

Seminar in Environmental History, Culture and Policy in Latin America and Caribbean Studies

ERG 290

Thursdays – 3:30-6:30

115 Barrows Hall

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 11:00-1:00

or by appointment

Course Overview

This course aims to look critically at 500 years of environmental transformation in the fault lines of state, science, politics of identity, race, class and gender in the history of Latin America and the Caribbean. Latin America and Caribbean are part of a geocultural region that shares and houses complex and diverse tropical and temperate ecosystems, called here bioregions, that have been deeply transformed by social-environmental forces. This course has four goals:

1. To present a critical examination of scholarly and literary works documenting and studying environmental and social transformations in Latin American and Caribbean bioregions: Caribbean islands; Amazon, Atlantic and Temperate forests; drylands; Andean mountains and glaciers; Savannah and rangelands; and major lakes / rivers / swamps / mangroves/ coastal areas. Let's explore what motivates these scholars to write about those transformations in Latin America and Caribbean bioregions.
2. To investigate how scholars have incorporated nature in their understandings of Latin American and Caribbean history, culture and policy. What approaches do they use to appreciate the role of nature in state formation, cultural identity and policies of development/conservation? How do these studies combine: e.g. primary historical sources and ethnographies, oral histories and statistical data? For what purpose? We will explore these questions by examining methodologies and theoretical approaches, arguments and evidences outlined in studies from Environmental History, Political Ecology, Historical Geography, Literary-Journalistic and Environmental Anthropology.

3. To explore how those understandings have been received and applied in public policy, education etc. An increasing number of studies are being conducted on historical human-nature relationships in Latin America and Caribbean, and scholars are continually building an interdisciplinary field to study those human-nature relationships. In some cases, those academics are also trying to make environmental history instrumental, their results insightful and useful for environmental and development policy making. More and more panels at conferences and journal articles in this field are appearing than ever before. Three international conferences (in Chile in 2003, in Cuba in 2004 and in Sevilla in 2006) dealt specifically with the Latin American and Caribbean Environmental History topic.
4. To focus on the tools of the environmental history field, because it is ideally situated to bind together approaches from the natural sciences, social sciences and history in non-deterministic accounts of change. Throughout this course, we hope to discuss how tools in Environmental history can or cannot provide:
 - a translatory role between disciplines, both to explain rapid advances in the environmental sciences to other fields (medicine, engineering, public policy, geography, anthropology etc),
 - essential documentation and accounts of change to those environmental scientists faced with:
 - de-contextualized data or;
 - Policy decisions based contingently on current understanding of the value and dynamics of past environments.

Guest Speakers and videos

The course is organized around a series of guest speakers who will participate in round-table class discussions and/or ERG Colloquium. Although attendance at the ERG Colloquium cannot be required, it is strongly encouraged, and I urge you to arrange your schedules so that you can attend these talks (see course schedule at ERG website). Invited guests include Thomas Perreault (Department of Geography, Syracuse University), Suzana Sawyer (Department of Anthropology, University of California Davis), Angus Wright (Emeritus Professor of History, Sacramento State University), John Cordell (Ethnographic Institute), Lise Sedrez (California State University, Long Beach) and Mark Carey (Post-doc Ciriancy Wantrup/UCB). The class will also present few videos to illustrate aspects of culture, landscape and politics on different regions studied.

Course Requirements

This course is run as a seminar and student-led discussion. As such, class time will be based on discussion of weekly readings. Students are expected to do the readings each week, and be prepared to discuss them critically in class (see below). Active participation in class discussion is expected, and will factor into final grades. The course involves a number of required written assignments:

1. *Weekly critical response papers or book reviews*: These one-page (500-word) response papers and book reviews should critically assess the authors' theoretical arguments, and may include discussion of particular issues, specific questions that the readings raise for you, or a more general critique of the authors' conceptual frameworks. They should *not* be mere summaries of the readings' key points. Over the course of the semester, students will be expected to turn in 3 one-page critical responses and 9 book reviews. These will be graded on a scale of 0-25 points. Thus, individually, the critical responses and book reviews do not carry much weight, but collectively, they are significant for your overall grade. (*total of 300 points possible*)
2. *Readings oral presentations*. Students will each be responsible for introducing one week's readings. They should prepare a presentation of roughly 10-15 minutes that summarizes and critiques the week's readings. Presentations should draw out and critically assess key points for class discussion. On the week that you present your readings introductions, your critical response paper should be longer-than-usual (1500-word), and form the basis of your presentation. (*100 points*)
3. *Mid-term paper*. These papers will be short (about 2000-word document), in the format of a review essay focused on the literature reviewed and an environmental problem (in one or more bio-region) in Latin America/ Caribbean. These research papers should consider environmental aspects you are interested to study, time period in history you think will apply to your problem, policy and communities involved, geography/boundaries and how you envision the literature / primary/secondary source/ interviews to help to frame your work. Students will receive a handout detailing the requirements of this paper. (*200 points*)
4. *Final paper or project*. This paper or media project will be a full-length research paper (6000 words) that could potentially be used for research grant application, and may be written on any topic related to environmental history, culture and policy in Latin America and the Caribbean. This paper can extend from the mid-term paper, (e.g. it may examine a particular issue that concerns the historical aspect of environmental and social changes discussed in the mid-term paper). As with the mid-term papers, the final research papers must be polished, final drafts, fully referenced, free of mechanical errors, and with a coherent, critical narrative, and a clear

theoretical/methodological framework. Students will receive a handout detailing the requirements of this paper. (400 points)

Required Texts

Books

1. Dean, Warren. 1995. *With broadax and firebrand : the destruction of the Brazilian Atlantic forest*. Berkeley: University of California Press. See online: <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft7c6007zh>
2. Brannstrom, Christian. 2004. *Territories, commodities and knowledge : Latin American environmental history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*. London : Institute for the Study of the Americas.
3. Healy, Kevin 2001. *Llamas, Weavings, and Organic Chocolate: Multicultural Grassroots Development in the Andes and Amazon of Bolivia*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
4. McCook, Stuart George. 2002. *States of nature: science, agriculture, and environment in the Spanish Caribbean, 1760-1940*. 1st ed. Austin: University of Texas Press.
5. Perez, Louis A. 2001. *Winds of Change: Hurricanes and the Transformation of Nineteenth Century Cuba*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press.
6. Raffles, Hugh. 2002. *In Amazonia: a Natural History*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
7. Sawyer, Suzana 2004. *Crude Chronicles: Indigenous Politics, Multinational Oil, and Neoliberalism in Ecuador*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
8. Schiebinger, Londa L. 2004. *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic world*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
9. Soluri, John. 2005. *Banana cultures: agriculture, consumption, and environmental change in Honduras and the United States*. 1st ed. Austin: University of Texas Press.
10. Wright, Angus Lindsay. 2005. *The Death of Ramon Gonzalez : the Modern Agricultural Dilemma*. Rev. ed. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Book reviews:

- Brannstrom, C. 2004. States of nature: Science, agriculture, and environment in the Spanish Caribbean, 1760-1940. *Journal of Latin American Studies* 36:167-168.
- — — 2003 Insatiable Appetite: The United States and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical World. *Journal of Latin American Studies* 35.2 May 2003: 426(2).
- Cushman, G. T. 2005. Plants and empire: Colonial bioprospecting in the Atlantic world. *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 60 (4):516-518.
- — —. 2005. States of nature: Science, agriculture, and environment in the Spanish Caribbean, 1760-1940. *Hahr-Hispanic American Historical Review* 85 (3):495-496.
- Espinosa, A. V. 2006. Crude Chronicles: Indigenous Politics, Multinational Oil, and Neoliberalism in Ecuador. *J. Lat. Amer. Stud.* 38, 409–455
- Guerra, L. 2003. Winds of change: Hurricanes & the transformation of nineteenth-century Cuba. *Journal of American History* 90 (2):639-640.

- Martins, L. 2003. In Amazonia: a natural history. *Environment and Planning D-Society & Space* 21 (3):378-380.
- Miller, S. 2003. In Amazonia: a natural history. *Environmental History*. 8(4):
- Rahier, J. M. 2004. The study of Latin American "racial formations": Different approaches and different contexts. *Latin American Research Review* 39 (3):282-293.
- Uzendoski, M. A. 2005. Making Amazonia: Shape-shifters, giants, and alternative modernities. *Latin American Research Review* 40 (1):223-236.
- Wilcox, R. W. 2003. Amazon sweet sea: Land, life, and water at the river's mouth. *Environmental History* 8 (4):684-685.
- Young, K. R. 2005. Nature's role in Latin American governance and history. *Latin American Research Review* 40 (3):457-468. Cordell

Articles, dissertation chapters and book chapters

- Andrade, Renata 2006. *The Third Bank of The São Francisco River: nature, culture and Power 1843-2003*. Doctoral Dissertation. University of California, Berkeley. (Part3:ch6,7,8)
- Brannstrom, C. 2002. Rethinking the 'Atlantic Forest' of Brazil: new evidence for land cover and land value in western Sao Paulo, 1900-1930. *Journal of Historical Geography* 28 (3):420-439.
- Carey, Mark Palmer. 2005. People and glaciers in the Peruvian Andes: A history of climate change and natural disasters, 1941 – 1980. Ph.D., University of California, Davis, 2005, 302 pages; AAT 3182466
- Castro Herrera, Guillermo. 2001. Environmental History made in Latin America. <http://www.h-net.org/~environ/historiography/historiography.html>
- Cronon, W. 1992. "A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative," *Journal of American History* 78 (March 1992): 1347-1376.
- — — "Why the Past Matters," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 84:1 (Autumn 2000), p.2-13. Awarded the William Best Hesseltine Award for the best article published in the Wisconsin Magazine of History in 2000-2001
- Cordell, John. 1989. *A Sea Of Small Boats, Cultural Survival Report ; 26*. Cambridge, Mass.: Cultural Survival
- Doreen Massey, 'Places and Their Pasts', *History Workshop Journal* 39, 1995, pp182-192
- Drummond, J. 1996. The Garden Is The Machine - An Environmental History of Brazil's Tijuca Forest. *Environmental History* 1 (1):83-104.
- Klinge, Matthew W. 2003. Spaces of Consumption in Environmental History. *History and Theory* 42 (4):94-110.
- Massey, D. 1995. Places and Their Pasts. *History Workshop Journal* (39):182-192.
- Merchant, C. 2003. Shades of darkness: Race and environmental history. *Environmental History* 8 (3):380-394.
- Morse, Richard M., and Jorge Enrique Hardoy. 1992. *Rethinking the Latin American city*. Washington, D.C. Baltimore: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Johns Hopkins University Press.

Nash, L. 2004. The fruits of ill-health: Pesticides and workers bodies in post-World War II California. *Osiris* 19:203-219.

Orlove, Benjamin S. 2002. *Lines in the water: nature and culture at Lake Titicaca*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press (Ch 1, 5). See online: <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/kt1g5019bc>

Perreault, T. 2005. State Restructuring and the Scale Politics of Rural Water Governance in Bolivia. *Environment and Planning A* 37 (2):263-284

— — —. 2003. Changing Places: Transnational Networks, Ethnic Politics, and Community Development in the Ecuadorian Amazon. *Political Geography*, 22(1): 61-88.

Raffles, H. 2003. Further Reflections on the Amazonian Environmental History. *Journal of Latin American review*. 38:3:165-187

Sedrez, Lise (California State University) Pollution Control in Guanabara Bay, Rio de Janeiro: From Public Health to Public Environment, 1958-1975

Soluri, J. 2002. Accounting for taste - Export bananas, mass markets, and Panama disease. *Environmental History* 7 (3):386-410.

Sörli, S and P. Warde. 2005. The Problem of the Problem of Environmental History , a Re-reading of the Field and Its Purpose. Centre for History and Economics University of Cambridge

Trawick, P. B.. 2002. Comedy and Tragedy in the Andean Commons. *Journal of Political Ecology*. Vol 9. P35-68

White, Richard, 1999. The Nationalization of Nature. *The Journal of American History* 86.3 : 41 pars. 26
Jul. 2006 <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/jah/86.3/white.html>

Recommended:

The Chicago Manual of Style. 15th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003. ISBN (required for grad students, optional for undergrads).

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 6th ed. Revised by John Grossman and Alice Bennett. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. 308 pp. ISBN 0226816273. (recommended for undergrads).

Films:

The charcoal People in Brazil, Voices of Amazonia, Sugarcane allies; The motorcyclist diaries; Mestizo; You me and them

Week	Theme	Critical response paper due on Wednesday before the date of Readings/ guest lecturer
Week 1 08/31	Introduction Latin America and Caribbean environmental history? Bioregions? Tropical nature?	Bienvenidos, Bem-vindos! Welcome! What is Environmental History? Latin American and Caribbean Studies? Readings at: b-space, resources and assignment windows for each week.

Week 2 09/07	Scales, places and philosophies in Environmental History of Latin America	Assignment due: write a critical response paper (500 words) of what is the state of art on environmental history of Latin America. Read Brannstrom Ch1, articles and book reviews posted at b-space: Week 2 folder. Cronon, Castro-Herrera, White, Massey; Merchant; Sörlin and Warde;
Week 3 09/14	Artisanal fisheries: lakes rivers/mangroves and swamps	Assignment: write a critical response paper on Orlove ch 1 and 5, and readings found at week 3: Andrade ch 3 and 4, 7 and 8 , Locker 1998, Cordell 1978
Week 4 09/21	Amazon: oil	Assignment: write a book review for Sawyer; For discussion go to <i>Week 4</i> at b-space/resource: Escobar 2006, Perreault 2003, Brannstrom Ch3. Guest: Sawyer
Week 5 09/28	Amazon: past edens, forest and river	Assignment due: write a book review for Raffles, <i>In Amazonia</i> ; For discussion see book reviews at Week 5 folder b-space/resource: : Miller, Uzendoski, Martins, Brannstrom Ch4 Raffles 2003 for discussion.
Week 6 10/05	Atlantic Forest: the transformation what remains	Assignment: write a book review for Dean 1995, for discussion go to Week 6 at b-space/resource: Drummond's book review, Brannstrom Ch6 and Brannstrom 2002 film: The charcoal people of Brazil.
Week 7 10/12	The plants of the Caribbean	Assignment: write a book review for Schiebinger; For discussion go to Week 7 at b-space /resources: See Cushman's review for <i>Plants and Empire</i>
Week 8 10/19	Mid-term paper Agriculture and Consumption in the tropics	Assignment: book review for Soluri 2006. For discussion go to Week 8 at b-space /resources: See Kingle 2003. and Mollett 2006
Week 9 10/26	Agriculture frontiers in subtropical forests and drylands	Assignment: book review for Wright 1992 For discussion go to Week 9 at b-space/resource: Nash 2004
Week 10 11/02	Slaves, State, Sugar and Bananas	Assignment: book review McCook 2002, For discussion Brannstrom Ch5, go to Week 10 at b-space /resources:

		See Brannstrom's and Cushman's reviews for <i>States of Nature</i> For discussion see films: Sugarcane allies and Mestizo
Week 11 11/09	Caribbean islands: Natural Hazards and Revolutions of nature	Assignment: book review for Perez 2001. For discussion go to Week 11 at b-space /resources:
Week 12 11/16	Andes: Water, land and indigenous movement	Assignment: book review for Healy 2001, For a discussion go to Week 12 at b- space/resources: read Perreault 2005 Guest Speaker: Thomas Perreault
Week 13 11/30	Andes: Science and Melting Glaciers and lakes	Assignment: write a critical response paper on Carey Phd chapters (yet to choose) week 13th Guest Speaker: Mark Carey
Week 14 12/07	Cities in Latin America	Assignment: write a critical response paper on readings found at Week 14: Sedrez., Morse and Hardoy 1992. Encyclopedia of World Environmental History: Urbanization Guest speaker: Lise Sedrez, concluion
Week 15 12/14	Final Paper	Your presentations! Good Job!!
12/15	Dinner party	