

York University and Arizona State University 2008 History 5540

Taught at York University on Thursdays, 11.30-2.30 Ross South 536

In conjunction with Arizona State University (Taught at Arizona State University on Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.)

Course Website: You will access this through <http://moodle.glendon.yorku.ca>

York University: Professor Colin Coates

Arizona State University: Professor Susan Gray

Course Description:

This course begins by examining the nature of environmental exchange between Europe and North America, and then turns to the study of the environmental impact that non-aboriginal settlers had on the continent. Alongside the biological changes involved in population growth and resource use, attitudes towards landscape (“wilderness,” rural and urban) will be considered. Because environmental issues cross national boundaries, the course looks at literature concerning both the United States and Canada. The course will be taught by faculty at both ASU and York Universities, and will be open to graduate students at both institutions. Canadian and US faculty and students will share course readings, discussions, and some writing assignments through electronic media and during an exchange visit between the two campuses.

Course Assignments:

This course rests on a series of required weekly readings in North American environmental history from both sides of the U.S./Canadian border, and including material covering the Northeast, the West and Southwest and the North. All course readings have been placed on reserve in the Scott Library, or are available electronically. Most assigned books are available for purchase in the York University bookstore, particularly those which are in short supply at the Scott Library.

There are three written assignments. Twice during the semester, each ASU and York student will be paired with a counterpart from the other institution to discuss together a set of weekly readings and to prepare jointly a five-page paper in response to an essay assignment on the readings devised by the instructors. The discussions and essays are intended as comparative, cooperative exercises. Students may use a variety of media to communicate to one another their ideas about the readings and to draft a single paper, including chat room, email, and the invention of Alexander Graham Bell. The papers will be due in class on the day that the readings are discussed, including those days on which ASU and York meet by video conference and face-to-face. Authors of papers should expect to take a large role in class discussions. To ensure workload equity, students will be paired with a different partner for each essay, and only the higher of the two marks on the papers will be counted toward the final grade. As a final paper, all students will write a ten-page paper synthesizing course readings. All papers should be double-spaced and employ proper citation format.

Because the quality of this course will be determined by the quality of discussion, course participation will count for 20% of the final grade. The two five-page papers will comprise 40% of the grade, and the final ten-page paper the remaining 40%.

6 Sept. Week 1: Introductions and course orientations

13 Sept. Rosh Hashanah – no classes at York

20 Sept. Week 2: The Columbian exchange

- Alfred W Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004 – 2nd edition), chapters 6-9 (pp. 132-216) (GF507.66 1986)
- R Cole Harris, *Voices of Smallpox around the Strait of Georgia in The Resettlement of British Columbia: Essays on Colonialism and Geographical Change* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997) – also in *Ethnohistory* 41, 4 (1994): 593-626.
- Liza Piper and John Sandlos, *A Broken Frontier: Ecological Imperialism in the Canadian North Environmental History* (2007)

27 Sept. Week 3: Extermination

- Andrew Isenberg, *The Destruction of the Bison: An Environmental History, 1750-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) (QL737 U53 1934 2000)
- Calvin Martin, *Keepers of the Game: Indian-Animal Relationships and the Fur Trade* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978)

4 Oct. Week 4: First nations and the environment I

- Hugh Brody, *The Other Side of Eden: Hunters, Farmers and the Shaping of the World* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2000) (GN 407.3 B76 2000)
- Shepard Krech III, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2000) (E98 P5 K74 2000)

11 Oct. Week 5: First nations and the environment II (Videoconference I)

- Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996) (PM 2583 B39 1996)
- Julie Cruikshank, *Do Glaciers Listen?: Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters and Social Imagination* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005) (GB 2403.2 C78 2005)

18 Oct. Reading break: travel to Phoenix (Thursday to Sunday)

Week 6: Rivers—Grand Canyon I (Friday)

- Donald Worster, *A River Running West: The Life of John Wesley Powell* (F788 P88 W67 2001)

Week 7: Gender and Sense of Place—Grand Canyon II (Saturday)

- Vera Norwood, *Made from this Earth: American Women and Nature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006) (QH26 N67 1993)
- Sharon Butala, *Wild Stone Heart: an apprentice in the fields* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 2000) (PS 8553 U67354 Z53 2000)

25 Oct. – No class

1 Nov. – Week 8: Invaders

- Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004)
- Clinton L. Evans, *The War on Weeds of the Prairie West: An Environmental History* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2002) (SB613 C2E83 2002)

8 Nov. Week 9: Forestry and Fire

- Stephen Pyne, *Fire in America: a cultural history of wildland and rural fire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982) (SD 421.3 P96 1982)
- Paul Hirt, "Getting Out the Cut': A History of National Forest Management in the Northern Rockies," in Dale D. Goble and Paul W. Hirt, eds., *Northwest Lands, Northwest Peoples: Readings in Environmental History* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999). (G155 N75 N66 1999)

- Richard Rajala, "Clearcutting the British Columbia Coast: Work, Environment and the State, 1880-1930," in Jeremy Mouat and Cathy Cavanaugh, eds., *Making Western Canada: Historical Essays* (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1996), pp. 104-132. (FC3206 M35 1996)

15 Nov. Week 10: Normative agrarian landscapes (Video-conference II)

- Mark Fiege, *Irrigated Eden: The Making of an Agricultural Landscape in the American West* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999) (S616 U6F54 1999)
- Brian Donahue, *Reclaiming the Commons : Community Farms and Forests in a New England Town* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001)

22 Nov. Week 11: Tourism

- Claire Elizabeth Campbell, *Shaped by the West Wind: Nature and History in Georgian Bay* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005)
- Gregory Summers, *Consuming Nature: Environmentalism in the Fox River Valley, 1850-1950* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006) (GE 198 F69 S86 2006)

29 Nov. Week 12: Cities/urban environments

- Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (London: Verso, 1991) (HN80L7D38 2006)
- Ken Cruikshank and Nancy B. Bouchier, "Blighted Areas and Obnoxious Industries: Constructing Environmental Inequality on an Industrial Waterfront, Hamilton, Ontario, 1890-1960" *Environmental History* 9 (2004): 464-96.
- Sherry Olson, "Downwind, downstream, downtown: The environmental legacy in Baltimore and Montreal" *Environmental History* (2007).

6 Dec. Week 13: Course appraisal / Video conference III

- <http://niche-canada.org/comment/reply/160 - comment-form>