

# **Hibernia Beyond Humans**

## **The Rise of Environmental Humanities in Irish Studies**

***Comhfhios* Boston College**

February 8, 2025

Connolly House, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA

The Irish Studies Graduate Students of Boston College, in conjunction with the Irish Studies Program, are pleased to host the eighth annual *Comhfhios* Boston College conference. *Comhfhios* (pronounced “co-is”) meaning “knowledge together,” or “open to all knowledge,” invites emerging scholars in all Irish Studies fields to gather in Boston.

This year’s theme is “Hibernia Beyond Humans: The Rise of Environmental Humanities in Irish Studies.” Inspired by increased attention within the field to material and environmental studies, *Comhfhios* 2025 welcomes presentations that investigate interactions and relationships between human actors, nonhuman actors, and the environments across Ireland and her diasporas. Environments, both natural and constructed, are in part defined by the conditions in which someone or something operates; under the anthropocene, flora and both human and nonhuman fauna exist in and contribute to environments that inform our research today.

How does the changing nature of the landscape - including material objects, archaeology, and communities, as well as climate - affect the course of Irish history and its reflections in memory and Irish folklore? How does ecocriticism inform our understanding of the environment? How can we challenge notions of what an environment is and how it is constructed? How has literature represented and engaged with a variety of environments from the blue humanities to crises and calamities? How has empire, colonialism, and imperialism affected or been affected by the nonhuman? And how, in turn, does the environment and/or animal studies relate to Irish culture and society? How does the current environmental crisis impact our work in Irish studies?

Papers need not be limited by era nor location, and can pertain to the areas of the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the global Irish diaspora from the early times to the present. Papers that expand the chronological, geographical, and disciplinary boundaries of Irish Studies beyond its current traditional core strengths in literature and history will be gladly received.

Presentations within the theme of “Hibernia Beyond Humans” can include, but are by no means limited to:

- Ecology
- Landscapes / Built Environments

- Animal Studies
- Food and Hunger
- Embodiment / Materiality
- Conservation and Sustainability
- Environmental Impact of Colonialism, Imperialism, and Empire
- Island Cultures
- Memory Studies

All proposals should be between 200 and 300 words, and paper presentations will be 15-20 minutes long. Roundtable proposals are also welcome, and a single abstract for the group should be submitted via the registration form. Please submit proposals via the [Abstract Submission Form](#) by **December 1st, 2025**. Contact ComhfhiosBC@gmail.com with any questions you may have. We look forward to reading your proposals.