

HIST 464  
Environmental History of Latin America  
Schedule T & Th, 3:30 - 4:15 PM  
Location: LA5-154

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Office Hours: T 12-1:30, W 9:30-11:30 (by appointment only), Th 10:11:30 5-6  
See <http://www.sedrez.com/html/officehours.html>

## **ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY OF LATIN AMERICA (Fall 2008)**

Environmental history is a new field in Latin American historiography-and yet it has already built a solid body of works that study the relationship between nature and society in Latin America. Environmental history is by its nature an interdisciplinary business, leaning in particular on the natural sciences, but also on wings of geography and anthropology. Students are encouraged to consider the readings in their disciplinary context and how they touch other disciplines. The goal of this class is to understand how scholars have incorporated nature in their understanding of Latin American history.

The speaker series organized for both this class and *Spanish 444/544 Studies in Spanish American Culture: The National Romances of Nineteenth-Century Spanish America* is partially funded by the Center for International Education. On these days, the class will meet at **AS-384**, at 3:45 pm. Attendance is mandatory.

### **STRUCTURE**

This is a seminar based on academic discussion. Success or failure of the class depends on the commitment of the participants in keeping up with the readings. Come to class prepared. Be ready to explain the main argument of the readings, but be also ready to be critical and able to connect that work with other readings. Expect to read between 100-150 pages per week.

### **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

After successful completion of the course of study, the student will be able to demonstrate the following skills and knowledge:

- 1) evaluate the social, intellectual, political, and economic history of Latin America
  - Assessment: essay exams, class discussions of readings, brief response papers, original research paper, book review, annotated bibliography
- 2) understand the significance of the concept of environmental history
  - Assessment: essay exams, class discussions of readings, brief response papers, original research paper, book review, annotated bibliography
- 3) think broadly, placing Latin America in world context
  - Assessment: essay exams, class discussions of readings, brief response papers, original research paper, book review, annotated bibliography
- 4) understand history as a discipline
  - Assessment: essay exams, class discussions of readings, brief response papers, original research paper, book review, annotated bibliography
- 5) understand conceptual methods, i.e., periodization, interpretation
  - Assessment: essay exams, class discussions of readings, brief response papers, original research paper, book review, annotated bibliography

- 6) evaluate the difference between secondary and primary sources
  - Assessment: essay exams, class discussions of readings, brief response papers, original research paper, annotated bibliography
- 7) develop writing, analytical organizational, oral, mechanical, computer, and library skills
  - Assessment: essay exams, class discussions of readings, brief response papers, original research paper, book review, annotated bibliography
- 8) understand the role of history professionals
  - Assessment: essay exams, class discussions of readings, brief response papers, original research paper, book review, peer reviewing, annotated bibliography

### REQUIRED READINGS

- Miller, Shawn. *Environmental History of Latin America*
- Crosby Jr., Alfred W. *Ecological Imperialism*
- Dean, Warren. *With Broadax and Firebrand*
- Soluri, John. *Banana Cultures*
- McCook, Stuart George. *States of Nature*
- Wright, Angus Lindsay. *The Death of Ramón González*

Required texts should be available for purchase in the bookstore. However you can also get copies at the library through Link+ or buy them online, sometimes at considerable savings. I suggest that you look at the following websites for used copies: [www.bookfinder.com](http://www.bookfinder.com), [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com), [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), [www.powells.com](http://www.powells.com). If you do order books online remember that you have to receive them in time to read them for class.

I have also uploaded several articles and chapters to the class website, at BeachBoard (**BB**) and E-Reserves. They are also required reading.

The History Department has a *Grammar and Style Manual* available at the department office. You are encouraged to use the manual when writing your papers. In addition you can consult *The Chicago Manual of Style* for guidance on citation (footnote and bibliographic) styles. See Part II, Section 17 for footnotes, Part II, Section 16 for bibliographies. Visit also the **Writer's Resource Lab**, at <http://www.csulb.edu/~wrl/home.htm>.

### ASSIGNMENTS

#### 1. Weekly reading responses

Every week, by **Sunday evening**, you will post on BeachBoard a one/two paragraph response in reaction to the readings of that week. I expect these "immediate reaction" responses to get more sophisticated by the end of the course, but they are supposed to be informal. By **Tuesday** morning, I expect you to read ALL your colleagues' responses. You will be asked to discuss them, so come to class prepared.

#### 2. Article Review

On **October 2** you should write a 2-page **review** of a peer-reviewed, academic article related to the course theme, environmental history of Latin America. You may select an article from the Online Bibliography on Latin America Environmental History ([www.csulb.edu/laeh](http://www.csulb.edu/laeh)), the Environmental History journal, or any other scholarly source. Post your article on a discussion board at Beach Board to share with your colleagues. You may NOT review articles listed in this syllabus. I will not accept non-academic articles. If you have doubts whether an article fits the requirements for this assignment, email me the complete reference.

#### 3. Midterm Review

You should write a scholarly **review of a book** of your choice (roughly 800 words). Check the Environmental History journal, or H-Net reviews (<http://www.h-net.org/reviews/>), as examples.

Follow the guidelines provided in the BB website. The book review is due on **October 30**, in hardcopy AND digital format. You may NOT review books listed in this syllabus. I will not accept non-academic books or edited volumes. If you have doubts whether an book fits the requirements for this assignment, email me the complete reference. TIP: be smart and select a book that helps you to write your final review paper.

#### 4. *Bibliography Essay*

The article and book reviews build toward the course's final assignment, **a historiography essay** on one aspect of the field (10-15 pages). Use at least **five** bibliographic sources (journal articles and books) for the paper. Because there are limited resources available at CSULB, you may have to go to another library to find appropriate material. Be careful when using internet sources – discuss them with me.

You should consider questions such as the books' main arguments, the sources, how they contribute to the debates in the field, their strengths and weaknesses, etc. Suggested topics for the final assignment include, but are not limited to: the ecological impact of the European arrival in the New World; the urban environment in Latin America; land use and forest conservation; the history of science and nature in Latin America; environmental movements; Latin American environmental history in a global context; and demography and natural resources.

You must meet with me by week six to discuss your topic. Paper topics are due on **October 16**. An annotated bibliography is due on **November 13**. A near complete draft (it means at least 10 pages) is due on **December 9**, in class. You will bring 3 copies of your draft to share with me and your colleagues. Be prepared to comment on their work. You will revise the work of two of your colleagues, and two of them will do the same with yours. On **December 11**, you will discuss these revisions in class, and work together to improve your papers. Final draft is due on **December 16 at 3 pm** (no exceptions; no extensions; you may also be asked to turn in your research notes, so do not destroy them.) See handout at BB on what is a good essay. I will post some examples of review papers on BeachBoard—you have some latitude if you want to do something different, but you must discuss your options with me. There is no final examination.

#### 5. *Discussion Leading*

Each student will help leading the discussion for one of the weekly readings. Connect to previous readings, to the weekly responses, to your own experience and to scholarly reviews of the readings – you have many alternatives on how to lead the session. My main request is that you should encourage participation from your colleagues. There may be groups of 1 to 3 students leading the discussions, depending on the size of the class.

#### **GRADING**

Weekly responses	10% course grade
Discussion/attendance	10% course grade
Discussion leading	10% course grade
Article review	15% course grade
Book review(s)	20% course grade
Annotated bibliography, topic, first draft	5% course grade
Bibliographic essay	30% course grade

*Graduate students should contact me to discuss grading/assignment alternatives, but they are subject to the same policies for attendance and participation. I request grad students to read the entire books and to submit at least three book reviews during the semester, other than a substantially longer paper..*

## **GUIDELINES:**

Each student should come to see me during my OFFICE HOURS at least once in the semester. As the final weeks tend to be crammed, plan accordingly.

All course ASSIGNMENTS must be fulfilled in order to receive a passing grade. Factors such as attendance in class, participation in discussions, honoring due dates for assignments, and consistent quality of work may also be taken into account in assigning the final grade. Late papers, postings or reviews will be penalized, so plan ahead.

The reviews and the final essay should be turned in in DIGITAL (at Beachboard) **and** HARDCOPY format. Make sure your file is correct and that it is Microsoft Word compatible. If I cannot open the file, you have not fulfilled the assignment.

DISCUSSIONS will be based on the readings for that week. Come prepared. See handout at BB on what is considered good participation in discussions.

CHEATING and PLAGIARISM are serious offenses and will not be tolerated. They are violations of university regulations. Students in this class will be held to a high standard of academic integrity, which is defined as "the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception." Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Such actions will be subject to disciplinary action. If I suspect any of the above, I may ask to see notes and draft. If you have any questions about academic integrity, please talk with me. A single instance of cheating and plagiarism will result, at the very least, in a failing grade for that assignment. Depending on the severity of the case, other consequences may include a failing grade for the class, regardless of performance on other assignments, and further disciplinary actions, including suspension and expulsion, based on University policy as summarized in the Schedule of Classes. (Graduate students will be held to an even higher standard. A single act of cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade in the course, regardless of other graded course assignments.) While all written work must be exclusively your work, you are encouraged to work together when appropriate.

ATTENDANCE is required.

We have an E-Reserve page at <http://ereserves.library.csulb.edu/>. The password is AMAZON.

## **DEPARTMENTAL PORTFOLIO INFORMATION for HISTORY MAJORS**

The History Department now requires major to move through a sequence of courses that begins with History 301, is followed by History 302, and culminates in a senior seminar (History 499) that matches one of the areas of concentration they have chosen for the major. History 499 must be taken in the student's last semester of work or after 18 units of upper-division work in the major. Those 18 units must include at least 6 units, that is, two courses, in the concentration of the History 499 being taken. Students in History 499 are required to assemble a portfolio that contains their work in their upper-division history courses. This portfolio is designed to enable students to show development in the major and mastery of key analytical, mechanical, and presentation skills. As part of this process, history majors (or prospective history majors) should save all work from upper-division history courses for eventual inclusion in this portfolio.

For portfolio guidelines, see [www.csulb.edu/history](http://www.csulb.edu/history). For questions and/or advising about the portfolio, contact Dr. Sharlene Sayegh ([ssayeghc@csulb.edu](mailto:ssayeghc@csulb.edu)).

## READINGS AND SCHEDULE

### Week 1

Sept. 2– Syllabus & expectations.

Sept. 4 - What is Latin America? Does it make sense?

Reading: Price, "Latin America: A geographic preface" (BB)

### Week 2 Establishing concepts

Sept 9 – Reading: Hughes, "Defining Environmental History" and "Local, Regional, and National Environmental Histories" (BB and E-reserves)

Sept 11 – Impact on Latin American studies

Reading: Sedrez, "Environmental History of Modern Latin America" (BB); Miller, "Introduction"

### Week 3 – (Sept 16, 18) *Nature and Culture in the Andes*, by D. Gade, or the old new world

Readings: "Deforestation and Reforestation of the Central Andean Highlands," 75-102, "Malaria and Settlement Retrogression in Mizque, Bolivia" & "The Andes as a Dairyless Civilization: Llamas and alpacas as un milked animals," 75-117 (BB); Miller, Chapter One.

*Student presentation on Thursday.*

### Week 4 – (Sept 23, 25): *Ecological Imperialism*, by A. Crosby, or how Europe reproduced its landscape around the world

Readings: Crosby, Ch. 1-2, 7-9, 11-12, Miller, Ch. Two.

*Student presentation on Thursday.*

### Week 5

Sep. 30 - Movie: The Charcoal People

Oct 2 - Discussion: article reviews, book reviews and final paper reviews

### October 2– ARTICLE REVIEW DUE

### Week 6

Oct. 7 - Library research session – discuss review essays

Oct. 9 - *With Broadax and Firebrand*, by W. Dean, or five hundred years of reshaping a forest to extinction

Readings: Dean, Ch. 1-3, 5, 12, 13 – Check E-Reserves.

### Week 7 – (Oct 14, 16) *States of Nature*, by S. McCook, or how states keep trying to redesign landscapes.

Readings: McCook, the entire book; Miller, Ch. Four.

*Student presentation on Thursday.*

### OCTOBER 16 - PAPER TOPIC DUE

### Week 8 – (Oct 21, 23) *The Ecology of Oil*, by M. Santiago

Reading: Intro, ch. 1 & 4; on BB and E-Reserves

*Student presentation on Thursday.*

### Week 9

Oct. 28 – **Speaker Series**. Lecture by professor Elizabeth Garrels, M.I. T., "Sarmiento and the Andean Souther Cone: reflexions on transnational geography, culture and economy from 1840-1952." AS-384, 3:45 pm

Reading: TBA

Oct. 30 – Catch-up class; Miller, Ch. Five.

OCTOBER 30 - BOOK REVIEW DUE

**Week 10** – (Nov. 4 & 6) *The death of Ramón Gonzales*, by A. Wright, or the modern agricultural dilemma

Reading: (ch. 1, 2, 5, 9 & afterthought)

*Student presentation on Thursday.*

**Week 11** – (Nov. 11 & 13) John Soluri, *Banana Cultures*

Reading: Intro, ch 1, 3 & 6

*Student presentation on Thursday.*

**Week 12**

Nov. 18 - **Speaker Series.** Lecture by professor Jorge Marcone, Rutgers University, “Humboldt in Latin America: Naturalism and narrative in the 19th century.” AS-384, 3:45 pm.

Reading: TBA

Nov 20 - Movie: *The greening of Cuba*

Reading: Miller, Epilogue.

NOVEMBER 19 – TURN IN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON BEACHBOARD

**Week 13 – Thanksgiving Holiday November 26 – November 28**

**Week 14** – (Dec 2, 4) Urban environments

**Reading:** *Trouble in Paradise*, by Thanos & Roberts (ch. 4); Miller, ch. 6 & 7

**Week 15** - Wrapping up, and paper presentations

December 9 – FIRST DRAFT DUE. Bring THREE copies of your draft paper to share with your colleagues. Be prepared to criticize their work and help them to improve their writing. Presentation of topics and their relevance.

December 11 – Peer-reviewing, discussion of review papers

DECEMBER 16 - FINAL DRAFT DUE