Overview

Humans and wild animals have lived together in North America for more than 14,000 years. During this time, around 150 native species have gone extinct, and thousands of exotic species have colonized the landscape. Some formerly rare species have become common, and some common ones have become rare. Wild animals have served as food, clothing, shelter, servants, companions, weapons, and totems. A few charismatic species—such as the gray wolf, bald eagle, and American bison—have become icons. But they are not the only ones. Today’s wildlife symbols include a peculiar menagerie: California condors, northern spotted owls, black-footed ferrets, desert tortoises, polar bears, and Delhi Sands flower-loving flies to name just a few. As we will see in this class, their stories have much to tell us not only about ecological science and environmental politics, but also about American history and culture.

This course will explore the turbulent, contested, and colorful history of wildlife in North America. It will span from the Pleistocene to the present and cover the entire continent. Throughout the term, we will consult examples from California—the state with the greatest biodiversity, largest human population, and richest conservation history—and around the globe for comparison. In the process, you will develop a deep understanding of the changing relationships between people and wild animals over time. There are no easy answers for why things happened the way they did, and no simple lessons for what we should do in the future. But it’s a good story, and one that offers myriad, often unexpected insights for serious students of history and environmental studies.

Goals

1. To develop a deep understanding of the complex relationships between people and wild animals throughout American history

2. To develop a sense of how wildlife debates have shaped, and been shaped by, cultural categories from race, class, gender, and citizenship, to private property, social welfare, and economic prosperity

3. To develop basic skills for interpreting and analyzing evidence from historical sources, popular culture, politics, media, literature, and scholarship related to wildlife in North America

4. To develop an appreciation for how history can inform current policy and management for conservation in the United States and beyond
**Requirements**

*Lectures*: Each lecture poses a big picture question about the history of wildlife in North America. By the end of the quarter, you should be able to give intelligent answers to all of these questions. The animal listed for each day serves both as a mascot and a case study. Classes will begin with a brief update of administrative issues. The remainder of our time will be dedicated to lectures, multimedia clips, short readings, writing exercises, and group discussions. Please come prepared to contribute. Lectures are posted on GauchoSpace immediately before class.

*Readings*: This course involves a considerable amount of reading (as well as watching and listening). If you don’t want to read then you shouldn’t enroll. Before each class, you should complete all of the assigned readings. All of the readings are posted or linked under the week they are assigned on our course’s GauchoSpace website.

*Short Writing Exercises*: 10% of the final grade. Five times during the quarter, you will complete a short in-class writing exercise worth two points on your final grade. To receive credit, you must give thoughtful, coherent, and legible responses. These will not be announced ahead of time.

*Primary Source (Grizzly) Essay*: 10% of the final grade. For this assignment, you will submit a short interpretive essay (1000-1200 words) using a collection of primary sources (historical images and documents). All documents and instructions are provided on GauchoSpace.

*Film Review*: 10% of the final grade. For this assignment, you will submit a short documentary film review (1000-1200 words). Complete instructions for the review, including a list of suggested films and questions, are provided on GauchoSpace.

*Field Guide*: 10% of the final grade. For this assignment, you will research, design, and produce a wildlife “field guide.” Your field guide is an opportunity for you to be creative with the material and thus can take a variety of forms. Complete instructions are provided on GauchoSpace.

*Midterms*: 40% of the final grade. You will complete two multiple choice midterms during the quarter. Each will be worth 20 points on your final grade. The purpose of these exams is to test your acquisition of course content, including key terms and case studies from the lectures, readings, audio clips, and other multimedia sources. Bring a half-page Scantron to the exam.

*Book Clubs*: 20% of the final grade. Twice during the quarter, you will read a book and then come into section ready to discuss it. In section, you will answer one question designed to test your basic reading comprehension and ensure that you have completed the assignment. You will then break up into small groups to answer a series of additional questions, and finally discuss your small group answers as a whole section.

*Discussion Sections*: The purpose of the discussion sections is to help you succeed in the course by preparing you for the assignments and midterms, and giving you an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the material. Section attendance is mandatory. You will be docked 5 points for every unexcused section absence. *You will not have sections on weeks zero, four, and eight.*

**Policies**

*Crashing*: For those of you who are not yet registered, please attend the section in which you wish to enroll during week one and follow the instructions provided by your TA. She will notify you if
there is space by the beginning of week two. Registered students who do not attend section during week one will be dropped from the class to make room for crashers.

*Attendance:* You must make arrangements with your TA ahead of time if you need to miss class for personal, health, or religious reasons. She will not grant assignment exemptions or extensions after the fact or for reasons other than these three. If you are ill, you may email her at least one hour before class.

*Academic Integrity:* I maintain a zero-tolerance policy for academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, cheating, and unauthorized student teamwork. All cases will be referred to the appropriate campus authorities.

*Email:* I welcome all of your questions and comments. But email is an inefficient means of communication, and I do not use it to correspond with students—except in emergencies. I will be happy to speak with you in person before, during, or after class, in my office hours, or if all else fails then by special appointment. If you have logistical questions, consult with your TA first.

*Personal Conduct:* 108w is a collaborative learning environment. Respect is essential for maintaining this atmosphere. I will not tolerate disrespectful behavior of any kind. Any verified case of such behavior will result in an immediate expulsion from the course, a grade of F, and referral to campus authorities.

*Electronic Devices:* After the first day of class, electronic devices will not be permitted in this class during lectures. If you are seen using a device during class (after the initial announcements and logistics), you will be asked to leave and two points will be deducted from your final grade.

*Disabled Students Program (DSP):* We will make every reasonable effort to accommodate DSP students. If you are a registered DSP student and you will be requesting special arrangements, you should let your TA know within the first two weeks of the quarter, or within one week of enrolling in the DSP. You should also submit your request no less than one week before the scheduled exam or quiz, so that we can plan for any special accommodations. If you fail to show up for your special accommodations, you will receive a zero for that quiz or exam. We will not meet retroactive DSP requests.

*Grade Appeals:* If you disagree with a grade you have received, then you have the right to request a review by the professor. Please keep in mind, however, that an appeal will invoke a review of the full assignment and could result in an even lower grade.

*Incomplete Grades:* Incompletes will not be given for this class, except in the most extreme circumstances, such a sudden, debilitating illness or death in the immediate family. DSP status is not a justification for requesting an incomplete grade.

*Honors Section:* There is no honors section for this class.

*Extra Credit:* There may be options for extra credit as the quarter proceeds; I’ll let you know.

*Suggestions:* I welcome any and all suggestions for how to improve the course.
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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
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<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>SECTION</th>
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<td>Mountain Lion</td>
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<td>Devil’s Hole Pupfish*</td>
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<td>Polar Bear</td>
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<td>What does wildlife have to do with climate change?</td>
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<td>How will we pay for conservation in the future?</td>
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<td>Should we try to bring back extinct species?</td>
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<td>Who is conservation for?</td>
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<td>Five unannounced short writing exercises, each worth 2 points</td>
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GENERAL READINGS

Part I: Before Conservation

The following is a list of general readings for the course. You should complete each reading by the time class begins on the day it is assigned. This list does not include readings associated with your three take-home assignments or two book clubs.

September 28 (R), Class 0. Introduction – no reading.

October 3 (T), Class 1. Woolly Mammoth: What happened to the Pleistocene megafauna?

October 5 (R), Class 2. Pacific Salmon: Were Native Americans sustainable stewards?

October 10 (T), Class 3. Passenger Pigeon: How abundant was native wildlife when the Europeans arrived?

October 12 (R), Class 4. Beaver: How did the fur trade affect North American wildlife?

October 17 (T), Class 5. Plains Bison: What caused the near extinction of an American icon?

October 19 (R), Class 6. Midterm #1
   No reading.

Part II: The Age of Conservation

October 24 (T), Class 7. Elk: Who were the first conservationists, and why was their work so controversial?

October 26 (R), Class 8. Wolf: How have Americans' views about predators changed over time?


LISTEN AT HOME: "When the Beasts Come Marching In." WBEZ This American Life. 11 March 2016. (https://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/582/when-the-beasts-come-marching-in)

October 31 (T), Class 9. Mountain Lion: How do laws shape wildlife management?


November 2 (R), Class 10. White-Tailed Deer: What makes some species so successful in modern America?


November 7 (T), Class 11. Devil’s Hole Pupfish: How did the Endangered Species Act change conservation?


November 9 (R), Class 12. Steelhead: Why is wildlife conservation so controversial today??


November 14 (T), Class 13. Raccoon: What do we want from the wild animals in our cities?


LISTEN AT HOME: "Leave it to Beavers." NHPR Outside/In. 13 April 2017. (http://outsideinradio.org/shows/ep36)

November 16 (R), Class 14. Quiz #2 and Film Review Assignment discussion.

No reading.

Part III: An Uncertain Future

November 21 (T), Class 15.
Class cancelled.

**November 23 (R), Class 16.**

Thanksgiving holiday.

**November 28 (T), Class 17. Polar Bear: What does wildlife have to do with climate change?**


**November 30 (R), Class 18: Mallard: How will we pay for conservation in the future?**


**December 5 (T), Class 19. Woolly Mammoth: Should we try to bring back extinct species?**


**December 7 (R). Class 20. Homo sapiens: Who is conservation for?**


**Book Clubs**

Twice this quarter, you will read a book and come to your discussion section prepared to discuss it. In section, you will answer one question about the book on your own (to demonstrate comprehension) and four questions in small groups. You will come back together toward the end of your time to discuss your answers as a whole section.

*Please purchase these books on-line as soon as possible!*

**Book Club 1. Week 5: Wednesday, 1 November 2017**


**Book Club 2. Week : Wednesday, 9 November 2017**