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"Being Dumped"

Marder, Michael

Marder, Michael. "Being Dumped." *Environmental Humanities* 11, no. 1 (2019): 180-93. https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-7349488 .

In this article, Michael Marder interprets the "toxic flood" we are living or dying through as a global dump. On his reading, multiple levels of existence—from the psychic to the physiological, from the environmental-elemental to the planetary—are being converted into a dump, a massive and still growing hodgepodge of industrial and consumer by-products and emissions; shards of metaphysical ideas and theological dreams; radioactive materials; light, sound, and other modes of sensory pollution; pesticides and herbicides; and so forth. Toxicity targets our bodily tissues, senses, and minds, not to mention our worlds, without individuating us in this targeting, as indifferent and random as the global dump that nourishes it. Disrupting metabolism at every scrambled register of existence, it waxes into what Marder calls "ontological toxicity," the mangled parts of the dump that do not pass through and out of being and, in not passing, warrant the annihilation, the rapid passing away, of all else. In an ontologically toxic state, the meaning of being is being dumped. (Text from author's abstract)

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Source URL: http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/8791
Print date: 10 November 2026 12:20:21