

Comparative Forest History

The course will study the relationship between humans and forests in selected locales or regions in different parts of the world. "This was the order of human institutions: first the forests, after that the huts, then the villages, next the cities, and finally the academies," said Vico in *The New Science*. Forests -- the material reality -- have played an enormous and often essential supporting role in the development of what used to be called "civilizations" and forest decline has also often contributed to the decline of civilizations. The course will first of all examine this relationship between physical environment and cultural process.

Ideas about nature, as the historian Raymond Williams has explained, "contain an extraordinary amount of human history." This project will also look at portions of this "human history" as it is embedded in ideas about and uses of particular forests and will explain how different communities and groups have organized their notions about the same forests differently. These cultural constructions have reflected differences in relations with the physical environment, but also differences in social and political relations.

The course will be inherently comparative, and will seek to identify key differences and similarities in the relationships between forests and peoples in different regions and locales on different parts of the globe.

The readings, lectures, and class discussions will aim to introduce students both to substantive developments and to basic areas of analysis in American and global environmental history.

Course discussions will be located, generally, around several questions:

- What is a "forest," in this particular context?
- How is the forest *used*, and by what people?
- How is the forest *owned*, and by whom?
- In conflicts over forest use, who are the parties and how are the conflicts resolved?
- To what uses are the forest "commons" -- or public lands -- put to, and how are these uses regulated?
- How do men and women use the forest differently? How do different social or ethnic groups use the forest differently?
- What stories, myths, or symbols are projected onto the forests by the people who live in or around them?
- How do different forest cultures perceive "sustainability"?
- How have different forest-owning cultures responded differently to global appetites for forest products? What is the relationship between "globalization" and

forest change?

Readings:

The following are available in the campus bookstore:

William Dietrich, *The Final Forest: The Battle for the Last Great Trees of the Pacific Northwest* (Penguin, 1992).

Marchak, Patricia. *Logging the Globe*. (McGill-Queen's University Press: 1995).

Tucker, Richard P., *Insatiable Appetite: The United States and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical World* (Rowan and Littlefield, 2007).

Michael Williams, *Americans and Their Forests: A Historical Geography* (Cambridge, 1992).

Additional assigned readings will be on reserve (marked with an "*" on the schedule below) in Wilson Library.

Requirements:

1) **Forty-five percent** of your grade will be contingent on your participation in discussions and on in-class writing assignments. I cannot emphasize the importance of this participation and on adequate preparation for it. Much of the activity in this course will be in your hands. You must, of course, attend class in order to receive any credit at all for this part of your grade.

We will conduct weekly discussion on the Blackboard site – you are required to check the Blackboard site twice a week and participate in this discussion. More details about this in class.

Students are also responsible for making themselves aware of any changes in the class schedule or in the assigned readings. Again, you must check the class Blackboard site twice a week – you'll find announcements there of any schedule or assignment changes.

2) **Twenty percent** of the grade will depend on two 4 pp. review papers (typed, double-spaced, font not over 12 pt.) of additional readings (article- or chapter-length) that I will assign to you early in the quarter. You will also be required to give a brief presentation in class of the contents and main argument of these readings. These assignments will be designed to supplement the main theme or question of the class sessions in which you will be asked to give your presentation.

The papers will be due at the beginning of the sessions in which you will give your presentations. In some cases, you may have to gather some background information to complete your reviews. Your reviews should be attentive to form

and style and should follow the citation form for book reviews in the humanities.

4) **Ten percent** of the grade will depend on a 5-page paper (typed, double-spaced, font not over 12 pt.) on *The Final Forest*. I will give you guidelines for this paper later in the quarter.

3) **Twenty-five percent** of the grade will depend on a take-home final exam. This exam will be mainly an essay exam that will cover the material in the course, but that will also be intrinsically related to the questions we work on in discussion, in-class writing assignments, and presentations. **SCHEDULE:**

Week 1: What is a Forest?

--"Forest" in *Oxford English Dictionary*.

--Michael Dove, "The Dialectical History of 'Jungle' in Pakistan: An Examination of the Relationship Between Nature and Culture," *Journal of Anthropological Research* (1992): 231-253.*

--Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, 139-141. *

Into the Field: Texts and Landscapes: Reading Forest History – afternoon field trip to Sehome Arboretum

Week 2: Who Owns the Forest?: The Fate of the Greenwood Myth in England

--Schama, "The Liberties of the Greenwood," in *Landscape and Memory*, 135-173.*

--William Cronon, "Bounding the Land," in *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*, 54-81. *

Week 3: Colonization and Forest Change: New England as a British Colony; Thailand Colonizes Itself

--Cronon, "Taking the Forest," in *Changes in the Land*, 108-126.*

--Williams, *Americans and Their Forests*, pp. tba

--Patricia Marchak, "Thailand, the Land No One Should Use: A Case Study," in *Logging the Globe*.

Week 4: Forest Communities, Work Culture, and Labor Politics: Social Change in the Wiregrass and Wobblies in the Western Woods

--Mart Stewart, "The Limits of the Possible" in *'What Nature Suffers to Groe': Life, Labor, and Landscape on the Georgia Coast, 1680-1920*.*

--Mart Stewart, "The IWW and the Loyal Legion of Lumbermen in the Pacific Northwest Woods," unpublished paper on reserve.*

Week 5: Core and Periphery: Chicago and White Pine Logging in the Great Lakes Region

--William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*, 148-206.*

Week 6: Hacking and Pulping: Industrialized Logging and Industrial Forests

--Michael Williams, *Americans and Their Forests*, 289-330.

--Dave Bohn, *Kinsey, Photographer: A Half Century of Negatives by Darius and Tabitha May Kinsey* (selected photographs)*

--Richard Tucker, *Insatiable Appetite: The United States and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical World*, pp. tba.

--Ricardo Carrere and Larry Lohmann, *Pulping the South: Industrial Tree Plantations and the World Paper Economy*, pp. tba.*

Week 7: Forests and National Memory: The Redwoods and the NaziWoods

--Schama, "The Verdant Cross," in *Landscape and Memory*, 185-244*

--Robert Pois, *National Socialism and the Religion of Nature*, pp. tba.*

--Slides of Rotwald, Austria's ancient forest reserve, CD-Rom on reserve.

Week 8: Forests, Science, and Policy

--William Dietrich, *The Final Forest: The Battle for the Last Great Trees of the Pacific Northwest*, 47-59, 97-115.

--"Complex Forests, Simple Visions: Science, Policy, and Old-Growth Forests" (tapes of papers from 1997 AAAS session; on reserve)

Into the Field: The "New Forestry" and Industrial Logging: afternoon field trip to Trillium Forest Reserve

Week 9: Logging the Globe

--Joshua Gees, *The Trade and Navigation of Great Britain Considered* (1728)*

--Marchak, *Logging the Globe*, 3-22; 23-84; 143-193.

Week 10: Convergence in Vietnam: Agent Orange, New Economic Zones, and Doi Moi (for the Fatherland)

--Marchak, "Industrial Forestry in the Southern Hemisphere," in *Logging the Globe*.

--"Central Highlands Environment Calls for Help," *Saigon News Daily*, Dec. 3, 1996.*

--Viet Hoa, "On the 'Holy Islands': Green Tourism in My Tho and its Neighboring Islands," *The Saigon Times Weekly*, Nov. 30-Dec. 6, 1996.*

--Pam McElwee, "You Say Illegal, I Say Legal: The Relationship between 'Illegal' Logging and Poverty, Land Tenure, and Forest Use Rights in Vietnam," *Journal of Sustainable Forestry*.*

--"Agent Orange" in *Encyclopedia of World Environmental History*, ed. Shepherd Krech, John McNeill, and Carolyn Merchant.