Environmental History, HIST 3950
Fall 2015, MWF 10:30-11:20
Old Main 006

Instructor Information
Dr. Amanda Lewis
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Office: Old Main Hill 323G
Office Hours: Tuesday 10:00am-12:00pm, and by appointment

Course Description
This course will introduce you to the field of environmental history. We will focus on the relationship between people and the environment over the course of the past two centuries through an examination of major themes in environmental history. The course takes a global approach while also highlighting the foundation of American environmental history. You will learn how to “read a landscape” to learn a place’s historical context as well as develop an understanding of the interconnectedness of environmental history.

Required Texts
Banana Cultures by John Soluri. ISBN: 780292712560
Additional readings can be found on Canvas

Course Goals
By the time you finish this course you will be able to:

- Identify and analyze important events, people, ideas that shaped environmental history.
- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources used to write environmental history.
- Describe how the relationship between people and the environment has changed since the beginning of the late nineteenth century.
- Communicate clearly ideas based on evidence through writing.

Learning Outcomes

◆ Historical Knowledge
- Identify the key events which express/define change over time in a broad range of places and regions
  - Identify how change occurs over time
  - Explain historical continuity and change
  - Describe the influence of political ideologies, economic structures, social organization, cultural perceptions, and natural environments on historical events
  - Discuss the ways in which factors such as race, gender, class, ethnicity, region, and religion influence historical narratives

◆ Historical Thinking
- Recognize the past-ness of the past
  - Explain how people have existed, acted, and thought in the past
- Explain what influence the past has on the present
  - Emphasize the complex nature of past experiences
    - Interpret the complexity and diversity of situations, events, and past mentalities
    - Develop an international perspective on the past that addresses the cumulative effects of global exchange, engagement, and interdependence
  - Emphasize the complex and problematic nature of the historical record
    - Recognize a range of viewpoints
    - Compare competing historical narratives
    - Challenge arguments of historical inevitability
    - Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation

**Historical Skills**
- Develop skills in critical thinking and reading
  - Evaluate debates among historians
  - Differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations
  - Assess the credibility of primary and secondary sources
- Develop research skills
  - Formulate historical questions
  - Obtain historical data from a variety of sources
  - Identify gaps in available records
  - Recognize the discipline's standards for accurate and ethical research.
- Develop the ability to construct reasonable historical arguments
  - Construct a well-organized historical argument
  - Support an interpretation with historical evidence from a variety of primary and secondary sources

**Assignments**

*Comprehension Quizzes 15%*
There will be approximately 10 quizzes, both announced and unannounced, throughout the semester. These will assess your reading comprehension and retention of lecture and discussion. No quizzes will be made up, but I will drop the lowest score.

*Book Analysis 15% each (30% total)*
You will write reflection and analysis essays on *Banana Cultures* and *Crimes against Nature*. Details for each assignment can be found on Canvas.

*Annotated Bibliography 15%*
An annotated bibliography is a compilation of sources that you have read, summarized, and analyzed. You will pick one of the unit themes of the course and compile sources related to that topic. However, you will choose a narrower focus for your sources. For example, if you are interested in the environmental history of water, you might choose a geographic region and explore the history of water management. The sources you annotate will related to this. Further details can be found on Canvas.

*Local Landscapes Project 30%*
As your cumulative assessment for this course, you will produce a project that examines the change over time of a local landscape. This project will be presented in two ways. You will pick a location in Cache Valley and explore its environmental history. In the first part, you will need to
document the place’s current landscape characteristics. You will contrast this with documentation of your location’s historical uses and aesthetics. For the first form of presentation, you will need to create a visual presentation, probably in the form of a power point presentation, which will be uploaded to Canvas. Your classmates will have the opportunity to comment and you can have a discussion with them online about your project. Then you will submit a 5 page paper to me giving a historical analysis of your landscape. You will draw on the primary sources you found in the library’s Special Collections or elsewhere as well as secondary source supporting your analysis. Further details can be found on Canvas.

**Participation 10%**
You are expected to be an active learner in this course. This means you will participate in class discussions and activities throughout the semester. I do not take attendance, but repeated absences will hurt your overall participation score. Participation looks like this: Students answer my question prompts in class; Students work collaboratively on class activities; students do not sleep in class, use cell phones, or social media; students demonstrate a grasp of the course material in non-written ways.

**Grading Scale**
- **100-90 points:** “A” range
  - 100-97: A+; 96-93: A; 92-90: A-
- **89-80 points:** “B” range
  - 89-87: B+; 86-83: B; 82-80: B-
- **79-70 points:** “C” range
  - 79-77: C+; 76-73: C; 72-70: C-
- **69-60 points:** “D” range
  - 69-67: D+; 66-63: D; 62-60: D-
- **59-0 points:** “F” range

**Class Policies**
- Everyone’s behavior affects our learning environment. Please arrive on time and do not begin to pack up until our session is over. If you need to come in late or leave early, please sit at the back or edge of the room so as not to disrupt the class.
- Please limit the use of computers in the classroom. Research has shown that students do better in class when they write notes by hand rather than on a computer.
- Phones should be completely silent. Even phones on vibrate are distracting. The use of phones in any capacity is not allowed.
- Late assignments: No quizzes will be made up. Late assignments will be deducted 10% for each day late up to one week. After 7 days, the assignment will not be accepted.
- No attendance taken. Recognize that it pays to show up regularly. In class, you hear the particular points of a lecture as well as the general context in which those points are raised. One without the other usually leads to problems on exams.
- Ask questions. If you are confused, please do not hesitate to ask in class or during office hours.
- In class, I expect you to focus your attention on the lecture and discussion. Chatting with neighbors, reading newspapers, answering your phone, browsing the Internet, updating Facebook or Twitter, or sleeping are all great things, but not in the classroom. In the classroom, they are rude and distracting. Worse still, they break down the mutual respect between students and teacher.
By attending regularly, you do not depend on someone else’s notes – notes that might turn out to be awful. In class, you can work on a skill that the non-attender never develops: note-taking abilities. You cannot sharpen this skill just by copying notes but only by doing the work yourself: be a good listener, become familiar with materials in its entirety, and learning to discern, organize, and inter-relate the critical components of an argument. I cannot emphasize the importance of these skills inside and outside the university.

Course Schedule
(Subject to change)

**Week 1**  *The Big Ideas*
31 August  Intro to Syllabus, Course Expectations and Requirements
2 September  What is environmental history?
Read Worster “Doing Environmental History”
4 September  How to read a landscape
Read Cronon “How to Read a Landscape”  Hart “Reading the Landscape”

**Week 2**  *A Global Context of the Human-Environment Relationship*
7 September  No Class – Labor Day
9 September  The Columbian Exchange
Watch Jared Diamond “Why do societies collapse?”
Read Crosby “Ecological Imperialism”
11 September  Nature and Wilderness as an Idea
Read Cronon “The Trouble with Wilderness”

**Week 3**  *An American Context of Environmental Ideas*
14 September  Early Conservation Movement in the US
Read Pinchot, “How Conservation began in the United States”
16 September  Protecting Spaces
Read Perrottet “John Muir’s Yosemite”, Muir “Features of the Proposed Yosemite National Park”
18 September  America’s Greatest Idea?

**Week 4**
21 September  Aldo Leopold
Read Leopold “A Sand County Almanac” & “Wilderness as a Form of Land Use”
23 September  Library Bibliographic Instruction – We will meet in the library.
25 September  Managing the American Landscape
Jacob Book Analysis Due & Discussion

**Week 5**  *Imperialism and Environment*
28 September  Colonial Resource Extraction
Read Robins, “Slave Cocoa and Red Rubber”
30 September  Disease and Empire
Read Sutter “Nature’s Agents or Agents of Empire?”
2 October  Empire, Race, and Environment
Read Anderson “Immunities of Empire”
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<tr>
<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
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<tr>
<td>5 October</td>
<td>Lessons from the Dust Bowl</td>
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<td>7 October</td>
<td>The Green Revolution</td>
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<td>9 October</td>
<td>Big Farms, Small Farms</td>
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**Read** Beeman and Pritchard excerpt

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<th>Week 7</th>
<th>Modern Global Exchanges</th>
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<td>12 October</td>
<td>Core and Peripheries</td>
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<td>14 October</td>
<td>Environment and War</td>
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<td>15 October</td>
<td>Invasive Species (Friday Class)</td>
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<td>16 October</td>
<td>No Class – Fall Break</td>
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**Read** Evenden “Aluminum, Commodity Chains, and the Environmental History of the Second World War”

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<th>Week 8</th>
<th>Trees &amp; Fire</th>
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<tr>
<td>19 October</td>
<td>Soluri Book Analysis Due &amp; Discussion</td>
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<td>21 October</td>
<td>Forest Management</td>
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<td>23 October</td>
<td>The Big Burn</td>
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**Read** Kull, “Deforestation, Erosion, and Fire”

**Read** Stoll “Insects and Institutions”

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<th>Week 9</th>
<th>The Modern Environmental Movement</th>
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<tr>
<td>26 October</td>
<td>Fire Management in global perspective</td>
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<td>28 October</td>
<td>Energy beneath the ground</td>
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**Read** Kull “Deforestation, Erosion, and Fire”

**Read** Pyne “Frontiers of Fire”

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<th>Week 10</th>
<th>Water</th>
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<tr>
<td>2 November</td>
<td>Industrialism and the Birds</td>
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<td>4 November</td>
<td>Global Perspectives</td>
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<td>6 November</td>
<td>Conservation, Poverty, and War</td>
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**Read** Carson excerpts from *Silent Spring*

**Read** Nash “The International Perspective” & Guha, “Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Perspective”

**Read** Brockington “Forests, Community Conservation, and Local Government Performance: The Village Forest Reserves of Tanzania” and Bankoff “Making Parks out of Wars”

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<th>Week 11</th>
<th>Water</th>
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<tr>
<td>9 November</td>
<td>Water Management</td>
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<td>11 November</td>
<td>Environmental Disasters</td>
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Read Cushman “The Imperial Politics of Hurricane Prediction” & Steinberg excerpt from Acts of God

13 November Animals around Us
Domestic Animals
Read Milton “The Transvaal Beef Frontier”
Annotated Bibliography Due

Week 12
16 November Wildlife Management
18 November Landscape Project Work day
20 November Landscape Project Work day

Week 13
23 November Endangered Species
Read Manganiello “From a Howling Wilderness to Howling Safaris”

25 November No Class – Thanksgiving
27 November No Class – Thanksgiving

Week 14 Pollution and Overconsumption
30 November Consequences of Industrial Progress
Read Kinkela “The Paradox of US Pesticide Policy during the Age of Ecology”
2 December Nuclear Consequences
Read Wills “Welcome to the Atomic Park”
Landscape Presentations Due
4 December Whose Oceans?
Read Finley, “Global Borders and the Fish that Ignore Them”
Muscolino “The Yellow Croaker War”

Week 15 Population and the Future of the Planet
7 December Seven Billion and Counting
Read Nash “Island Civilization”
9 December Sustainability arguments
11 December The future of the environment

Finals Week
14-18 December Landscape Paper due