

HIST 345: ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY

Fall 2011 (5 credits), MWF, 1-2:20, Dr. Ryan Dearing



History 345 explores the dynamic field of environmental history. Units in this interdisciplinary course will address environmental issues in vastly different historical settings, ranging from the Pre-Columbian world to the modern, industrial United States. The central theme of environmental history is the multifaceted and fluid relationship between “nature” and human beings over time. Thus, we will examine the ways in which humans have influenced, and been influenced by, the natural world in North America. How has the environment shaped peoples’ lives, worldviews, and daily interactions? Conversely, how have human beings perceived and altered the landscapes around them, and what have been the consequences? Exploring recent trends in the field, each week we will focus on interrelated topics or “intersections” involving humans, ideas, identities, and the environment. Examples include studies of Native and colonial Americans; “wilderness” as a place and an idea; race, class, and gender; labor; marketing and consuming nature; the American West & Pacific Northwest; conservation and preservation; urban environmental history; “green” government; anti-environmentalism; and comparative environmental history.