

**AP/HISTORY 5543:**  
**NATURE AND SOCIETY IN THE INDUSTRIAL WORLD:**  
**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY SINCE INDUSTRIALIZATION**  
Department of History, York University  
Winter 2020

**Time:** Monday 11:30am-2:30pm

**Place:** Ross S156

**Moodle site:** <https://moodle.yorku.ca/moodle/course/view.php?id=161000>

**Instructor:** Dr. Jennifer Bonnell

**Office hour:** Monday 10-11am or by appointment

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines the relationships between people and their environments from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twenty-first century. It considers the global ecological consequences of industrialization and the growing human footprint on Earth from a historical perspective, drawing from the field of environmental history.

Through a number of different nineteenth- and twentieth-century case studies of industrialized societies around the world, students will examine the ways in which humans interacted with the rest of nature. In particular, this course looks at the extraordinary influence of humans on global ecosystems over that past 160 years that has led scholars to characterize this period as the Anthropocene, the beginning of a distinct geological and ecological epoch.

### **FORMAT**

This course meets once per week for a three-hour seminar session. These sessions will combine discussion of key concepts and themes from course readings. All listed readings are mandatory and essential to completion of this course. Active oral participation is crucial to success in this course.

### **READINGS**

All books used in this course are available on 2 hour reserve at Scott Library, and a number are available in ebook format through the Library catalogue. These books are also available for purchase online (used and new via ABEbooks.com or via Amazon). All articles used in this course are available electronically through the York Library e-resources. Links to electronic readings will be posted to the course web page on Moodle.

## **EVALUATION**

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

Participation 30%

Presentation 20%

Essay Proposal 10% (due Monday Feb. 3)

Review Essay 40% (due Friday April 10)

### *Participation (30%)*

Active participation in class discussions is essential to your success in this course. Students are expected to read all of the assigned material and come to class prepared to participate actively and to engage critically and thoughtfully with the readings and the responses of fellow students.

All course participation must be in compliance with the York University Student Code of Conduct (<http://www.yorku.ca/oscr/pdfs/StudentCodeOfConduct.pdf>). In order to ensure this, students should try at all times to be respectful toward one another and toward all faculty and staff. Active and respectful student participation is essential to establishing a productive and engaging learning environment for everyone.

### *Presentation (20%)*

All students are required to complete a presentation no longer than 10 minutes. This presentation will be based on the readings and topic of a given week of the course. Students will be required to provide an outline of key issues and topics covered in the readings as a way of leading into seminar discussion. Please consult the detailed assignment description available on the course Moodle site.

### *Essay Proposal (10%, Due: Feb. 3)*

All students are required to submit a short 2-3 page essay proposal along with a 1-page bibliography. Students must consult with the instructor to determine the topics of their essays. Please consult the detailed assignment description available on the course Moodle page.

### *Review Essay (40%, Due: April 10)*

This critical review essay (20-25 pages) should survey and review a selection of 5-7 key works in a given sub-field of environmental history. Please consult the detailed assignment description available on the course Moodle site.

## **COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS**

Please make sure that all work that you hand in and present for this class is your own. The university takes this issue very seriously. We expect you to be familiar with all of the university policies relating to academic integrity. Violations of the York Senate Policy on Academic Honesty – including submitting work written by someone else or submitted in another course, failing to use quotation marks and citations when using or paraphrasing the printed or electronically-transmitted work of others, collaborating on written assignments, cheating during examinations, and aiding or abetting academic misconduct – will be treated severely. Recent penalties have included failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension from the University, and withholding or rescinding a York degree. For further information, see

<http://www.yorku.ca/univsec/policies/document.php?document=69>.

All assignments should be submitted *on paper* in class. Please double-space all written assignments and print them in standard 12-point font with 1-inch margins. Include your name and the assignment's title at the top of the paper (no separate title pages necessary). All sources should be credible scholarly sources and should be cited, using the Chicago Manual of Style (notes and bibliography) (<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=996235>), in footnotes. You must also provide a properly formatted bibliography for each assignment. **Please retain copies of all drafts and rough work.**

Please submit all assignments on the designated due dates. The instructor will not grade assignments submitted later than seven days. All deadline extension requests must be made in writing via email to the instructor.

We will accommodate students with disabilities working with the York University Learning Disability Services office (<http://www.yorku.ca/cds/lds/>). Please contact the instructor directly to make sure we are informed of your needs. If you will require any kind of accommodation for religious reasons, please let us know as soon as possible. Attendance is otherwise mandatory.

## SCHEDULE

January 6: Introduction to the Course

January 13: What is Environmental History?

Hughes, J. Donald. *What is Environmental History?* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Cambridge: Polity, 2016.  
[ebook available, YorkU Libraries]

Isenberg, Andrew C. "Introduction: A New Environmental History." In Andrew C. Isenberg, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental History* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014): 1-14.

January 20: Approaches to Global Environmental History

McNeill, J.R., and Peter Engelke. *The Great Acceleration: An Environmental History of the Anthropocene since 1945*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016. [ebook available]

Cushman, Gregory T. *Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World: A Global Ecological History*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013. [ebook available]

January 27: Once Were Many: Rural Hinterlands and Animal Populations

Isenberg, Andrew C. *The Destruction of the Bison: An Environmental History, 1750-1920*. Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Walker, Brett L. "Meiji Modernization, Scientific Agriculture, and the Destruction of Japan's Hokkaido Wolf." *Environmental History* 9, no. 2 (April 1, 2004): 248–74. doi:10.2307/3986086.

#### February 3: Cities in Environmental History

Cronon, William. *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1991.

Bonnell, Jennifer. "An Intimate Understanding of Place: Charles Sauriol and Toronto's Don River Valley, 1927-1989." *Canadian Historical Review* 92, no. 4 (December 2011): 607–36. doi: [10.3138/chr.92.4.607](https://doi.org/10.3138/chr.92.4.607)

#### February 10: Parks and Conservation

Loo, Tina. *States of Nature: Conserving Canada's Wildlife in the Twentieth Century*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007. [ebook available]

Cronon, William. "The Trouble with Wilderness or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." *Environmental History* 1.1 (1996): 7-28.

Binnema, Theodore (Ted), and Melanie Niemi. "'Let the Line Be Drawn Now': Wilderness, Conservation, and the Exclusion of Aboriginal People from Banff National Park in Canada." *Environmental History* 11, no. 4 (October 1, 2006): 724–50. <https://doi.org/10.1093/envhis/11.4.724>.

#### February 17: NO CLASS: READING WEEK

#### February 24: Agriculture and Environment

Soluri, John. *Banana Cultures: Agriculture, Consumption, and Environmental Change in Honduras and the United States*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005. [ebook available]

Worster, Donald. *Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity, and the Growth of the American West*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1985.

#### March 2: Environment and Human Health

Nash, Linda. *Inescapable Ecologies: A History of Environment, Disease, and Knowledge*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006. [ebook available]

Parr, Joy. *Sensing Changes: Technologies, Environments, and the Everyday, 1953-2003*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009. [ebook available]

### March 9: Megaprojects and High Modernism

Scott, James C. *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998. [ebook available]

Eve E. Buckley, *Technocrats and the Politics of Drought and Development in Twentieth-Century Brazil*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2017. [ebook available]

*Melville Nelles Hoffman Lecture in Environmental History: Eve Buckley, "Technocrats and the Politics of Drought and Development in Twentieth-Century Brazil." Monday, 9 March, 4pm. Schulich Executive Dining Room.*

### March 16: Cold War Environments

Brown, Kate. *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Shapiro, Judith. *Mao's War against Nature: Politics and the Environment in Revolutionary China*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

### March 24: On Matter and Energy

Timothy LeCain, *Mass Destruction: The Men and Giant Mines that Wired America and Scarred the Planet*. Rutgers University Press, 2010. [ebook available]

Pyne, Stephen. *Fire: Nature and Culture*. Reaktion, 2012. [ebook available]

### March 30: Post-War Environmentalism

Rome, Adam. *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of American Environmentalism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Guha, Ramachandra. *The Unquiet Woods: Ecological Change and Peasant Resistance in the Himalaya*. 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition. Orient Blackswan, 2013. Ch. 7, "Chipko: Social History of an 'Environmental' Movement," "Epilogue: The Afterlives of Chipko," and Sutter, Paul. "When Environmental Traditions Collide: *The Unquiet Woods* and US Environmental History."