

Seminar - Professor Nathalie Blanc
04 May 2016, 5.00pm

A pioneer of ecocriticism and environmental humanities in France, a cultural geographer and an artist, Professor Nathalie Blanc came from Paris to give a talk about her experience and trajectory in the field of environmental humanities.

This event co-sponsored by the School of Languages, Cultures and Societies PGR Fund and the Paris-based LADYSS Research Cluster took place in the Alumni Room in the School of English, gathering 18 young researchers as well as senior researchers and professors. It was followed by a debate between Professor Blanc and the audience. Attendants had the opportunity to present themselves as well as the existential questions that as researchers the ecological crisis is triggering for them. They shared the way they had to deal with them and the dilemmas they had.

The problem of academics' talk being controlled and invaded by the very same neo-liberal discourse and ideology that is currently responsible of destroying the planet was evoked, as well as the necessity to use ruse to go around imperatives on language researchers meet in their applications for funding or in academia's everyday life. The difficulty of environmental humanities researchers of having to work in an environment segmented into silos and rather rigid sectors was also touched upon, as well as the ensuing schizophrenia and multi-persona this brings about for researchers. Participants also mentioned several strategies they had to try and overcome these challenges in what turned out to be an open and frank, non-politically-correct but relieving debate.

By Clara Breteau



Professor Nathalie Blanc