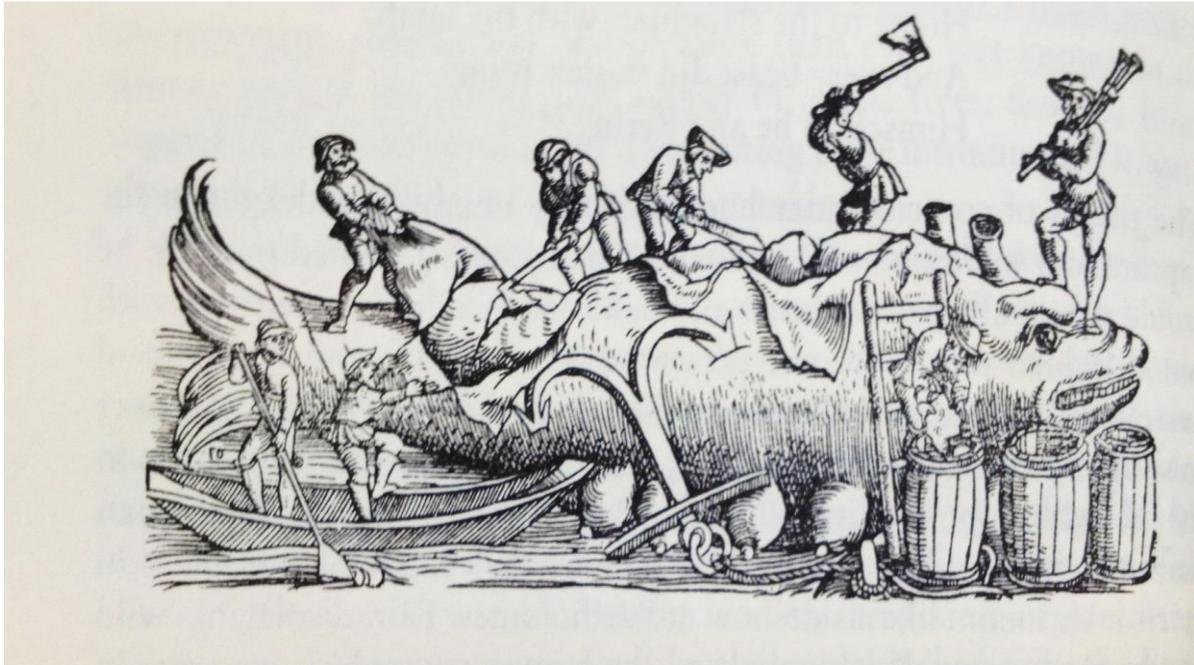




Arts & Social
Sciences

School of Humanities and Languages



ARTS3242

Environmental History

S1 2014

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1. Course Staff and Contact Details

Course Convenor & Instructor

Name	Prof. Nicolas RASMUSSEN	Room	Morven Brown 314
Phone	9385-2361 (no messages)	Email	N.Rasmussen@unsw.edu.au
Consultation Time	Thursdays 3-4:30 in teaching weeks, and by appointment		

2. Course Details

Units of Credit (UoC)	6	
Course Description	“A global perspective on our modern environmental condition and its development, primarily in Europe and other Western cultures, since pre-industrial times. Topics include: human impacts and natural changes in climate, the forests and the oceans; changing concepts of the natural world; agriculture, technology, economics and environmental damage; the impact of population growth and the industrial revolution; imperialism and its ecological and social effects; ecological science and its politics, modern conservation and environmental movements.”	
Course Aims	1.	To increase students’ understanding of changes in the environment and their relation to human societies since prehistoric times
	2.	To impart a critical understanding of the information sources and forms of analysis on which environmental history is based
	3.	To give students an active, working knowledge of key writings and concepts in the scholarly field of environmental history
Student Learning Outcomes	1.	Ability to draw intelligently on a range of specific examples of past environmental change in relation to human society
	2.	Ability to identify key examples of scholarship and core concepts in the field of environmental history, and relate these examples and concepts to those of other disciplines
	3.	Ability to think rigorously and critically about the strengths and weaknesses of these key examples and core concepts, their implications and their suitable applications
	4.	Ability to employ core concepts of environmental history in independently constructing own evidence-based stories about the past
Graduate Attributes	1.	in depth engagement with discipline
	2.	rigorous analysis and other skills of scholarly enquiry
	3.	effective communication
	4.	independent critical and reflective learning

3. Learning and Teaching Rationale

This course aims to impart an active understanding both of knowledge in the relatively new field of Environmental History, and also of its *historiography* – that is, the different ways the history has been and can be written. Put another way: it is not just about what happened to the Earth and humanity's relation to it since the last Ice Age (a subject too vast for a survey course of any rigour); it is at least as much about different ways to think about environments and human societies, past and present.

The organisation of the lectures and readings is roughly chronological, and mainly focussed on episodes in Western civilisation and its relations to nature. The chronological organisation partly helps to build factual understanding of how we have come to our present environmental situation, while the episode focus allows us to introduce key concepts and writings pertinent to them. The lectures will tend to cover major developments in society-environment relations during the period in question, dealing both with the events and their historiography. Often there will be a film in the lecture period to help make the past situation more immediate. The readings will deal with material from the same episodes and periods. These readings are of two main types. The 'textbook' for this subject, J. Radkau's *Nature and Power*, is an advanced book that deals much more with historiography than directly with the events discussed in the historiography. It is therefore excellent for stimulating critical thinking, but no substitute for the lecture. The other type of reading consists of scholarly articles or chapters that represent widely-cited exemplary approaches to the subject matter, and/or examples introducing key concepts. They are compiled in a course reader that every student needs. These key examples/concepts are the focus for the weekly seminar discussions and short assignments, and can only be mastered fully against the factual background that the lectures attempt to impart, and the historiographic commentary coming mainly from the Radkau 'textbook'. It is expected that you will do all the assigned reading each week, which should take 2-3 hours.

This course is an advanced subject in History and Environmental Humanities. Although it requires no specific prior subjects and is available for general education credit, it does pre-suppose generic reading and essay writing capacities typical of third year Arts students. Students with other backgrounds may need to allow extra time to complete assigned readings and assessments.

4. Teaching Strategies

The weekly lectures will familiarise you with an historical era, what has been written about some of its major environmental and social events, and the particular concepts/examples discussed both in the text and reader. The Radkau text familiarises you with the range of historiography and primes you to think critically about it. The weekly readings introduce key exemplars and concepts that you will explore in the seminar/tutorial discussions. You will learn to think rigorously about these exemplars and concepts with short writing assignments about two of them. An in class final test encourages you to learn more than just those two. With a research essay you will actively apply a wide range of or acquired knowledge, critical capacities, and research skills to a major project of your own.

The weekly lecture/seminar period is an essential part of this course. The lecture will move fast through a range of material, some discussed in the readings and some not. Although the lecture slides will in general be made available via the course web site, their complex content does not lend itself to bullet points. They are for review only, and neither intended nor suitable for imparting knowledge on their own. Thus it is important not only that you fulfil your required 80% session attendance but that you prepare for the class period by reading.

5. Course Assessment					
Assessment Task	Length	Weight	Learning Outcomes Assessed (see above)	Graduate Attributes Assessed (see above)	Due Date
Buzz group p/f 'quiz'	N/A	10%	2, 3	1, 2	weekly
Concise essay 1	700 w	15%	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3	1 week after topic given
Concise essay 2	700 w	15%	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3	1 week after topic given
In class final test	N/A	15%	1, 2	1, 2	June 5
Research essay	2700 w	45%	3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4	June 13

Please Note: In addition to fulfilling the above assessment requirements, students are expected to attend at least 80% of their lectures and tutorials in order to pass the course.

Assessment Details and Instructions

Seminar (tute) buzz group 'quizzes': Discussions, and subsequent essays, are the main way in which key examples and concepts are learned. In seminars you will be broken into small groups and asked to discuss and answer a question or questions dealing with the key concept/example covered in that week's readings and lecture. The groups will then share their answers with the others, and there will be a general seminar-style guided discussion. The answers of each group will be marked either 0 or 1 point, based on the adequacy of its answer to the question and its contribution to class discussion that week. You will generally share the mark of your group (unless you specially distinguish yourself from the group, e.g. by sleeping or by contributing more constructively to the overall class discussion, in which case you might earn a bonus point). These discussions will account for 10% of your overall mark. If you participate in more than ten sessions, the best ten are counted toward your participation mark. If you fail to attend without a documented excuse, you will receive no participation mark for the week.

Short seminar essays: After the session, you will have the option to write a short essay of about 800 words (excluding references) on the topic of the week. **Essays longer than 1000 words may not be read or marked**, or marked on the basis of only the first 1000 words, at the instructor's discretion. The essay questions/tasks will be provided you on the day of the lecture via the course web site and/or by email at your UNSW student email address, and they will be closely based on the seminar buzz group discussion questions. You have one week to complete them. **Two short essays must be submitted in the course of the semester**, each worth 15% of your overall mark. If you submit three during in the term, the two best will be counted. Each is to be submitted electronically on week after the question is issued, that is by 4pm on the Thursday following the class in which the topic is discussed. A hard copy must also be submitted for marking. Papers received late will be penalized (see Late Submission, below) unless a properly documented application for Special Consideration is received and granted. **You must write one of these essays on one of the first three topics**, i.e. those discussed in seminars (tutes) of Weeks 2-4.

You may write on a week's topic even if you have not attended the discussion, although you would be unwise to do so because you will be less well prepared. If a week of class is cancelled for whatever reason you will still have the option of writing the essay for that week as usual. In case of cancellation the topic will be provided on the scheduled day if not earlier, via the course web site and/or the UNSW student email system. The short essays will be assessed according to your capacity to synthesize information and apply the week's key

concepts critically to the assigned question or topic, expressing this thinking as a concise and coherent argument. Though these essays will reflect the group discussion, yours must be written entirely by yourself, and it will be subject to the plagiarism policy—and very likely checked electronically. Thus each of these written pieces must reflect **only your own work**. If the text of any two submitted papers is found to be too similar, in the opinion of the instructor, both will receive no credit. Please see Plagiarism below.

In-class test: This will require a few sentences about a number of key concepts/examples dealt with in the seminar discussions. Answering will be straightforward if you have done all readings and attended most sessions. You will be allowed to consult your notes and course reader; active understanding and coherent thinking is assessed, not memorisation.

Research Essay: This is an essay of about 3000 words, and absolutely no more than 4500, on one of a list of historical topics provided by the end of week 4. It will ask you to use some of our key concepts and examples in describing and interpreting historical events developed (ie researched) by yourself -- not merely reprocessed from assigned readings. For empirical evidence you may extract data from published sources, and/or conduct primary research in sources like historical newspapers and periodicals (many available on line) or government reports such as those in the NSW State Library. Further instructions will be issued along with the topic list. Example topics, which will be similar to this year's topics, include:

- Discuss the idea the religion can contribute importantly to the ecological sustainability of a civilization, or lack thereof, through a detailed comparison and analysis of two particular cultures and periods, including ancient China and at least one of the following examples; ancient Egypt; ancient Mesopotamia; ancient Greece.
- To what extent do recent ecological accounts of the European conquest of the Americas repeat older notions that the extinction of indigenous peoples was an inevitable consequence of an inherent European superiority?
- Discuss the idea that European science – its ideas, institutions, and specific practices – is largely to blame for the deleterious environmental effects of Western civilization and imperialism, both before the industrial revolution (ca 1800) and after.
- What kinds of environmental impacts did the industrial revolution have on Australia before the 20th century (i.e. before Australia itself became the base for significant advanced manufacturing), and how great/extensive were the major ones?
- Compare and contrast the engineering projects involving the Snowy River and Colorado River from an environmental history perspective, commenting on what they reveal about the different national contexts in the middle 20th century.
- Considering the development of ecology as a science over the past century (or longer), how reliably can ideas from ecology serve as a basis for sustained environmental activism today?
- Discuss the idea that the environmental movement is incompatible with labor and human rights movements as generally framed today.

I am happy to give brief advice in response to provisional essay outlines of not more than two pages, if emailed me before the end of week 9. I will not read drafts essays.

Students should consult the History essay writing guide before beginning this assessment: See http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/lcpub/HistoryBook_WEB.pdf

As essay assignments account for the bulk of assessment in this course, it is important that you master the art of writing coherent evidence-based essays at the level expected of a third-year arts subject. Students who feel they need improvement in essay writing should allow extra time for assignments, and should consider the excellent free help (online instruction, short courses, individual coaching) offered by UNSW's Learning Centre. To explore the resources available, you can start with this link: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/academic-skills>

Grades

All final results are reviewed at the end of each semester and may be adjusted to ensure equitable marking across the School.

The proportion of marks lying in each grading range is determined not by any formula or quota system, but by the way that students respond to assessment tasks and how well they meet the objectives of the course. Nevertheless, since higher grades imply performance that is well above average, the number of distinctions and high distinctions awarded in a typical course is relatively small. At the other extreme, on average 6.1% of students do not meet minimum standards and a little more (8.6%) in first year courses. For more information on the grading categories see <https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/GuideToUNSWGrades.html>

Note on Marking Criteria for Research Essays

High Distinction 85% +

An outstanding essay, excellent in all regards. An HD essay shows original thinking, creativity in approach, and lucidity in presentation. Based on extensive research (where practical some of it primary), it grapples with historiographical problems, displays theoretical acumen, and involves both innovative interpretation of evidence and critical analysis of argument. This essay is a delight to read and the prose is of high standard. An HD essay shows potential to undertake post-graduate studies in History or Environmental Humanities

Distinction 75%-84%

An essay of a superior standard. Well written, closely argued and based on wide, thoughtful and critical reading, a DN essay answers its question convincingly and shows an active understanding of complex historiographical issues. It should be well written and pursue an argument with subtlety and imagination. Students producing DN research essays are encouraged to progress toward Honours in History or Environmental Humanities.

Credit 65%-74%

A CR essay is work of a high degree of competence. It answers its question well, demonstrating a sound grasp of subject matter, and arguing its case with clarity, consistency and confidence. It engages critically and creatively with the question, attempts to critique historical interpretations and positions itself within the relevant historiography. A Credit essay demonstrates the potential to complete Honours work with further development.

Pass 50%-64%

A Pass essay is work of a satisfactory standard. It answers its question but does not do so fully or particularly well. It has a coherent argument, and is grounded in the relevant reading but the research is not extensive and/or the argument fails to engage historiographical issues. The prose is capable but could probably be much improved. A pass grade suggests that the student can (with application) complete a satisfactory pass degree; it does not qualify a

student for admission to honours. There is a world of difference between a bare and a high pass essay. The latter signals far more reading and a much deeper understanding of the question. With additional work, students with a high pass essay can achieve credit standard.

Fail Under 50%

This is work of unacceptable standard for a university subject of the relevant level. It fails to answer the question and/or is based on inadequate reading and understanding. Although flaws in writing style alone do not account for failure, so long as the writing is adequate to convey the thinking coherently, a failed essay usually has serious faults in terms of prose, presentation and structure.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Assignments submitted to the School Assignment Box must have a properly completed School Assessment Coversheet, with the declaration signed and dated by hand. The Coversheet can be downloaded from <https://hal.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/courses/course-outlines/>. It is your responsibility to make a backup copy of the assignment prior to submission and retain it.

Assignment hard copies must be submitted before 4:00pm on the due date. Assignments received after this time will be marked as having been received late.

Late Submission of Assignments

Late assignments will attract a penalty. Of the total mark, 3% will be deducted each day for the first week, with Saturday and Sunday counting as two days, and 10% each week thereafter.

The penalty may not apply where students are able to provide documentary evidence of illness or serious misadventure. Submit a Special Consideration application to request penalty waiver. Time pressure resulting from undertaking assignments for other courses does not constitute an acceptable excuse for lateness.

6. Attendance/Class Clash

Attendance

Students are expected to be regular and punctual in attendance at all classes in the courses in which they are enrolled. Explanations of absences from classes or requests for permission to be absent from classes should be discussed with the teacher and where applicable accompanied by a medical certificate. If students attend less than 80% of their possible classes they may be refused final assessment.

Students who falsify their attendance or falsify attendance on behalf of another student will be dealt with under the student misconduct policy.

Class Clash

A student who is approved a permissible clash must fulfil the following requirements:

- a. The student must provide the Course Convenor with copies of lecture notes from those lectures missed on a regular basis as agreed by the Course Convenor and the student.

- b. If a student does attend a lecture for which they had secured a permitted clash they will still submit lecture notes as evidence of attendance.
- c. **Failure to meet these requirements is regarded as unsatisfactory performance in the course and a failure to meet the Faculty's course attendance requirement. Accordingly, Course Convenors will fail students who do not meet this performance/attendance requirement.**
- d. Students must attend the clashed lecture on a specific date if that lecture contains an assessment task for the course such as a quiz or test. Inability to meet this requirement would be grounds for a Course Convenor refusing the application. If the student misses the said lecture there is no obligation on the Course Convenor to schedule a make-up quiz or test and the student can receive zero for the assessment task. It should be noted that in many courses a failure to complete an assessment task can be grounds for course failure.

7. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's thoughts or work as your own. It can take many forms, from not having appropriate academic referencing to deliberate cheating.

In many cases plagiarism is the result of inexperience about academic conventions. The University has resources and information to assist you to avoid plagiarism.

The Learning Centre assists students with understanding academic integrity and how to not plagiarise. Information is available on their website: <http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/>. They also hold workshops and can help students one-on-one.

If plagiarism is found in your work when you are in first year, your lecturer will offer you assistance to improve your academic skills. They may ask you to look at some online resources, attend the Learning Centre, or sometimes resubmit your work with the problem fixed. However, more serious instances in first year, such as stealing another student's work or paying someone to do your work, may be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures.

Repeated plagiarism (even in first year), plagiarism after first year, or serious instances, may also be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. The penalties under the procedures can include a reduction in marks, failing a course or for the most serious matters (like plagiarism in an Honours thesis) or even suspension from the university. The Student Misconduct Procedures are available here:

<http://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf>

8. Course Schedule				
<i>To view course timetable, please visit: http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/</i>				
Week Commencing	Topic(s)	Lecture content	Seminar/tute content	Reading
March 3 (W1)	Introduction	Environmental historiography; prehistory; hunting gathering and environmental change	No session	Radkau: 36-45 Reader: Penna; McNeill; Pyne
March 10 (W2)	Discovering agriculture, the poisoned chalice	Crop and animal domestication; emergence of settled life; the biology of civilization	Coevolution	Radkau: 45-71, 77-85 Reader: Diamond Ch 4; Fowler & Mooney
March 17 (W3)	Water and power in the ancient world	Natures and Civilisations; Egypt, Greece, China, Mesopotamia, Mexico, Peru	"Hydraulic Civilizations"	Radkau: 86-117 Reader: Hillel; Wittfogel, Hughes
March 24 (W4)	Medieval Europe	Roman collapse; the Church, the Prince and the closed manor world; feudalism and the environment	Sustainability in the <i>Ancien Regime</i>	Radkau: 127-51 Reader: White; Pretty
March 31 (W5)	Old World meets New	Conquistadores and the "Columbian exchange"; institutions and organisms in the Europeanisation of the Americas	Biological imperialism	Radkau: 152-64 Reader: Crosby; Cronon's <i>Changes</i> ; Diamond Ch.10
April 7 (W6)	Early modern Europe and environment	Nature versus the Reformation, Capitalism, and Scientific Revolution	Did Western science kill Mother Nature?	Reader only: Merchant; Thomas; Bowler (156-63)
April 14 (W7)		Enlightenment, Life Science and the Economy of Nature	Ecology = science X empire ?	Radkau: 164-9 Reader: Bowler (163-9); Grove (skim India stuff); Koerner
MIDSEMESTER BREAK				
April 28 (W8)		Industrial revolution; markets and masses; erasing space and time in agriculture	Energy transition	Radkau: 195-226 Reader: Cronon's <i>Metropolis</i> ; Davidson; Siefertle

May 5 (W9)		First environmental crisis; 19 th C environmentalism (live lecture)	Urban metabolism. no live tute; films and quiz via course web site	Radkau: 226-49 Reader: Hutton & Connors; Tarr
May 12 (W10)		Topics: Second Industrial revolution, second crisis; science and State in dirty 1930s. <i>Live film viewing in lecture slot, and recorded lecture via course web site.</i>	Topic: Megamachine (or, 2nd Age of Pyramids). <i>No live tute; films and quiz via course web site.</i>	Radkau: 260-65 Reader: Worster, Worster, Schivelbusch
May 19 (W11)		Cold War, Green Revolution, and the rise of modern environmentalism	Atomic fear	Radkau: 250-60, 265-94 Reader: Lutts, Cullaheer, Hughes extract
May 26 (W12)		Globalisation, transnational environmentalism	Greenpeace vs working class?	Radkau: 294-330 Reader: Hagan, Harter
June 2 (W13)		No Lecture	In-class test	Review

9. Course Resources

Textbook Details

Joachim Radkau, *Nature and Power: A Global History of the Environment* (Cambridge University Press, 2008)

Additional Readings

ARTS3242 Course Reader, available at UNSW bookstore

Other sources

For a general starting point in environmental history journal literature, try:

<http://www.eh-resources.org/links/index.html>

For journal literature dealing specifically with the history of environmental ideas, science, or technology, search in the "History of Science, Technology and Medicine" database in UNSW Library's Sirius collection: <http://Sirius.library.unsw.edu.au>

Students seeking resources can also obtain assistance from the UNSW Library. One starting point for assistance is: <http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html>

10. Course Evaluation and Development

Courses are periodically reviewed and students' feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered using various means including UNSW's Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

11. Student Support

The Learning Centre is available for individual consultation and workshops on academic skills. Find out more by visiting the Centre's website at:

<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au>

12. Grievances

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should, in the first instance, attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors.

If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and Languages. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Complaints.html>

13. Other Information

myUNSW

myUNSW is the online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing and current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au>

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html>

OHS

UNSW's Occupational Health and Safety Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others. For all matters relating to Occupational Health, Safety and environment, see

<http://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/>

Special Consideration

In cases where illness or other circumstances produce repeated or sustained absence, students should apply for Special Consideration as soon as possible.

The application must be made via Online Services in myUNSW. Log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration.

Applications on the grounds of illness must be filled in by a medical practitioner. Further information is available at:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/SpecialConsideration.html>

Student Equity and Disabilities Unit

Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to

or at the commencement of the course, or with the Student Equity Officers (Disability) in the Student Equity and Disabilities Unit (9385 4734). Information for students with disabilities is available at: <http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au>

Issues that can be discussed may include access to materials, signers or note-takers, the provision of services and additional examination and assessment arrangements. Early notification is essential to enable any necessary adjustments to be made.