



Department of Liberal Arts, IIT Hyderabad

UNESCO Chair in Vulnerability Studies, University of Hyderabad

Conference Organizers:



Cultures of Waste

TWO-DAY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

August 7 & 8, 2026

Keynote speakers



Prof Cecilia Åsberg

**Chair of Gender, Nature,
Culture at Linköping
University, Sweden.**

**Keynote 1:
“Waste and the Humanities”**



Prof Myra Hird

**Professor in the School of
Environmental Studies at Queen’s
University, Ontario, Canada.**

**Keynote 2:
“Waste As, Waste Is: Cultures of
Waste”**

Conference coordinators:

**Pramod K Nayar – Distinguished Professor, Dept of Liberal Arts,
Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad and UNESCO Chair in
Vulnerability Studies, Department of English, The University of
Hyderabad**

**Srirupa Chatterjee – Associate Professor, Dept of Liberal Arts,
IIT Hyderabad**

**Anna Kurian – Faculty Fellow- UNESCO Chair in Vulnerability
Studies, Department of English, University of Hyderabad**

CONCEPT NOTE

When Myra Hird develops a 'public sociology of waste' in her book of the same title, she talks in terms of 'framing' waste. This Conference addresses modes of framing waste and the cultures in which waste is framed: as a problem, as a resource, and so on. It examines imaginaries of wasted bodies, landscapes, processes that construct waste as monstrosities, redundancies, excesses. Focusing on literary texts from the high literary to the popular, the speculative and the 'new weird', the Conference seeks papers on waste/d bodies, the nonhuman as/in waste, hybrids-as-waste, the waste Anthropocene among others.

Scholars and writers with various intellectual engagements including contemporary Gothic studies (like Catherine Spooner and Fred Botting), critical body studies (like Susan Bordo, Esther Rothblum, and Marilyn Wann), energy humanities (like Imre Szeman and Tanner Mirrlees), posthumanism (like Rosi Baridotti, Donna Haraway, and Karen Barad), and last but not least gender and queer studies (like Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, and Sara Ahmed) have recursively addressed how waste and excess define the tech-driven consumerist world we inhabit. How do cultures of waste and excess define the current human condition? How do we imagine environmental crises and energy shortages within intellectual debates of waste? What genres in, say, the literary, enable a critical literacy of/around waste? How are human and non-human identities impacted by excesses and redundancy resulting from a highly commercialized, technologized, and transnational culture which characterizes the present times? How do we approach wasted and wasting bodies, or wasted – and therefore disposable – peoples of modernity?

“Cultures of Waste” will be an attempt to delve into some of these critical questions and more.

The conference seeks to address matters of waste and excess through topics that include but are not limited to:

- Environmental degradation and waste
- Embodiment, decay, and waste
- Gendered identity as waste and excess
- Gothic narratives and the concept of waste
- Body image, body shaming, and excess
- Energy crisis and cultures of waste
- Posthumanism, waste, and excess
- Climate crisis and waste
- Anthropocene, ecological crises, and waste

DAY 1

Aug 7, 2026: Inaugural session: 9.30 to 10.00 am; LA212

Welcome note: Dr. Srirupa Chatterjee (9.30 to 9.35 am)
Introduction to themes of the conference: Prof Pramod K Nayar (9.35 to 9.50 am)
Address by HoD, Dept of Liberal Arts, IIT Hyderabad, Dr. Aalok Khandekar (9.50 to 10.00 am)
Vote of thanks: Prof Anna Kurian: 10.00 to 10.05 am

Keynote 1: LA212; 10.15 to 11.15 am, Aug 7, 2026

Moderator: Prof Pramod K Nayar (UNESCO Chair in Vulnerability Studies, Department of English, The University of Hyderabad, India)
Speaker: Prof Cecilia Åsberg (Professor of Gender, Nature, and Culture at Linköping University, Sweden)
Title of the talk: “Waste and the Humanities”

Session 1; Aug 7, 2026; 11.30 am to 1.00 pm; LA316

Session Chair: Dr. Rashmi Singh, Dept of Liberal Arts, IIT Hyderabad

1. Harinisha M and Dr. Rajalekshmi K
Research Scholar, Assistant Professor
Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore
“Framing Waste in Extractive Energy Regimes: Indigenous Sovereignty and the Graphic Narrative”
2. Piya Hore and Anjali K. Janeiro
Doctoral scholars
Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad
“Aging as Abject: The Politics of “Wasted” Female Body in Contemporary American Women’s Fiction”
3. Ben Parry
Senior Lecturer
Bath Spa University
“Short Film screening with Q&A. *Wastescap.es*. 18 mins (4K) 2024”

Lunch Break: 1.15 to 2.30 pm (Faculty Lounge)

Session 2, Aug 7, 2026; 2.30 to 4.00 pm; LA 316

Session Chair: Dr. Anindita Majumdar; Dept of Liberal Arts, IIT Hyderabad

4. Ajitabh Hazarika
Independent Researcher
“Narrating Worlds “in the vicinity of a chemical dump site”: Don DeLillo’s *White Noise*”
5. Alankrita Bhattacharya
PhD scholar
Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore
“The Namasudra-refugees as Wasted Humans in Manoranjan Byapari’s Novels”
6. Karuna Gupta
Doctoral scholar
Central University of Jammu
“Decentering Hydro Discardscapes: Reading Swarga: A Posthuman Tale”

Tea Break: 4.00 to 4.30 pm

Keynote 2: LA 316; 4.30 to 5.30 pm

Moderator: Prof Pramod K Nayar (UNESCO Chair in Vulnerability Studies, Department of English, The University of Hyderabad, India)

Speaker: Prof Myra Hird, (Professor in the School of Environmental Studies at Queen’s University, Ontario, Canada)

Title: “Waste As, Waste Is: Cultures of Waste”

DAY 2

Session 1, Aug 8, 2026 (10.00 am to 11.30 am; LA212)

Session Chair: Dr. Anandita Pan, Dept of Liberal Arts, IIT Hyderabad

7. Vidushi Rai
Research scholar
Amity University Noida
“Embodied Bereavement: Making Sense of Body Image Trauma and Politics of Excess in Gen Z Women’s Online Dating Practices”

8. Dr. Pallavi Gupta
Independent Researcher based in Hyderabad, India
“Beyond abjection: Intimacies of waste in Indian railway stations”

9. Jenifar Sabnam and Dr. Jasmine A. Choudhury
Research scholar and Assistant Professor
The Assam Royal Global University, Guwahati
“Hegemonic Masculinity: Dismantling Powerplay of Male Excess in Han Kang’s *The Vegetarian*”

Session 2, Aug 8, 2026 (11.30 am to 1.00 pm; LA212)

Session Chair: Dr. Rashmi Singh, Dept of Liberal Arts, IIT Hyderabad

10. Bryant Scott
Assistant Professor
Hamad Bin Khalifa University
“Waste, Exhaustion, and Entrepreneurial Life in *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*”

11. Nirupama R
Research Scholar
Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad
“Narrative Waste and Gendered Excess: Anti-epic Framing in *Aathreyakam*”

12. Rishika Ghosh and Bidisha Pal
Doctoral scholar and Assistant Professor
SRM University-AP
“Living Waste: Caste, transcorporeal subjectivity and environmental disposability in Perumal Murugan’s *Fire Bird*”

Lunch Break: 1.00 to 2.00 pm; Faculty Lounge

Session 3, Aug 8, 2026 (2.00 to 3.30 pm); LA316

Session Chair: Dr. Shuhita Bhattacharjee, Dept of Liberal Arts, IIT Hyderabad

13. Soma Mandal

PhD scholar

Indian Institute of Technology Delhi

“Consigned to unfreedom: subject positions in the limiting order of caste”

14. Rudransh Kantharia

Master’s Student

Indian Institute of Technology Madras

“Gendered Excess and Spectral Disposability: Queer Bodies in Crisis in Contemporary Sri Lankan Fiction”

15. Kaushani Mondal

Assistant Professor

University of North Bengal

“Planetary Subaltern and Wastocene: Understanding Ecological Refugees Through Arati Kumar-Rao’s Marginlands: Indian Landscapes on the Brink”

Tea Break: 3.30 to 4.00 pm

Session 4, Aug 8, 2026 (4.00 to 5.30 pm); LA316

Session Chair: Dr. Srirupa Chatterjee, Dept of Liberal Arts, IIT Hyderabad

16. Diya Arora

Master’s Student

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi

“THE DECAY OF AFFECT: How Emotions Become Cultural Waste”

17. Rebecca Goddard

Senior Lecturer in Cultural Production

University of the West of England

“More-than-human archetypes in waste-landscapes; matter and waste as co-researchers”

18. Hasna P and Dr. Vishnu Priya N S

Research Scholar and Associate Professor

Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore

“Devalued Femininities: Reading Manju Kapur Through Sara Ahmed’s The Promise of Happiness”

Closing remarks and vote of thanks:

Prof Anna Kurian

**Faculty Fellow - UNESCO Chair in Vulnerability Studies, Department of English,
The University of Hyderabad, India**
