

FACULTY OF ARTS
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Department of History

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE SYLLABUS
HISTORY 3030

Title: Environmental History

Term: Fall 2007

Offered: Slot 04 [Mon., Wed., Fri., 11:00-11:50 a.m.]

Room: SN 1103

Description

The course examines the history of human relationships to the natural environment. The focus of the course is the history of environmental changes caused by humans, and the reciprocal influence of the natural environment on human cultures and societies. Case Studies will introduce patterns of ecological change associated with broad historical transformations such as colonialism, military conflict, the development of world economies, etc.

Course Instructor

John Sandlos
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Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30-3:00; Friday 12-1:30

Method of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be based on the following percentages:

Essay Proposal:	15% (due September 28 th)
Assignment #1:	25% (due October 12 th – book reviews only)
Research Essay (Final Draft):	40% (due December 3 rd)
Participation:	20%

Course Organization and Management

The course involves brief formal lectures by the instructor, student presentations, and seminar discussions. The lecture sessions will include time for discussion, and will on occasion be supplemented by films. Most weeks begin with a presentation by a student (or group of students) on the topic of the week, continue on Wednesdays with a class discussion, and conclude on Friday with a brief introductory lecture on the next week's topic. On two separate weeks, much of the class will be devoted to a seminar discussion of an assigned book. **Participation in all discussions is a crucial element of each student's participation grade.**

Assignments

Assignment #1 is a proposal for your research essay. This proposal should be 2-3 pages (500-750 words) of text with a bibliography attached. Your proposal should identify a research topic, your methodology, key sources, and most importantly a key question that you will attempt to answer (this should take the form of a thesis statement). The instructor will discuss strategies for writing proposals in class. **This assignment is due September 28th.**

Assignment #2 is a formal book review OR a presentation. Students will have a choice between delivering a class presentation on the topic of the week or writing a formal book review of Mike Davis' *The Ecology of Fear* (with limitations on numbers of students who may do either assignment).

In the case of the review, the instructor will provide you with links to useful websites on writing book reviews and examples, but students would benefit greatly from a close reading of the "Books" section in the *Saturday Globe and Mail*. The journals *Environmental History* and *Environment and History* also carry many reviews and review essays of EH books. This assignment should be between 1,000-1,250 words (4-5 pages double spaced) **and is due at the beginning of class on October 12th.**

If a student chooses to take on a presentation, he or she will report to the class on the "book of the week" that is associated with each course topic. You are also expected to respond to the instructor's lecture and may compare the themes associated with your topic to others in the course. If there is more than one student presenting in a given week, students should co-ordinate their presentations so they cover different aspects of each topic. In all cases, *students are expected to meet with the instructor the week before the presentation. Students will be evaluated individually on their presentations and are not expected to work together beyond the initial co-ordination phase. Presentations should be no longer than fifteen minutes.*

The Research Essay is a brief and original environmental history of particular place, region, city, issue, political movement, etc. Examples may include a history of human interactions with a particular natural feature in Newfoundland (or elsewhere), policy histories, histories of particular parks or conservation areas, histories of particular social movements, worker safety movements, urban 'green' initiatives, environmental racism, etc., etc. etc. The essays should be no more than 2,500 – 3,000 words (10-12 pages double-spaced). **The essay will be due December 3rd.**

*******All assignments are due before 11AM on the date they are due, except for the final paper, which is due at 4 PM in the instructors mailbox (dated and stamped). In the absence of documented medical or compassionate circumstances, late assignments will be assigned a 10% penalty per day. Students doing a presentation on the week an assignment is due will get one extra week from the assigned due date.**

Required Reading

The required short articles or book chapters are found in **online (only where noted) or otherwise in a folder on reserve at the library**. In addition, students will be required to purchase the following books for the first assignment and for discussions (they are on reserve but I recommend buying them):

Mike Davis, *The Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster* (New York: Vintage, 1998) **[Students doing book reviews only]**

Tina Loo, *States of Nature: Conserving Canada's Wildlife in the Twentieth Century* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006)

Ted Steinberg, *Acts of God: the Unnatural History of Natural Disaster in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) *****available as an e-book via MUN library**

Schedule of Topics and Readings

The following list of lecture topics and readings is subject to change:

Week One (September 5-7)

Introduction to Environmental History

Required Reading:

Donald Worster, "Doing Environmental History," in D. Worster (ed.) *The Ends of the Earth* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 289-307
Carolyn Merchant, "The Theoretical Structure of Ecological Revolutions" *Environmental Review* vol. 11, no. 4 (Winter 1987), pp. 265-74

Week Two (September 10-14)

The European Invasion of the Americas

Required Reading:

Alfred W. Crosby, "Ecological Imperialism: The Overseas Migration of Western Europeans as a Biological Phenomenon," in D. Worster (ed.) *The Ends of the Earth*, pp. 103-17

Book of the Week: Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986)
****to be presented by instructor

Week Three (September 17-21)

Colonization and Environmental Change

Ted Steinberg, *Down to Earth: Nature's Role in Human History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 21-38. *****available as an e-book via the MUN library website**

William Cronon, "Kennebec Journey: The Paths out of Town," in W. Cronon, George Miles and Jay Gitlin (eds.) *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), pp. 28-51

Book of the Week: Carolyn Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions: Nature, Gender, and Science in New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989)

Week Four (September 24-28)

Ecology and Imperialism: Environmental History in South Asia

Required Reading:

Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *This Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 113-45.

Book of the Week: Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *This Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993)

Week 5: (Oct. 1-5)

Environmental Change Under Communism

Required Reading:

Judith Shapiro, *Mao's War Against Nature: Politics and the Environment in Revolutionary China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 95-137

Book of the Week: Judith Shapiro, *Mao's War Against Nature: Politics and the Environment in Revolutionary China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Week Six (October 10-12)

War and Nature

Required Reading:

Edmund Russell, *War and Nature: Fighting Humans and Insects with Chemicals from World War I to Silent Spring* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 95-144.

Book of the Week: Edmund Russell, *War and Nature: Fighting Humans and Insects with Chemicals from World War I to Silent Spring* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

Week Seven (October 15-19)

The Politics of Natural Disasters

Book Discussion: Ted Steinberg, *Acts of God: the Unnatural History of Natural Disaster in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)

Week Eight (October 22-26)

Fire and Human History

Required Reading:

Stephen Pyne, *Fire in America: A Cultural History of Wildland and Rural Fire* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), pp. 71-83; 100-22

Book of the Week: Stephen J. Pyne, *Fire: A Brief History* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001)

Week Nine (October 29-November 2)

Urban Environmental History

Adam Rome, *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of American Environmentalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 87-118.

Ken Cruikshank Nancy B. Bouchier, "Blighted Areas And Obnoxious Industries: Constructing Environmental Inequality On An Industrial Waterfront, Hamilton, Ontario, 1890-1960," Environmental History vol. 9, no.3 (July 2004) *** **Available online at**
<<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/eh/9.3/cruikshank.html>>

Book of the Week: Adam Rome, *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of American Environmentalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

Week Ten (November 5-9)

The Nineteenth Century Decline of Wildlife and the Origin of the North American Conservation Movement

Book Discussion: Tina Loo, *States of Nature: Conserving Canada's Wildlife in the Twentieth Century* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006)

Week Eleven (November 14-16)

Class, Race and the Early Conservation Movement

Required Reading:

Karl Jacoby, "Class and Environmental History: Lessons from 'The War in the Adirondacks,'" *Environmental History* Vol. 2, 3 (July 1997), pp. 324-34
Bill Parenteau, "Care, Control and Supervision: Native People in the Canadian Atlantic Salmon Fishery, 1867-1900," *Canadian Historical Review* 79, 1 (March 1998), pp. 1-35 *****Available online through the MUN library website**

Book of the Week: Karl Jacoby, *Crimes Against Nature: Squatters, Poachers, Thieves and the Hidden History of American Conservation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001)

Week Twelve (November 19-23)

Selling Nature: Post-materialist Environmental Change and Modern Tourism

Required Reading:

Hal K. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1998), pp. 1-28

Book of the Week: Hal K Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1998).

Week Thirteen (November 26 – November 30th)

Social Movements and the Origins of Modern Environmentalism

Required Reading:

Robert Gottlieb, "Reconstructing Environmentalism: Complex Movements, Diverse Roots," in Char Miller and Hal Rothman (eds.) *Out of the Woods: Essays in Environmental History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997) 144-160

Ramachandra Guha, *Environmentalism: A Global History* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 98-124

Book of the Week : Ramachandra Guha, *Environmentalism: A Global History* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000)

Select Bibliography

Arnold, David and R. Guha, eds. *Nature, Culture, Imperialism: Essays on the Environmental History of South Asia* (Delhi: Oxford UP, 1995)

Bouchier, Nancy B. and Ken Cruickshank, "'Sportsmen and Pothunters': Environment, Conservation and Class in the Fishery of Hamilton Harbour, 1858-1914," *Sport History Review* 28 (1997), pp 1-18

Colpitts, George. *Game in the Garden: A Human History of Wildlife in Western Canada to 1940* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2002).

Cronon, William. "A Place for Stories: Nature, History and Narrative," *Journal of American History* 78 (March 1992), pp. 1347-1376

Cronon, William. *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983)

Diefendorf, Jeffrey M. and Kurk Dorsey, eds. *City, Country, Empire: Landscapes in Environmental History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005)

Gaffield, Pam and Chad Gaffield, eds. *Consuming Canada: Readings in Environmental History* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1995)

Gadgil, Madhav and Ramachandra Guha. *This Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992)

- Gottlieb, Robert *Forcing the Spring: the Transformation of the American Environmental Movement* (Washington: Island Press, 1993)
- Grove, Richard Vinita Damodaran, and Saptal Sangwan, eds. *Nature and the Orient: the Environmental History of South and Southeast Asia* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998)
- Jacoby, Karl. *Crimes Against Nature: Squatters, Poachers, Thieves and the Hidden History of American Conservation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001)
- Miller, Char, ed., *Atlas Of U.S. And Canadian Environmental History*
- Miller, Char and Hal Rothman, eds. *Out of the Woods: Essays in Environmental History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997)
- Parenteau, Bill. "A 'Very Determined Opposition to the Law: Conservation, Angling Leases, and Social Conflict in the Canadian Atlantic Salmon Fishery, 1867-1914,'" *Environmental History* 9, 3 (July 2004), pp. 436-63
- Spence, Mark David. *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999)
- Tucker, Richard P. and Edmund Russell, *Natural Enemy, Natural Ally: Toward an Environmental History of Warfare* (Corvallis: University of Oregon Press, 2004)
- Weiner, Doug. *Models of Nature: Ecology, Conservation and Cultural Revolution in Soviet Russia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000)
- Weiner, Doug. *A Little Corner of Freedom: Russian Nature Protection from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999)
- Worster, Donald. *Dust Bowl: the Southern Plains in the 1930s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979)
- Worster, Donald, ed. *The Ends of the Earth: Perspectives on Modern Environmental History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988)