

# HH 3018

## The Environmental History of Oceans

Instructor: Assistant Professor Miles Powell  
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Office: HSS-05-24  
Office hours: By appointment

Pre-requisites: None  
Academic Units: 3  
Meeting time: Wednesdays, 12:30-15:30  
Venue: LHS-TR+43

### Course Aims

Aimed at history students but also suitable for anyone with an interest in the oceans' past, this elective course will provide you with a general overview of the key themes and debates within the field of marine environmental history. Upon completion of this course, you will have a better understanding of how humans have shaped ocean environments historically, and how oceans have shaped the course of human history. You will additionally be stronger writers and thinkers.

### Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Investigate and explain** how humans have shaped ocean environments historically, and how these modified environments have shaped the course of human history.
2. **Compare and contrast** the major approaches and theories within marine environmental history.
3. **Analyze and interpret** primary and secondary historical sources relating to marine environmental history.
4. **Formulate** compelling historical arguments about marine environmental history that effectively deploy primary and secondary source evidence.
5. **Present** historical ideas and evidence concerning marine environmental history to a specialist audience

### Course Content

In this class, students will explore the innovative field of marine environmental history. They will discover that, although oceans may appear pristine and timeless, human societies have been modifying marine environments for centuries. In turn, these modified environments have shaped the course of human history. Students will examine how numerous societies around the world and through time have developed relationships with the sea, some of them sustainable and some of them not. Students will also learn about the complex systems of international cooperation that have emerged to facilitate the conservation of mobile marine species. Finally, students will learn how perceptions of oceans and ocean creatures have changed in response to cultural and scientific developments.

### **Required Books:**

This course has no textbook. Course readings will be available in PDF form on the iNTULearn course site.

### **Student Assessment:**

In-Class Participation:	10%
In-Class Quizzes:	20%
Found Object Presentation:	10%
Found Object Essay:	20%
Term Paper:	40%

### **In-Class Participation:**

Students must attend every tutorial prepared to discuss that week's assigned readings. Outstanding participants will demonstrate a thorough and critical understanding of the assigned material by offering perceptive comments and asking informed questions.

### **In-Class Quizzes:**

Students can expect five brief in-class "pop quizzes" ensuring that they have arrived to seminar with all of the assigned readings completed. I will grade each quiz out of five, and throw out each student's lowest mark. This course will not have a final exam, because the emphasis will be on engaging with course material and developing critical thinking, rather than rote memorization.

### **Found Object Presentation:**

Each student will sign up to present a "found object" on a week of their choosing. Students may select anything they like, from a sushi roll to a tourism brochure, but they

must connect that object to the week's themes in a meaningful and insightful manner. They will present their object for ten minutes, and then field questions from their peers.

### **Found Object Essay:**

The week following their found object presentation, students will submit a brief (800-1,000 word) essay that builds on their presentation by addressing their peers' concerns. Due to the page restriction, I advise you to limit discussion to a single course theme.

### **Term Paper:**

At the last seminar, students will submit a six to eight page essay responding to a prompt of their choosing. Students will have the choice of: 1) comparing two historical societies' relationships to the sea and assessing which was more sustainable; 2) describing how attitudes towards oceans have changed in response to cultural and scientific developments in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; 3) describing the most effective historical strategies for conserving marine species that transcend national borders; 4) developing their own research project, which they must OK with me by week 4.

### **Course Outline and Readings:**

Week I (17/01): Introduction

No Readings:

**\*\*\*Writing workshop in seminar\*\*\***

Week II (24/01): Indigenous Fisheries

Readings:

Fikret Berkes, "Fishery Resource Use in a Subarctic Indian Community," *Human Ecology* 4(4) (1977): 289-307.

Miles Powell, "Divided Waters: Heiltsuk Spatial Management of Herring Fisheries and the Politics of Native Sovereignty" *Western Historical Quarterly* 43(4) (Winter 2012): 463-484.

Joseph E. Taylor III, *Making Salmon: An Environmental History of the Northwest Fisheries Crisis* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), "1: Dependence, Respect, and Moderation."

Week III (31/01): The Unnatural Sea

Readings:

April M. H. Blakeslee, "Invasive or Native? The Case History of the Common Periwinkle Snail (*Littorina littorea*) in Northeast North America" in David J. Starkey, Poul Holm, Michaela Barnard, eds., *Oceans Past: Management Insights from the History of Marine Animal Populations* (London: Earthscan, 2008): 7-24.

W. Jeffrey Bolster, *The Mortal Sea: Fishing the Atlantic in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), "Prologue."

Callum Roberts, *The Unnatural History of the Sea* (Washington: Shearwater Books, 2007), "1: The End of Innocence"; "2: The Origin of Intensive Fishing."

Week IV (07/02): Declension Narratives

Readings:

Dean Bavington, *Managed Annihilation: An Unnatural History of the Atlantic Cod Collapse* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011); "Preface"; "2: The Birth and Development of Cod Fisheries Management"; "3: Success through Failure: The Expansion of Management after the Moratorium."

W. Jeffrey Bolster, *The Mortal Sea: Fishing the Atlantic in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), "5: Waves in a Troubled Sea."

John G. Butcher, *The Closing of the Frontier: A History of the Marine Fisheries of Southeast Asia, c. 1850-2000* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004), "Introduction"; "4: Catching More with the Same Technology"

Week V (14/02): Marine Space

Readings:

Miles Powell, "A World of Fins and Fences: Australian and South African Shark Management in the Transoceanic South" *International Review of Environmental History* 3(2) (2017)

Josh Reid, *The Sea is My Country: The Maritime World of the Makahs* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), "1: The Power of Wickaninnish Ends Here"; "2: Inveterate Wars and Petty Pilferings."

Lissa Wadewitz, "Pirates of the Salish Sea: Labor, Mobility, and Environment in the Transnational West" *PHR* 75(4) (Nov 2006): 587-627.

Week VI (21/02): Littoral Histories

Readings:

Michael Adas, "Continuity and Transformation: Colonial Rice Frontiers and Their Environmental Impact on the Great River Deltas of Mainland Southeast Asia" in *The Environment and World History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009): 191-208.

Christopher L. Pastore, *Between Land and Sea: The Atlantic Coast and the Transformation of New England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2014), "Prologue: From Sweetwater to Seawater"; "5: Improving Coastal Space during a Century of War"; "6: Carving the Industrial Coastline."

Week VII (28/02): Competition

John G. Butcher, *The Closing of the Frontier: A History of the Marine Fisheries of Southeast Asia, c. 1850-2000* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004), "6: The Great Fish Race."

Mathew Evenden, *Fish versus Power: An Environmental History of the Fraser River* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), "6: Fish versus Power."

Loren McClenachan, "Social Conflict, Over-Fishing and Disease in the Florida Sponge Fishery, 1849-1939" in David J. Starkey, Poul Holm, Michaela Barnard, eds., *Oceans Past: Management Insights from the History of Marine Animal Populations* (London: Earthscan, 2008): 25-46.

**\*\*\*Recess Week\*\*\***

Week VIII (14/03): International Cooperation

Readings:

Kurkpatrick Dorsey, *The Dawn of Conservation Diplomacy: U.S.-Canadian Wildlife Protection Treaties in the Progressive Era* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), "Introduction"; "4: Conflict in the Bearing Sea"; "5: Conciliation and Conservation."

Kurkpatrick Dorsey, *Whales and Nations: Environmental Diplomacy on the High Seas* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), "Introduction"; "4: Cheaters Sometimes Prosper"; "6: Save the Whales for Later."

#### Week IX (21/03): Management Regimes

##### Readings:

Carmel Finley, "11: A Political History of Maximum Sustained Yield, 1945-1955" in David J. Starkey, Poul Holm, Michaela Barnard, eds., *Oceans Past: Management Insights from the History of Marine Animal Populations* (London: Earthscan, 2008): 189-203.

Arthur F. McEvoy, "Toward an Interactive Theory of Nature and Culture: Ecology, Production, and Cognition in the California Fishing Industry" in Ed. Donald Worster, *The Ends of the Earth: Perspectives on Modern Environmental History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

#### Week X (28/03): Marine Science

##### Readings:

Stephen Bocking, *Ecologists and Environmental Politics: A History of Contemporary Ecology* (London: Yale University Press, 1997), "7: Ecology and the Ontario Fisheries."

Rozwadowski, Helen M. *The Sea Knows No Boundaries: A Century of Marine Science Under the ICES* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), "Introduction"; "1: Forging International Science of the Sea"; "6: Which Master to Serve?"

Joseph E. Taylor, "El Niño and Vanishing Salmon: Culture, Nature, History, and the Politics of Blame," *Western Historical Quarterly* 29 (Winter 1998), 437-57.

#### Week XI (04/04): Recreation and Tourism

##### Readings:

Susan G. Davis, *Spectacular Nature: Corporate Culture and the Sea World Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), "Introduction"; "1: Another World"; "2: The Park and the City."

Loren McClenachan, "Recreation and the 'Right to Fish' Movement: Anglers and Ecological Degradation in the Florida Keys" *Environmental History* 18(1) (1 January 2013): 76-87.

Week XII (11/04): The Blue Revolution

Readings:

Stephen Bocking, "Science, Salmon, and Sea Lice: Constructing Practice and Place in an Environmental Controversy" *Journal of the History of Biology* 45(4) (Winter 2012): 681-716.

Darin Kinsey, "'Seeding the Water as the Earth': The Epicenter and Peripheries of a Western Aquacultural Revolution" *Environmental History* 11(3) (Jul., 2006): 527-566.

John Soluri, "Something Fishy: Chile's Blue Revolution, Commodity Diseases, and the Problem of Sustainability" *Latin American Research Review* 46 (2011): 55-81.

Week XIII (18/04): Wrap Up

Readings:

No assigned readings.

**\*\*\*Term Paper Due\*\*\***