

# Paradise Lost?

## The Archaeology and Ethics of Human Environmental Impacts

Anthro 3384 and CFA 3384  
Southern Methodist University  
Fall 2007

---

Professor: Dr. Torrey Rick  
Office: Heroy 444  
Phone: 768-3542  
Email: trick@smu.edu  
Teaching Assistant: Lauren Willis  
Office Hours: Tu 1-2

Course Location: Fondren 155  
Course Time: Tu/Th 11-12:20  
Office Hours: Tu/Th 2-3  
  
Office: Heroy 435  
Email: lwillis@smu.edu

---

### Course Description:

With human populations skyrocketing, pollution of air and water on the rise, extinction of animal species at alarming rates, and the need for agricultural land at a premium, the world is in an environmental crisis. Politicians, scientists, and the general public are constantly grappling with the best ways to preserve the environment for the future and to minimize the impact that our human activities have on the natural world. Ultimately, these environmental problems pose several ethical dilemmas and have left us at a crossroads.

Although many people view our current environmental crises as relatively recent phenomena, archaeological and historical records are filled with instances of ancient environmental degradation. Using interdisciplinary archaeological, anthropological, and historical case studies from around the world, this course provides a detailed examination of human impacts on the environment over the last 50,000 years. We will review current environmental and ethical issues in the U.S. and then trace ancient human environmental impacts from early hunter-gatherers through the development of state level agriculturalists.

### Required Texts (\*\*\*) All readings are on reserve at ISEM Library(\*\*\*):

- C. Redman (1999). *Human Impact on Ancient Environments*. University of Arizona: Tucson.  
J. D. Hughes (2001). *An Environmental History of the World*. Routledge: New York.  
B. Kline (2000). *First Along the River: A Brief History of the US Environmental Movement*. Acada Books: Oxford.  
J. Diamond (2006). *Collapse: Why Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*. New York: Viking.

### Course Website:

This is a useful place to download the syllabus and all course assignments and study guides.  
<http://faculty.smu.edu/trick/courses.htm>

### Course Requirements:

Grades will be based on two midterm examinations and two take-home critical essay assignments focused on the course lectures, readings, and class discussions. Because many of the topics we will cover in lecture are only briefly mentioned in your readings, your success depends on your attendance in lecture. We will also have numerous discussions during our course meetings.

Everyone is expected to follow the SMU honor code and violators will be prosecuted. I do not give makeup examinations or accept late assignments unless you have a note from your doctor or other viable source. If you have a documented disability and need special accommodations, please see me as soon as possible.

### Grade Breakdown:

- Midterm 1 (October 9): 30%  
Midterm 2 (November 15): 30%  
Critical Essay 1 (September 20): 20 %  
Critical Essay 2 (December 11): 20 %

## Course Outline

<b>Date</b>	<b>Lecture Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
Aug 23	Course Introduction	--
Aug 28	Environmental Crisis	Redman Ch. 1; Hughes Ch. 8-9
Aug 30	Climate Change	Kline Ch. 11
Sep 4	Archaeology and Historical Ecology	Hughes Ch. 1; Diamond Prologue & Ch. 1
Sep 6	Human Attitudes Towards the Environment	Kline Introduction, Ch. 1, 2, 3 & Conclusion; Redman Ch. 2
Sep 11	Environmental Ethics: Ancient Harmony?	Hughes Ch. 2
Sep 13	Reconstructing Past Environments	Redman Ch. 3
Sep 18	Fire	Redman pg. 65-67
Sep 20	Twilight of the Mammoths *** <i>Critical Essay 1 Due in class</i> ***	Redman pg. 75-80
Sep 25	Prey Choice and New World Hunter-Gatherers	Redman Ch. 4
Sep 27	Archaeology and the State of the World's Oceans	Braje et al. 2006 (on file ISEM Library)
Oct 2	Pygmy Mammoths, Shellfish, and Sea Mammals on the Channel Islands	Erlandson et al. 2004; Rick et al. 2007 (on file ISEM Library)
Oct 4	Domestication and Translocation of Animals	--
Oct 9	*** <i>Midterm 1</i> ***	--
Oct 11	Agriculture and the Environment	Redman Ch. 5
Oct 16	Vikings in Greenland	Diamond Chs. 6-8
Oct 18	Agriculture in the Southwest	Redman pg. 117-122, 148-156; Hughes pg. 22-27; Diamond Ch. 4
Oct 23	Pacific Islands	Hughes pg. 93-99; Redman pg. 68-75; Diamond Ch. 2
Oct 25	Pacific and Caribbean Islands	Diamond Ch. 3
Oct 30	Old World Urbanism	Hughes Ch. 3; Redman pg. 127-139, 156-158
Nov 1	Old World continued	Hughes Ch. 4
Nov 6	Mesoamerican Complexity and the Environment	Hughes pg. 42-51, 113-119; Redman pg. 139-148; Diamond Ch. 5
Nov 8	The Amazon and the Human Past	Hughes pg. 217-224, pg. 127-135
Nov 13	Catastrophes and Diseases	Redman Ch. 7
Nov 15	*** <i>Midterm 2</i> ***	--
Nov 20	<i>FALL BREAK—No Class</i>	--
Nov 22	<i>THANKSGIVING—No Class</i>	--
Nov 27	Conservation and Sustainable Strategies	Hughes pg. 99-108; Hughes Ch. 7; Diamond Ch. 9
Nov 29	Environmental Ethics Reconsidered	Diamond Chs. 14-16
Dec 4	Course Conclusion	Hughes Ch. 10; Redman Ch. 8
Dec 11	*** <i>Critical Essay 2 Due by 5:00 in Heroy 435</i> ***	--

**Important Dates:** Sep 10: last day to declare pass/fail  
Nov 5: last day to drop