

# NATURE AT WAR

---

The University of York Centre for Modern Studies  
Fourth Annual Postgraduate Symposium

Thursday 5th June 2014

Humanities Research Centre (Berrick Saul Building),  
University of York

10:30am **Registration:** Berrick Saul Building (BSB) Foyer

11:00am **Welcome & Introduction:** Bowland Auditorium, BSB  
(All panels will take place in the Bowland)

11:10am **PANEL I: War & The Non-Human**

Chair: Professor Jason Edwards

Tom Randall (Lancaster University) *'The Case Against Using Animals for Military Research.'*

James Cole (University of Southampton) *''The World Has Gone Quite Mad'': Exploring the Experiences of, and Relationships between, Animals and Humans during Warfare in the Works of Michael Morpurgo.'*

Irina Chkhaidze (University College London) *'(Anti-)Speciesism in Charles Avery's "The Islanders", and the "Blind Spot" of Humanism.'*

12:30pm Lunch

1:40pm **PANEL II: Identity/Crisis**

Chair: Alex Alonso

Muna Al-Abboodi (University of Leicester) *'Wherever a Woman comes, there comes Revolution: Protesting Nature in "Sea Rose" and "The Helmsman".'*

Matthew Holman (University of York) *“In-between moments”: Figuring the Trace and the Problem of Temporality in the Work of Ryan McGinley.*

Mathelinda Nabugodi (University College London) *‘Walter Benjamin’s Shell-Shocked Experience.’*

3:00pm Refreshments

3:30pm **Poetry Readings & Commentary**

Karl O’Hanlon (University of York) *‘Six Poems on Nature at War: An Annotated Reading.’*

3:50pm **PANEL III: Conflicted Territory**

Chair: Sebastian Owen

Harriet Ryder (University of York) *‘Redrawing the American Frontier in Recent Resource War Fiction.’*

Anna Svendsen (University of York) *“Wounded men and wounded trees”: Vegetation as the Locus of Violence in David Jones’s “In Parenthesis”.*

Jack Thacker (University of York) *‘The Iron Harvest: Edward Thomas and Seamus Heaney.’*

5:15pm Break

5:30pm **KEYNOTE ADDRESS:** Dr. James Purdon (Jesus College, University of Cambridge) *‘Heavy Weather.’*

6:30pm Wine Reception

---

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The CModS Symposium Committee would like to thank Helen Jacobs for her incredible administrative assistance; CModS director Dr. Jason Edwards for his advice and encouragement; Timothy Lawrence and Amy Tobin for their wisdom and for offering the benefit of their experience; the wider academic community at the Humanities Research Centre for its continuing support of the Postgraduate Forum; Cucina Catering for today's refreshments and everyone involved in making today's event a success.

---

## ABOUT CMODS

*The Centre for Modern Studies (CModS) Postgraduate Forum (cmods-pgforum@york.ac.uk)* has existed in its present form since October 2010, and provides a platform for postgraduate students that work in the modern period to present papers that relate to their research. The aim of the forum is to facilitate the exchange of scholarly ideas across the humanities and social sciences. It thus offers postgraduate students a space in which they can develop and hone their pedagogic and discursive skills in an informal way, and creates a genuinely interdisciplinary community in the Humanities Research Centre (HRC) at the University of York. The CModS Postgraduate Forum Committee is a non-hierarchical organising body made up of the following York postgraduates (for the year 2013-14): Emily Bowles, Karl O'Hanlon and Sam Perks.

---

## BIOGRAPHIES

### **Keynote:**

*Dr. James Purdon, Jesus College, University of Cambridge*

James Purdon is Research Fellow in English at Jesus College, Cambridge. His interests include modernist literature and visual art, the cultural history of information, and Cold War writing. His first book, *Modernist Informatics*, is about modernism, spies, surveillance and paperwork, and will be published next year by Oxford University Press.

## Speakers:

*Muna Al-Abboodi, University of Leicester*

Muna is a PhD student at the University of Leicester in the School of English (American studies). She received her BA and Masters in English Literature from the University of Baghdad where she became a lecturer in the Department of English at the College of Languages. She was also a lecturer in the School of Modern Languages at the University of Leicester. Her Masters dissertation was on Thomas Carlyle and Matthew Arnold, and her current thesis is on Modern American poetry.

*Irina Chkhaidze, UCL*

Irina is currently completing her PhD at UCL's History of Art Department, titled 'Posthumanism in Contemporary Art' that conceptualises the works of Matthew Barney, Patricia Piccinini and Charles Avery in relation to critical discourse of posthumanism. Previously, she studied Humanities and Liberal Arts in Bremen and Berlin, Germany.

*Dr. James Cole, University of Southampton*

Dr. James Cole recently completed a PhD in English Literature and Creative Writing at the University of Southampton, comprising an original novel, *Reading Through Binoculars*, and a critical commentary exploring literature's relationship to memory and identity, on individual, national and trans-national levels. His wider

research interests include children's literature – he is currently researching how digital technologies can influence the reading habits of children and young adults

([www.rebookreview.co.uk](http://www.rebookreview.co.uk)). Outside of his studies he has developed a creative writing workshop programme for schools ([www.fictionfirstaid.co.uk](http://www.fictionfirstaid.co.uk)) and is an active writer in the community with a developing publication profile.

*Matthew Holman, University of York*

Matthew is currently studying under an F.R. Leavis Studentship for an MA in Modern and Contemporary Literature and Culture at The University of York. His research interests tend to focus on the relationship between poetry and the visual arts in postwar New York, with a specific focus on space and queer theory.

*Mathelinda Nabugodi, UCL*

Mathelinda is a PhD Candidate at University College London. Her thesis investigates some images that appear in the writings of Percy Bysshe Shelley and Walter Benjamin. Previously she has studied at the University of Edinburgh and the University of Copenhagen.

*Karl O'Hanlon, University of York*

Karl is a second year PhD candidate in the department of English. His thesis focuses on style and faith in the poetry of Geoffrey Hill.

*Tom Randall, Lancaster University*

Tom is a current MA Philosophy student at Lancaster University.

*Harriet Ryder, University of York*

Harriet is a first year part-time student on the interdisciplinary MA in Culture and Thought After 1945 at the University of York's Centre for Modern Studies. Her main areas of research lie within the medical humanities, but recent work that she presented at York's postgraduate forum has also furthered an interest in ecocriticism and animal studies. She is currently writing a thesis on the representation of euthanasia in fiction and hopes to continue her research at

PhD level once she has completed her MA.

*Anna Svendsen, University of York*

Anna Svendsen, a native of the Chicago area, U.S.A., holds degrees in English from the Catholic University of America and the University of York. She is currently in her first year of doctoral research in English at York looking at religious symbolism in the war poetry and painting of David Jones.

*Jack Thacker, University of York*

Jack Thacker is an MA student in Modern and Contemporary Literature at the University of York. His paper 'The Thing in the Gap-stone Style: Alice Oswald's Rhythmical Structures' is forthcoming in *The Cambridge Quarterly*.