

History/CFB 3309
North American Environmental History
SMU-in-Taos, June Term 2012

Professor Andrew R. Graybill
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This course examines the past interactions between human societies and the natural world on the North American continent, with particular emphasis on the region that is now the American Southwest. This relationship is complex, for the environment reveals the effects of people's influences but also shapes human history by creating and limiting our possibilities. Members of the course will investigate this reciprocal relationship through the investigation of specific themes, including the following: Native American resource management; the ecological impact of European arrival in the New World; resource exploitation and commodification in the industrial age; changing ideas about nature; and the roots of current environmental problems and the political solutions devised to address them.

READINGS:

Three books are required for this course. I will also post several articles on Blackboard (marked *).

- Krech, Shepard III. The Ecological Indian: Myth and History. New York: Norton, 1999.
Merchant, Carolyn, ed. Major Problems in American Environmental History (2nd ed.).
Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 2005.
Rodriguez, Sylvia. Acequia: Water Sharing, Sanctity, and Place. Santa Fe: SAR Press,
2006.

COURSE GOVERNANCE:

If you need academic accommodations for a disability, you must first contact Rebecca Marin in the office of Services for Students with Disabilities (rmarin@smu.edu) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. You should then schedule an appointment with me in order to make appropriate arrangements. Students who require accommodation for this class must contact both Ms. Marin and me no later than Friday, June 1.

I take plagiarism – stealing and passing off another's ideas as your own, or using information without crediting the source – very seriously. Please consult the SMU Honor Code (http://smu.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook/PCL_05_HC.asp) for a fuller explanation of this offense. Some specific examples of actions that constitute plagiarism include pasting together uncredited information or ideas from the internet or published sources; submitting an entire paper written by someone else; submitting a paper written for another class (and thus not original work); and copying another student's work (even with that student's knowledge and permission). In short, when you write your essays for this course, you will need to be meticulous about giving credit to any and all sources. As this is so important, if you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Finally, a note on professionalism. Discourteous or disruptive conduct will not be tolerated. You must arrive at class punctually and join in our activities for the entirety of the session. So as not to distract from your own learning or that of your classmates, you may not use cell phones, iPods, or any other PDAs during class (they must be stowed, out of sight, before we begin). Neither may you use laptop computers of any kind during class. I realize this may be inconvenient for some, but it is nonnegotiable.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students in the class will be expected to participate actively in class discussions, and will also complete two essays (details to come). Furthermore, I will reward your hard work with several, easy-to-ace in-class quizzes that will cover readings, class material, or both.

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

Class Participation:	15%
Quiz Average (dates TBA):	25%
Essay #1 (due June 15):	30%
Essay #2 (due June 29):	30%

I consider the course syllabus a contract of sorts between us – if we all abide by its dictates, we should have smooth sailing indeed.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

In this course, students will learn – among other things – how to 1) read and evaluate a secondary historical source; 2) write an argument-driven, expository essay; 3) think critically about complicated social and political issues.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS:

WEEK 1:

5/31: Arrival at Fort Burgwin

6/1: Course Introduction

Merchant, Major Problems, chapter 1

WEEK 2:

6/4: Three Islands

*Jared Diamond, Collapse, chapters 2-3

6/5: Native Americans

Krech, The Ecological Indian, chapters 2-3

6/6: Field Trip: Taos Pueblo (with guest, Sylvia Rodriguez)

Rodriguez, Acequia, chapters 1-4

6/7: Ecological Invasions

Merchant, Major Problems, chapter 2

6/8: Colonial Resource Exploitation

Merchant, Major Problems, chapters 3-4

WEEK 3:

6/11: The Industrial Revolution

Merchant, Major Problems, chapters 6, 8

6/12: The Destruction of the Bison

Krech, The Ecological Indian, chapter 5

6/13: Cowboy Ecology

Merchant, Major Problems, chapter 9

6/14: Field Trip: Las Vegas, NM

*David Correia, “Retribution Will be Their Reward”

*Andrew Graybill, Policing the Great Plains, chapter 4

6/15: Essay #1 due by 5:00PM via Blackboard

WEEK 4:

6/18: Naturalists

*Henry David Thoreau, Walden

6/19: Preservation

Merchant, Major Problems, chapter 11

6/20: Conservation

Merchant, Major Problems, chapter 10

6/21: Field Trip: Valles Caldera

6/22: Energy

Merchant, Major Problems, chapter 14

WEEK 5:

6/25: Hydraulic Society

Rodriguez, Acequia, chapters 5-8

6/26: Field Trip: El Vado Dam

6/27: From Conservation to Environment
Merchant, Major Problems, chapter 13

6/28: The Environmental Movement
Merchant, Major Problems, chapter 15

6/29: Essay #2 due by 5:00PM via Blackboard

6/30: Depart from Fort Burgwin