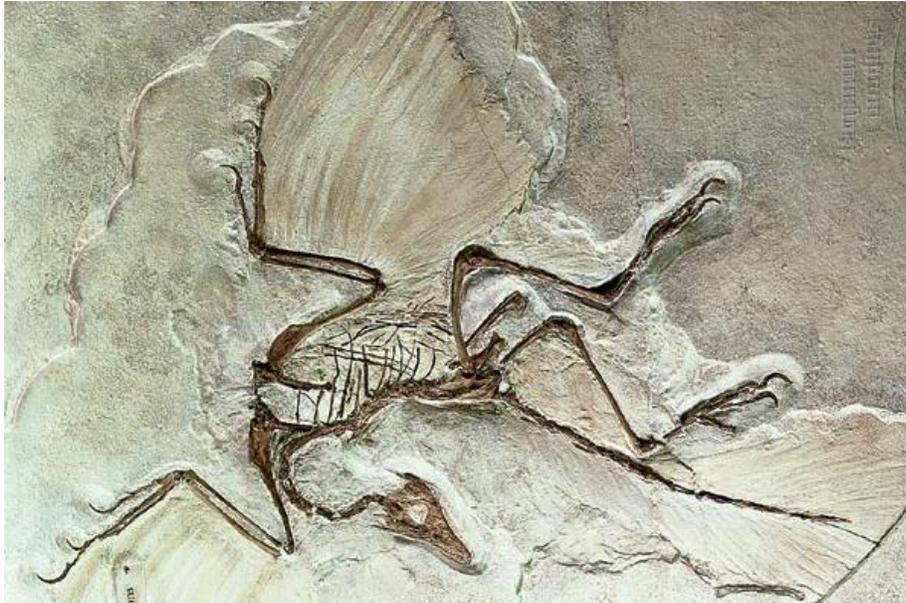


# 2021-2022

## Interdisciplinary Research Seminar (CHIIRS)

*Sponsored by The Bill and Carol Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry*



### **The Ethics of Extinction: Anthropocene Fragments**

*Facilitator: Lynne Huffer, Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies*

This seminar engages our current climate crisis through the lens of a now ubiquitous figure: the Anthropocene. We will reference the Anthropocene as a practical reference point for an apocalyptic world we cannot comprehend except in televisial and socially mediatized fragments. Monster hurricanes, forest fires, rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and other manifestations of anthropogenic changes to earth systems present us with an urgent demand: we must do something now. At the same time, scientists tell us it is already too late to change the course of the planet's trajectory toward an increasingly uninhabitable lifeworld. How are we to live this? As we ask about climate policy, we also need to ask this basic ethical question.

The seminar will focus specifically on contemporary Extinction Studies from a multidisciplinary perspective. We will read materials from the history of paleontology as well as work in philosophy, literature, and critical theory that engages with the ending of worlds. Extinction extends to us an ethical call: to bear witness to life in its ending. But because of the conditions that surround extinction, this call to bear witness is an impossible task. Indeed, such an impossibility puts the very idea of ethics into question. Pursuing this understanding of ethics as a question, the seminar will also explore problems of form, with a particular focus on experimentation and the art of the fragment. The seminar will encourage its members to experiment with form (writing, collage, digital art, performance) as a way to explore ethics as a practice of transformation. Each one-and-a-half hour seminar will be structured around discussing a reading as well as thinking about or experimenting with fragments.

The seminar is open to faculty and graduate students and will meet at the Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry from **11:30am-1:00pm** on the following **Thursdays** during the spring 2022 semester: **February 24, March 24, and April 21**. Please contact Lynne Huffer [lhuffer@emory.edu](mailto:lhuffer@emory.edu) if you are interested in joining us.

*We are grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities for its support of this program. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in these seminars do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.*

Please note that we adhere to Emory University's COVID-19 Event and Gathering Policy: Any gathering must adhere to current Emory health and safety protocols. Indoor dining is not permitted for events or gatherings. Masks are still required in all indoor public and common spaces on campus and are strongly encouraged outdoors when in groups. The university may revert to a more restrictive operating status should future conditions warrant.