

Lecture topic: “Cascadia Bioregional Literature on the Pacific Coast: Our Debt to the Beats”

The lecture examines the emergence of "Cascadia Bioregional Literature" on the Pacific Coast, called by some younger scholars the "Turtle Island School", which borrows the Indigenous name for North America. This cross-cultural style of writing has emerged under the influence of the renowned Beat Lit and Ecological poet Gary Snyder, Dr. Carolan's old mentor. Jack Kerouac was also inspired by Snyder to write his celebrated novel *The Dharma Bums*. Along with Dr. Carolan's teacher, the poet Allen Ginsberg, the Beats helped to revolutionize American society in the 1950s-60s. "Cascadia" is a trans-border regional area that extends down the Pacific Coast from Alaska, through British Columbia in Canada, through Washington and Oregon states, and into northern California. Much of modern environmental thinking has been generated from the Cascadia region, and Greenpeace, the international eco-organization began in Vancouver. The multicultural mix of European, Indigenous, and trans-Pacific influences from East and South Asia has helped to shape current global ideas regarding Environmental Thought.

Workshop: “Cascadia Bioregional Literature”

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Students interested in the workshop are requested to sign up for it. Please contact Prof. Eugenia Sojka at: eugenia.sojka@us.edu.pl
Certificates of the Workshop Completion will be given to participating students.

Workshop description:

The interactive workshop will examine Cascadia Literature's fundamental ecological concerns addressed with reference to Beat Lit and Indigenous cultures. It consists of a lecture, Question & Answer, small group discussion about issues in the lecture, and screening of Dr. Carolan's two film documentaries, followed by discussion. The workshop will end with a short Beat-style reading from Dr. Carolan's creative work entitled "Dance Your Prayers, "performed Ginsberg-style, upbeat and jazzy." Some of the issues to be discussed in the workshop are the following: How can corporate and government economic interests be reconciled with popular environmental concerns? How have the Environmental Movement principles of "Interconnectedness" developed from Indigenous and trans-Pacific Asian roots? Dr. Carolan will also focus on some Polish/European comparisons with B.C.'s oil pipeline debate. He points out: "I am aware that Katowice has very recently hosted the world forum on Climate Change issues. Thus, we will have opportunity to consider how both traditional and post WW II Lit from this region are still relevant to our contemporary life."

Documentaries produced by Dr. Carolan:

- A) **Cascadia: *The Life and Breath of the World***, views the current environmental crisis through the lens of prominent Pacific Coast writers and artists (including Wade Davis, Hugh Brody, the late-poet Joanne Kyger and others). This film has been shown

internationally and includes location imagery from Vancouver, Seattle, B.C.'s coastal islands, and the lush Fraser Valley near UFV;

- B) ***Gabriel George Live at Harrison Hot Springs:*** Gabriel George is the grandson of the great Hollywood Indigenous actor Chief Dan George and is a prominent Indigenous spokesperson himself in B.C. He talks about his grandfather Chief Dan, and also reads from his work, and that of Chief William Sepass, another honoured tribal leader from the Fraser Valley. Chief Dan George revolutionized the absurd, colonialist way in which North America's Indigenous peoples were represented in Hollywood films. Gabriel George offers a profoundly rich presentation featuring Coast Salish song, ritual drumming, and storytelling. It's a deeply moving contemporary portrait that echoes thousands of years of Indigenous culture.