

Humanities 6102: Field Methods in Environmental Humanities

Spring 2016

Th 10:45-1:45

618B Fort Douglass

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Course Description:

This is the second foundations course for the environmental humanities MA program and is required for all EH students. This course is designed to introduce you to doing research in the environmental humanities. Because the EH program is an interdisciplinary program, there is no set research method associated with it (indeed, some would argue that there are no methods in humanities research!). Rather, EH scholars use a variety of methods and interpretive practices to suit their research questions. This course will survey three of the many methods available to environmental humanities researchers: 1) qualitative interviewing (including oral history); 2) textual criticism; and 3) qualitative fieldwork.

The goal of this class is to offer a starting point for you to learn and think about what rigorous research methods are, how to do environmental humanities research using one or more research methods, and how to decide the appropriate methods for the types of questions you want to ask.

This is not a traditional methods class in that you will not emerge from this class as an expert in any one particular method. Rather, this is a survey class in which you will receive an introductory base of knowledge about research methodology and methods and a survey of three methods that can be used for doing environmental humanities research. The expectation is that you can use this knowledge to decide in what other methodological area(s) you would like to take another class, an independent study, or pursue more in-depth training.

Required Books and Materials:

1. Books:

- Booth, Wayne C, Gregory G Colomb, and Joseph M Williams. *The Craft of Research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.
- Brummett, Barry S. *Techniques of Close Reading*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009.
- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes, 2nd Edition*. University Of Chicago Press, 2011.
- Reid, Joshua L. *The Sea Is My Country: The Maritime World of the Makahs*. Yale University Press, 2015.

2. pdf files of essays, articles and book chapters. These will be made available to you through the course Canvas page.

You are expected to have completed your reading assignments and prepared comments and questions for discussion before each class session. During class, you are expected to be present and be prepared to help create and maintain a lively class discussion.

Assignments:

1. Reading Argument Papers (10%): Participation and reading is crucial to the success of a graduate level class. To encourage thorough reading and engagement with the readings, you will write a paper each week that advances an argument in response to the readings. This argument can advance a scholarly criticism of or more of the readings, expand upon the argument of one or more of the readings, make an argument to connect one or more of the readings in a unique way, or apply the main argument/theory/method of one or more of the readings to a case. A paper that merely summarizes the readings will not be given full credit. Papers should be no longer than one single-spaced page. As such, you should focus on making one concise argument in your paper, as opposed to trying to advance several arguments. These papers do not require that you bring in additional references beyond the reading materials assigned. Reading Argument Papers are **due by 11:59pm the Wednesday night before class.**

2. Application Papers (30%): For each method we study, you will be assigned an application paper. These papers will provide an opportunity to get practice with a method. More details will be discussed in class.

- **Interviewing/Oral History Paper (10%):** For this paper, you will conduct a qualitative or oral history interview with someone of your choosing. You will turn in a copy of your interview preparation materials as well as a 5 page double-spaced paper. If you do a qualitative interview, the preparation materials should include: 1) The type of qualitative interview you chose to conduct; 2) a brief discussion of the topic of the interview; and 3) a list of interview questions or prompts. If you do an oral history interview, the preparation materials should include 1) background on the interviewee; 2) a brief discussion of the topic of the interview; and 3) a list of interview questions or prompts. The paper should include 1) a description of the interview (what type of interview, who you interviewed, etc.); 2) an explanation and justification of why you chose that type of interview and what you hoped to get from it; 3) discussion of what you learned from the interview process (can range from practical knowledge about the method to knowledge gained from the content itself); and 4) reflection on what you would do differently in the future. This paper should include some academic references related to the interview type you chose. You may include additional references related to other aspects of your argument. **This paper is due on February 22.**
- **Textual Criticism Paper (10%):** For this paper, you will select a text or set of texts that interest you and analyze/interpret those texts using one or more of the theories, methods, or techniques discussed in class and/or readings. (You may also draw from additional theories, methods, or techniques if you like.) The paper should: 1) describe the text or set of texts and justify its significance; 2) offer a thesis statement or research question that will guide your analysis; 3) introduce the theory(s), method(s), or technique(s) you used; and 4) the bulk of the paper should be an analysis of the text that shows how the theory(s), concept(s), or technique(s) you used help you to interpret the text(s) and that supports your thesis or answers your research question. This paper should be between 5-10 double spaced pages. It should include some academic

references to support the theory(s), concepts(s), or technique(s) you use. It may include references that support other parts of your argument. **This paper is due on March 7.**

- **Fieldwork Paper (10%):** For this paper, you will conduct 5-10 hours of fieldwork on a topic of your choosing. You turn in a copy of your fieldnotes and a 5-10 page paper that: 1) describes the topic of inquiry and the site(s) of your fieldwork; 2) offers and justifies a research question or thesis statement that framed or emerged from your fieldwork; and 3) provides analysis/interpretation of your fieldnotes to answer the research question or support your thesis. Your paper should include some references to your fieldwork and fieldnotes. It can include references to theories or concepts used in your analysis or related to other aspects of your argument. **This paper is due on April 18.**

3. Research Method Report (20%): This will be a fifteen-minute in-class presentation (followed by time for Q&A). You will choose a method that you are interested in learning more about or think you might use for your thesis/project. A method is defined as a systematic and rigorous process of creating new knowledge through a research or creative product. You will do some research on that method through reviewing books, articles, and potentially interviewing someone who uses that method. Your presentation should include: 1) a summary of the method; 2) a description of the types of research questions and projects that for which the method would be appropriate; 3) an explanation of the type of knowledge that the method produces; and 4) a discussion of the benefits and limitations of the method. Your in class presentation should include some references to the academic materials you consulted in learning about the method. Your in-class presentation is **due on April 7.**

Some examples of methods include:

- questionnaires and surveys
- content analysis
- philosophical method
- historical method
- literary criticism
- creative writing
- photography or documentary film
- archival methods
- digital humanities
- participatory action research
- discourse analysis
- performance

4. Research Proposal Paper (40%): The final paper for this course is to write a research proposal. This should be a 10-15 page (not including references) paper that introduces your research topic, explains its significance, reviews relevant research and identifies a gap in that research (aka literature review), proposes a thesis statement or research question, and explains the research method(s) you would use. In addition to a written copy of the final paper submitted to me via Canvas by 11:59 p.m. on **May 5**, you will also give an in-class presentation on your paper in progress on **April 28** (location and time TBD).

Policies

Grading Criteria: Every grade you receive on an assignment in this class will be determined according to the following scale:

A = Excellent. To receive an “A,” your assignment must not only meet all of the requirements, but should also exceed the expectations and standards.

B = Good. A “B” is a good grade. It means you have met all of the requirements of the assignment and done a good job in meeting those requirements.

C = Unsatisfactory work

Assignments: All assignments are due *via Canvas* on the due date in **.doc** or **.docx** format. All written assignments should be in 11-12 pt. font and double-spaced. In the event you do not turn in your assignment on the day it is due, late written assignments will receive a half letter grade reduction for every full day they are late (i.e. A to B).

Statement on Attendance: Because participation and cooperative learning are essential to the design of this course, you are expected to attend class and participate. See the Student Handbook for the university policy on absences.

Statement on Content Accommodation: All of the content, reading assignments, films, assignments, and other teaching materials have been chosen in order to achieve the pedagogical objectives of this course best. Some of the writings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include material that conflicts with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. I will not make content accommodations in this course.

Statement on Open Learning Environment: The intention and structure of university level courses are to provide open, thoughtful forums for a wide variety of topics and ideas. While discussing these topics, students shall not discriminate on the basis of “race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability or veteran status.”

Statement on Academic Misconduct: Academic misconduct is a serious violation of your contract as a student and will be treated severely. The university policy on academic misconduct is in the student code available at <<http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html>>.

Statement on Sexual Misconduct: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran’s status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

ADA Statement: The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Service, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD) to make arrangements for accommodation.

Course Schedule and Readings:

I. INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH

January 14: What are the Environmental Humanities? (*Class gets out at 1pm today*)

- Scully, Malcolm G. "A Program to Create an Ethic of Place." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, August 13, 2004.
- Rose, Deborah Bird, Thom van Dooren, Matthew Chrulew, Stuart Cooke, Matthew Kearnes, and Emily O'Gorman. "Thinking Through the Environment, Unsettling the Humanities." *Environmental Humanities* 1 (2012): 1–5.
- Handy, George. "What Are the Environmental Humanities." *Home Waters*, October 26, 2012. <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/homewaters/2012/10/what-are-the-environmental-humanities.html>.
- "About the Journal." *Environmental Humanities*. Accessed December 28, 2015. <http://environmentalhumanities.org/about/>.
- "Resilience: An Environmental Humanities Journal." *Resilience*. Accessed December 28, 2015. <http://www.resiliencejournal.org/about/overview/>.
- *Thinking prompts:*
 - *Can we define the environmental humanities?*
 - *What are some of the key characteristics of EH?*
 - *How are EH interdisciplinary?*
 - *What is the relationship between research, teaching, application, and activism in EH?*

January 21: Introduction to Research Methods & The Problem of Research Methods in the Humanities

- Denzin, Norman K., and Yvonna S. Lincoln. "Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research." In *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research 4th Edition*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 1–19. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2011.
 - Pickering, Michael. "Introduction." In *Research Methods in Cultural Studies*, edited by Michael Pickering, 1–14. Edinburgh, GBR: Edinburgh University Press, 2008.
- ***Read only pp. 1-5.**

- *Thinking Prompts*
 - *What does research look like in EH?*
 - *What new knowledge does EH create?*
 - *What is the difference between research and creative work?*
 - *Is there an EH research method?*
 - *What sorts of methods come to play in EH?*
 - *What is the problem with the term "method" among humanities scholars?*
 - *What is the difference between humanities and social science methods?*
 - *What is the difference between data collection and data analysis?*

- What are the differences between a thesis, exams, and a project?

- Due Reading Argument Paper #1

II. INTERVIEWING & ORAL HISTORY

Jan 28: Qualitative Interviewing & Oral History

- Lindlof, Thomas R., and Bryan C. Taylor. "Producing Data II: Qualitative Interviewing." In *Qualitative Communication Research Methods, 3rd Edition*, 170–216. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2011.
- Lindlof, Thomas R., and Bryan C. Taylor. "Sensemaking: Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretation." In *Qualitative Communication Research Methods, 3rd Edition*, 241–81. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2011.
- Sommer, Barbara W., and Mary Kay Quinlan. *The Oral History Manual*. Rowman Altamira, 2009. ****Chapters 7-9 only**
- Ritchie, Donald A. "An Oral History of Our Time." In *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide*, 19–46. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Endres, Danielle. "Environmental Oral History." *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture* 5, no. 4 (2011): 485–98. doi:10.1080/17524032.2011.610810.
- Thinking Prompts
 - What is oral history?
 - What is qualitative interviewing?
 - What are the similarities and differences in these approaches?
 - What sort of knowledge does interviewing produce?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of interviews?

- Due Reading Argument Paper #2

February 4: Visit from Joshua Reid

- Reid, Joshua L. *The Sea Is My Country: The Maritime World of the Makahs*. Yale University Press, 2015. not on canvas
- Thinking Prompts
 - What is the methodological approach in the book?
 - What kind of evidence is used to support claims (i.e., oral history, historical documents, etc.)?
 - What is the role of interviewing/oral history in historical method?
 - What are some methodological considerations when working with indigenous populations?
 - What is the role of trust and relationship building in oral history research? What about in historical research?

- Due Reading Argument Paper #3

February 11: Examples of Oral History & Interviews (Class gets out at 1pm today)

- Pezzullo, Phaedra C., and Stephen P. Depoe. "Everyday Life and Death in a Nuclear World." In *Public Modalities: Rhetoric, Culture, Media, and Public Life*, edited by Daniel

C. Brouwer and Robert Asen, 85–108. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2010.

- Smallwood, J. B. “Grassroots Oral History: Environmentalist Opposition in Two Texas Water Controversies.” *Oral History Review* 15, no. 2 (1987): 97–114. doi:10.1093/ohr/15.2.97.
- Lee, Debbie. “Listening to the Land: The Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness as Oral History.” *Oral History Review* 37, no. 2 (2010): 235–48. doi:10.1093/ohr/ohq093.
- Rickard, Laura N. “Mountains and Handrails: Risk, Meaning, and Responsibility in Three National Parks.” *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture* 8, no. 3 (July 3, 2014): 286–304. doi:10.1080/17524032.2013.850109.
- Clarke, Tracylee. “Goshute Native American Tribe and Nuclear Waste: Complexities and Contradictions of a Bounded-Constitutive Relationship.” *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture* 4, no. 4 (2010): 387–405. doi:10.1080/17524032.2010.520724.
- *Thinking Prompts*
 - What is the main argument of each article? How is this a contribution to ongoing research?
 - What is the new knowledge created by each article?
 - What is the methodological approach used in each article?
 - Which type of interview was used in the article? Was this effective/ineffective?
 - What sort of evidence do interviews offer in each article provide? Is the interview data good source of evidence for the main argument of the article?

- *Due Reading Argument Paper #4*

III. TEXTUAL CRITICISM

February 18: Introduction to Textual (Rhetorical) Criticism

- Brummett, Barry S. *Techniques of Close Reading*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009. not on canvas
- *Thinking Prompts*
 - What is close reading?
 - Is close reading limited to rhetorical studies?
 - What other disciplines use close reading?
 - What sort of knowledge does close reading produce?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of textual criticism

- *Due Reading Argument Paper #5*

February 25: Examples of Textual Criticism

- Lockwood, Alex. “The Affective Legacy of Silent Spring.” *Environmental Humanities* 1 (2012): 123–40.
- Keyser, Catherine. “An All-Too-Moveable Feast: Ernest Hemingway and the Stakes of Terroir.” *Resilience: A Journal of the Environmental Humanities* 2, no. 1 (2015). doi:10.5250/resilience.2.1.002.

- Bsumek, Peter K., Jen Schneider, Steve Schwarze, and Jennifer Peeples. "Corporate Ventriloquism: Corporate Advocacy, the Coal Industry, and the Appropriation of Voice." *Voice and Environmental Communication*, 2014, 21-.
- Pezzullo, Phaedra C. "Contaminated Children: Debating the Banality, Precarity, and Futurity of Chemical Safety." *Resilience: A Journal of the Environmental Humanities* 1, no. 2 (2014). doi:10.5250/resilience.1.2.004.
- DeLuca, Kevin Michael, and Anne Teresa Demo. "Imaging Nature: Watkins, Yosemite, and the Birth of Environmentalism." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 17, no. 3 (2000): 241–60. doi:10.1080/15295030009388395.
- Endres, Danielle, Samantha Senda-Cook, and Brian Cozen. "Not Just a Place to Park Your Car: Park(ing) as Spatial Argument." *Argumentation & Advocacy* 50, no. 3 (Winter 2014): 121–40.
- Schmitt, Casey. "Invoking the Ecological Indian: Rhetoric, Culture, and the Environment." In *Voice and Environmental Communication*, 66–87. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014.
- *Thinking Prompts*
 - What is the main argument of each article? How is this a contribution to ongoing research?
 - What is the new knowledge created by each article?
 - What is the methodological approach used in each article?
 - What texts were analyzed in each of these articles?
 - What theories or concepts were developed through the analysis of these texts?
 - Was there sufficient textual evidence to support the main argument of each article?
- *Due Reading Argument Paper #6*

IV. QUALITATIVE FIELDWORK

March 3: What is Fieldwork?

- Bailey, Carol A. "Introduction to Qualitative Field Research." In *A Guide to Qualitative Field Research*, 2nd edition., 1–13. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 2007.
- Lindlof, Thomas R., and Bryan C. Taylor. "Producing Data I: Participating, Observing and Recording Social Action." In *Qualitative Communication Research Methods*, 3rd Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2011.
- *Thinking Prompts:*
 - What is qualitative fieldwork?
 - What is ethnography? What is participant observation?
 - What methods are used in fieldwork?
 - How is qualitative fieldwork different from scientific fieldwork?
 - What sort of knowledge does fieldwork produce?
 - Is fieldwork a traditional humanities method?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of fieldwork?
- *Due Reading Argument Paper #7*

March 10: Fieldnotes (Class gets out at 1pm today)

- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing) 2nd Edition*. University Of Chicago Press, 2011. not on canvas
- *Thinking Prompts*
 - What are fieldnotes? How do they serve as a form of data or evidence?
 - What methodological approaches use fieldnotes?
 - What kind of knowledge do fieldnotes produce?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of fieldnotes?
- Due Reading Argument Paper #8

March 17- No Class-Spring Break

March 26- No Class- Work on fieldwork for Fieldwork Paper

March 31: Examples of Field Research

- Milstein, Tema. "When Whales 'Speak for Themselves': Communication as a Mediating Force in Wildlife Tourism." *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture* 2, no. 2 (2008): 173–92. doi:10.1080/175240308021
- Carbaugh, Donal. "'Just Listen': 'Listening' and Landscape among the Blackfeet." *Western Journal of Communication* 63, no. 3 (1999): 250–70. doi:10.1080/10570319909374641.
- Porter, Natalie. "Risky Zoographies: The Limits of Place in Avian Flu Management." *Environmental Humanities* 1 (2012): 103–21.
- Kirksey, Eben. "Living With Parasites in Palo Verde National Park." *Environmental Humanities* 1 (2012): 23–55.
- Milstein, Tema. "'Somethin' Tells Me It's All Happening at the Zoo': Discourse, Power, and Conservationism1." *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture* 3, no. 1 (2009): 25–48. doi:10.1080/17524030802674174.
- *Thinking Prompts*
 - What is the main argument of each article? How is this a contribution to ongoing research?
 - What is the new knowledge created by each article?
 - What is the methodological approach used in each article?
 - What sites were analyzed in each of these articles?
 - What theories or concepts were developed through the analysis of practices?
 - Was there sufficient fieldnote evidence to support the main argument of each article?
- Due Reading Argument Paper #9

V. MORE ON METHODS

April 7: Research Method Presentations

- Due: In-class Research Methods Report

April 14: Hybrid Methods (class gets out at 1pm today)

- Endres, Danielle, and Samantha Senda-Cook. "Location Matters: The Rhetoric of Place in Protest." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 3 (August 2011): 257–82. doi:10.1080/00335630.2011.585167.
- Middleton, Michael K., Samantha Senda-Cook, and Danielle Endres. "Articulating Rhetorical Field Methods: Challenges and Tensions." *Western Journal of Communication* 75, no. 4 (July 2011): 386–406. doi:10.1080/10570314.2011.586969.
- Tsing, Anna. "Matsutaki Worlds Live." *Matsutaki Worlds*, n.d. <http://www.matsutakeworlds.org>. - not on canvas
- Tsing, Anna. "Unruly Edges: Mushrooms as Companion Species." *Environmental Humanities* 1 (2012): 141–54.
- Powys, Vicki, Hollis Taylor, and Carol Probert. "A Little Flute Music: Mimicry, Memory, Narrativity." *Environmental Humanities* 3 (2013): 43–70. See also the audio clips that accompany this at: <http://environmentalhumanities.org/archives/a-little-flute-music/>
- Mark, Andrew. "Refining Uranium: Bob Wiseman's Ecomusicological Puppetry." *Environmental Humanities* 4, no. 2014 (2014): 69–93.
- Sze, Julie. "Environmental Justice Anthropocene Narratives: Sweet Art, Recognition, and Representation." *Resilience: A Journal of the Environmental Humanities* 2, no. 2 (2015). doi:10.5250/resilience.2.2.010.
- *Thinking Prompts*
 - What is the main argument of each article? How is this a contribution to ongoing research?
 - What is the new knowledge created by each article?
 - What is the methodological approaches are used in each article?
 - How do these articles combine various methods?
 - How do some of these articles play with genre, style, and form?
 - What theories or concepts were developed through these analyses?
 - What do you like/dislike about these articles?

- Due Reading Argument Paper #10

VI. PLANNING A RESEARCH PROJECT

April 21: Preparing a Research Project

Guest lecture: Amy Brunvand, EH Librarian

- Booth, Wayne C, Gregory G Colomb, and Joseph M Williams. *The Craft of Research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. not on canvas

VII. COURSE WRAP UP

April 28: Paper-in-Progress Presentations

May 5: Final Paper Due by 11:59pm