Complete Seminar Reading List

Select 10 of the following 16 seminar topics

1. Bodies and environments
What historical relationships can we discern between disease, health and environments?
What are the important material relationships?
What are the important cultural relationships?
What is historical ecology (how is it different from environmental history)?


2. Agroecosystems
What is an agroecosystem?
What kind of energy does it rely upon?
Is agriculture the most important of our relationships to the natural world?
How does agriculture structure relationships between the city and the country?


3. Fisheries
What is a “commons”? Why is it significant?
When do we see the most dramatic impacts upon fisheries?
Is capitalist exploitation most at fault for stock declines?
What about the role of technology?


Sean Cadigan, “The moral economy of the commons: ecology and equity in the
Newfoundland cod fishery, 1815-1855” *Labour*. Spring 1999. , Iss. 43; pg. 9-42 (33)

Jeremy B.C. Jackson, et al. “Historical Overfishing and the Collapse of Coastal

Arthur F. McEvoy, “Toward an Interactive Theory of Nature and Culture: Ecology,

Frank Tough, “The establishment of a commercial fishing industry and the demise of

4. The fur trade
How would you characterize human-animal relationships within the fur trade?
What about relationships with the rest of nature?
Why do people overhunt?

Carolyn Podruchny, “Baptizing novices: Ritual moments among French Canadian
voyageurs in the Montreal fur trade, 1780-1821” *Canadian Historical Review* Jun 2002. Vol. 83, Iss. 2; pg. 165-95 (30)

examination of the problems of resource management in the fur trade,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 1.1 (1975) 49-68 (19)


Calvin Martin, “The European Impact on the Culture of a Northeastern Algonquian
5. Colonial geographies
This is a work of historical geography. How are historical geography and environmental history related disciplines? What differences, if any, are there between the two?
How do the maps in this work convey meaning?


6. Science
The prevailing means by which Western societies know nature is through science. And even environmental history is distinguished as an interdisciplinary field that relies to a certain extent on science.
In what ways have scientific perspectives about the natural world changed over time? How have these changes reflected larger social changes? How have they influenced relations with the natural world? What cautions should environmental historians take when relying upon scientific theories and evidence?


7. **Climate**
What is weather?
What is climate?
How do we know these in history?
What is environmental determinism and why is it significant to the study of historical climates? Has climate changed Canadian history?
As climate changes, how will this affect social relationships (including social relationships with nature)?


Alan Catchpole and Irene Hanuta. “Severe Summer Ice in Hudson Strait and Hudson Bay Following Major Volcanic Eruptions, 1751 to 1889 A.D.” *Climatic Change* 14(1989): 61-79

8. **Gender and sexuality**
Where does environmental history intersect with gender history?
How is masculinity important to constructions of Canadian nature?
What is the significance of reproduction and sexuality in environmental history?


9. **Wilderness**
What is wilderness?
Why is wilderness so important to tourism and recreation in Canada and North America?
Is there a distinctly Canadian kind of wilderness?

Lynda Jessup, “The Group of Seven and the Tourist Landscape in Western Canada, or The More Things Change ...” *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 2002, 37.1 144-180 (36)


10. **Risk and Hazards**
How do societies address the risks that inhere in many natural environments?
What makes a community more or less resilient?
What is a natural hazard or a natural disaster? (How is it different from other hazards and disasters?)


Stéphane Castonguay, “The Production of Flood as Natural Catastrophe: Extreme Events and the Construction of Vulnerability in the Drainage Basin of the St. Francis River (Quebec), Mid-nineteenth to Mid-twentieth Century.” *Environmental History* 12.4 (2007)


11. Conservation and Parks
What is the relationship between conservation and preservation?
How have parks protected nature?
Is protected nature different from unprotected nature? (Is it more static, less dynamic?)
How have parks protected other values?


12. Urban and Suburban Environments
Are cities natural environments?
What is “metabolism” and how does it help us to understand urban environments?
How do urban environments reinforce social inequalities?


H.V. Nelles, “How did Calgary get it’s River Parks?” *Urban History Review* 34, 1 (October 2005)


13. War and Nature
Does war create unique or different relationships between humans and the rest of nature?
How important are conflict metaphors to human-nature interactions?


14. Environmentalism
What are the roots of contemporary environmentalism? In Canada and elsewhere? How has environmental activism intersected with other kinds of activism? How much was it a product of the larger social changes of the 1960s?


Karen Jones, “*Never Cry Wolf*: Science, Sentiment, and the literary rehabilitation of *Canis lupis*” *Canadian Historical Review* 2003 84.1, 65-93 (31)


Take a look at either R. Carson, *Silent Spring* or F. Mowat, *Never Cry Wolf* or E.T. Seton, *Wild Animals I have Known* or Grey Owl’s *The men of the last frontier*

15. Energy
What are the different sources of energy that power human societies? In what ways does nature shape the exploitation and use of different kinds of energy?


Tyler Priest, "Extraction Not Creation: The History of Offshore Petroleum in the Gulf of Mexico." *Enterprise and Society* 8 (June 2007)


16. Was the 20th century exceptional in environmental history?
Where does Canada fit in global environmental history?