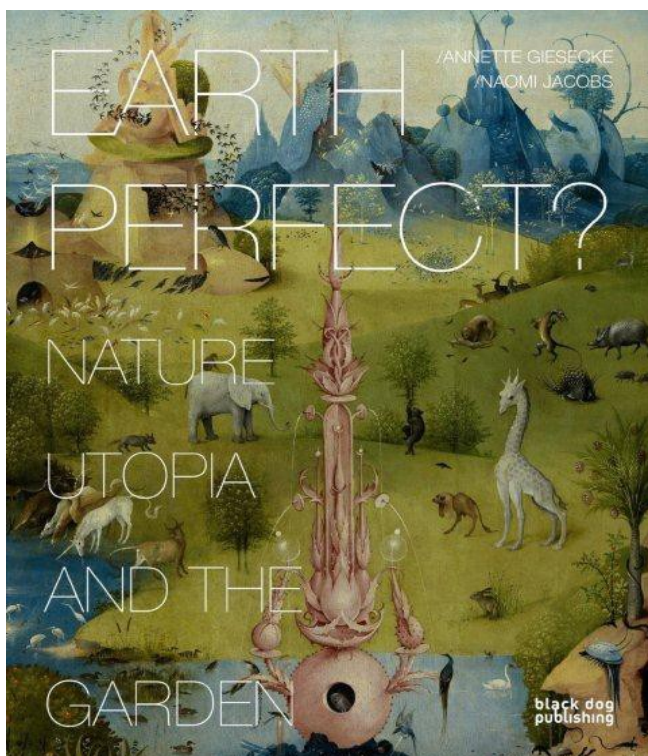


# Seminars in the Humanities

THE  
GRADUATE  
CENTER  
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OF NEW YORK

The Possible Worlds, Alternative Futures Seminar presents

## Naomi Jacobs on Nature, Utopia, and the Garden



The garden occupies a special place in utopian representations of the “good place.” In Judeo-Christian mythology, the Garden of Eden was the place where the first people lived in harmony with nature and with God. For Islamic believers, the paradise reached after death is a beautiful enclosed garden. Thomas More’s Utopians were keen gardeners who vied to outdo their neighbors. Most utopian fictions and projections since More have addressed in some form the importance of the cultivation of both ornamental and useful plants. In contemporary culture, such phenomena as the “Locavore,” and “guerrilla gardening” movements, as well as the shift toward landscaping with native plants, indicate a lively desire to engage with the production of plants, whether as home gardener or as farmer’s market customer, and a conviction that the world would be a better place if it included more or different kinds of gardens. In this seminar meeting we will consider a variety of questions on the relationships between nature, utopia and the garden.

Thursday, April 11th, 4:15pm  
Room 3209

**Naomi Jacobs** is Professor of English at the University of Maine, Past President of the Society for Utopian Studies, and founding member of the Advisory Board for Utopian Studies, the Society’s journal. With Annette Giesecke, she co-edited the new volume of essays from Black Dog Press, *Earth Perfect? Nature, Utopia and the Garden*. Her publications on utopian and dystopian fiction range from William Morris to Octavia Butler.



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