Stanford University Postdoctoral Fellowship: Cultures of Nature in the American West

The Environmental Humanities Project, in collaboration with the Woods Institute for the Environment and the Bill Lane Center for the American West at Stanford University, seeks applicants for a postdoctoral fellowship focusing on cultures of nature in the American West. Applicants' research should focus on how cultures shape conceptions of nature, the natural, species boundaries, uses of plants and animals and natural resources, the human body in its environmental dimensions, or environmental health and illness; how cultures of nature form and dissolve; how cultures map nature, literally and metaphorically; how cultures of nature rooted in particular places develop dimensions beyond that place (e.g. in the virtual realm); and what practical differences such cultures make for human uses of the environment and in shaping nature.

The postdoctoral fellow will be a leader in the Environmental Humanities Project, a new initiative at Stanford designed to develop an interdisciplinary community across departments, programs and research areas in the Humanities involving environmental issues. This community will also seek to build bridges to the social and natural sciences. Fellows should be committed to this goal and will be expected to participate actively in building such a community. In addition, they will teach one class and participate in workshops and seminars. The appointment is for one year but may be renewed for an additional year. Applicants must have their doctoral degree in hand 30 days prior to the appointment start date.

The concept of "cultures of nature" is conceived broadly to include indigenous, ethnic, class-based, local, professional formations and subcultures. The American West is understood as the United States west of the Mississippi, western Canada, Mexico, and their interfaces with the Pacific region. We welcome applicants from anthropology, history, literary and cultural studies, political science, sociology and urban studies, as well as candidates from the natural sciences with a strong interest in multidisciplinary methods and the humanities. We particularly encourage applicants who are interested in working with a variety of sources, including data, maps, images, and multimedia visualization techniques. Applicants should be comfortable working in a collaborative research setting. The fellowship research project will be developed by the candidate in collaboration with scholars from a variety of related disciplines, and will have an associated public outreach dimension.

For further information please contact Ursula K. Heise <uheise@stanford.edu>, Professor of English, Director of the Program in Modern Thought and Literature and faculty coordinator of the Environmental Humanities Project, or Jon Christensen <jonchristensen@stanford.edu>, Executive Director, Bill Lane Center for the American West, Stanford University.

Applicants should submit the following materials by April 1, 2010: Cover letter, CV, 1000-word project proposal, dissertation abstract, 25-page writing sample, three letters of recommendation. Send application materials to: Prof. Ursula K. Heise, Department of English, 450 Serra Mall Bldg. 460, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-2087.