

GEOG/HIST/GOVT 3160

# ECOLOGIES OF U.S. GLOBAL POWER

## NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY OF U.S. FOREIGN RELATIONS

Wednesday 11:15 – 1:45AM

Location: Zen 107

Professor: Richard Nisa

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Office: Mansion 38A or on Zoom

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00 – 11:00 AM or by appointment

*Robbers of the world, now that the earth is insufficient for their all-devastating hands they probe even the sea; if the enemy is rich, they are greedy; if he is poor, they thirst for domination; neither east nor west has satisfied them; alone of mankind they are equally covetous of poverty and wealth. Robbery, slaughter and plunder they falsely name empire; they make a desert and call it peace.*

—Tacitus, *Agricola*, 30.4

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This interdisciplinary course will highlight the vital role that the physical environment played in the establishment and growth of U.S. power on the world stage. From timber and cotton in the 18th and 19th centuries to coal and steel in the early 20th century to oil and gas in the 21st; from bananas in Latin America to green energy sources and the carbon-intensive archipelago of military bases; from diplomacy to war, many of the foundational drivers of U.S. foreign relations are tangled with issues related to the control, extraction, or distribution of key natural resources. Students in the class will engage with a suite of sources, from historical archives to art and film, coming away with a firm understanding of the important geographical and economic connections between environmental, military, and diplomatic history.

Image: Oil pumpjacks on the Lost Hills Oil Field, California: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pumpjacks.JPG>

## COURSE OBJECTIVES:

There are three main pedagogical goals for our class:

- ✦ First, we will work together to help you build a baseline understanding of the environmental history of the United States. This is a vital backbone to understanding how the U.S. sought to establish, maintain, or expand access to resources at different times. We will seek to pair this understanding of environmental history with both military history and a diplomatic history of U.S. foreign relations—how did the state succeed or fail to in their pursuits? Was violence used? Was aid deployed or withheld? What role did the corporate form play?
- ✦ Second, critical analysis, close reading, and scholarly writing are extremely important tools for working through these tough questions. To that end, we will collaborate with the intention of improving the ways in which you synthesize and articulate complex ideas. If, after handing in your final project, you feel that writing is an essential component of reading and thinking, then I will consider this second goal met.
- ✦ Lastly, we will be doing a lot of discussion in this class. I hope that we can develop a classroom culture that encourages you to feel invested in the readings and to want to critically analyze and comment on the connections between the history, and the uneven political, economic, and environmental issues that shaped U.S. global power. With your help, I endeavor to build this classroom into a robust, respectful, and safe community.

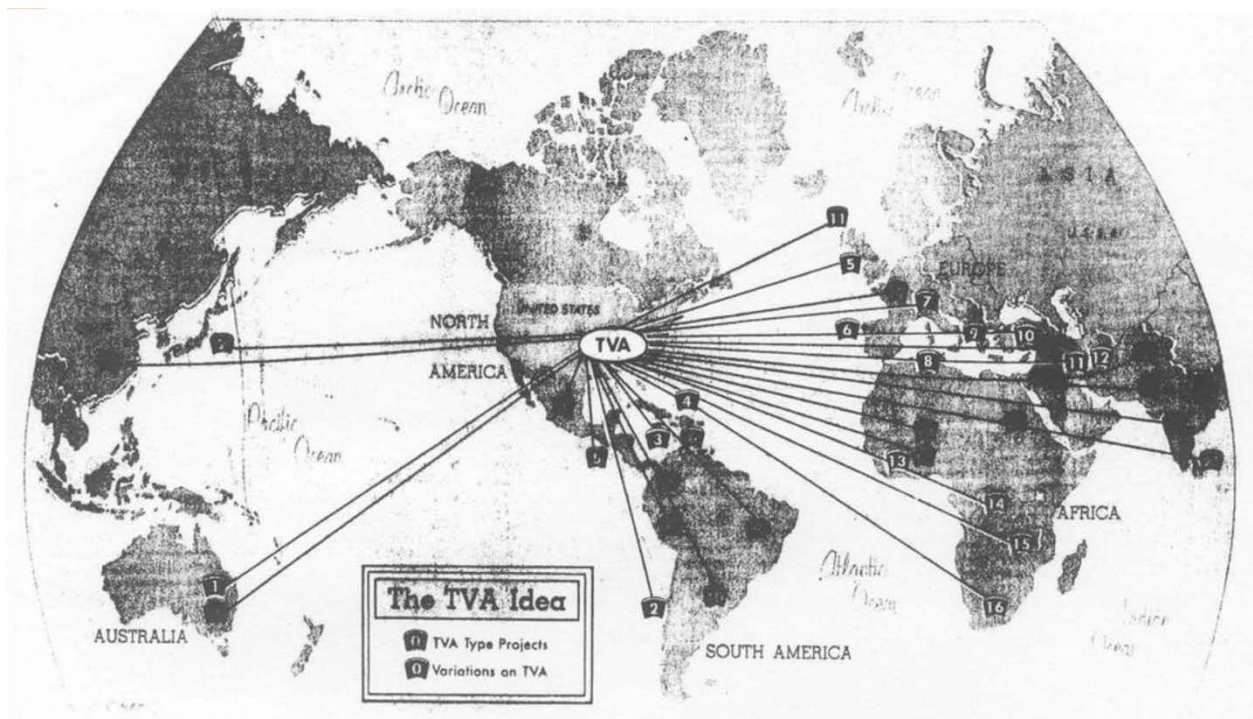


Image: Global reach of the TVA model from the *Milwaukee Journal*, 1958: <https://slideplayer.com/slide/14501440/>

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

### Readings:

There is no “textbook” to purchase for this class. All readings are located on our class Blackboard site and/or available for download from the FDU library/e-brary. Readings will be drawn from a range of sources: academic articles and book excerpts, newspapers and magazine reportage, and occasionally fiction. While most of the readings in this class derive from academic books and journals, I have tried to select readings that are engaging and readable for non-experts. There is a lot of reading in a 3000-level class, but if you put in the effort the reward for close reading extends far beyond the walls of our classroom. Reading assignments will be supplemented by a number of videos, lectures and discussions. Active participation is critical if the seminar-style discussion sessions are to work effectively. Attendance and participation are accordingly each worth a significant portion of your grade. BRING THE READINGS TO CLASS.

While there is no textbook to buy, we will be reading one book in its entirety in the class, and I recommend (but don’t require) you to get your own copy. The library has ordered a paper version (which I will place on reserve), and I have requested that they also get the rights to an ebook version if possible. In the book, Black uses the history of the US Department of the Interior to lay out the country’s shifting relationship to mineral extraction—both domestic and foreign. The book is excellent.

✚ Megan Black, “Mineral Frontiers in the Twentieth Century,” in *A Companion to U.S. Foreign Relations* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2020)

Additionally, these two other books are extremely useful and both are available through FDU’s ebook library:

✚ Mark Fiege, *The Republic of Nature: An Environmental History of the United States*, (Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 2013).

Fiege’s text is a really clear narrative environmental history of the United States. While many of you are no doubt familiar with a lot of the key events, practices, or places in US history, this book compliments and complicates them by noting the way nature and the environment were understood and used by the population.

✚ Peter A. Shulman, *Coal and Empire: The Birth of Energy Security in Industrial America*, Illustrated edition (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015).

Shulman here considers the importance of coal to the energy transitions that fueled the US rise to power and kickstarted our path-dependency on fossil fuels. It is really well written and clear, and like both Black and Fiege, this text will really expand your base of understanding of myriad moments in US and world history.

**Attendance and Participation (15%):**

Attendance and active participation are compulsory in this class. Our meetings will be discussion-based and/or project heavy, meaning your absences will be keenly felt by all of us. While we are in a pandemic, and we are all burdened by physical and emotional stressors that make concentration and time-management difficult, this is a small group that only meets once a week, making community cohesion all-the-more important. I hope you not only attend class, but feel invested in the material and our classroom culture enough to participate actively. We will all be better from hearing from you.

**Discussion Questions (10%):**

Every week, each student is responsible for submitting one well thought-out discussion question to our class Blackboard site. These are due by the end of the Tuesday before class. We will use your questions to drive our seminar conversations forward, so don't be flip. Asking good questions is a vital skill—both for developing critical thinking skills and for writing compelling essays. However, it is a skill that does not come easy. After reading the material, consider issues that you think our group would benefit from exploring, or think about aspects of the narratives we might want to know more about, places where one text complicates or challenges others read for that week or earlier in the semester. A great discussion question will have us returning to the texts and/or working to synthesize ideas across several readings. Avoid yes/no or zero sum questions in favor of ones that ask us to consider how, why, or (Bob Dylan voice) what's the reason for.

**Response Papers (25%):**

Please write a total of five (5) short reactions to the articles we've read for that day's class (FORMAT: 250-350 words, double-spaced, Times New Roman in 12 point font, one inch margins on the top and bottom, 1.25 on the sides). I am looking for some sort of critical engagement with the readings: I DO NOT WANT A 'BOOK REPORT'. Reaction papers are evaluated based on the following four criteria.

You will not get full credit for the assignment unless you meet these basic objectives:

1. One sentence that clearly identifies the author/s and the title of the piece you are writing about AND their central claim, assertion, or thesis. You needn't write about all of the readings, but I look favorably on students who try to synthesize multiple texts in their responses.
2. One sentence that briefly explains how the author builds and/or supports this thesis.
3. Your CRITICAL thoughts on the reading/readings. Consider articulating how the readings relate to other readings from the course or to other issues from other classes you are taking/have taken. The best way to go about this is to think about the readings and think through questions like (but not limited to) *how* do environmental issues impact a culture of diplomacy, war, foreign policy, or economic power? *Where, who* and/or *how* are certain people/places the beneficiaries of the issues explored in the readings and how do other respond?
4. PREPARE AND PROOFREAD: I will deduct points if the paper isn't checked for errors in grammar, composition, spelling and clarity. These deductions add up!

You choose the six different classes that you want to write a response for, but you are only to hand in one response per class, and it must **cite and engage** with *at minimum* one of the readings done for that class.

### Research Paper (25%):

This semester we will work on writing one analytical essay, the final draft of which will be due on March 30. Because research and writing are processes that take time, this single paper will take shape over a number of weeks, by way of short assignments and peer review sessions. You will be writing a paper that critically analyzes a key issue in the environmental history of the United States that was central to the country's foreign policy, economic strategy, territorial ambitions, or military history. The final essay will be approximately 1,500 - 2,000 words long. We will be breaking the paper up into a number of small parts and working with each other to develop and improve the end result.

Exploring <i>FRUS</i> on February 2	---
3 paper 'ideas' due on February 9	---
250 word abstract and draft bibliography due February 23	5%
Full rough Draft due on March 9 (bring 2 printed copies for peer review)	5%
Final Draft due on March 30 (uploaded with earlier drafts appended)	15%
Total as a percentage of final course grade	25%

All papers should be written substantially in your own words, and please use the Chicago Style (full note) for all citations and bibliographic entries.

### Final Project (25%):

The summative project for this course you will be using your research paper as the basis for an episode of our class podcast (title TBD by you all). Like the paper, the podcast will come together over the course of the final half of our class and will be divided into smaller chunks. We will also have a website for the podcast (I will build it and set it up), on which you will be required to post the following:

1. A written podcast transcript (and a link to a PDF of the final version of your research paper)
2. A glossary of key terms that you use in the podcast and short bios of the people you refer to
3. A timeline of the issue you explore in the podcast
4. A map (or series of maps) to help listeners understand the geography of the issue
5. Visuals (especially those drawn from the primary sources you use in the paper/podcast)

Writing for the ear in-class workshop, identify an expert	---
Working with visuals in-class workshop	---
Writing interview questions in-class workshop	---
Draft text for glossary due April 20	---
Short interview with an expert due April 27	10%
Audio sample of introduction to workshop due May 4	---
Final Project due on May 11	15%
Total as a percentage of final course grade	25%

## CLASS PROTOCOLS:

The following protocols hold, without exception, for all students in this class:

1. Collegiality and common sense require that (at minimum) you turn off your cell phone ringer in the classroom and (ideally) put the phone away entirely. I know, I know. But still.
2. Laptops are welcome (indeed encouraged) in the classroom—we are going to use them a lot in the second half of the semester! However, please use them in a manner that is respectful towards the rest of us: that is, use the device for note-taking and not...image searching, say. I had an instance recently where this was not the case and it was just plain awful. Don't be that person. Please.
3. Respect is paramount. We will be discussing and debating issues in this class that have no clear or inevitable 'answers' yet still generate impassioned and/or emotional responses. Please be mindful of others as we work to develop an open-yet-critical classroom culture. It can be both—I promise.
4. I encourage you to visit me during office hours if you have questions or concerns about the readings or assignments, or if you simply want to say hello. I am more than happy to review material and answer questions. If you cannot make posted hours, we can try to arrange an alternative appointment time.
5. I grade all work for analysis and content as well as style and grammar. A little effort goes a long way.

## Grading criteria:

Attendance and Participation	15%
Discussion Questions (ten @ 1% each)	10%
Response Papers (five @ 5% each)	25%
Midterm Research Paper	25%
Final Project: Podcast Episode and Supplemental Webpage	25%
Total	100%

## Grade determination:

The numeric grades correspond to the following letter grades:

	A	95 - 100%	A-	90 - 94.9%	
B-	80 - 82.9%	B	83 - 86.9%	B+	87 - 89.9%
C-	70 - 72.9%	C	73 - 76.9%	C+	77 - 79.9%
	D	60 - 69.9%	F	Less than 60%	

## Academic Integrity:

Cheating, plagiarism, or other violations of academic integrity will not be tolerated. To that end, if you haven't already done so, please become familiar with FDU's Academic Integrity Policy. Any and all students in violation of this policy will be subject to automatic failure of the course for a first offense, and will be suspended from the university for a second offense. The inability to prove authorship when questioned about your work's authenticity could be grounds for the charge of plagiarism. It is entirely your responsibility to read the FDU Academic Integrity Policy carefully and abide by it.



**Basic Needs Security:\***

An increasing number of students in the U.S. struggle to find and secure safe housing, and some may have difficulty affording food and daily groceries. If you find yourself in such a position (especially if you feel that these conditions impact your performance in the course), please consider reaching out to the Dean of Students for support. If you are comfortable discussing these issues with me, please do so, and I will try to make any accommodations that I can.

\*Based on Sara Goldrick-Rab's *Basic Needs Security*:

<https://medium.com/@saragoldrickrab/basic-needs-security-and-the-syllabus-d24cc7afe8c9>

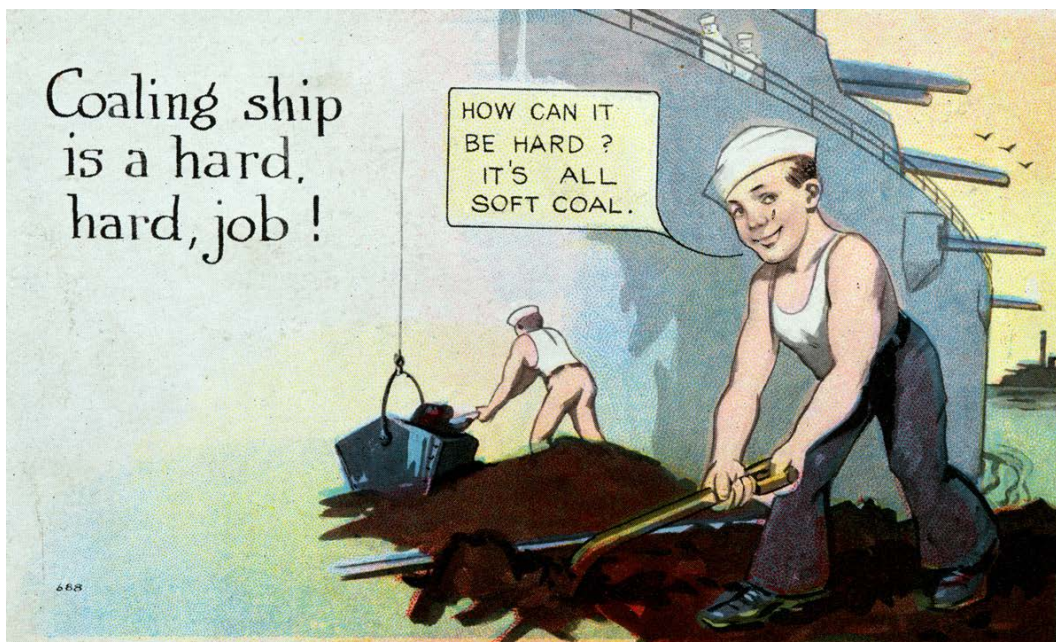
**Disability Disclosure:**

Fairleigh Dickinson University – College at Florham, in accord with the policies underlying Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA), works to ensure that reasonable accommodations are implemented for enrolled students with documented disabilities to function in the academic environment. Any student with documented disabilities, who feels he/she/they may need academic accommodations while taking this course, should first contact the office of Disability Support Services at 973-443-8079 to discuss his/her/their specific needs. Once the disability is verified, pick-up your letters from the office of Disability Support Services, then make an appointment to see the professor.

Visit <http://view.fdu.edu/default.aspx?id=3344> for more information.

**Inclusivity Statement:**

All students, regardless of their sexuality and gender identity, are welcome at FDU and in this class. Campus resources for the LGBTQ+ community include the student LGBTQ+ organization on campus, Accepting and Understand the Rights of All (AURA, [fduaura@gmail.com](mailto:fduaura@gmail.com)); AURA's faculty advisor, Prof. John Schiemann ([jws@fdu.edu](mailto:jws@fdu.edu)).



WWII-era Navy postcard: <https://www.steelnavy.org/history/items/show/38>

## COURSE OUTLINE

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**January 26, 2022: Virtual Introductions on Zoom**

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**February 2, 2022: Pre/Colonial Americas and the Littoral Spaces of the Transatlantic**

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**February 9, 2022: Revolutionary Environments**

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**February 16, 2022: The Civil War and the Racial Ecologies of King Cotton's Southern Empire**

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**February 23, 2022: Imperial Sutures: Infrastructure and/of Islands and the Sea**

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**March 2, 2022: Imperial Intimacies: Land and Labor, Race and Resistance**

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**March 9, 2022: Total War and the Expansion of US Industrial Frontiers**

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**March 16, 2022: Spring Recess : No Class**

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**March 23, 2022: Internalizing Global Imaginaries**

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**March 30, 2022: The Carbon-based War Machine**

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**April 6, 2022: Oil Frontiers**

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**April 13, 2022: The Hot Cold War: Counterinsurgency and War on the Environment**

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**April 20, 2022: Laying Waste**

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**April 27, 2022: The Uneven Geographies of the Drug War**

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**May 4, 2022: Rare Earth Security and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Mineral Frontiers**

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**May 11, 2022: Final Projects Due**



## DETAILED COURSE SCHEDULE



Cotton Farm by Mae Wertz: <https://pixels.com/featured/cotton-farm-mae-wertz.html>

### January 26, 2022: Virtual Introductions on Zoom

*"They make a desert and call it peace".*

After spending a bit of time meeting each other, today we will explore a few of the general themes and terms that will structure our course discussions. We'll outline our preliminary thoughts on ideas like nature, empire, nation, security, borders, and frontiers, and we will begin an open-ended conversation about why (or if) studying environmental resources and resource use/extraction is a productive lens through which to learn about US foreign & economic policy and the country's rise in global power.

#### *In-class viewing:*

The Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, *Gracias Amigos* (1944), 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AgUpu751QBM>

Excerpt: "War," *The Problem with Jon Stewart*, September 30, 2021, Apple TV.

#### *In-class reading/discussion:*

Excerpts: Martin van Creveld, *Supplying War: Logistics from Wallenstein to Patton*, (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

Excerpts: Nedal T. Nassar, Elisa Alonso, and Jamie L. Brainard, "Investigation of U.S. Foreign Reliance on Critical Minerals—U.S. Geological Survey Technical Input Document," 2020: <https://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2020/1127/ofr20201127.pdf>

Derek Gregory, R. Johnston, G. Pratt, M. Watts, and S. Whatmore eds. *The Dictionary of Human Geography* (Malden, MA: Blackwell., 2009) (empire, natural resource, frontier, frontier thesis, terra nullius)

## February 2, 2022: Pre/Colonial Americas and the Littoral Spaces of the Transatlantic

"Strategy is the art of making war upon the map."

Now that we've gotten to know each other a little virtually, we will meet face-to-face (yay!) and spend this week's class exploring readings detailing indigenous and settler land use and the idea of the frontier. In engaging with the question of the frontier through its relations to internal and external geographies of power, we will ask a provocative question: what are the spatial limits of US environmental history? Our attempts to find an answer to this question (to the degree that there is a coherent answer) will be a journey lasting the next 13 weeks (or more!).

### Read for class today:

Greg Grandin, *End of the Myth: From the Frontier to the Border Wall in the Mind of America*, (New York: Metropolitan, 2020). (Chapter 1: All that Space: 11-30)

Strother E. Roberts, "Pines, Profits, and Popular Politics: Responses to the White Pine Acts in the Colonial Connecticut River Valley," *The New England Quarterly* 83, no. 1 (2010): 73-101.

Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, United States: Harvard University Press, 2008). (Chapter 1: The Gold Coast and the Atlantic Market in People)

### In-class reading/discussion:

Excerpts from: George Perkins Marsh, *Man and Nature: Or, Physical Geography As Modified by Human Action* (London: Harvard University Press, 1965 (1864))

Derek Gregory, R. Johnston, G. Pratt, M. Watts, and S. Whatmore eds. *The Dictionary of Human Geography* (Malden, MA: Blackwell., 2009) (settler society; commodity; commodity chain)

### Additional readings:

William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (Hill and Wang, 2011).

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, Revisioning American History (Boston: Beacon Press, 2014), Chapter One: Follow the Corn

Eric Jay Dolin, *Leviathan: The History of Whaling in America*, (New York; London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008).

Eric Jay Dolin, *Fur, Fortune, and Empire: The Epic History of the Fur Trade in America*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2011).

Mark Fiege, *The Republic of Nature: An Environmental History of the United States*, (Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 2013).

Andrew C. Isenberg, *The Destruction of the Bison: An Environmental History, 1750-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Strother E. Roberts, *Colonial Ecology, Atlantic Economy: Transforming Nature in Early New England* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019).

Nancy Shoemaker, "Whale Meat in American History," *Environmental History* 10, no. 2 (April 1, 2005): 269-94.

Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, "Supply Chains and the Human Condition," *Rethinking Marxism* 21, no. 2 (April 1, 2009): 148-76.

## **February 9, 2022: Revolutionary Environments**

*"A government of our own is our Natural Right"*

This week we will focus less on the concept of frontier expansion and settler colonialism, and instead turn our focus to the role of commodity circulation in the forming of US power in the lead-up to and performance of the US Revolutionary War. Certainly, sugar, cotton, and tobacco were central to the establishment of a wealthy landowning class in the US (and the systems of domination that facilitated their wealth—which would eventually become a central focus of the US Civil War), but the 18<sup>th</sup> century environmental logics, the war, and the material needs of its soldiers form a key component of this nascent and rebellious US power.

### **Read for class today:**

David E. Nye, *Consuming Power: A Social History of American Energies*, (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1999). (The Energies of Conquest; 15-40).

David C. Hsiung, "Food, Fuel, and the New England Environment in the War for Independence, 1775-1776," *The New England Quarterly* 80, no. 4 (2007): 614-54.

Mark Fiege, *The Republic of Nature: An Environmental History of the United States*, (Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 2013). (excerpts from By The Laws of Nature and of Nature's God Declaring American Independence; 57-99).

### *In-class reading/discussion:*

Excerpts: Erna Risch, *Supplying Washington's Army* (University of Michigan Library, 1981). (Excerpts on mercantile capitalism, excerpts from chapters 3 (on transportation) and 4 (on forage))

Derek Gregory, R. Johnston, G. Pratt, M. Watts, and S. Whatmore eds. *The Dictionary of Human Geography* (Malden, MA: Blackwell., 2009) (property; war; military occupation/logistics)

### *Additional readings:*

Judith A. Carney, *Black Rice: The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in the Americas*, (Cambridge, Mass. London: Harvard University Press, 2002). (African Rice and the Atlantic World; 142-159).

Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America*, (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

Elizabeth Anne Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-82*, (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 2002).

Courtney Fullilove, *The Profit of the Earth: The Global Seeds of American Agriculture*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

Blake McGready, "Contested Grounds: An Environmental History of the 1777 Philadelphia Campaign," *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 85, no. 1 (2018): 32-57.

J. R. McNeill, "Woods and Warfare in World History," *Environmental History* 9, no. 3 (2004): 388-410.

Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1986).

Natale Zappia, "Revolutions in the Grass: Energy and Food Systems in Continental North America, 1763-1848," *Environmental History* 21, no. 1 (January 1, 2016): 30-53.

### **February 16, 2022: The Civil War and the Racial Ecologies of King Cotton's Southern Empire**

*"Trees? American trees had ropes in them...and that bountiful land...who worked it?"*

In recent decades, the US Civil War has become fertile ground for scholars studying the synthesis of environmental, military, and diplomatic history. From the role of the landscape in enabling or hindering troop advances to the transnational economies of cotton, sugar, and tobacco to the emergent need to secure the fuel for a steam powered war machine and a steam powered trade regime: securing US power meant harnessing and maintaining access to specific ecological spaces. We will explore these intersections this week.

#### **Read for class today:**

Lisa Brady, *War upon the Land: Military Strategy and the Transformation of Southern Landscapes during the American Civil War* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012); (Intro: Nineteenth-Century Ideas of Nature and Their Role in Civil War Strategy 1-23).

Erin Stewart Mauldin, *Unredeemed Land: An Environmental History of Civil War and Emancipation in the Cotton South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018). (Revealing Vulnerabilities; Intensifying Production: 42-99).

Joan E. Cashin, *War Stuff: The Struggle for Human and Environmental Resources in the American Civil War*, Cambridge Studies on the American South (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018). (Chapter 4: Timber 82-107).

#### *In-class reading/discussion:*

Excerpts: Carolyn Finney, *Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014). (Chapter 3: 40 Acres and a Mule)

Derek Gregory, R. Johnston, G. Pratt, M. Watts, and S. Whatmore eds. *The Dictionary of Human Geography* (Malden, MA: Blackwell., 2009) (nation; nation-state; security)

*Additional readings:*

Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*, (New York: Knopf, 2014).

Lisa M. Brady, "The Wilderness of War: Nature and Strategy in the American Civil War," *Environmental History* 10, no. 3 (July 1, 2005): 421-47.

John C. Inscoe, "The Strength of the Hills: Representations of Appalachian Wilderness as Civil War Refuge," in Brian Allen Drake, ed., *The Blue, the Gray, and the Green: Toward an Environmental History of the Civil War* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2015).

Timothy Johnson "Reconstructing the Soil: Emancipation and the Roots of Chemical-Dependent Agriculture in America," in Brian Allen Drake, ed., *The Blue, the Gray, and the Green: Toward an Environmental History of the Civil War* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2015).

Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom*, (Cambridge, MA.: Belknap Press: An Imprint of Harvard University Press, 2017).

Megan Kate Nelson, "The Difficulties and Seductions of the Desert: Landscapes of War in 1861 New Mexico" in Brian Allen Drake, ed., *The Blue, the Gray, and the Green: Toward an Environmental History of the Civil War* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2015).

Mark Fiege, "Gettysburg and the Organic Nature of the American Civil War," in Richard Tucker, *Natural Enemy, Natural Ally: Toward an Environmental History of War*, (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2004). (Chapter 3: Cotton Kingdom; Chapter 4: Nature's Nobleman).

Matthew Karp, *This Vast Southern Empire: Slaveholders at the Helm of American Foreign Policy, This Vast Southern Empire* (Harvard University Press, 2017) (Chapter 8: Foreign Policy amid Domestic Crisis; Chapter 10: American Slavery, Global Power).

Peter A. Shulman, *Coal and Empire: The Birth of Energy Security in Industrial America*, Illustrated edition (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015). (chapter 3: The Slavery Solution).

Nancy Shoemaker, "The Extraterritorial United States to 1860," *Diplomatic History* 42, no. 1 (January 1, 2018): 36-54.

**February 23, 2022: Imperial Sutures: Infrastructure and/of Islands and the Sea**

*"We think of paths as existing only on land, but the sea has its paths too."*

Today we focus on the sea, a geography that might at first be understood as an imperial interstices but is in fact a key environment at the core of US global power from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to today. Seafaring spaces and systems were key to the global circulation of commodities, central to the regimes of extraction that facilitated the transition to steam power and fossil fuel locomotion, were key to US imperial control in the Pacific and East Asia, and in our digital world of today, they remain the vital sinews that facilitate the maintenance of the uneven geography of US political and economic control.

**Read for class today:**

Rebecca M McLennan, "The Empire of Law Goes to Sea," *Diplomatic History* 44, no. 5 (November 1, 2020): 786-807.



Jason W. Smith, *To Master the Boundless Sea: The U.S. Navy, the Marine Environment, and the Cartography of Empire* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018). (chapter 3: The Common Highway 75-106; Epilogue: 202-209).

Peter A. Shulman, *Coal and Empire: The Birth of Energy Security in Industrial America*, Illustrated edition (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015). (excerpts from chapter 1: The Challenges of Coal/The Politics of Steam: 25-40; chapter 4: Fueling the War)

*In-class reading/discussion:*

Excerpts: James A. Huston, *The Sinews of War: Army Logistics, 1775-1953* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1966).

*Additional readings:*

Jairus Banaji, *A Brief History of Commercial Capitalism*, (Chicago, Illinois: Haymarket Books, 2020) (The Infrastructure of Commercial Capitalism)

Liam Campling and Alejandro Colas, *Capitalism and the Sea: The Maritime Factor in the Making of the Modern World* (London ; New York: Verso, 2021).(excerpt: "The Value of Logistics: The Annihilation of Time by Sea?" )

Charmaine Chua, "'Sunny island set in the sea': Singapore's land reclamation as colonial project'." *The Funambulist* 17 (2018): 20.

Charmaine Chua et al., "Introduction: Turbulent Circulation: Building a Critical Engagement with Logistics," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 36, no. 4 (August 1, 2018): 617-29.

Deborah Cowen, "Infrastructures of Empire and Resistance," *Verso Books*, January 25, 2017, <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3067-infrastructures-of-empire-and-resistance>.

Sasha Davis, *Islands and Oceans: Reimagining Sovereignty and Social Change*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2020). (Chapter 3: Against Spheres of Influence: Environmental, Economic, and Human Circulations in the More-Than-Political Pacific).

Bruce Jones, *To Rule the Waves: How Control of the World's Oceans Shapes the Fate of the Superpowers* (New York: Scribner, 2021) (Chapter 10: America's Lake Naval Warfare in the Western Pacific and Beyond (2010-2017))

Laleh Khalili, *Sinews of War and Trade: Shipping and Capitalism in the Arabian Peninsula* (Verso, 2020).

Bernhard Klein and Gesa Mackenthun, eds., *Sea Changes: Historicizing the Ocean*, (New York: Routledge, 2003).

Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 2013).

Jenna M. Loyd, Emily Mitchell-Eaton, and Alison Mountz, "The Militarization of Islands and Migration: Tracing Human Mobility through US Bases in the Caribbean and the Pacific," *Political Geography* 53 (July 1, 2016): 65-75.



Laurel Mei-Singh, "Routed Through Water: Decolonial Ecologies on The Wai'anae Coast of Hawai'i," *The Funambulist*, no. 35 (May 1, 2021): 44-47.

Juliet Nebolon, "'Life Given Straight from the Heart': Settler Militarism, Biopolitics, and Public Health in Hawai'i during World War II," *American Quarterly* 69, no. 1 (March 30, 2017): 23-45.

Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History*, (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2008).

David Vine, *Island of Shame: The Secret History of the U.S. Military Base on Diego Garcia*, First Edition (Princeton University Press, 2009).

### **March 2, 2022: Imperial Intimacies: Land and Labor, Race and Resistance**

"...by the importation of free sugar from our colonial dependencies a conflict has been precipitated between the Anglo-Saxon of this country on the one hand and the c\*\*ly labor of the Orient and the cheap labor of the Tropics on the other."

If last week's readings and discussions drew our attention to the central role played by the spaces between sites and populations, this week we return to the ground—more specifically the processes of working the ground. We will read about sugar and bananas and the ways that controlling the uneven geography of resources was key to US economic growth. But we also explore the connection between land and human labor—in this case agricultural and sexual—were part of the terrain of US expansion and control. Power is not a one way street. That is, a banana is not only a plant, but also the result of particular intersections that infuse that plant with regimes of work (human and mechanical), economic power, resistance, and often violence.

### **Read for class today:**

April Merleaux, *Sugar and Civilization: American Empire and the Cultural Politics of Sweetness*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015). (Sugar's Civilizing Mission: Immigration, Race, and the Politics of Empire, 1898-1913: 28-54).

Jason M. Colby, "Chapter 11: Progressive Empire: Race and Tropicality in United Fruit's Central America," in Daniel E. Bender and Jana K. Lipman, *Making the Empire Work: Labor and United States Imperialism* (New York: New York University Press, 2015) (289-311).

Seungsook Moon, "Chapter 5: Sexual Labor and the US Military Empire: Comparative Analysis of Europe and East Asia," in Daniel E. Bender and Jana K. Lipman, *Making the Empire Work: Labor and United States Imperialism* (New York: New York University Press, 2015) (137-160).

### *In-class reading/discussion:*

Montes, Luis. "Bananas, The Fruit Empire of Wall Street." *International Pamphlets* (1933).

### *Additional readings:*

Nadine Attewell and Wesley Attewell, "Sweating for Their Pay: Gender, Labor, and Photography across the Decolonizing Pacific," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 24, no. 2 (2021): 183-217.

Nadine Attewell and Wesley Attewell, "Between Asia and Empire: Infrastructures of Encounter in the Archive of War," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 20, no. 2 (April 3, 2019): 162-79.

Peter Chapman, *Bananas: How the United Fruit Company Shaped the World*, (New York: Canongate U.S., 2009)

Patrick Chung, "From Korea to Vietnam: Local Labor, Multinational Capital, and the Evolution of US Military Logistics, 1950-97," *Radical History Review* 2019, no. 133 (January 1, 2019): 31-55.

Nan Enstad, *Cigarettes, Inc.: An Intimate History of Corporate Imperialism*, (Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 2018). (Introduction; Making a Transnational Cigarette Factory Labor Force; Where the Races Meet)

Andrew Friedman, "US Empire, World War 2 and the Racialising of Labour," *Race & Class* 58, no. 4 (April 1, 2017): 23-38.

Daniel Jaffee, *Brewing Justice: Fair Trade Coffee, Sustainability, and Survival*, (University of California Press, 2007)

Shana Klein, *The Fruits of Empire: Art, Food, and the Politics of Race in the Age of American Expansion*, 2020. (4. Seeing Spots: The Fever for Bananas, Land, and Power; 5. Pineapple Republic: Representations of the Dole Pineapple from Hawaiian Annexation to Statehood)

James W. Martin, *Banana Cowboys: The United Fruit Company and the Culture of Corporate Colonialism* (University of New Mexico Press, 2022)

Adam Moore, *Empire's Labor: The Global Army That Supports U.S. Wars* (Ithaca New York: Cornell University Press, 2019)

Augustine Sedgewick, "Chapter 12: What is Imperial about Coffee? Rethinking 'Informal Empire,'" in Daniel E. Bender and Jana K. Lipman, *Making the Empire Work: Labor and United States Imperialism* (New York: New York University Press, 2015) (312-334)

### **March 9, 2022: Total War and the Expansion of US Industrial Frontiers**

*"War clouds bring prosperity to producers of chromium..."*

Understanding the intersections of US interests with the environmental geographies of the two world wars is an enormous task. Warfare in the early/mid-twentieth century was reliant on fossil fuels (which we will explore in the coming weeks), on industrial commodities like rubber and steel, on extractive regimes in the American West, research on (and deployment of) toxic chemicals on racialized populations in the Pacific, and much, much more. So, this week we will only scratch the surface, but we will continue to develop an understanding of the ecologies of total war in the coming weeks. Today's class also marks the first foray into Megan Black's outstanding 2018 book: *The Global Interior*, which we will read in its entirety over the next few weeks.

### **Read for class today:**

Megan Black, *The Global Interior: Mineral Frontiers and American Power*, (Harvard University Press, 2018). (1-50)

Matthew Evenden, "Aluminum, Commodity Chains, and the Environmental History of the Second World War," *Environmental History* 16, no. 1 (January 1, 2011): 69-93.

Gregg Mitman, "Forgotten Paths of Empire: Ecology, Disease, and Commerce in the Making of Liberia's Plantation Economy: President's Address," *Environmental History* 22, no. 1 (January 1, 2017): 1-22.

*In-class viewing:*

Gregg Mitman et al., *The Land Beneath Our Feet*, (Alchemy Films, n.d.).

*Additional readings:*

Christopher R. Boyer, "Crisis Utilization in Mexican Forests," in Simo Laakkonen, Richard Tucker, and Timo Vuorisalo, eds., *The Long Shadows: A Global Environmental History of the Second World War*, 1st edition (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2017).

Connie Y. Chiang, "Imprisoned Nature: Toward an Environmental History of the World War II Japanese American Incarceration," *Environmental History* 15, no. 2 (April 1, 2010): 236-67.

Deborah Fitzgerald, *Every Farm a Factory: The Industrial Ideal in American Agriculture* (New haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

Greg Grandin, *Fordlandia: The Rise and Fall of Henry Ford's Forgotten Jungle City*, (New York: Picador, 2010).

Roy MacLeod, "'The Mineral Sanction': The Great War and the Strategic Role of Natural Resources," in *Environmental Histories of the First World War*, ed. Richard P. Tucker et al., 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 99-116.

Gregg Mitman, *Empire of Rubber: Firestone's Scramble for Land and Power in Liberia* (New York: The New Press, 2021)

**March 16, 2022: Spring Recess : No Class**

**March 23, 2022: Internalizing Global Imaginaries**

*"The old imperialism—exploitation for foreign profit—has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair-dealing."*

In today's class we will start to explore how changes in internal institutional structures—coupled with political and economic interests—shifted the geographic focus of US power. As we will see over the remaining class meetings, this idea of a border between foreign and domestic space works visually on maps and politically as a part of the speeches of generals, diplomats, and leaders. Where it falls short is in helping us understand the circulation of power, where capital touches down and extracts from the earth, and whose interests these processes serve.

**Read for class today:**

Megan Black, *The Global Interior: Mineral Frontiers and American Power*, (Harvard University Press, 2018). (51-148)

Dexter Fergie, "The Strange Career of 'National Security,'" *The Atlantic*, September 29, 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/09/the-strange-career-of-national-security/598048/>

*In-class reading/discussion:*

Harry S. Truman, "Inaugural Address" (Washington, D.C, January 20, 1949), <https://www.bartleby.com/124/pres53.html>

*Additional readings:*

Megan Black, "Mineral Frontiers in the Twentieth Century," in *A Companion to U.S. Foreign Relations* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2020), 925-41.

Ashley Carse et al., "Panama Canal Forum: From the Conquest of Nature to the Construction of New Ecologies," *Environmental History* 21, no. 2 (April 1, 2016): 206-87.

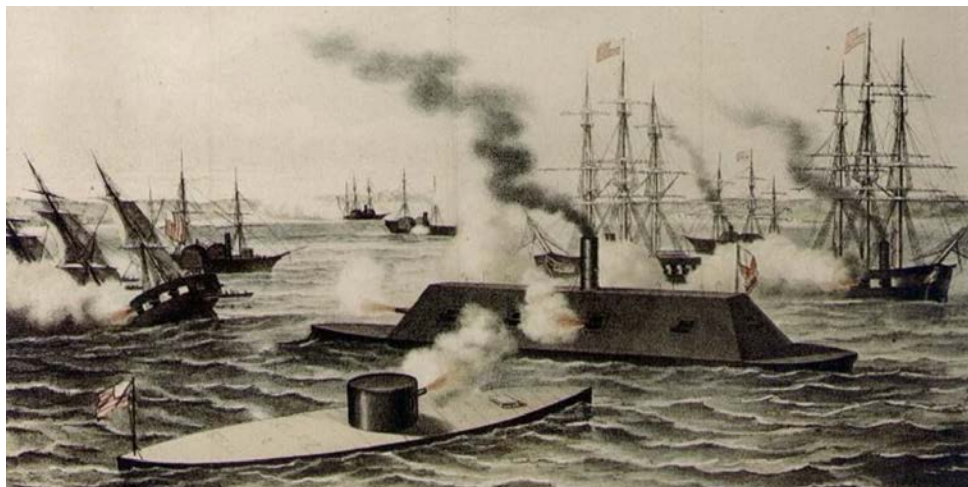
Glenn J. Dorn, "Pushing Tin: U.S.-Bolivian Relations and the Coming of the National Revolution," *Diplomatic History* 35, no. 2 (April 1, 2011): 203-28.

Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (Macmillan, 2006).

Julie Greene, *The Canal Builders: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2010).

Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire: A History of the Greater United States* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019), Excerpts about Guano Islands.

Nancy Langston, "Iron Mines, Toxicity, and Indigenous Communities in the Lake Superior Basin," in 11. Iron Mines, Toxicity, and Indigenous Communities in the Lake Superior Basin (University of California Press, 2017), 313-38.



Civil War-era Ironsides:

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/when-the-union-ran-out-of-ironclads-they-built-timberclads-130433/>

### **March 30, 2022: The Carbon-based War Machine**

*"Men have been known to starve and yet fight and again advance to battle, but history has been silent upon the act of a warship, without coal and oil, or without ammunition, doing such heroic acts of devotion to duty."*

This week begins a two-part unit on the centrality of fossil fuels to US foreign policy and environmental & military geography. This week will highlight the transformations to US war-making facilitated by its ample supplies of carbon-based energy reserves. Beginning with coal and steam power and moving towards an engagement with oil extraction, today we will look at how the uneven geography of energy supply shaped US territorial and economic engagements in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **Read for class today:**

Megan Black, *The Global Interior: Mineral Frontiers and American Power*, (Harvard University Press, 2018). (148-183)

Victor McFarland, "Oil and U.S. Foreign Relations," in *A Companion to U.S. Foreign Relations* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2020), 942-60.

Peter A. Shulman, *Coal and Empire: The Birth of Energy Security in Industrial America*, Illustrated edition (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015). (chapter 5: The Debate over Coaling Stations; chapter 6: Inventing logistics)

#### *In-class reading/discussion:*

James A. Huston, *The Sinews of War: Army Logistics, 1775-1953* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1966). (excerpts)

"Not So Private Negotiations": Mexico Expropriates the Oil Companies:  
<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5170/>

#### *Additional readings:*

Michael Camp, *Unnatural Resources: Energy and Environmental Politics in Appalachia after the 1973 Oil Embargo*, (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2019).

Mona Domosh, *American Commodities in an Age of Empire* (Taylor & Francis, 2006).

Andreas Malm, *Fossil Capital: The Rise of Steam Power and the Roots of Global Warming* (London ; New York: Verso, 2016)

Kazushi Minami, "Oil for the Lamps of America? Sino-American Oil Diplomacy, 1973-1979," *Diplomatic History* 41, no. 5 (November 1, 2017): 959-84.

Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (Verso, 2011).

David E. Nye, *Consuming Power: A Social History of American Energies*, (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1999). (High-Energy Economy: 187-216; Energy Crisis and Transition: 217-248).

Dan Tamir, "Something New under the Fog of War: The First World War and the Debut of Oil on the Global Stage," in *Environmental Histories of the First World War*, ed. J. R. McNeill et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 117-35.

### **April 6, 2022: Oil Frontiers**

*"I drink your milkshake"*

Part two of our (too?) small unit on fossil fuels and the ecologies of US foreign policy focuses on the construction of specific geographies of extraction, and by extension pulls myriad places into a willing or unwilling conversation with the US over matters of energy security, national security, or economic opportunity. Taken together, the selection of assigned and additional readings covers the US state's involvement in an exceedingly broad geography of extraction.

### **Read for class today:**

Bret Gustafson, "The New Energy Imperialism in the Caribbean," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 49, no. 4 (October 2, 2017): 421-28.

Laleh Khalili, "The Infrastructural Power of the Military: The Geoeconomic Role of the US Army Corps of Engineers in the Arabian Peninsula," *European Journal of International Relations* 24, no. 4 (December 1, 2018): 911-33.

Chad H. Parker, "Aramco's Frontier Story: The Arabian American Oil Company and Creative Mapping in Postwar Saudi Arabia," in *Oil Culture* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

Brandon Wolfe-Hunnicut, "Oil, Empire, and Covert Action," in *A Companion to U.S. Foreign Relations* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2020), 961-84.

### *In-class reading/discussion:*

"143. Briefing Paper Prepared in the Department of State" Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 81, Saudi Arabia: 5/75-5/77. Secret. Drafted by Cecil, Countryman, and Twinam on January 3, 1977, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977-1980, Volume XVIII, Middle East Region; Arabian Peninsula*.

### *Additional readings:*

Hannah Appel, *The Licit Life of Capitalism: US Oil in Equatorial Guinea* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2019)

Andreas Malm and The Zetkin Collective, *White Skin, Black Fuel: On the Danger of Fossil Fascism* (Verso Books, 2021).

Nicole Fabricant and Bret Gustafson, "Revolutionary Oil? Offshore Drilling in Cuba," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 49, no. 4 (October 2, 2017): 441-43.

Chad H. Parker, *Making the Desert Modern: Americans, Arabs, and Oil on the Saudi Frontier, 1933-1973* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2015).

Robert Vitalis, *America's Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier*, 1st edition (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2006)



Osamah F. Khalil, "The Crossroads of the World: U.S. and British Foreign Policy Doctrines and the Construct of the Middle East, 1902-2007," *Diplomatic History* 38, no. 2 (April 1, 2014): 299-344.

Stephen Haycox, *Battleground Alaska: Fighting Federal Power in America's Last Wilderness* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2016). (Chapter 2: The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; Chapter 3: Native Claims and Alaska Statehood; Chapter 4: The Trans-Alaska Pipeline)

David M. Wight, *Oil Money: Middle East Petrodollars and the Transformation of US Empire, 1967-1988* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021).

#### **April 13, 2022: The Hot Cold War: Counterinsurgency and War on the Environment**

*"We are fighting a war with no front lines, since the enemy hides among the people, in the jungles and mountains, and uses covertly border areas of neutral countries. One cannot measure [our] progress by lines on a map."*

Today's class dives more explicitly into the US's foreign (or perhaps more accurately external outsiders and internal outsiders) engagements during the decades of the Cold War. Many in the US are taught that the Cold War was 'cold,' that its violence never escalated to the level of a 'hot' war. But in thinking through both the environmental impacts and spatial extents of global counterinsurgency (what President Johnson once referred to as "a war to build as well as to destroy") in the mid-to-late 20<sup>th</sup> century, we will get a better understanding of the redefinition of diplomacy and warfare in an era which was 'cold' while 'hot' enough to cause millions of casualties around the world.

#### **Read for class today:**

Megan Black, *The Global Interior: Mineral Frontiers and American Power*, (Harvard University Press, 2018). (183-214)

Thomas Robertson, "'This Is the American Earth': American Empire, the Cold War, and American Environmentalism," *Diplomatic History* 32, no. 4 (September 1, 2008): 561-84.

David A. Biggs, *Quagmire: Nation-Building and Nature in the Mekong Delta*. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010). (Chapter 6: American War 197-226).

#### *In-class reading/discussion:*

"United States Objectives and Programs for National Security - NSC 68", 14 April 1950.

*President's Secretary's File, Truman Papers:*

[https://web.archive.org/web/20090530110830/http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study\\_collections/coldwar/documents/pdf/10-1.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20090530110830/http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/coldwar/documents/pdf/10-1.pdf)

#### *In-class viewing:*

Excerpt: *Don't Look Up*, Adam McKay, dir. 2021

#### *Additional readings:*

Kristin L. Ahlberg, "'Machiavelli with a Heart': The Johnson Administration's Food for Peace Program in India, 1965-1966," *Diplomatic History* 31, no. 4 (September 1, 2007): 665-701.

- David Biggs, *Footprints of War: Militarized Landscapes in Vietnam*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018).
- Gavin P. Bowd and Daniel W. Clayton, "Geographical Warfare in the Tropics: Yves Lacoste and the Vietnam War," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 103, no. 3 (March 23, 2012): 627-46.
- Lisa M. Brady, "Sowing War, Reaping Peace: United Nations Resource Development Programs in the Republic of Korea, 1950-1953," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 77, no. 2 (2018): 351-63.
- Daniel Clayton, "Militant Tropicality: War, Revolution and the Reconfiguration of 'the Tropics' c.1940-c.1975," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 38, no. 1 (January 1, 2013): 180-92.
- Nick Cullather, "'Fuel for the Good Dragon': The United States and Industrial Policy in Taiwan, 1950-1965," *Diplomatic History* 20, no. 1 (January 1, 1996): 1-26.
- Shane Hamilton, *Supermarket USA: Food and Power in the Cold War Farms Race*, 1st edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).
- Su-kyoung Hwang, "The Korean War and the Environment," *Critical Asian Studies* 53, no. 4 (October 2, 2021): 517-37.
- Simo Laakkonen, Richard Tucker, and Timo Vuorisalo, eds., *The Long Shadows: A Global Environmental History of the Second World War*, (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2017).
- Simo Laakkonen, Viktor Pál, and Richard Tucker, "The Cold War and Environmental History: Complementary Fields," *Cold War History* 16, no. 4 (October 1, 2016): 377-94.
- Jenna M. Loyd and Alison Mountz, *Boats, Borders, and Bases: Race, the Cold War, and the Rise of Migration Detention in the United States*, (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2018).
- Edwin A. Martini, "World on Fire: The Politics of Napalm in the Global Cold War," *Cold War History* 16, no. 4 (October 1, 2016): 463-81.
- Rob Nixon, "Of Land Mines and Cluster Bombs," *Cultural Critique* 67, no. 1 (2007): 160-74.
- Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2011).
- Christian Parenti, *Tropic of Chaos: Climate Change and the New Geography of Violence*, (New York: Nation Books, 2012).
- John H. Perkins, *Geopolitics and the Green Revolution: Wheat, Genes, and the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), Chapter 7: Wheat Breeding and the Exercise of American Power, 1940-1970.
- Thomas Robertson, "Cold War Landscapes: Towards an Environmental History of US Development Programmes in the 1950s and 1960s," *Cold War History* 16, no. 4 (October 1, 2016): 417-41.
- Elisabeth Schober, *Base Encounters: The US Armed Forces in South Korea, Anthropology, Culture, and Society* (London: Pluto Press, 2016).
- Stuart Schrader, "The Imperial Circuit of Tear Gas," in *Badges without Borders*, 1st ed., vol. 56, *How Global Counterinsurgency Transformed American Policing* (University of California Press, 2019), 192-213.

### April 20, 2022: Laying Waste

*"Why should we tolerate a diet of weak poisons, a home in insipid surroundings, a circle of acquaintances who are not quite our enemies, the noise of motors with just enough relief to prevent insanity? Who would want to live in a world which is just not quite fatal?"*

As should be quite clear by this point in the semester, war, security, and global power have dramatic impacts on the environment. What this week's readings and discussion will draw attention to are the remnants of violent interventions, whether in the form of radiation poisoning, water pollution, or atmospheric carbon. Building and maintaining US global power means not only shaping certain policy futures, but also introducing a potentially toxic afterlife. We are also finishing Megan Black's book, which after taking us to space, returns us to the ground, and in particular the valuable 'wastelands' of indigenous Americas.

### Read for class today:

Megan Black, *The Global Interior: Mineral Frontiers and American Power*, (Harvard University Press, 2018). (214-250)

Sasha Davis, *The Empires' Edge: Militarization, Resistance, and Transcending Hegemony in the Pacific* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2015). (Chapter 3: Seeing Like an Empire: Islands as Wastelands)

Leah Zani, "Bomb Ecologies," *Environmental Humanities* 10, no. 2 (November 1, 2018): 528-31.

Oliver Belcher et al., "Hidden Carbon Costs of the 'Everywhere War': Logistics, Geopolitical Ecology, and the Carbon Boot-Print of the US Military," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 45, no. 1 (2020): 65-80.

### In-class reading/discussion:

Suzanne Fiederlein and Sara Jane Rzegocki. "Explosive Remnants of War in Afghanistan." *Costs of War*, 19 Sept. 2019,  
[https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2019/Explosive%20Remnants%20of%20War%20in%20Afghanistan\\_Costs%20of%20War.pdf](https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2019/Explosive%20Remnants%20of%20War%20in%20Afghanistan_Costs%20of%20War.pdf)

### Additional readings:

Thom Davies, "Toxic Space and Time: Slow Violence, Necropolitics, and Petrochemical Pollution," *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 108, no. 6 (November 2, 2018): 1537-53.

Amy Marie, *The Defoliation of America: Agent Orange Chemicals, Citizens, and Protests*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2022

Jon Mitchell, *Poisoning the Pacific: The US Military's Secret Dumping of Plutonium, Chemical Weapons, and Agent Orange*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020.

Joshua Reno, "Engineering Military Rubbish: The Ethics of Waste in and around a Lockheed Martin Facility in New York State," *Ethnos* 0, no. 0 (July 30, 2020): 1-23.

Joshua Reno, *Military Waste*, (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2020).

Megan K. Stack, "The Soldiers Came Home Sick. The Government Denied It Was Responsible.," The New York Times, January 11, 2022, sec. Magazine, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/11/magazine/military-burn-pits.html>.

Susan L. Smith, "Chapter 3. Mustard Gas in the Sea Around Us," in *Toxic Exposures: Mustard Gas and the Health Consequences of World War II in the United States* (Rutgers University Press, 2017), 71-94.

Thuy Linh Nguyen Tu, *Experiments in Skin: Race and Beauty in the Shadows of Vietnam* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2021). (Chapter 2: The Beautiful Life of Agent Orange)

Adam M. Romero, "Commercializing Chemical Warfare: Citrus, Cyanide, and an Endless War," *Agriculture and Human Values* 33, no. 1 (March 1, 2016): 3-26.

Richard P. Tucker, *Insatiable Appetite: The United States and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical World*, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007).

Traci Brynne Voyles, *Wastelanding: Legacies of Uranium Mining in Navajo Country*, (Minneapolis: Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2015).

Marion Werner, Christian Berndt, and Becky Mansfield, "The Glyphosate Assemblage: Herbicides, Uneven Development, and Chemical Geographies of Ubiquity," *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 112, no. 1 (January 2, 2022): 19-35.

Natasha Zaretsky, *Radiation Nation: Three Mile Island and the Political Transformation of the 1970s* (New York : Columbia University Press, 2018).

#### **April 27, 2022: The Uneven Geographies of the Drug War**

"...this is the time for Mexico, with the help of the United States, to wage WAR on the drug cartels and wipe them off the face of the earth."

In our discussions this semester we have often had to adjust the scale of our analysis—from, say, the grand strategic vision of the US state to the intimate labor of the workers in the fields. Similarly, today we will have to recon with the connections and disconnections between sites of production and consumption along the supply chain—this time for drugs. Our readings and discussions will ask us to consider the complications caused by moving between thinking about the people who work the land growing narcotics, the bodies of the people who use them, and the often-violent methods of the state that has positioned drugs as an existential security threat.

#### **Read for class today:**

Suzanna Reiss, *We Sell Drugs: The Alchemy of US Empire*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014). (Raw Materialism: Exporting Drug Control to the Andes; 97-131)

April Merleaux, "Drugs, Empire, and U.S. Foreign Policy," in *A Companion to U.S. Foreign Relations* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2020), 572-95.

Michael Polson, "Making Marijuana an Environmental Issue: Prohibition, Pollution, and Policy," *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 2, no. 2 (June 1, 2019): 229-51.

Daniel Weimer, "The Politics of Contamination: Herbicides, Drug Control, and Environmental Law," *Diplomatic History* 41, no. 5 (November 1, 2017): 847-73.



Military burn pits. Illustration by João Ruas in NY Times Magazine:  
<https://static01.nyt.com/images/2022/01/15/magazine/15mag-burnpits/15mag-burnpits-superJumbo.jpg>

*In-class reading/discussion:*

US House of Representatives International Relations Committee, "H.Res.398 - Urging the President to expeditiously procure and provide three UH-60L Blackhawk utility helicopters to the Colombian National Police" (105th Congress (1997-1998))

*Additional readings:*

Michael M. Cohen, "Jim Crow's Drug War: Race, Coca-Cola and the Southern Origins of Drug Prohibition," *Southern Cultures* 12, no. 3 (Fall 2006): 55-79.

Jeremy Kuzmarov, "The Failure of the U.S. High-Tech War on Drugs," *Diplomatic History* 45, no. 5 (November 1, 2021): 903-14.

Todd Miller, *Empire of Borders: The Expansion of the US Border Around the World* (London ; Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2019).

Joseph F Spillane, "Global Drug Prohibition in Local Context: Heroin, Malaria, and Harm," *Diplomatic History* 45, no. 5 (November 1, 2021): 915-26.

Alfred W. McCoy, "How the Heroin Trade Explains the US-UK Failure in Afghanistan," *The Guardian*, January 9, 2018, sec. News, <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/jan/09/how-the-heroin-trade-explains-the-us-uk-failure-in-afghanistan>.

Alexander Rincón-Ruiz and Giorgos Kallis, "Caught in the Middle, Colombia's War on Drugs and its Effects on Forests and People", *Geoforum* 46 (May 2013) 60-78.

### May 4, 2022: Rare Earth Security and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Mineral Frontiers

*"But today, more than ever before, there has been reason to invade this whiteness, to mark and explore it, for an urgent military purpose."*

While all of our readings and discussions have had contemporary consequences, for our final meeting we will be looking at some of the most innovative—and potentially geopolitics-transforming—landscapes (and deep-seascapes) of extraction. As everyday life in many parts of the world becomes increasingly digitized, as cars become electrified, and as the global demand for resources transitions towards a new suite of minerals, what, and where, is the future nature of US global power?

#### Read for class today:

Excerpts: Nedal T. Nassar, Elisa Alonso, and Jamie L. Brainard, "Investigation of U.S. Foreign Reliance on Critical Minerals—U.S. Geological Survey Technical Input Document in Response to Executive Order No. 13953 Signed September 30, 2020," Open-File Report 2020-1127:

<https://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2020/1127/ofr20201127.pdf>

Johanne M. Bruun, "Invading the Whiteness: Science, (Sub)Terrain, and US Militarisation of the Greenland Ice Sheet," *Geopolitics* 25, no. 1 (January 1, 2020): 167-88.

Charles J. Butler, "Rare Earth Elements: China's Monopoly and Implications for U.S. National Security," *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 38, no. 1 (2014): 23-40.

Justine Calma, "Jeff Bezos Eyes Space as a New 'Sacrifice Zone,'" *The Verge*, July 21, 2021, <https://www.theverge.com/2021/7/21/22587249/jeff-bezos-space-pollution-industry-sacrifice-zone-amazon-environmental-justice>

#### In-class viewing/discussion:

Excerpt: *Don't Look Up*, Adam McKay, dir. 2021.

Excerpt: *Armageddon*, Michael Bay, dir. 1998.

#### Additional readings:

Martin Arboleda, *Planetary Mine: Territories of Extraction under Late Capitalism* (Brooklyn: Verso, 2020).

R. Carver et al., "A Critical Social Perspective on Deep Sea Mining: Lessons from the Emergent Industry in Japan," *Ocean & Coastal Management* 193 (August 1, 2020).

John Childs, "Extraction in Four Dimensions: Time, Space and the Emerging Geo(-)Politics of Deep-Sea Mining," *Geopolitics* 25, no. 1 (January 1, 2020): 189-213,

Anna Jackman et al., "Unearthing Feminist Territories and Terrains," *Political Geography* 80 (June 1, 2020).

Michael Kwet, "Digital Colonialism: US Empire and the New Imperialism in the Global South," *Race & Class* 60, no. 4 (April 1, 2019): 3-26.



Nicolas Niarchos, "The Dark Side of Congo's Cobalt Rush," *The New Yorker*, May 21, 2021, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/05/31/the-dark-side-of-congos-cobalt-rush>

Ivan Penn, Eric Lipton, and Gabriella Angotti-Jones, "The Lithium Gold Rush: Inside the Race to Power Electric Vehicles," *The New York Times*, May 6, 2021, sec. Business, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/06/business/lithium-mining-race.html>

U. S. Government Accountability Office, "Mining on Federal Lands: More Than 800 Operations Authorized to Mine and Total Mineral Production Is Unknown," accessed January 13, 2022, <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-20-461r>

U. S. Government Accountability Office, "Rare Earth Materials in the Defense Supply Chain," accessed January 13, 2022, <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-10-617r>.

**FINAL: May 11, 2022: Final Projects Posted Online by 1:00 PM**



Photo of indigenous land protectors at the Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation by Gabriella Angotti-Jones: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/06/business/lithium-mining-race.html>