

History 6460, Graduate Seminar in Environmental History
Fall 2007, History Department Conference Room, Thursday 4:30 – 7:00
Conte (7-1303), cconte@cc.usu.edu
Office Hours by Appointment
Phone: 797-1303

This course surveys some of the recent literature from a rapidly growing historical field concerned primarily with the changing relationship between humanity and its environment. That relationship is extraordinarily complex and therefore environmental historians have examined a number of diverse topics, such as the history of conservation, transformations in landscapes, thematic studies of fire and water, and urban environments and industrial sinks, among others. We will devote seven meetings to a discussion of the selected readings in some of these areas and then spend the balance of the seminar working on your research.

Weekly Discussion, 20%

Each week one student will be in charge of setting the discussion agenda. This entails a short presentation in which the discussion leader identifies the central themes brought out by the common readings and then proposes a series of questions for the class to consider. *As a help to the discussion leader, students will be required to email the instructor and the discussion leader two or three questions by noon on the day BEFORE our seminar meeting.* Full participation by all seminar members is required. This presentation and your general participation in the evening's discussion will constitute 50% of the final grade.

Short Papers

During the course of the semester, I will ask you to write 6 short (no more than one thousand words) essays that tie together the week's readings. Each paper will address a topic or question that arises from our discussion. 50%

Research Project

Each student will complete a research project based upon his or her individual interest. The project can be based on primary materials or represent a synthesis of the existing literature. I expect you to meet with me frequently to discuss the progress of your project. Projects should contain 20 pages of text, plus a bibliography. 30%

Reading Schedule

August 30th

Introductions and Syllabus

Key Questions: What is Environmental History?

Who historiographical traditions led to EH?
What are the field's central thematic concerns?
What questions motivate environmental historians?
Is EH truly interdisciplinary?
How does one "do" EH?

Sept. 6th and 13th

Part I: Definitions, Theories and Approaches

Problems/Approaches

Basso, Kenneth. "Quoting the Ancestors." In *Wisdom Sits in Places*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996. ER6460

Baleé, William. "Historical Ecology: Premises and Postulates." In *Advances in Historical Ecology*. Edited by William Baleé. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998. Docs. folder.

Drew, Joshua A. and Adam P. Henne. "Conservation Biology and Traditional Ecological Knowledge: Integrating Academic Disciplines for Better Conservation Practice." *Ecology and Society* 11.2 (2006), 34 – 42. Docs. folder.

McNeill, John. "Observations on the Nature and Culture of Environmental History." *History and Theory* 42 (2003), 5-43. Docs. folder.

Klinge, Mathew. Article in *History and Theory*. Docs. folder.

Pawson, Eric and Stephen Dovers. "Environmental History and the Challenges of Interdisciplinarity: An Antipodean Perspective." *Environment and History* 9 (2003): 53-75. ER6460

Peck, Gunther. "The Nature of Labor: Fault Lines and Common Ground in Environmental and Labor History." *Environmental History* 11.2 (2006): 212-38. Docs. folder.

Russell, Edmund. "Evolutionary History: Prospectus for a New Field." *Environmental History* 8 (2003), 204 – 228. ER 3950

Sachs, Aaron. "The Ultimate Other": Post-Colonialism and Alexander von Humboldt's Ecological Relationship with Nature." *History and Theory* 42.4 (2003), 111 – 135. Docs. folder.

Sutter, Paul. "What Can U.S. Environmental Historians Learn from Non-U.S. Environmental Historiography?" *Environmental History* 8 (2003): 109-129. ER6460

Sörlin, Sverker and Paul Warde. "The Problem of the Problem of Environmental History: A Re-reading of the Field." *Environmental History* 12 (2007)107-30. Docs. folder.

Schatzki, Theodore R. "Nature and Technology in History." *History and Theory* 42 (2003): 82-93. Docs. folder.

Optional:

Environment and History Volume 10.4 (2004). Tenth Anniversary Issue. Library.

Russell, Emily. *People and the Land through Time: Linking Ecology and History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997. Library GF41 .R87 1997.

Baleé, William, ed. *Advances in Historical Ecology*.

History and Theory Theme Issue 42 "Environment and History."

Historical Ecology Series. Baleé et al. Choose one of the books.

September 20th

Landscapes

Stewart, Mart. "From King Cane to King Cotton: Razing Cane in the Old South." *Environmental History* 12 (2007), 59-79.

Sluyter, Andrew. "Humboldt's Mexican Texts and Landscapes." *Geographical Journal* 96.3 (2006), 361-381.

Fish, Suzanne K. "Hohokam Impacts on Sonoran Desert Environment." In *Imperfect Balance: Landscape Transformations in the Precolumbian Americas*. Edited by David L. Lentz. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000. ER 6460

Neumann, Roderick. "'Africa's 'Last Wilderness': Reordering Space for Political and Economic Control in Colonial Tanzania," *Africa* 71 (2001), 641-665.

William Baleé, "Time, Complexity and Historical Ecology: The Perspective of Historical Ecology," in Baleé et al., eds., *Time, Complexity and Historical Ecology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 1-17.

Naban, Gary Paul. "Cultural Parallax: The Wilderness Concept in Crisis." In *Cultures of Habitat: On Nature, Culture, and Story*. Washington D.C.: Counterpoint, 1997.

Pipkin, John S. "Hiding Places: Thoreau's Geographies." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 91.3 (2001), 527 – 45.

Posey, Darrell A. "Diachronic Ecotones and Anthropogenic Landscapes in Amazonia: Contesting the Consciousness of Conservation." In *Advances in Historical Ecology*. Edited by William Baleé. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

Optional:

Börjeson, Löwe. *A History under Siege: Intensive Agriculture in the Mbulu Highlands, Tanzania, 19th Century to the Present* (Stockholm: Stockholm Studies in Human Geography, 2004)

September 27

Degradation/Restoration/Conservation/Biological Diversity

Brock, Emily. "The Challenge of Reforestation: Ecological Experiments in the Douglas Fir Forest, 1920-1940." *Environmental History* 9.1 (2004), 57 – 79. ER6460

Clements, Frederick. "The Nature and Structure of Climax." *Journal of Ecology* 24 (1936), 252-84.

Conte, C.A. "The Forest becomes Desert: Forest Use and Environmental Change in Tanzania's West Usambara Mountains." *Land Degradation and Development* 10 (1999), 291-309.

Donahue, Brian. "Another Look from Sanderson's Farm: A perspective on New England Environmental History and Conservation." *Environmental History* 12 (2007), 9-34.

Hall, Marcus. "Repairing Mountains: Restoration, Ecology, and Wilderness in Twentieth-Century Utah." *Environmental History* 6 (2001): 584-610. ER6460.

Higgs, Eric. "What is Good Ecological Restoration?" *Conservation Biology* 11.2 (1997), 338-48.

Judd, Richard W. "A 'Wonderful Order and Balance': Natural History and the Beginnings of Forest Conservation in America, 1730-1830." *Environmental History* 11 (2006): 8-36.

Optional:

Hall, Marcus. *Earth Repair: A Transatlantic History of Environmental Restoration*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005.

Brockington, Dan. *Fortress Conservation: The Preservation of the Mkomazi Game Reserve, Tanzania*. London: James Currey, 2002. Library

Grove, Richard. *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens, and the Origins of Environmentalism 1600 - 1860*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

October 4

Natural History/Human History and Meta Environmental History

McIntosh, Roderick, Joel Taniter and Susan McIntosh. "Climate, History and Human Action." In *The Way the Wind Blows: Climate, History and Human Action*. Edited by Roderick J. McIntosh, Joseph A. Tainter, and Susan Keech McIntosh. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

Leopold, Aldo. Selections from *Sand County Almanac* essays. ER 3950.

Pyne, Stephen J. "Forged in Fire: History, Land, and Anthropogenic Fire." In *Advances in Historical Ecology*. Edited by William Baleé. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

Optional:

Diamond, Jared. *Guns, Germs, and Steel. Or Collapse*.

Pyne, Stephen. *Fire*.

October 11

Science/Technology/Industry

Ward, Evan. "Geo-Environmental Disconnection and the Colorado River Delta: Technology, Culture, and the Political Ecology of Paradise." *Environment and History* 7 (2001), 219-46. ER 6460

Josephson, Paul. "Pyramids of Concrete: Rivers, Dams, and the Ideological Roots of Brute Force Technology." In *Industrialized Nature: Brute Force Technology and the Transformation of the Natural World*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2002. ER 6460

Davis, Devra. "Where I Come From." In *When Smoke Ran Like Water: Tales of Environmental Deception and the Battle Against Pollution*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2002. ER3950

Colten, Craig E. "Reintroducing Nature to the City: Wetlands in New Orleans." *Environmental History* 7 (2002): 226-246. ER6460

Nye, David. "Technology, Nature and American Origin Stories." *Environmental History* 8.1 (2003), 8-24.

Optional:

Josephson, Paul R. *Industrialized Nature: Brute Force Technology and the Transformation of the Natural World*. Washington D.C.: Island Press, 2002. Library.

Cioc, Mark. *The Rhine: An Ecobiography, 1815 - 2000*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003.

October 25th

Ethics

Cronon, William. "The Trouble with Wilderness: Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." with commentary. *Environmental History* 1 (1996): 7-28. ER6460

Carruthers, Jane. "Past and Future Landscape Ideology: The Kalahari Gemsbok National Park." In *Social History and African Environments*. Edited by William Beinart and Joann McGregor. Oxford: James Currey, 2003. ER6460

Leopold, Aldo. Part IV of *A Sand County Almanac with Essays on Conservation from Round River*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1966. ER6460 ("The Upshot")

Abbey, Edward. "*Polemic: Industrial Tourism and the National Parks.*" In *Desert Solitaire*. ER6460

Carson, Rachael. Selections from *Silent Spring*.

Optional:

Oelschlaeger, Max. *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991. Library

Sellars, Richard West. *Preserving Nature in the National Parks: A History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997. Library

Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1962. Library

Meine, Curt. *Correction Lines: Essays on Land, Leopold, and Conservation*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2004.

November 1st, Research Proposal Presentation and Critique

November 8th and 15th, Individual Meetings.

November 29th and December 6th, Presentations.
