

Ecocriticism, Unnatural Nature, and Medieval Literature

LIT 499-05 (Spring 2021) with Dr. Glenn Steinberg



Lots of the stories in medieval literature take place in “natural” settings. This capstone course examines how medieval writers conceive of and portray the natural world – in comparison with how we understand nature today and in the context of Gary Alan Fine’s theory of naturework. We read lots of different medieval texts, including Arthurian romances, *fabliaux* (dirty stories that engage in social satire), and dream visions. This course also has a community-engaged learning component, working with a community partner on an environmental education project that uses what we have learned in class. From knights wandering in forest wilds to modern-day initiatives to encourage gardening for wildlife, we consider how humans define, describe, and engage with the natural world.