

History 50:516:380:C1

War and the World: An Environmental History of Warfare

Spring 2019
Tuesdays, 6:00-8:50 PM
Location: Rutgers, Camden County College
Blackwood, Madison Room 102

Instructor: Dr. Martin G. Clemis
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 5:00-6:00 &
9:00-10:00 PM, Madison 122
Email: martin.clemis@rutgers.edu
Phone (215) 380-0075

Course Description: This course examines the intersection of war and the natural environment. It explores the ways in which armed conflict and collective violence have shaped both the physical and the ideational world we inhabit. Warfare has not only had a sweeping impact on the physical landscape, including adverse ecological consequences and the creation of militarized spaces, it has profoundly altered the patterns and conditions of human settlement, and fashioned the world's political, economic, religious, cultural, and ideological character by creating, destroying, or altering political geographies such as territories, borders, states, empires, and so on. The course also investigates how the environment has shaped warfare. The natural world is more than just a setting for collective violence; it is an active agent that generates and sustains armed conflict, and that exerts a powerful influence on strategy and military operations. This course will use historical case studies to historicize this critical linkage between war and the natural world.

Course Requirements / Assignments:

In order to receive a satisfactory grade in this course, students must complete the following assignments:

1. **Attendance / Course Engagement** - This is a collaborative learning course. What this means is that the student is the primary focus of instruction, not the instructor. As a result, the course is not lecture-based but is founded on class discussion and dialogue among students and the instructor. Peer instruction, therefore, is a fundamental component of this course. Critique, debate, and discussion of assigned readings and additional outside material are vital to a healthy pedagogical environment. Moreover, they are an important part of your grade. Good attendance is also mandatory (you cannot participate in discussion or collaborate with your peers if you aren't here). Attendance is required and will be regularly taken. I am well aware that missing a class may happen occasionally, but regular absence will be noted and affect your class participation grade. As this class meets only one day per week, any student missing more than two classes will be in danger of failing.
2. **Article Summary / In Class Discussion** – Students are required to research and discuss one newspaper or journal article per week. The topic must be related to the intersection of environmental and military issues. The articles will be used as a basis for discussion in class. No written summary is required but bring the article and be

prepared to talk about it each Monday. The focus of the article can be either historical or contemporary.

3. **Book Reviews (2)** – Students are required to select, read, and review **two outside historical texts** that deal with a topic pertinent to this class. I have provided a sizable list of books on this syllabus. The list, however, is by no means exhaustive. Therefore, please feel free to select books outside of the instructor’s list. If you do so, however, make sure they are from academic presses connected to major universities (i.e. University of North Carolina Press, Oxford University Press, etc.). All outside books chosen for review must be approved by the instructor. Book reviews must be 700 to 1,000 words (single-spaced) and include the book’s thesis, method and sources. Book Reviews must be submitted in a Microsoft Word document using *Times New Roman* 12-point font with one-inch margins. Be sure to include your name, the date, and the corresponding number for each review (i.e. Book Review #1, #2, #3). Students must bring a hard copy to class and submit an electronic copy using the “Assignments” tool on Sakai. Book reviews are due on the following dates: the first is due **Monday March 11**; the second is due **Monday April 29**.

Detailed instructions on how book reviews are to be constructed along with samples can be found in the “Book Review” folder on Sakai. There you can also find instructions on how to develop the skills required for “strategic” reading—a method that will allow you to dissect a historical monograph and extract critical information in a timely and efficient manner. Make sure you consult the “Strategic Reading” instructions prior to reading your chosen books as it will help save time and reduce stress.

There are several ways students can acquire the books they choose to review: 1) purchase them online (used copies of most titles are available on any number of used book sites, including Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Abe Books); 2) borrow them from the Rutgers library—if they are unavailable, the university can order books for you through E-ZBORROW and Interlibrary Loan (ILL); 3) borrow the books from your local library or use interlibrary loan.

I suggest you choose and acquire your books within the first two weeks of the semester so that you have adequate time to complete the assignment. Also, choose your books carefully and try to pick works that share the same topic because you can use them to complete assignment #4 (see below).

I strongly urge students to consult professional reviews of the titles they choose. These can be found in any number of peer-reviewed scholarly journals. Academic journals are available through the Rutgers library website and its databases. For information on how to access databases on the Rutgers Library website, click on the “Introduction to Rutgers University Libraries” link found under the “Library Resources” folder on Sakai.

4. **Research Paper** – Students are required to create and submit a 10- to 12-page research paper for their final assignment. The paper must **identify and discuss an issue pertinent to war and the environment**. Students are permitted / encouraged to

use either historical case studies or current events for their topic. They are also encouraged to include graphs, charts, photographs, and other visual material within the final report. The paper must include at least **five scholarly sources**. A status report must be given in-class each week.

Paper topics must be submitted by **Monday, February 18** and a paper prospectus (that includes topic and potential sources) submitted by **Monday, March 11**. In-class presentations on papers will take place on **Monday, May 6**. The final must be submitted in pdf format no later than **Monday, May 13**.

Grading – Grades will be based on the following percentages:

Course Engagement	15%
Article Summary / Discussion	15%
Book Reviews	30%
Historiographical Essay	40%

Required Texts:

- Charles E. Closmann, ed. *War and the Environment: Military Destruction in the Modern Age* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009).
- Donovan Webster, *Aftermath: The Remnants of War* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996).
- **All additional readings on your syllabus are also required.** These will be available in pdf format on Sakai.

Course Schedule

The dates listed below are tentative and may change as the semester progresses.

Week / Date	Unit	Readings
1 1/28	Introduction	-----
2 2/4	Military and Environmental History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tucker, “The Impact of Warfare on the Natural World” • Laakkonen, “The War, Society, and the Environment” • Machlis, “Warfare Ecology”

3 2/11	The American Civil War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kirby, "The American Civil War: An Environmental View" • Fiege, "Gettysburg and the Organic Nature of the American Civil War" • Brady, "The Wilderness of War"
4 2/18		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meier, "Fighting in Dante's Inferno" • Steinberg, "The Great Food Fight"
5 2/25		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closmann, Chapter 3 • Humphreys, "This Place of Death" • Summers, "Gettysburg Regress"
6 3/4	World War I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closmann, Chapter 4 • Wilson, "Tommyfying the Western Front" • Fitzgerald, "Chemical Warfare and Medical Response during World War I"
7 3/11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heidbrink, "The First World War and the Beginning of Overfishing in the North Sea" • Gough, "Conifers and Commemoration" • Webster, Chapter 1
8 3/18	Spring Break – No Class	
9 3/25	World War II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pearson, "The Age of Wood" • Muscolino, "Refugees, Land Reclamation, and Militarized Landscapes in Wartime China"
10 4/1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closmann, Chapter 8 • Webster, Chapter 2
11 4/8	The Cold War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Josephson, "War on Nature as Part of the Cold War" • Webster, Chapter 3
12 4/15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bankoff, "A Curtain of Silence" • Brady, "Life in the DMZ" • Webster, Chapter 4
13 4/22	Post-Cold War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gleick, "Water and Conflict" • LeBillon, "The Political Ecology of War" • Webster, Chapter 5
14 4/29		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alvarez, "Environmental Damage from Illicit Drug Crops in Colombia" • Homer-Dixon, "On the Threshold" • Matthew, "Is Climate Change a National Security Issue?"
15 5/6	Presentations	-----

16 5/13	Final Paper Due
------------	------------------------

Book Review Reading List

Bernstein, Jeremy. *Plutonium: A History of the World's Most Dangerous Element* (2009)

Bevan, Robert. *The Destruction of Memory: Architecture at War* (2016)

Biggs, David. *Quagmire: Nation-Building and Nature in the Mekong Delta* (2011)

Brady, Lisa. *War Upon the Land: Military Strategy and the Transformation of Southern Landscapes during the American Civil War* (2012)

Briesen, Detlef. *Armed Conflict and Environment: From World War II to Contemporary Asymmetric Warfare* (2018)

Brown, Kate. *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters* (2015)

Drake, Brian et al eds. *The Blue, The Gray, and the Green: Toward an Environmental History of the Civil War* (2015)

Durant, Robert F. *The Greening of the U.S. Military: Environmental Policy, National Security, and Organizational Change* (2007)

Edgington, Ryan H. *Range Wars: The Environmental Contest for White Sands Missile Range* (2014)

El-Baz, Farouk ed. *The Gulf War and the Environment* (2016)

Gaglano, Francis ed. *Modern Military Geography* (2010)

Galgano, Francis ed. *The Environment-Conflict Nexus: Climate Change and the Emergent National Security Landscape* (2019)

Hamblin, Jacob Darwin. *Arming Mother Nature: The Birth of Catastrophic Environmentalism* (2013)

Herzberg, Julia et al eds. *Ice and Snow in the Cold War: Histories of Extreme Climactic Environments* (2018)

Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography: What the Map Tells Us About Coming Conflicts and the Battle Against Fate* (2013)

Kirk, Andrew G. ed. *Doom Towns: The People and Landscapes of Atomic Testing, A Graphic History* (2016)

Klare, Micheal. *Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict* (2001)

Laakkonen, Simo et al. eds. *The Long Shadows: A Global Environmental History of the Second World War* (2017).

Lemay, Kate Clarke. *Triumph of the Dead: American World War II Cemeteries, Monuments, and Diplomacy in France* (2018)

Marshall, Tim. *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Explain Everything About the World* (2016)

Mauldin, Erin Stewart. *Unredeemed Land: An Environmental History of Civil War and Emancipation in the Cotton South* (2018)

McNeill, J.R. ed. *Environmental Histories of the Cold War* (2013)

McNeill, J.R. *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914*

Meier, Kathryn Shively. *Nature's Civil War: Common Soldiers and the Environment in 1862 Virginia* (2015)

Muscolino, Micah S. *The Ecology of War in China: Henan Province, the Yellow River, and Beyond, 1938-1950* (2014)

Nelson, Megan Kate. *Ruin Nation: Destruction and the American Civil War* (2012)

Pearson, Chris et al. eds. *Militarized Landscapes: From Gettysburg to Salisbury Plain* (2010)

Price, Steven V. ed. *War and Tropical Forests: Conservation in Areas of Armed Conflict* (2003)

Ringholz, Raye. *Uranium Frenzy: Saga of the Nuclear West* (2002)

Russell, Edmund. *War and Nature: Fighting Humans and Insects with Chemicals from World War I to Silent Spring* (2001)

Savage, Kirk. *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape* (2011)

Tucker, Richard P et. al. eds. *Environmental Histories of the First World War* (2018).

Wilcox, William A. *The Modern Military and the Environment: The Laws of Peace and War* (2007)

Winter, Jay. *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (2014)

Winters, Harold A. et al. *Battling the Elements: Weather and Terrain in the Conduct of War* (2001)

Wood, C.E. *Mud: A Military History* (2006)

Woodward, Rachel. *Military Geographies* (2004)

Zierler, David. *The Invention of Ecocide: Agent Orange, Vietnam, and the Scientists Who Changed the Way We Think About the Environment* (2011)

Zoellner, Tom. *Uranium: War, Energy, and the Rock that Shaped the World* (2010)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT: Academic integrity is essential to the success of the educational enterprise and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the academic community. Violations of academic integrity include but are not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating others' violations of academic integrity. The instructor assumes students will familiarize themselves with the policies and information posted by Rutgers at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/> at the earliest opportunity.

DISABILITY SERVICES STATEMENT: Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, abides by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 508 of the Disabilities Act of 1998, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008. These mandate that reasonable accommodations be provided for qualified students with disabilities and accessibility of online information. If you have a disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please contact the instructor early in the semester so that he can provide or facilitate in providing accommodations you may need. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with the Office of Disability Services, the designated office on campus to provide services and administer exams with accommodations for students with disabilities. The Rutgers-Camden Office of Disability Services can be contacted by phone at 856-225-6442 or on the web at <http://learn.camden.rutgers.edu/disability-services>. The instructor looks forward to talking with you soon to learn how he may be helpful in enhancing your academic success in this course.