

HIST 407/507: ENVIRONMENT AND COLONIALISM

Winter Term 2014 – T 2:00-4:50pm – McKenzie 240B – CRN 24028/24051

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Overview and Objectives

Environmental history has, in the last few decades, become one of the most vibrant new research fields. At the same time, the term “environment” has broadened greatly, in part because it is impossible to define that term in a truly exclusive manner against the backdrop of this globalizing age and our recognition of humanity’s ecological and environmental footprint around the world. Where does the “human” end and the “natural” begin? How do we understand, categorize, and interact with the non-human features of our world? What effect do we have on those features, and they on us? Why and how have these processes changed over time? Can we divide them by era or category meaningfully?

All of those questions have special resonance if we consider the context of colonialism, primarily from Europe and the US, between the 16th and 20th centuries. The advent of colonial domination led to global integration and inequity of a breadth and depth unknown before, with dramatic effects on the landscapes and people that integration touched. From the reckless integration of biological zones to attempts at “conservation,” not to mention the use and promotion of certain resources with the denial of resources to others, the exercise of colonial power and the expansion of a globalizing, and industrializing, order were indelibly written on environments. All over the world, and even at empire’s metropolitan centers, the arrival of colonial rule or its proxies had vast effects. Colonialism was a global and globalizing process, so our primary organization is really thematic despite the weight the British empire exerts in the literature. The permutations in the relationship between environments and colonial power varied widely around the world, which permits seminar members great freedom to pursue their interests and share their knowledge.

The primary purpose of this course, as with all HIST 407/507 seminars, is for you to learn how to craft a major analytical research paper (5000-7500 words, not including notes and bibliography, but a bit longer for 507 seminarists) that makes central use of primary sources. Our seminar schedule is therefore geared towards giving us a balance between common readings, methodological tutelage, and writing with critical discussion of our ongoing work. We cannot cover everything, but completing this course will give you an understanding of general themes at the intersection of colonial and environmental histories, knowledge of the particular case you choose to write about, and the skills necessary to research and write analytical papers on further historical subjects. In addition, this course can meet the 50% threshold for the African Studies minor and may serve as credit towards an Africa concentration in the History major, though in either case you must write your major paper on an African topic and let me know about this at the outset.

A Note About This Syllabus

Everything on this syllabus is important; you need to read it carefully and refer to it frequently. You are solely responsible for knowing and understanding its contents. The paper copy you receive at the beginning of the course is, ideally, the final version, but the unexpected can intrude and changes may be made. The version posted on Blackboard at any given time should be the latest version.

Requirements and Grading

Participation is about 40% of your grade. This includes discussion in class and Blackboard questions as well as group work connected to your paper drafts (see the schedule and the assignment list at the end of this syllabus, pp. 8-9). If you are silent and/or unengaged with the seminar, or disregard these exercises, you can receive a low or even failing grade no matter how inspired your other work may be.

The proposal for the major paper, due in the third week of classes, comprises about 10% of your final grade. This proposal is expected to identify a topic, propose a basic thesis, and identify at least ten sources (three primary), in proper style as per Rampolla (see **page 9** of this syllabus). Although only a small part of the grade in itself, failure to tender this proposal on time will result in a failing grade for the seminar. Failure to tender the rough draft for comment in week 9 on time will also result in a failing mark.

The biggest piece of your grade (~50%) is the major research paper based on primary sources. This paper must be a polished piece of writing that is correct in grammar and style (formatting) to Rampolla's *Pocket Guide* or the *Chicago Manual of Style* (16th edition) on which it is based, using footnotes/endnotes and a bibliography. MLA, APA, and other styles will not be accepted from undergraduate members. Style will constitute 1/3 of the paper grade. **Your seminar grade however will not exceed your final paper grade.**

Unless you are prevented from completing coursework because of verified emergency or illness, no excuses or extensions will be given, and no late work will be accepted. The due dates in this course are set out on day one, so you have all term to prepare for them. **Plan ahead.** Note: if you email your work, you alone are responsible for my receipt of it; if the email gets lost or you send the wrong file, I will grade what I receive accordingly.

Course Texts and Reading Suggestions

There is only one “required text,” a general overview to writing history and Chicago Manual style:

- Rampolla, Mary Lynn. *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. 7th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012. ISBN 978-0-3126-1041-8.

Our thematic interest and broad scope suggests that chapters and articles will serve us best. These are given on the following pages in connection with the relevant week. **All of these readings will be available on Blackboard**, and should be obtainable electronically at the requisite time via links in the “syllabus” section of the course site; let me know as soon as possible if you have any problems. **Printing out these selections and bringing them to seminar is your responsibility, and is your “book cost.”**

Each “reading week” has three distinct (albeit relatively short) readings, and it is likely to be confusing if you simply read them in rapid succession. Therefore I would strongly recommend schematizing your reading. Structure your personal summary around these questions, or some variation, for each selection:

- What is the main point of this article or chapter? What is the author's central thesis?
- Does the author situate her or his work within a broader discussion among historians? How?
- What are the author's assumptions, and what evidence do they use or omit?
- What things are missing? What is weighted or slighted? (Does the author convince you?)
- How does this relate, directly or abstractly, with the other readings for the week? With other weeks' themes and readings?

Considering these questions as you read will raise questions in your own mind that will interest the seminar as a whole, and they can help you to refine your own writing later.

Graduate Students in History 507 (CRN 24051)

Graduate students enrolled in History 507 will have modified requirements, most notably a longer paper (7000-9000 words) that deals more heavily with a particular subject's historiography or that engages in comparative or broader contextual analysis. The finished paper should be nearly publishable in quality. There will also be additional readings and meetings that we will arrange at relevant times and tailor to your own research strengths and interests. Graduate students are still beholden to all 407 assigned work.

Other Policy Statements:

100% Attendance: Because this is a participatory seminar that depends on your input, attendance is required at all class meetings and events; the standard penalty for absence works out to about one full letter grade for each instance. We meet only once per week, so even one absence affects the whole seminar; naturally if you are missing for reasons beyond your control (health, weather, family emergency) UO policy covers you. Please inform me immediately if you anticipate an absence, not so much to ameliorate any penalties, but to allow me to keep you abreast of developments in the course and assure that I receive any work that is due. Late arrival and early departure also have a detrimental effect on the seminar.

Special Needs and Gizmos: Although I'm otherwise a technophile, some gadgets are annoying and distracting not only for the user but for the people around her or him. They also create a physical barrier that stifles conversation. Therefore I request that you leave laptop computers in their bags (print out your notes) and turn off or silence your phones. Of course the rule is not absolute. If you wish to show images or play music from a laptop, or look something up, just ask me. I am however OK with tablets or flat e-readers on a trial basis, should you prefer to use those for your readings instead of paper.

If you do have physical or learning differences that require special accommodations such as a laptop for general use, official notice from the Accessible Education Center (see <http://aec.uoregon.edu>) is required. I will do everything in my power to address all documented needs, but I cannot make exceptions without it.

Academic Honesty: The information in this subsection should go without saying, but unfortunate recent experience and surprising unfamiliarity with issues of academic honesty among students has prompted me to include it in all of my syllabi. I refer you, for your information, to Student Conduct and Community Standards at the Office of Student Life:

<http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/tabid/68/Default.aspx>

You will find there a number of relevant headings to policies on academic honesty and conduct. In our case, inadvertent plagiarism will be the greatest source of peril. If you are unsure of what plagiarism is, you can consult Rampolla's relevant selections (ch. 6, 98-105), or the UO's own particular guide to the subject:

<http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>

It is a gross understatement to say that academic dishonesty will adversely affect your grade. At the very least, you will receive an automatic failing mark for the course. However, my personal view of the matter is that plagiarists have no place in an institution of higher learning. Therefore I always press for the *maximum* penalty for offenses of this nature, which means suspension or expulsion from the University. If you have any concerns or you're not sure whether something is plagiarism, ask me as soon as possible, *before* you turn it in for a grade. At the seminar level, there is no margin even for unintentional error on this point.

Everything Else: In all other matters, I default to the Duck Guide or the relevant Departmental policy. If you're not sure of something, please ask sooner rather than later!

HIST 407: ENVIRONMENT AND COLONIALISM

Meeting and Reading Schedule (subject to modification)

Complete all session readings before the meeting assigned, and be ready to discuss them. All readings will be found on Blackboard, at least in the form of links to e-journals. It is up to you to print them out and bring them to class! First week readings are distributed by email.

- T 7 Jan (Week 1) Introduction to, and Requirements of, the Course**
 Reading (emailed): Jürgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2005), 3-22.
 Douglas R. Weiner, “A Death-Defying Attempt to Articulate a Coherent Definition of Environmental History,” *Environmental History* 10 (2005): 405-420.
 Activities: Introduction of seminar members, backgrounds, and interests
 Discussion of scope, goals, ambitions, and expectations
 Library orientation with David Woken (History reference librarian), 4-4:50pm (144 Knight)
- T 14 Jan (Week 2) The Intersection of Colonialism and the Environment, and Its Contents**
 Rampolla: Rampolla, *Pocket Guide*, 1-19.
 Reading: **(Catch up on Osterhammel and Weiner if necessary.)**
 William Beinart & Lotte Hughes, *Environment and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1-21.
 John M. MacKenzie, “Empire and the Ecological Apocalypse: The Historiography of the Imperial Environment,” in Tom Griffiths and Libby Robin, eds. *Ecology and Empire: Environmental History of Settler Societies* (Edinburgh: Keele University Press, 1997), 215-28.
 Richard Grove, “The Colonial State and the Origins of Western Environmentalism,” in *Green Imperialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 474-86.
 Discussion: historical research, types of sources, and refining your topics.
Assignment Due: Five possible paper topics, each with a brief description of broader aims or questions the paper might answer. See assignment list.
- T 21 Jan (Week 3) Biological Integration, Adaptation, and Interpretation**
 Rampolla: Rampolla, *Pocket Guide*, 39-49, 66-85, 99-128 *passim* (for citation models).
 Reading: Shawn Miller, *An Environmental History of Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 49-76.
 James L. A. Webb, Jr., *Tropical Pioneers: Human Agency and Ecological Change in the Highlands of Sri Lanka, 1800-1900* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002), 4-75.
 James Giblin, “The Precolonial Politics of Disease Control in the Lowlands of Northeastern Tanzania,” in Gregory Maddox, James Giblin, & Isaria Kimambo, eds., *Custodians of the Land: Ecology & Culture in the History of Tanzania* (London: James Currey, 1996), 127-51. **(507 students read both.)**
 Activities: Discussion: Basic style and citation standards (Rampolla).
 Discussion: Devising a clear thesis and roadmap for research.
 Discussion: How does that footnoting feature work, anyway?
- R 24 Jan (Week 3) Paper Proposal due by 5:00pm. See the proposal/paper description, p. 9.**
- T 28 Feb (Week 4) Colonial Ideas of Nature: Science, Exploitation, & Conservation**

- Rampolla: Rampolla, *Pocket Guide*, 49-65, 86-93.
 Reading: Richard H. Grove, "The Evolution of the Colonial Discourse on Deforestation and Climate Change," in *Ecology, Climate, & Empire: Colonialism and Global Environmental History, 1400-1940* (Cambridge: White Horse Press, 1997), 5-36.
 Helen Tilley, "An Environmental Laboratory: 'Native' Agriculture, Tropical Infertility, and Ecological Models of Development," ch. 3 in *Africa as a Living Laboratory: Empire, Development, and the Problem of Scientific Knowledge, 1870-1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 115-68.
 Greg Bankoff, "Breaking New Ground? Gifford Pinchot and the Birth of 'Empire Forestry' in the Philippines, 1900-1905," *Environment and History* 15 (2009): 369-93.
- Activities: Discussion: Evaluating sources for value, content, bias, et cetera.
 Primary source reading/viewing. (In-class exercise)
 How and when do we cite sources? Why? (In-class exercise)
- T 4 Feb (Week 5) Contests: Spaces and Resources**
 Rampolla: Rampolla, *Pocket Guide*, 94-132 (relevant from here on out, to quote/cite).
 Reading: Richard H. Grove, "Colonial Conservation, Ecological Hegemony and Popular Resistance: Towards a Global Synthesis," in *Ecology, Climate, & Empire: Colonialism and Global Environmental History, 1400-1940* (Cambridge: White Horse Press, 1997), 179-223.
 Cynthia Radding, *Landscapes of Power and Identity: Comparative Histories in the Sonoran Desert and the Forests of Amazonia from Colony to Republic* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 89-116
 Nancy Jacobs, *Environment, Power, and Injustice: A South African History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 148-72.
- Activities: Discussion: How to think about revising your research focus and when.
Assignment Due: Short review (2-3 pp.) of the major book on your topic. See assignment list.
- T 11 Feb (Week 6) Colonialism and Built Environments: Cities and Societies**
 Reading: William Beinart and Lotte Hughes, *Environment and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 148-66.
 M. Satish Kumar, "The Evolution of Spatial Ordering in Colonial Madras," in Allison Blunt & Cheryl McEwan, eds., *Postcolonial Geographies* (New York: Continuum, 2002), 85-98.
 W. C. Bissell, "Conservation & the Colonial Past: Urban Planning, Space & Power in Colonial Zanzibar," in David Anderson & Richard Rathbone, eds., *Africa's Urban Past* (London: James Currey, 2000), 246-61.
- Activities: Discussion: Composing your research paper; more on citations and style.
Assignment Due: Paper outline and revised thesis statement. See assignment list.
- T 18 Feb (Week 7) No regular seminar meeting. Individual meetings required.**
 Activities: Every seminar member must meet with me *at least* once between 20 Feb and 3 Mar to consult on paper progress. You may arrange more than one visit, but one (expect up to an hour) is required.
- T 25 Feb (Week 8) No regular seminar meeting. Individual meetings required.**
 Activities: See prior week's note for requirement.
- T 4 Mar (Week 9) Rough Draft Exchange (Short meeting)**

Assignment due: Draft papers due for exchange at class time. Bring four copies; see assignment list.

Activities: Discussion of the current state of your work, problems and issues, and any other relevant matters that have arisen.

T 11 Mar (Week 10) Small Group Critiques (Short meeting?)

Assignment due: Peer Critiques. Bring two extra copies of each critique. See assignment list.

R 20 Mar

Final Papers due by 5:00pm in my office, 311 McKenzie Hall. No extensions or incompletes will be permitted. See the proposal/paper description, p. 9.

Recapitulation of Major Due Dates:

Sunday, 12 Jan, 19 Jan, 26 Jan, 2 Feb, 9 Feb	Blackboard Postings (1 question) on readings by midnight
Thursday, 24 Jan, 5:00PM	Paper Proposals Due
Tuesday, 4 Mar, 2:00PM	Rough Drafts Due (Bring copies for small groups)
Thursday, 20 Mar, 5:00PM	Final Research Paper Due (NO EXTENSIONS)

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS: LIST & DESCRIPTIONS

Weeks 2-6 (Each Sunday prior): On 12 Jan, 19 Jan, 26 Jan, 2 Feb, & 9 Feb, **before midnight**, I expect you to post one question relevant to the readings on Blackboard, in our course forum for that week. This question **may not** be a simple request for information, but rather a question of some intellectual and analytical substance regarding the readings or the issues they raise connected to colonial environmental history or the historian's craft. Your post may be a couple of sentences to couch one question, or it may be a long paragraph (or more) if you have a lot of interrelated questions to ask about one idea that's piqued you. Besides forcing you to get the reading done early enough to digest it, devising a question also permits you to raise issues or questions that we can touch upon in seminar and so serves an important role in your participation grade. I also expect you to read over your fellow students' questions before seminar, and not to ask the same question someone else has (although you may build upon their thoughts). Even if you must be absent, I expect you to tender these questions on time, as with all the weekly assignments.

Week 2 (14 Jan): Bring five potential research topics, with a once-sentence statement for each with possible questions or research directions for this topic. Of the five topics, you must include the following: 1) An individual; 2) an event; 3) a social, cultural, or economic theme; 4) a historiographical topic. The goal of requiring this "spread" is to get you thinking in a variety of ways about devising topics and questions. Use Pretorius, Nasson, and any other relevant readings to help push you along. This is a brain-storming exercise, but try your best to choose topics you think may be new, or might offer new insights.

Those seminarians in African Studies must assure that most, if not all, of these also are "African," that is to say not dealing primarily with topics outside the continent. Some topics may satisfy more than one of these categories, as well. Hopefully one of these ideas will form the seed for your proposal (**see prior page**).

Week 3 (22/24 Jan): Paper proposal due. See page 9.

Week 5 (4 Feb): You are to write a review of the most important book (secondary source) on your topic as proposed, about two to three pages (500-800 words) in length. In this review, I want you to describe the book's topic, its thesis (that is, what is the book trying to prove or to say?), the main points of its argument, and assessment of its effectiveness as well as its use of sources. The purpose of this exercise is for you to think critically about historical writing and to begin to evaluate others' work.

Week 6 (11 Feb): Thesis statement and paper outline. By this time you should have an idea of generally where your paper is going. You are to tender a one-sentence thesis statement (the answer to your research question!) together with an outline in this classic "nested" format:

- I. Happy things
 - a. Warm donuts with good coffee on a winter morning
 - b. Getting both Park Place and Boardwalk in Monopoly
 - c. Pigs in mud
 - i. Wet mud
 - ii. Dry mud
- II. Unhappy things
 - a. Sending risqué text message to a parent by mistake
 - i. Worse: a sibling
 - ii. Worst: a grandparent
 - b. Startled rock hyraxes
 - i. They're already really, really ill-tempered
 - c. [Et cetera]

You can annotate your points more fully with text if you wish, but the primary goal is to be clear. (No, I don't know what topic this outline could possibly address.)

Week 9 (4 Mar): Tender of draft research papers. Bring four copies of your research paper drafts, whatever state they may be in. You will be organized into complementary groups of four writers as peer groups for critique and commentary. Ideally you will be well along in your writing; matters of style will not be graded at this point. If you have not progressed significantly beyond your outline, your final paper will at the very least be denied the full value of the peer critiques the following week. In any case, be sure to continue your research and writing between weeks 9 and 10.

Week 10 (11 Mar): Peer critiques. Meet to exchange written comments and talk about draft papers in small groups. One author will talk about their paper a bit, and then the readers will each present their individual commentaries/critiques, and discussion will follow. Every 25-30 minutes, I will signal the groups to move to the next paper and author. **Final papers are due 20 March, during finals week; see page 9.**

Format for the Commentaries/Critiques:

Your comments for each paper in your 4-person group **must** be typed and 2-3 pages (400-800 words) in length. Bring two extra copies, one for the paper's writer and one for me.

At the outset of your commentary/critique you must briefly, in a sentence or two, **identify the subject of the paper and state its thesis as you, the reader, see it.** This seems elementary but it is hard for writers sometimes to distance themselves and read their work as an outside viewer might. If a thesis is hard for a paper's commentators to divine, that is a valid point for discussion.

After that, segue into talking about the paper itself, its strengths and weaknesses, any issues you might have about its approach, things you think might strengthen the paper or that you feel are superfluous, and the like. Keep these questions (and perhaps others) in mind as you write your evaluation:

- Is the core thesis clear, and does the author adequately support it?
- Is the organizational framework reasonable and logical? Can you follow the narrative or argument?
- Are key questions left unanswered or unaddressed? Does the approach presume or omit anything problematic?
- Is any portion of the paper particularly strong or weak?
- Do you think primary sources used judiciously, and in a way that contributes materially to the strength of the paper?
- Is the paper fair to other potential ways to read sources on its subject, if any?
- Does the paper adequately deal with the seminar context, that is, the interplay of colonialism and the environment?

In all of these cases you must assure that your comments are constructive, meaning that you should offer a solution to the issue at hand (which may be implicit in your comment, for example in corrections). You should also feel free to praise the author at strong points of the paper, and perhaps consider why those parts were so impressive and how to expand that strength. More specific comments, such as names or terms that are not defined, are at your discretion as to whether you wish to include them in the written comments or communicate them orally.

Generally you should avoid making comments on the prose in a draft unless it is exceptionally difficult to read or needs reorganization. We expect draft citations to be imperfect or tentative, so they should not be the subject of commentary. If you wish, you may also return a marked draft of the paper to the author, but that is entirely up to you as the reader and I do not require it.

(Thanks to Dr. Alex Dracobly for his input and inspiration in refining the assignments and critiques. –LFB)

THE PROPOSAL AND THE PAPER

As you are all well aware, terms at the U of O are extremely short. It is therefore essential that you begin devising workable research subjects as early as possible. With that in mind, you must tender a proposal by 5:00pm on Thursday, 24 January 2014, that indicates your subject, articulates a research question (the answer to which will be your paper's thesis), and demonstrates its viability as a research subject. Failure to tender this proposal will result in a failing grade for the seminar.

I require this early start and approval process in order to prevent the scramble for hard-to-acquire resources or the belated discovery that a topic is unworkable. Your thesis and your focus within the subject may (and likely shall) shift significantly as you conduct research, but I want us to have a good starting point to prevent frustration, undue stress, and ultimately sub-par work at the end of the term.

The proposal for the major paper must include the following elements:

- Statement of the subject, and a **tentative thesis or research question in clear, direct language**. The statement may at this point be the question or unknown factor you expect your research to resolve.
- A discussion of the historical context and the importance of the subject. Here you may draw on the secondary literature (history books, etc) and other historical interpretations of your subject.
- A preliminary bibliography (annotation optional, depending on the strength of your introduction) of **at least ten** potential sources, including **no less than 3** primary sources (letters, novels, memoirs, speeches, government reports, and the like). **Divide the bibliography into two sections**, one for "primary sources" and one for "secondary sources." Annotation is not required. This bibliography may include material you have not yet received but which looks promising, and you need not have read everything yet. Fortunately, we can get a lot from around the world online, at Knight, or via ILL. You are to avoid internet-originated sources—digitized books and articles are OK, but check with me for anything that's not on Google Books or a journal website. This bibliography **must be stylistically correct** as per Rampolla (or Chicago). See me if you have any questions; David Woken (History and Area Studies librarian) will also be available to aid your search, and we have put together a research guide here: http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/history/hist407_braun.html.

It is important that you make clear what you understand about the subject you are proposing, based on your preliminary research investigations, and what your proposed subject might mean. At the very least, you are to make the case that your thesis is arguable and that materials adequate to investigate it are available in the time allotted. Your proposal is only expected to be three pages or so in length (800+ words), **not counting** the bibliography. Some of that text may make it into the final paper, so it is not lost writing effort by any means. Beyond the requirements, you may want to write about anything else you've considered relative to the paper. Displaying deep, careful thought will not only improve your grade, but also allow me to make more useful and thoughtful comments that will aid you in directing your research.

The final 407 paper itself must be 5000-7500 words, excluding footnotes, bibliography, cover sheet, and so forth. It must make use of no less than ten relevant and significant sources (including primary sources), but successful papers generally employ many more. The paper is to be a piece of formal writing, in clear and concise college-level English; style counts for 1/3 of the overall paper grade. For the final proposal and the paper, *Chicago Manual N + B* styles (footnotes plus bibliography, as laid out in Rampolla's *Guide* or Turabian's *Manual* for those who know it) are to be used for citations—not APA, MLA, or any other style guide; **using the wrong style, or no discernable style at all, will earn you a style grade of F**. Following a style guide's prescriptions are more than just a matter of cosmetics; being assiduous about documenting your research can save you from inadvertent failure to cite sources (plagiarism) and the epic sadness that attends it. General writing help is available from the Writing Labs at the University's Teaching and Learning Center; see <http://tlc.uoregon.edu/> for more information. **The final draft is due in my office at 5:00pm on Wednesday, 20 Mar 2014; no late papers will be accepted. Plan ahead!**