

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Discipline: Anthropology /Interdisciplinary

Fall 2008

SEMS 480-8: Societies and Environments – Human Factors in Ecological Change

Upper Division

Faculty Name: Dr. Laura Meitzner Yoder

Suggested Pre-requisites: Introductory courses in a social science and in biological science recommended.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

How do societies on global and local levels impact and modify forests, land, and sea? This course examines the ecological effects of human-environment interactions at the landscape scale, in both historical and modern contexts. Using case studies from each region visited on the voyage, we will focus on ecological changes that accompany a confluence of political, social, and economic factors. Readings focus on phenomena including trade, migration, resource-intensive livelihoods, conflict, urbanization, pollution, territorialism, botanical exploration, and colonialism. The course also discusses a range of research methods for tracing environmental change through time, including examination of historical documents and artwork, forest and climate measurements, long-term or repeated observation, interviewing, and geographic information systems (GIS). Each student will write two regional environmental histories which include primary or secondary data (e.g., photos, interviews, measurements, maps, government publications) gathered from sites visited, as well as a final essay on some aspect of environmental change on a multi-regional scale. All students must productively contribute to class sessions as presenters and commentators on other students' work.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through this course, we will:

- 1) Examine the interplay of human societies and ecological change, environmental influences and social adaptation;
- 2) Consider the role that travel and ensuing comparative analyses have played in shaping ecological knowledge about and constructions of nature;
- 3) Learn about and evaluate different methodologies used in assessing environmental change, and discuss how the methods used impact perceptions of ecological modification;
- 4) Assess the role of public policies in directing and responding to environmental change;
- 5) Gain first-hand experience in gathering information on environmental change through various methods; and
- 6) Study concrete examples of environmental changes in locations visited along the voyage.

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Day	Topic	Assignments and readings due	Next port in itinerary
1	Introductions; Impact of travel and other learning processes on ecological knowledge and constructions of nature	Background information form (provided in class); Grove 1995; Mergen 2003; Campos [in press]	
2	Measuring and perceiving ecological impacts: Issues of scale and sources of knowledge	Mathews 2003; Bentley 1989	
3	Measuring and perceiving ecological impacts: Cases on land use in the Amazon	Posey 1998; Wallace 2007	→Salvador
4	Researching and writing environmental histories: Conducting local fieldwork	Journal entries from Brazil due; Lewis 2004	
5	Researching and writing environmental histories: Tracking forest change	Langston 2005; AND one of the two articles by Fairhead & Leach 1995	
6	Politics of environmental change: Case study from South Africa	Summary #1 due today; Carruthers 2006	→Walvis Bay
7	Politics of environmental change: Contested histories	Jacobs 2005; Maddox 2004; Storey 2004	→Cape Town
8	Review of field experiences in Africa	Journal entries from Africa due	
9	Knowledge and ecological change: Botanical exploration	Philip 1995; Arnold 2006	
10	Knowledge and ecological change: Colonial projects and perceptions	Grove 1996; Grove et al. 1998: select one chapter from here for Summary #2 due today	
11	Claims, rights, and environmental policies: Community Forestry in India	Guha 2001	
12	Claims, rights, and environmental policies: Case study of the Chipko movement	Environmental History #1 due; Rangan 2004	→Chennai
13	Claims, rights, and environmental policies: Malaysian land and forests	Doolittle 2004; Kathirithamby-Wells 2005	
14	Claims, rights, and environmental policies: Discourses on forests and pollution in Indonesia (and SEAsia)	Harwell 2000	→Penang
15	Forest history: Environmental impacts of conflict	Lewis 2006; McNeill 2004; Tsutsui 2003	→Ho Chi Minh
16	Forest history: Tenure and management in China	Dachang 2001	→Hong Kong, Shanghai
17	Forest history: Case study of Japan	Journal entries from Asia due	→Kobe, Yokohama

18	Review of field experiences in Asia	Bolster 2006	
19	Global systems: Changing marine environments	Environmental History #2 due	
20	Global systems: Discerning climate patterns (Video: The Life and Times of El Niño, BBC 2005)	Presentations	
21	Course presentations of environmental histories	Presentations	→Honolulu
22	Course presentations of environmental histories	Final exam essay (due)	
23	Final exam essay		→Puntarenas

1. *Required:*

*Grove, R. H. (1995). Green imperialism: Colonial expansion, tropical island Edens and the origins of environmentalism, 1600-1860. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. Excerpts.

*Mergen, Bernard, 2003. "Review Essay: Children and Nature in History," Environmental History 8(4):643-669.

*Campos, M. [in press] On Amazonian migrant acquisition of ecological knowledge.

2. *Required:*

*Mathews, A. 2003. "Suppressing Fire and Memory: Environmental Degradation and Political Restoration in the Sierra Juárez of Oaxaca, 1887-2001," Environmental History 8(1):77-108.

*Bentley, J. W. (1989). "What Farmers Don't Know Can't Help Them: The Strengths and Weaknesses of Indigenous Technical Knowledge in Honduras." Agriculture and Human Values Summer: 25-31.

3. *Required:*

*Posey, D. A. (1998). Diachronic Ecotones and Anthropogenic Landscapes in Amazonia: Contesting the Consciousness of Conservation. Advances in Historical Ecology. W. Balée. New York, Columbia University Press: 104-118.

*Wallace, Scott. 2007. "Last of the Amazon." National Geographic (January) 211(1):40-71.

Recommended:

*Balée, W. (1993). "Indigenous Transformation of Amazonian Forests." L'Homme 129-128, XXXIII(2-4): 231-254.

*Miller, S. W. (2000). Fruitless Trees: Portuguese Conservation and Brazil's Colonial Timber. Stanford, Stanford University Press. Excerpts.

4. *Required:*

*Lewis, Michael, 2004. 'This Class Will Write a Book': An Experiment in Environmental History Pedagogy, Environmental History 9(4):604-619.

5. *Required:*

*Langston, Nancy, 2005. "On Teaching World Forest History," Environmental History 10(1):20-29.

AND one of the following two articles:

*Fairhead, J. and M. Leach (1995). "False Forest History, Complicit Social Analysis: Rethinking Some West African Environmental Narratives." World Development 23(6): 1023-1035. (of greater interest to social science students)

OR

*Fairhead, J. and M. Leach (1995). "Reading Forest History Backwards: The Interaction of Policy and Local Land Use in Guinea's Forest-Savanna Mosaic, 1893-1993." Environment and History 1: 55-91.

Recommended [faculty copy on reserve]:

*Fairhead, J. and M. Leach (1996). Misreading the African landscape: Society and ecology in a forest-savanna mosaic. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

6. *Required:*

*Carruthers, Jane, 2006. "Tracking of Game Trails: Looking Afresh at the Politics of Environmental History in South Africa" Environmental History 11(4):804-829.

7. *Required (book reviews):*

*The Rise of Conservation in South Africa: Settlers, Livestock, and the Environment, 1770-1950. By William Beinart. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Reviewed by Nancy Jacobs, in Environmental History 10:4, October 2005.

*Environment, Power, and Injustice: A South African History. Nancy J. Jacobs. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Reviewed by Gregory H. Maddox, in Environmental History 9:3, July 2004.

*South Africa's Environmental History: Cases & Comparisons. Edited by Stephen Dovers, Ruth Edgecombe, and Bill Guest. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003. Reviewed by William K. Storey, in Environmental History 9:3, July 2004.

8. Journal entries from Africa due. (No readings.)

9. *Required:*

*Arnold, David. The Tropics and the Traveling Gaze: India, Landscape, and Science, 1800-1856. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006. Excerpts: Chapter 1, and Chapter 6 "Botany and the Bounds of Empire" on Joseph Hooker.

*Philip, K. (1995). "Imperial Science Rescues a Tree: Global Botanic Networks, Local Knowledge and the Transcontinental Transplantation of Cinchona." Environment and History 1: 173-200.

Recommended:

*Brockway, L. (1979). Science and Colonial Expansion: The role of the British Royal Botanic Gardens. New York, Academic Press.

*Arnold, D. (1996). The Problem of Nature: Environment, Culture, and European Expansion. Oxford, Blackwell.

10. *Required:*

- *Grove, R. H. (1996). "Indigenous Knowledge and the Significance of South-West India for Portuguese and Dutch Constructions of Tropical Nature." Modern Asian Studies 30(1): 121-143.
- *Grove, R. H., V. Damodaran, and S. Sangwan, Eds. (1998). Nature and the Orient: The Environmental History of South and Southeast Asia. New Delhi, Oxford University Press.

11. *Required:*

- *Guha, Ramachandra, 2001. "The Prehistory of Community Forestry in India," Environmental History 6(2):213-38.

12. *Required:*

- *Rangan, H. (2004). From Chipko to Uttaranchal: the environment of protest and development in the Indian Himalaya. Liberation Ecologies: Environment, development, social movements. R. Peet and M. Watts. London, Routledge: 371-393.

13. *Required:*

- *Doolittle, A. A. (2004). "Powerful Persuasions: The Language of Property and Politics in Sabah, Malaysia (North Borneo), 1881-1996." Modern Asian Studies 38(4): 821-850.
- *Kathirithamby-Wells, J. 2005. Nature and Nation: Forests and Development in Peninsular Malaysia. Copenhagen: NIAS Press. Excerpts: pp. xxix-24, 27-44 [on Penang], 415-426.

14. *Required:*

- *Harwell, E. (2000). "Remote Sensibilities: Discourses of Technology and the Making of Indonesia's Natural Disaster." Development and Change 31: 307-340.

Recommended [faculty copy on reserve]:

- *Zerner, Charles, ed. 2003. Culture and the Question of Rights: Forests, Coasts, and Seas in Southeast Asia. Durham: Duke University Press.

15. *Required:*

- *Lewis, James G. 2006. On Smokey Bear in Vietnam, Environmental History 11(3):598-603.
- *McNeill, J. R., 2004. "Woods and Warfare in World History," Environmental History 9(3):388-410.
- *Tsutsui, William M., 2003. "Landscapes in the Dark Valley: Toward an Environmental History of Wartime Japan," Environmental History 8(2):294-311.

16. *Required:*

- *Liu Dachang, 2001. "Tenure and Management of Non-State Forests in China since 1950: A Historical Review," Environmental History 6(2):239-63.

17. *Required:*

- *Totman, C. (1998). The Green Archipelago: Forestry in Preindustrial Japan. Athens, Ohio, Ohio University Press. Excerpts: pp. 1-6, 149-169, 171-190. [full copy on reserve]
- *Knight, J. (2003). The Problem of *Gaizai*: The View from Japanese Forestry Villages. In The Political Ecology of Tropical Forests in Southeast Asia. Lye Tuck-Po et al. Kyoto and Melbourne: Kyoto University Press and Trans Pacific Press: 265-282.

18. Journal entries from Asia due. (No readings.)

19. *Required:*

*Bolster, W. Jeffrey, 2006. "Opportunities in Marine Environmental History," Environmental History 11(3):567-597.

FIELD COMPONENT

There are two aspects of the field assignments for this course:

- 1) Field journal entries on social-environmental interactions while in port, following guidelines provided; due three times--immediately after completing the field visits to each continent. These are assessed based on completion of the assignments, clarity and complexity of observations and writing, and links to materials covered in the classroom.
- 2) Environmental histories of locations visited on the voyage, following guidelines provided; due twice during the semester. These should include materials gathered while in port (publications and/or observations and interviews), and link some local phenomenon to the broader issues raised in the course, especially the book-length regional resources used in the course (e.g., Totman, Kathirithamby-Wells, Zerner). These are assessed based on the nature and quality of materials and data used in port assignments, creativity and complementarity in methods used, and reference to relevant published literature.

Students should glean materials for these assignments through their FDPs, organized group Field Program visits, and Independent Practica. Before arrival at each port, students will get approval for their proposed field visits.

All students must complete three field practica. Two of these must be field trips led by me, from the list below, which address the material we cover in class. The third may be from the list of supplemental options listed separately below, or an independent option you design yourself (with my approval).

Students should select at least two FDPs from the following list:

BRAZIL:	Cachoeira
SOUTH AFRICA:	National Botanical Gardens at Kirstenbosch (FDP)
MALAYSIA:	Flora and Fauna in Malaysia
JAPAN:	Osaka Aquarium: Ring of Fire

One additional FDP or independent practicum should be selected from the following list:

- Farm and village visits: e.g., FDP "Rural Village and Farm Visit" (Chennai)
- Local ecology trips: e.g., FDP "Coastal Environments near Salvador," "Sea, Salt, and Sand"(Walvis Bay), "Bicycling in Pitaçu Park: Urban Ecology" (Salvador)
- Botanic gardens: e.g, FDP to Botanic Gardens in Penang
- Visits to historic locations: e.g., Hiroshima
- Service projects or FDPs with components of resource-based livelihoods: e.g., "Working Women's Forum" (Chennai)
- Museum and display visits

- Other independent practica as approved

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Environmental histories (written and final presentations)	2 (20 points each)	40 points
Field journal entries	3 (5 points each)	15 points
Reading summary/commentary	3 (5 points each)	15 points
Class participation (attendance, posing and answering questions, coordinating a class session, and feedback to other students)		15 points
Final essay (exam)		15 points

Total=100 points

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Late Victorian Holocausts: El Nino Famines and the Making of the Third World, by Mike Davis
Verso: London/NY, 2001.

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

1. Required:

*Grove, R. H. (1995). Green imperialism: Colonial expansion, tropical island Edens and the origins of environmentalism, 1600-1860. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. Excerpts.

*Mergen, Bernard, 2003. "Review Essay: Children and Nature in History," Environmental History 8(4):643-669.

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*Elvin, Mark. 2004. *The Retreat of the Elephants: An Environmental History of China*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

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