



**Faculty of Arts
Department of History
Course Outline
Winter 2023**

**HTST 593.30
Environmental History: Themes in Power,
Colonialism and Military History**

Instructor: George Colpitts

Email: colpitts@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours and Location/Method: Tuesday 10:00-11:00; Wednesday 3:00-4:00, SS 614

Class Room Location, Days and Times: SS613, Mondays, 15:00-17:45

Course Delivery: In person

Description: An introduction to environmental history with a focus on North America, but with examples drawn from the field in Europe, Central and South America, and other areas of the world. Students will have the opportunity to view history differently through the lens of human-environmental interactions, ecological theory and the broad range of methods and approaches that environmental historians use to practice their craft. This seminar will focus especially on issues of power in environmental history, taking up three interrelated themes: colonialism, imperialism and war.

Learning Outcomes

- To familiarize students with the methods and theory of environmental history and apply them in their own research.
- To examine colonialism, imperialism and military history through the lens of environmental history.
- To improve the students' writing skills, especially in writing essays, as well as to raise the quality of their oral presentation skills.

Reading Material

There is no assigned textbook for this course for purchase. The assigned weekly readings are through links provided in the course D2L by locating them in the list under My Tools, or you can use the following link:

https://ucalgary.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/leganto/public/01UCALG_INST/lists/16969246280004336?auth=SAML

Assessment

Method	Due Date	Weight
Weekly meeting participation	Weekly throughout term	30%
Term Paper proposal	Due February 6, emailed before class to instructor	10%
Book Review	Students will write a review on a book that they choose among those appearing in Week 4, due March 20	30%
Final Research Paper	Due Monday April 17 by noon	30%

Grading Policies

Each assessment item will be assigned a letter grade, according to the grading scale appearing below. Each student's final grade in the course will be calculated by adding up the weighted numerical values corresponding to the letter grade for each assessment item, and then converting this numerical value back into a letter grade. The numerical value will be based on the middle point between the maximum and minimum values of an associated grade, for instance, an A on assignment has the numerical value of an 87, and a B+ assignment has a numerical value of 78 (see the Department of History's grading system chart, below). A missed reading report or weekly meeting will be awarded a 0 grade and deducted from the overall term mark for that component of the course.

Details on Methods of Assessment

- Class participation: students are expected to be in class. Absenteeism will significantly impact a student's cumulative participation grade by end of term. Students missing a class because of illness or personal reasons must communicate to the instructor about their absence and discuss ways to meet to discuss that week's missed readings. The instructor assesses a student's overall participation grade based on the improving quality of his or her engagement, responses and contributions during weekly seminar meetings.
- Paper proposals: students will submit a 1-page proposal, single-spaced, with a bibliography attached. The instructor will post instructions on how to prepare the proposal on the course D2L during the first week of classes. Students are encouraged to discuss their paper ideas with the instructor before submitting the proposal.
- Book Reviews: students having chosen one of the chapters of books listed in Week 4's readings, will read the book to write a book review, six to seven pages in length, double-spaced (Times New Roman font, normal margins). Students should not refer to published book reviews to help them in this assignment. They are to identify the book's chief argument and the author's main points and evidence to back it up.
- Term Research Paper: students will investigate a topic in environmental history related to the seminar theme of power in imperialism, colonialism or military history, using primary sources (supplemented with secondary literature). Term papers are to be 12 – 15 pages in

length (12pt. Times Roman, normal margins, double-spaced, excluding end-notes and bibliography). More information on this assignment will be available on the course D2L during the first week of classes. Students are encouraged to discuss their research and development of the paper with the instructor.

Learning Technologies Requirements

Assigned weekly readings will be available digitally on the course D2L. The student will require a computer with internet connection.

Schedule

Date	Topic & Reading	Important Dates
Week 1, January 9	<p><i>Introductory meeting:</i></p> <p><u>Before</u> this meeting students should read:</p> <p>Donald Worster, “Ice, Worms, and Dirt: the Power of Nature in North American History,” in Alan MacEachern, and William J. Turkel, Eds., <i>Method & Meaning in Canadian Environmental History</i> (Toronto: Nelson, 2009), 24-34.</p>	
Week 2: January 16	<p><i>Big Picture Environmental History</i></p> <p>Richards, John, Chapter 6: “Landscape Change and Energy Transformation in the British Isles,” <i>The unending frontier: An environmental history of the early modern world</i> (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2003), pp. 193-241.</p> <p>Radkau, Joachim. Chapter 4, “Colonialism as a Watershed in Environmental History,” in <i>Nature and power: A global history of the environment</i>. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) pp. 152-194.</p>	
Week 3: January 23	<i>Impact of Empires and Colonialism</i>	

	<p>Grove, Richard H., Chapter 1: Edens, Islands and Early Empires,” in <i>Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 16-72</p> <p>Alfred W. Crosby, “Ecological Imperialism: The Overseas Migration of Western Europeans as a Biological Phenomenon,” in David Freeland Duke, ed., <i>Canadian Environmental History</i> (Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, 2006), 143-154.</p>	
<p>Week 4: January 30</p>	<p><i>Indigenous and Newcomer Environmental History: Power, Colonialism and War</i></p> <p>ALL to read: James Daschuk, Chapter 4, “Despair and Death during the Fur Trade Wars, 1783-1821,” from <i>Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life</i> (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2013), 41-57.</p> <p><i>Class to divide up to read one of the following chapters and present it to the others in the seminar. They will continue to read the rest of the book for the book review assignment:</i></p> <p>Pekka Hämäläinen, Chapter 1, “Conquest,” <i>The Comanche Empire</i> (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 18-67.</p> <p>Theodore Binnema, Chapter 5, “The Horse and Gun Revolution, 1700-1770,” in <i>Common and Contested Ground: A Human and Environmental History of the Northwestern Plains</i></p>	

	<p>(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 86-106.</p> <p>Elliott West, Chapter 8, “Path of Empire,” in <i>The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado</i> (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1998), 173-201.</p> <p>Ryan Tucker Jones, Chapter 2, “<i>Promyshlenniki</i>, Siberians, Alaskans, and Catastrophic Change in an Island Ecosystem,” in <i>Empire of Extinction: Russians & the North Pacific’s Strange Beasts of the Sea, 1741-1867</i> (Oxford University Press, 2014), 60-101.</p> <p>Micah Muscolino, Chapter 1, “A Militarized River: The 1938 Yellow River Flood and its Aftermath, in <i>The Ecology of War in China: Henan Province, the Yellow River, and Beyond, 1938–1950</i> (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 21-58.</p> <p>Gregory T. Cushman, Chapter 2: “The Guano Age, ” in <i>Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World</i> (Cambridge University Press, 2013).</p> <p>Chris Pearson, Chapter 1, “The Emperor’s New Camp,” in <i>Mobilizing Nature: the Environmental History of War and Militarization in Modern France</i> (Manchester University Press, 2012), 16-37.</p> <p>Andrew McIlwaine Bell, Chapter 2, “The Glory of Gangrene and ‘Gallinippers,’” in <i>Mosquito Soldiers: Malaria, Yellow Fever, and the Course of the American Civil War</i> (Louisiana State University Press, 2010), 21-35.</p>	
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<p>Week 5: February 6</p>	<p><i>Colonial Ecological History in Conquest and Colonization</i></p> <p>John McNeill, Chapter 4, “Fevers Take Hold: From Recife to Kourou,” in <i>Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 91-136.</p> <p>Philipp N Lehmann, “Between Waterberg and Sandveld: An Environmental Perspective on the German–Herero War of 1904,” <i>German History</i>. 32:4 (December 2014), 533-558.</p> <p>Martin Kalb, “Water, Sand, Molluscs: Imperial Infrastructures, the Age of Hydrology, and German Colonialism in Swakopmund, Southwest Africa, 1884-1915,” <i>Environment & History</i> 26:2 (May 2020), 175-206.</p>	
<p>Week 6: February 13</p>	<p><i>War and Climate</i></p> <p>Dagomar Degroot, “‘Never such weather known in these seas’: Climatic Fluctuations and the Anglo-Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century, 1652-1674,” <i>Environment & History</i> 20:2 (May 2014), 239-273.</p> <p>Jason W. Smith, “‘Twixt the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Hydrography, Sea Power, and the Marine Environment, 1898-1901,” <i>Journal of Military History</i> 78:2 (April 2014), 575-604.</p> <p>Emmanuel Kreike, “De-Globalisation and Deforestation in Colonial Africa: Closed Markets, the Cattle Complex, and Environmental Change in North-Central Namibia, 1890-1990,” <i>Journal of</i></p>	<p>Paper Proposals due before class, emailed to instructor</p>

	<i>Southern African Studies</i> 35:1 (March 2009), 81-98.	
Week 7: Reading Week NO CLASS February 20		
Week 8, February 27	<p><i>Making Nature in Hunting and Conflict Zones</i></p> <p>Edmund Russell, Chapter 3, "Hunting and Fishing," from <i>Evolutionary History: Uniting History and Biology to Understand Life on Earth</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 17-30.</p> <p>Nancy Peluso and Peter Vandergeest, "Political Ecologies of War and Forests: Counterinsurgencies and the Making of National Natures," <i>Annals of the Association of American Geographers</i>, 101:3 (May 2011), 587-608.</p> <p>Peter Coates, "Borderland, No-Man's Land, Nature's Wonderland: Troubled Humanity and Untroubled Earth," <i>Environment & History</i> 20:4 (November 2014), 499-516.</p>	
Week 9: March 6	<p><i>American Civil War Landscapes and Environmental Transformation</i></p> <p>Judkin Browning, and Timothy Silver, "Nature and Human Nature: Environmental Influences on the Union's Failed Peninsula Campaign, 1862," <i>Journal of the Civil War Era</i> 8:3 (September 2018), 388-515.</p> <p>Lisa Brady, Chapter 3, "Ravaged Ground: Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley, 1864," in <i>War Upon the Land: military strategy and the transformation of southern landscapes during the American Civil War</i> (Athens: University</p>	

	<p>of Georgia Press, 2012), 72-92.</p> <p>Mark Fiege, “Gettysburg and the Organic Nature of the American Civil War,” in Richard P. Tucker and Edmund Russell, eds., <i>Natural Enemy, Natural Ally: Toward an Environmental History of War</i> (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2004), 93-109.</p>	
Week 10, March 13	<p><i>Environment, Race and Total War</i></p> <p>David Blackbourn, Chapter 5, “Race and Reclamation,” in <i>The Conquest of Nature: Water, Landscape and the Making of Modern Germany</i> (London: Jonathan Cape, 2006), 239-296.</p> <p>Joseph P. Hupy, “The Environmental Footprint of War,” <i>Environment & History</i>, 13:3 (August 2008), 405-421.</p>	
Week 11, March 20	<p><i>Total War Resources Management</i></p> <p>Richard P. Tucker, “The World Wars and the Globalization of Timber Cutting,” in Richard P. Tucker and Edmund Russell, eds., <i>Natural Enemy, Natural Ally: Toward an Environmental History of War</i> (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2004), 110-141.</p> <p>Mark Kuhlberg, Chapter 2, “One of the first aerial applications of an insecticide in forestry,” in <i>Killing Bugs for Business: Canada’s Aerial War against Forest Pests, 1913-1930</i> (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022), 42-76.</p> <p>Edmund Russell, Chapter 6, “Total War,” in <i>War and Nature: Fighting Humans and Insects with Chemicals from World War I to Silent Spring</i>, (Cambridge University Press, 2001),</p>	<p>Book Reviews due before class, emailed to instructor</p>

	95-118.	
Week 12, March 27	<p><i>Collateral Environmental Impacts of war and militarization</i></p> <p>Tim Cole, Marianna Dudley and Chris Pearson, “Defending Nation, Defending Nature? Militarized Landscapes and Military Environmentalism in Britain, France, and the United States,” <i>Environmental History</i>, 16:3 (July 2011), 456-491.</p> <p>Matthew Evenden, “Aluminum, Commodity Chains, and the Environmental History of the Second World War,” <i>Environmental History</i> 16:1 (January 2011), 69-93.</p> <p>Matthew Evenden, Chapter 6, “The Prairie Ruhr,” in <i>Allied Power: Mobilizing Hydro-Electricity During Canada’s Second World War</i> (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015), 139-162.</p>	
Week 13, April 3	<p><i>Cold War Environmental History</i></p> <p>Michael Staub, “Making Sense of Plague in the Vietnam War,” <i>Environmental History</i> 27:2 (April 2022), 242-268</p> <p>Richard Tucker, “Containing Communism by Impounding Rivers: American Strategic Interests and the Global Spread of High Dams in the Early Cold War”, in McNeill and Unger, <i>Environmental Histories of the Cold War</i>.</p> <p>Thomas Robertson, “Cold War Landscapes: Towards an Environmental History of US Development Programmes in the 1950s and 1960s,”</p>	

	<i>Cold War History</i> 16:4 (2016), 417-441	
Week 14 NO CLASS Easter Monday, April 10		

There is no Registrar-scheduled final exam.

**THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION APPEARS ON ALL DEPARTMENT OF
HISTORY COURSE OUTLINES**

Departmental Grading System

The following percentage-to-letter grade conversion scheme is used in all Canadian Studies, History, and Latin American Studies courses, except for HTST 200. See the university grading system in the calendar: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1-1.html>.

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	Description
90-100	A+	4.00	Outstanding performance
85-89	A	4.00	Excellent performance
80-84	A-	3.70	Approaching excellent performance
77-79	B+	3.30	Exceeding good performance
73-76	B	3.00	Good performance
70-72	B-	2.70	Approaching good performance
67-69	C+	2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance
63-66	C	2.00	Satisfactory performance
60-62	C-	1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance.
56-59	D+	1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject
50-55	D	1.00	Minimal Pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.
0-49	F	0	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.

***Please Note:** Students are expected to reach the grade range to receive that letter grade (ie. to receive an A- a student will have earned an 80 or 3.7 in the course). Assume that there will be no rounding up unless a faculty member announces otherwise.*

Writing

All written assignments and written exam responses are assessed partly on writing skills. Writing skills include surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) and general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented according to the format described in [The History Student's Handbook](#).

Academic Misconduct

Academic Misconduct refers to student behavior which compromises proper assessment of a student's academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance; failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

For more information, please see the University of Calgary [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#) documents, and visit the [Academic Integrity Website](#).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when students submit or present the ideas and/or writing of others as if they were their own or when they submit their own work to two different classes. Please see [The History Student's Handbook](#) for more details, but to summarize, plagiarism may take several forms:

- Failing to cite sources properly
- Submitting borrowed, purchased, and/or ghostwritten papers
- Submitting one's own work for more than one course without the permission of the instructor(s) involved
- Extensive paraphrasing of one or a few sources, even when referenced properly, unless the essay is a critical analysis of those works

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence, and written work that appears to contain plagiarized passages will not be graded. All such work will be reported to the Faculty of Art's associate deans of students who will apply the penalties specified in [the university calendar](#).

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the [Student Accommodations policy](#). Students needing an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in accordance with the [Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities](#). Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than Disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [Student Accessibility Services](#).

Research Ethics

Students are advised that any research with human participants – including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – must have the approval of the [Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board](#) or the [Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board](#). In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required. Some courses will include assignments that involve conducting research with human participants; in these cases, the instructor will have applied for and received ethics approval for the course assignment. The instructor will discuss the ethical requirements for the assignment with the students.

Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Copyright Legislation

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on [Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright](#) and requirements of [the Copyright Act](#) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under [the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

Copyright of Educational Materials

The University of Calgary has opted out of the Access Copyright Interim Tariff proposed by the Copyright Board. Therefore, instructors in all University of Calgary courses will strictly adhere to Copyright Act regulations and the educational exceptions permitted by the Act for both print and digital course material. No copyrighted material may be placed on course D2L or web sites without the prior permission of the copyright holders. In some cases, this may mean that instructors will require you to purchase a print course pack from the University of Calgary bookstore or consult books on reserve at the library. Please see the [University of Calgary copyright page](#).

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Student information will be collected in accordance with usual classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty and teaching assistants. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard.

MEDIA RECORDING IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Media Recording for Study Purposes (Students)

Students who wish to audio record lectures for personal study purposes need to follow the guidelines outlined in [Section E.6 of the University Calendar](#). Unless the audio recording of lectures is part of a student accessibility requirement, permission must be sought by the course instructor to audio record lectures.

Media recording for lesson capture

The instructor may use media recordings to capture the delivery of a lecture. These recordings are intended to be used for lecture capture only and will not be used for any other purpose. Recordings will be posted on D2L for student use and will normally be deleted at the end of term. Students are responsible for turning off their camera and/or microphone if they do not wish to be recorded.

Media recording for assessment of student learning

The instructor may use media recordings as part of the assessment of students. This may include but is not limited to classroom discussions, presentations, clinical practice, or skills testing that occur during the course. These recordings will be used for student assessment purposes only and

will not be shared or used for any other purpose. The recording will be destroyed as specified by [retention rule 2000.01](#) “Examinations and Student Assignments.”

Media recording for self-assessment of teaching practices

The instructor may use media recordings as a tool for self-assessment of their teaching practices. Although the recording device will be fixed on the instructor, it is possible that student participation in the course may be inadvertently captured. The recording will be destroyed as specified by [retention rule 98.0011](#) “Draft Documents & Working Materials.”

Sexual Violence Policy

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary’s sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see [the sexual and gender-based violence policy](#).

Other Useful Information

Please see the Registrar’s [Course Outline Student Support and Resources](#) page for information on:

- Wellness and Mental Health
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students’ Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk
- Campus Security 220-5333

Department of History Twitter @ucalgaryhist

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