

Presenter: Erika Anderson

Session & Time: Poster I

Room/Time: GLH / 1:00-2:00

Discipline: Psychology / English Literature

Faculty Mentor: Veronica Fruiht

Digital Portfolio URL:

Title: Words Taking Root: The Psychological Effects of Eco-Poetry on Eco-Anxiety and Connectedness to Nature

Abstract:

Eco-anxiety, described as fear and disorientation about climate change (Budziszewska & Jonsson, 2022), has been related to connectedness to nature, pro-environmental behaviors, and wellbeing in past research (Jalin et al., 2024; Curll et al., 2022). However, there is not a conclusive way of coping with eco-anxiety available in the literature. One proposed therapeutic approach is poetry, which was found to be useful in aiding a patient in developing new perspectives for coping (Raile, 2024). The present study will ask participants to read eco-poetry and gauge its impact on anxiety, connectedness, and emotions relating to nature. I hypothesize that an optimistic eco-poem will lower eco-anxiety and increase nature connectedness, and that the more participants engage in eco-poetry, the higher levels of eco-anxiety and nature connectedness they will experience. Participants in this study consisted of 50 adults. Participants

were randomly assigned to read an optimistic or pessimistic eco-poem, then complete a survey consisting of the Hogg Eco-Anxiety Scale (Hogg et al., 2021) and the ABC Connectedness to Nature Scale (Cuadrado et al., 2023), as well as how frequently they engage with eco-poetry, and their emotional and behavioral responses to engaging with poetry.

This study is expected to show that participants who read the optimistic eco-poem will have lower levels of eco-anxiety and higher nature connectedness. The results are also expected to show that participants who engage more often with eco-poetry on their own time will have higher levels of eco-anxiety and higher levels of nature connectedness. This research is expected to support previous literature suggesting that nature connectedness results in climate action and pro-environmental behaviors and that the use of poetry is a beneficial technique in therapy. This study will further contribute to the field by introducing the benefits of using eco-poetry as a therapeutic technique to cope with eco-anxiety.