registration around the corner we provide more information on Spring 2023 course offerings including insight on the two ENST 595T courses that will be taught by alumni, Angel Pinedo and Thienen Pfeiffer.

-Jazmin & Ifeyani

New Campus Garden Provides Learning Opportunity

ENST graduate students, Calvin Nguyen and Steve Anticona teach soil science in the new campus garden to a public health class.

Reduce Gourd Waste

It's decorative gourd season!

Whether it's in our pies, lattes, on our tables, or by our front doors, you can find the symbol of autumn anywhere you go. Unfortunately, many pumpkins are shellacked, glittered, painted, or otherwise decorated in ways that make them hard to dispose of responsibly. Here are some sustainable ideas to help reduce gourd waste.

Saving Pumpkin Seeds

Gardeners can save pumpkin seeds or other types of winter squash seeds by scooping them out, letting them dry, and storing them in a cool, dry place. You can also roast pumpkin seeds for a tasty snack.

Fall Decor

Instead of buying disposable decor, try making a potpourri of dried flower petals, colorful fall leaves, dried orange slices, star anise, pinecones, cinnamon sticks, acorns, or other aromatics. Pumpkins can also be used as seasonal plant pots. First, carve out the top of the pumpkin, then remove the pulp, add soil and seeds or a plant of your choice, and voila, you have a pumpkin pot! You can also make wreaths from real pine leaves, pine cones, fall leaves, and other natural materials. It is much easier for natural materials to biodegrade as opposed to plastic materials, which often cannot be recycled. Biodegradable items are better to use because they can be composted, reducing waste long-term.

Disposal

When it's time to throw away your decorations you can compost them at home in your composting/ vermicomposting bin or put them in the green bin if your city offers that service.

(Left) Vermicomposting bin filled with newspaper clippings, greens, soil, and worms.

From Farm to Table

(Left) Butternut squash on the vine in the compost pile near the CSUN Food Garden Orchard. (Right) Ripe butternut squash harvested from the pile.

This butternut squash was grown from food waste in a compost pile at the Food Garden Orchard at California State University, Northridge (CSUN). In 2019, Geronimo's (CSUN dining hall) gave their food waste to the CSUN Institute of Sustainability's composting program. The food waste happened to contain butternut squash seeds, from which eight butternut squash grew successfully. The squash were then donated to the CSUN Food Pantry which provides emergency nourishment and toiletries to CSUN students, including fresh, locally-grown food from the CSUN food garden.

Interview with Nicole Seymour on Glitter

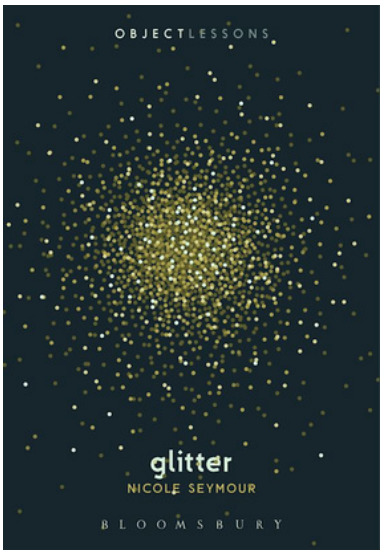
In June of 2022, Dr. Nicole Seymour, the Environmental Studies program advisor and a professor of English and Literature at California State University, Fullerton published her book, *Glitter* as part of Bloomsbury's series on Object Lessons. As listed in the book description, "*Glitter* reveals the complexity of an object often dismissed as frivolous. Nicole Seymour describes how glitter's consumption and status have

shifted across centuries-from ancient cosmetic to queer activist tool, environmental pollutant to biodegradable accessory-along with its composition, which has variously included insects, glass, rocks, salt, sugar, plastic, and cellulose. Through a variety of examples, from glitterbombing to glitter beer, Seymour shows how this substance reflects the entanglements of consumerism, emotion, environmentalism, and gender/sexual identity." With the topic of glitter being so interesting and relevant to environmental studies, we decided to interview Dr.Seymour.

What was your methodology with writing this book and selecting topics?

I started with the environmental pollutant issue and what I had seen in news stories that glitter is bad for the environment, so I knew that would be a thing but I knew nobody would want to read a whole book about me defending glitter against those accusations. A lot of it was sort of happenstance. I was visiting a friend in New Mexico and we went to a brewery and they had glitter beer. I also had a friend who had an extra ticket to see Taylor Mac, who is a queer performance artist and it was a holiday extravaganza and the costumes were incredible–super sparkly– and I thought, maybe I should write about that, so I ended up getting in touch with that person's costume designer. I'm also a contemporary scholar so I'm always reading the news and following social media and seeing things pop up. I had seen something pop up about the *Trolls* movie and I started thinking about glitter in animation and started reading about how animators were saying it was really difficult to animate glitter for various reasons that I won't go into. I'd say it started out of my training at the intersection of my queer studies and environmental studies and my interest just peaked by this claim about glitter as an environmental pollutant.

> **"My interest just peaked by this claim about glitter as an environmental pollutant"**



From an environmental lens, is there something you found particularly significant or insignificant (without giving away the entire content of that section in your book)?

Something that I think is cool for people at Cal State Fullerton to know is that the person who discovered the great Pacific garbage patch is actually from Long Beach. His name is Captain Charles Moore and it's cool to think that that person who's had such a major impact on citizen science is local. His organization is called Algalita and they have headquarters in Long Beach. They have volunteering opportunities if students are interested.

Is there anything specific you wanted your audience to take away or were you writing with the intention of 'whatever speaks to the reader'?

I did want people to know how complicated the question of 'What is glitter?' is, because it seems like something very obvious, but unlike other objects, glitter was a verb before it was a noun. If I said 'What is glass?,' there's only one real scientific answer to that. In the early 1400s, "glitter" appears in literature as referring to the sun "glittering on" something, so it wasn't even really an object when people started using that word. I'm interested in how the object itself is much newer than the concept so I wanted people to think about those kind of complexities and when you do think of it as a material, consider that it also has a really complex history–the fact that it was made out of plastic, people are now making it

out of cellulose, and you can make it out of sugar. I also wanted to make it a fun book to read so I made a big effort to change up my writing style a bit and to pick beautiful words engaging to an audience.

Did you start this research with the intention to get it published?

I didn't know what it was going to become. When I was following the news stories, it could've been as little as I might make a social media post about it, but then when these stories kept popping up year after year around the holidays I thought there was something here. I didn't know it would become a book for a while but I had known about this series, "Object Lessons," and I started to think, 'Well that would be a good thing for that series'. Oftentimes "glitter" doesn't get taken seriously.

Looking back, is there anything that you would like to have added to the book or that you would like to potentially add to a part 2 ?

All the time. I have Google alerts for glitter. This is a sort of sad but funny story. There is an academic book called *Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an Antiblack World*. I had read the introduction to this book but hadn't gotten any further. I was giving a talk about my book and someone asked if I had read this book and I had mentioned I started it and they said 'oh,there's that whole section on glitter' and I was like 'What?!,' I had literally started but hadn't gotten to that part. The author talks about different black artists that use glitter and so that was one of those moments where I was like 'Nooo'. So definitely, things come up all the time where I think 'I should've included that or should've cited this person' but it's just one of those things where you have to let it go. Maybe in like 10 years, I can do a 10-year anniversary edition and add some stuff that didn't make it into the original book.

What was your favorite part about writing this book?

I did this event for the Edinburgh Festival with a drag queen and we did it on Zoom because it was still during the pandemic. She was more of a comic relief and she did this workshop where she would show people how to put glitter on and I was there to talk about the scientific facts but when I read over the transcript I noticed I had made some jokes that were actually still funny to me when I read over it so I would say that was my favorite part. That was just such a cool experience even though it had to be on Zoom–to be part of a science event.

Dr.Seymour's book is now available for purchase on Amazon.

Tips from A Current Graduate Student

Guest Article By: Steve Anticona

I joined the program searching for ways to expand my understanding of conservation and environmentalism. Its interdisciplinary nature offered me the chance to explore interests and topics I was always curious about. Searching for those opportunities, I found myself learning about farming and beekeeping through the U-ACRE project, helping the Center for Sustainability with the campus garden, designing an exhibit in the Fullerton Arboretum alongside friends in the program, and joining the Environmental Studies advisory board as the student member.

Taking advantage of all those opportunities has deepened my experience in this program. Specifically, U-ACRE has allowed me to engage in research on honey bees and the survival of managed colonies. We monitor conditions like temperature and humidity as well as parasites and pests, to better plan and control the current and future environment of the colonies. With all of the research I've had the opportunity to conduct thus far and with the time I've invested in this work, I really wanted to challenge myself and that's why I ultimately came to the goal to write a thesis.

When I started this program, I found myself asking "What do I do now?" Let me reassure you that this program offers many ways to nurture knowledge and develop the skills necessary in future careers.

First, I encourage new students to really get to know the rest of the cohort. I always found conversations with other students in the program fascinating. There is so much to learn from each other and our motivations to succeed.

Secondly, get to know your faculty. They are the ones that will provide you with the best advice when it comes to research questions, internships, job opportunities, and academic support. We are extremely lucky to be able to get exposure to such a range of disciplines and thanks to them we can create our own blend of critical thinking and scientific inquiry.

The last tip I can give students is to join a club, organization, or academic program. As graduate students, the connections that you make here are as important as the ones that you will make in the future. Joining these groups will provide you with the opportunity to start a network here. You could even find yourself becoming a mentor figure to undergraduate students who are deciding if graduate school is right for them.

To face the challenges of our world and society in the decades to come will require the collaboration of many disciplines. I firmly believe that the Environmental Studies program will offer you the tools to do your part in that effort by giving students the ability to see those same problems from multiple intersectional perspectives. I hope your experience in the program is full of rewarding moments and memories, as it has been for me.

(Left) Steve Anticona in a bee suit. (Right) U-ACRE fellow, Steve Anticona visiting the apiary on Fullerton Arboretum grounds.

Spring 2023 Course Offerings

As the Spring 2023 registration window approaches, it is time to start thinking about course options. Typically, the Environmental Studies program offers two ENST 595T elective courses every spring in addition to the program's required courses and cross-disciplinary electives. This spring, the ENST 595T courses that will be offered are *Environmental Education* and *Wetlands Seminar*.

There is much to look forward to in both of these courses including field trips, real-world case studies, hands-on activities, and more!

ENST 595T-01 (16810) Environmental Education

Environmental Education will be taught by alumnus and current biology instructor, Angel Piñedo. Professor Pinedo is also the Education Director for the Arroyo Seco Foundation, a non-profit focused on restoring steelhead trout and their migration from the Pacific coast into the Pasadena mountains.

Course Description: Environmental education prepares people to make rational decisions concerning environmental stewardship. This course examines the history of environmental education, environmental education curricula, and environmental resources.

In this course, students will be introduced to environmental education in the field and will discuss topics such as climate change anxiety from a teacher's perspective, the importance of citizen science integration, and forms of communication across age groups and diverse communities.

He believes that a huge part of teaching environmental topics includes providing self-care to oneself and thus aims to spark discussions throughout the course on strategies to tackle the overwhelming

feelings that can come with working in the environmental field.

"How does the cynicism around climate change affect us as teachers and how do we keep going?" Professor Pinedo asks. "If the people around us don't care, what does that mean for us? We will explore how these issues not only affect us, but also the people around us and how we can continue to do our work the best that we can and not be burnt out."

Coming from an ecology background, Professor Pinedo plans to integrate outdoor activities and field trips so that students can see the value of citizen science and the difference between learning about something in a classroom and learning about something while directly experiencing it. Students should look forward to fieldwork, visiting Zyzzx in the Mojave Desert, and potentially going snorkeling. A sneak peek of an assignment for the course is running a mock environmental education lesson based on your current project (for students doing the exit project) or on a topic of interest.

Additionally, the course has been designed to cater to students going into different specialties–not just students planning on teaching. The course will touch heavily on communication in contemporary society and on key environmental topics including environmental justice, and on historical, social, and political aspects of environmentalism.

"You can make this course analogous to an environmental communication course," Professor Pinedo stated, "because in the end, teaching is about communicating some kind of material or language that may be difficult to understand, and translating that to someone who may not understand."

Environmental Education will take place on Wednesdays from 7:00pm-9:45pm.

ENST 595T-02 (16900) Wetlands Seminar

The Wetlands Seminar course will be taught by alumna, Thienen Pfeiffer who is the current president of the wetlands consulting firm, Glenn Lukos Associates.

Course Description: The course will examine wetlands from a variety of perspectives including biological, regulatory, and political. The physical environment (vegetation, soils, and hydrology) will be discussed in depth, particularly as related to wetland definitions. Wetland regulations will also be examined.

In this class, students will learn about the different types of wetlands and their conditions, will be exposed to current policy and regulations, will look at the physical environment, and will consider additional social issues like that of environmental justice. The course will also highlight the importance of wetlands and habitats, including current news articles relative to wetlands, and will feature field trips to wetland sites for interactive hands-on learning.

As an alumna of the program, professor Thienen Pfeiffer took this course approximately 20 years ago

with professor Tony Bomkamp who retired last year. Professor Pfeiffer will not only be applying what she learned back when she took the class, but will also be applying her 20 years of experience in the field of wetland delineation, to teach students valuable, relevant information as well as skills to use in their future careers. Students can expect to read excerpts from policy documents and statutory regulations like the Clean Water Act and the California's Department of Fish and Wildlife Fish and Game Code, have discussions on legislation like the Climate Act and what the implications of this document will be on wetlands, and get their hands dirty. A sneak peek of a field trip assignment: students will visit a local wetland (intertidal and/or inland) and will apply the regulatory information that they receive in the prior weeks to determine if what they see is a regulated wetland based on field conditions.

Additionally, this course will have students understand the significance of wetlands not just as a recreational or aesthetic resource but as a larger holistic resource that contributes to carbon sequestration, hosts sensitive species, and so much more. In Professor Pfeiffer's words, "We are this interconnected system where if these wetlands continue to decline, it affects the species that inhabit the wetlands–they aren't just a combination of soil, water, and plants. There's things that live in them that are sensitive and without these wetlands those species could become endangered."

(Above) Healthy inland marsh and riparian wetland in south Orange County. Photo provided by Thienen Pfeiffer.

Professor Pfeiffer shares that a key takeaway she hopes students gain from the course is that despite wetlands being regulated for protection purposes, they are still a natural resource and they're not just something that humans control, define, and regulate.

Thienen's experience in the field will provide the course with an industry lens that will play an integral part in conveying how different components of Environmental Studies cross over when surveying wetlands including habitat restoration, biological surveying, and GIS. Simultaneously, this will provide insight to students to consider the available opportunities upon graduating the program just within this one realm of consulting.

"I want to be able to give students the same kind of experience I got from the course," Professor Pfeiffer said, "which was that there's a really broad umbrella of environmental science and you can go in so many different directions."

Wetlands Seminar will take place on Thursdays from 4:00pm-6:45pm.

Additional Courses to Consider this Spring

ENST 520 - Environmental Research & Analysis with Professor Elaine Lewinnek (Environmental Studies Program Chair)

Tuesday, 4:00pm-6:45pm

Course Description: Research methods used in the field of environmental studies. Research tools used in such areas as environmental field studies, environmental experiments, social environmental impacts, environmental attitudes and behavior and environmental trend analysis. ***This course is required for all first-year students.***

ENG 429 - American Landscape in Literature with Professor Nicole Seymour (Environmental Studies Graduate Program Advisor, who is featured this month in the Green Titan)

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:30am-12:45pm

Course Description: Literary perception of our environment, with special attention to what perceptions of the landscape reveal about human nature.
Sneak Peek: Per Dr.Seymour, the course will cover topics like 'What is landscape?' and how it gets defined through painting, film, and literature." Additionally, one of the various texts students will read is the tongue-in-cheek piece, "Flora and Fauna of Las Vegas."

GEOG 478/POSC 478 - Urban Planning Principles with Professor Leea Short
Mondays, 7:00pm-9:45pm
Course Description: Seminar/discussion on conceptual themes and legal foundations of American urban planning. Policy areas associated with urbanization and suburbanization processes: land use, economic development, redevelopment, housing systems, neighborhood dynamics and growth management. This course fulfills the required planning elective to graduate and is not offered every semester, so it is highly recommended to take this course if you need to complete the planning requirement.

ANTH 445 - Quantitative Methods in Anthropology with Professor Sara Johnson (Director of U-ACRE Project)
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00pm-2:15pm
Course Description: Develops skills and knowledge in the application of quantitative methods in anthropological research. Integrated approach to research design, data collection, data management and data analysis through hands-on training.

CHEM 492 - Sustainability Projects with Professor John Haan
Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30pm-3:45pm
Course Description: Interdisciplinary teams work on real world problems related to sustainability on campus or in the community.

GEOG 422 - Global Climate Change with Professor Trevis Matheus
Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:00pm-2:15pm
Course Description: Physical factors that produce climatic patterns and regional impacts of climate change.

BIOL 479 - Ornithology with Professor Bill Hoese
Wednesdays and Fridays, 8:00am-11:50am (Discussion & Lab)
Course Description: Anatomy, physiology, evolution, behavior and ecology of birds. Laboratory and fieldwork in identification, anatomy, observational techniques and community composition.

Join OCAEP at CSUF today! You can join us on TitanLink using your CSUF login credentials.

(Above): ENST Grad Students attend a CEQA Essentials Workshop hosted by the Association of Environmental Professionals in Huntington Beach.

Thank you to everyone who contributed their time including Nicole Seymour, Angel Pinedo, Thienen Pfeiffer, and Steve Anticona. You made this issue possible. We understand that everyone is busy and thus truly appreciate your time. With that said, we hope to speak to more of you and highlight what you're involved in, so don't be surprised if we reach out!

If you have any suggestions, ideas, or would like to write a guest article, please don't hesitate to contact any of us.

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