**Introduction**: How can something that seems as infinite and timeless as the ocean have a history? Over the quarter, we will explore the different ways that historians and other researchers have attempted to answer that question. Marine environmental history is a new interdisciplinary field that explores the relationships between people and the oceans over time. One of the field’s central arguments is that the oceans—what we once considered unknowable and unchanging—have histories as complicated and meaningful as the histories of terrestrial places. The oceans cover 71 percent of the Earth’s surface and play a fundamental role in our lives in terms of ecology, economics, culture, law, and social relations. It is time that we begin to untangle these histories.

**ES 108O has three themes:**

1) what counts as knowing the oceans has **deep disciplinary roots**—in history, science, culture, economics and law—that in turn shape the kinds of stories that people tell about the oceans’ past, present, and future;

2) the boundaries that we draw between **work and play** in the oceans are also historical and cultural constructs;

3) and, finally, **issues of power** are deeply intertwined with how some people speak for their particular visions of the oceans and what constitutes appropriate activity there.

To make these themes as concrete as possible, we will employ a variety of learning methods. We will analyze the past using a historian’s skill set: gather evidence, look for patterns or discontinuities, develop explanations about context, causes, and consequences, write and revise our ideas, engage others, refine our arguments—although not necessarily in that order. These steps frequently overlap as we will learn over the quarter. One of this course’s main goals is for you to develop and practice these skills by participating in class and completing the required readings and assignments. At the end of the course, you should walk out of the classroom ready to explain how oceans have histories and how those histories might help us respond to contemporary problems.

**Course goals include:**

1) recognize the range of disciplinary methods and genres of evidence that will help us tell compelling stories about the oceans;

2) develop a broad understanding of the relationships between peoples and oceans over time;

3) recognize the complexity of the histories of the oceans by practicing the skills of historians. Be aware of simple stories and simple fixes.

**Readings:** You should complete all of the assigned readings **before** each class meeting. The first half of the course is reading intensive. In the second half, you will have more time to focus on the case study. Please bring that day’s readings (either digital or hard copy is fine) and notes to class, so that we can discuss the text together. All articles are available on Gauchospace in an effort to reduce costs for students. The following books are on reserve in the Environmental Studies and the Davidson Library.

Callum Roberts, *The Ocean of Life: The Fate of Man and the Sea*

Connie Chiang, *Shaping the Shoreline: Fisheries and Tourism on the Monterey Coast*
Assignments and Grades

Grade Breakdown
Participation: 20 %
Multiple-choice exam 20 %
Book evaluation essay 20 %
Montebello case study
   Exhibit and revisions 10 %
   Presentation and feedback 05 %
Reflection essay 25 %

***For every 24 hours that any assignment is late, the grade will drop by one letter. That means, for example, an A paper turned in 25 hours late will become a C paper.***

Participation: The success of this course depends on your good-faith participation. This means coming to every class prepared to contribute. Most classes will have a mixture of short lectures, discussions, informal in-class writings, and other exercises, so there will be a number of different ways for you to participate. Participation can mean something as simple as asking a question in person or over email or posting a relevant article on the course Gauchospace page! Almost everyday I will ask for short, informal written responses about that day’s readings in order to encourage you to keep up with the readings and to evaluate how well you understand the course’s content and themes. If you need to miss a class for a personal, medical, or religious reason, you must notify me in advance. Please check your email regularly. Please do not use your electronic devices during class for any reason except for note-taking. If your head is buried in a laptop when someone is talking and you are not looking up or taking any notes, I will assume that you are not paying attention. Your participation grade for that day will reflect this behavior.

Multiple-choice exam: There will be a multiple choice exam based on course readings, lectures, and discussions on Tuesday, November 13. Please bring a full-page (pink) bubble sheet to class that day. We will practice some of the types of questions you will encounter before the exam itself. If you are a registered Disabled Students Program (DSP) student and you plan to request an accommodation, you should submit your request for the exam within the first 3 weeks of the quarter. Please see http://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu for more information.

Book evaluation essay: You will write ONE evaluation essay (at least 7 pages, proofread, with page numbers, 12-point font, double-spaced, with polished prose) on EITHER of the assigned books: The *Ocean of Life* or *Shaping the Shoreline*. You can write in the style of a letter to the author, a creative non-fiction essay, or a formal review. You can use first person pronouns like “I” or “We,” but your essay must be well-written, proofread, and must demonstrate your critical response to the book’s author. Your review essay will have three parts: a personal reflection, an evaluation, and a source reflection. Each part should be at least two pages in length.

*First*, you will describe how the book engaged you on a personal level. Tell the author about one experience you had with a similar research topic, issue, theme, group of people, or place, including a part of the ocean analyzed in the book. In previous classes, students have written about fishing, Monterey, aquaria, oil spills, diving, spending time at the beach with family, and so on. The most important aspect is for you to use your imagination to reflect on something concrete in the real world. Be descriptive--give a sense of what it felt like for you to live through that experience.

*Second*, you will tell evaluate how well the author made an argument about the history of the oceans. In other words, you will review the book. A well-written evaluation is not the same thing as
a summary. A good review not only summarizes what the author wrote, but a good review evaluates how well the author accomplished her goals AND explains whether the book matters in a larger sense. Name two things that the author does well and two things that she might have done differently. What did the author do less well and how might the author have done those things differently? Here is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your skills in constructive feedback, because it is not only about what you say, but how you say it.

Third, you will address specifically the author’s use of sources. Choose ONE of the sources listed in the footnotes or bibliography, read that source carefully, and evaluate how well (or not) the author used that source to make a larger argument. Describe the source itself (where and when was it published, etc.) and reflect on how the author summarized the source. How does this source fit into the range of sources that the author uses for evidence? How does the author move between synthesizing sources and making arguments? We will discuss finding and evaluating sources in greater detail. You can use whatever citation style you prefer as long as you are consistent throughout your essay. Don’t forget to include an introduction and conclusion that bring all three parts together.

Montebello Case Study: Many of us are familiar with the spectacularly-devastating oil spills, such as the 1969 platform blowout in Santa Barbara, the 1989 Exxon Valdez in Alaska, and the 2010 Deepwater Horizon in the Gulf of Mexico. But there are many unseen threats to the oceans and the people who work and play there. According to a 2013 report by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), there are about 87 wrecks “that could pose a substantial oil pollution threat."¹ Is the Montebello one of these wrecks or is it a resource?

In December 1941, a Japanese submarine torpedoed the Montebello, an oil tanker owned by Union Oil, 6 miles off the coast of Cambria, California. All 38 crew members survived, but the vessel sank carrying nearly 73,571 barrels (3,089,982 gallons) of oil 900 feet to the ocean floor. After underwater surveys in 1996, 2003, and 2011, there is an ongoing debate whether the Montebello still holds its cargo and what kind of threats or opportunities it poses to local communities and ecosystems. Complicating matters, the vessel sits adjacent to the border of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS), itself a product of a decades-long battle waged in California to resist efforts to open its coastal waters to oil development.

We will use the Montebello as a case study to understand the course’s most important ideas. Our two main questions will be: 1) what kind of story does the Montebello mean to local peoples today along the Central Coast? 2) is the wreck a heritage resource or hazard? Here is the premise: You have been invited by the newly-opened Morro Bay Maritime Museum (MBMM) to design a series of exhibits and outreach efforts about the Montebello from the point-of-view of different stakeholder. The MBMM has asked you and four of your classmates to assume the identity of one of eight important stakeholder groups, so that visitors to the new museum will feel welcomed and educated about the case study and its complexities.

The stakeholder groups include: 1) Anti-oil environmental activists 2) MBNMS staff 3) Ecologists and other scientific investigators 4) supporters of the oil-industry and its heritage 5) survivors, rescuers, and local descendents of the 1941 sinking 6) Cal OSPR and U.S. Coast Guard responsible for 2011 Disaster Assessment 7) regional environmental justice activists 8) human fishers—commercial and recreational. I will ask you to rank your first three choices among the stakeholder groups and do my best to assign you to one of your preferred stakeholder groups.

Exhibit: Each group will prepare a poster-size exhibit that explains 1) How does this case study touch your life? Your work? Your community? 2) What does the museum goer need to know about this case study or the issues it raises from your perspective? What are the important themes or ideas or histories

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that need to be unpacked? 3) What problems or opportunities does the wreck create? 4) What is one specific action or strategy that the museum goer should consider to solve that problem or opportunity?

Each group will present its “exhibit” to the larger group for feedback on Thursday, November 29. Each exhibit needs a two-paragraph response to each question. Each exhibit also needs to incorporate two images, audio or video clip, and an interactive activity (or its description). Each exhibit will need at least three outside sources that follow the Chicago Manual of Style. Each group will turn in a “hard-copy” of their group’s exhibit on Thursday, November 29 and revisions to the hard-copy on Thursday, December 6.

Presentation and Feedback: Each person must describe one aspect of the exhibit to the larger class. You must volunteer—speak, take notes, photographs, etc.—during each day of the workshop through the last day of class. You must be engaged within your group as well as with other groups.

Reflection Essay: You will write a 9-page (about 2700 words) reflection essay that explains the four to five most important histories, concepts, insights, or skills that you have learned about the Montebello case study, offshore oil, and the history of the oceans generally from the course’s readings, lectures, discussions, workshops, your group members, and other exercises. Now that the course is nearly over, how would you answer the questions: How do I understand the history of the oceans? Why does that question matter in the first place? How can I take these insights, concepts, skills out into the larger world? In what ways do the histories of oceans help me respond to the contemporary challenges of today and tomorrow?

You can write in the style of a letter, a creative non-fiction essay, or a more formal essay. You can use first person pronouns like “I” or “We,” but your essay must be organized (what are the links among the four to five most important histories, ideas, insights, or skills? how does one lead to the second and to the third and so on?), well-written, proofread, and must demonstrate your critical, thoughtful response to the course.

Don’t forget an introduction and conclusion that brings all three parts together. You must footnote at least five sources from the course readings, two lectures or discussion comments to support your analysis, and two outside sources from the exhibits. Follow the Chicago Manual of Style for your footnotes. No bibliography is necessary. Please print out your typed, 12-point font, double-spaced essay with page numbers by Monday, December 10, 5 pm. No emailed essays, please. You may submit the essay earlier if you wish. You can turn in the essay to me in my office (Bren 4011).

Other policies:

Crashing: If you are not yet registered, then during week one you should attend and sign the waiting list.

Gender and Sex Discrimination Policy and Student Support: Under Title IX, university students are protected from harassment and discrimination based on gender and sex. If a student feels uncomfortable or in need of support at any time related to gender, sex, and/or sexual orientation, please contact me immediately. UCSB's Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity is an outstanding resource to advocate and support students. Please see http://wgse.sa.ucsb.edu/RCSGD/home.

Equal Access for All Students: If you have any learning or medical condition that requires accommodation to complete the course work, please ensure that the Disabled Students Program (DSP) is aware of your disability and that you are familiar with your DSP responsibilities. See http://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu/Index.aspx. I will work with you and DSP to find the appropriate accommodation. Please fill out the appropriate forms as soon as you can.
Plagiarism: UCSB takes plagiarism and other academic misconduct very seriously. If you turn in any work that fails to acknowledge the contributions of others, it may result in failure of the assignment or the course itself. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me. We will discuss plagiarism in detail.

Incomplete Grades: Incompletes will not be given for this class, except in the most extreme circumstances, such as a debilitating illness or death in the immediate family.

Copyright: All of the materials you receive through this course are subject to federal copyright laws and university policies. Distribution of these materials, such as posting them online or selling them to third party businesses, are strictly prohibited.

Schedule:

Week Zero

R September 27 Introductions

1. Knowing the oceans in time: Disciplines and evidence

Week One

T October 2 Reconstructing the oceans’ past I: Deep time of oceanography and archaeology


R October 4 Reconstructing the oceans’ past II: Historical Ecology


Week Two

T October 9: Reconstructing the oceans’ past III: Critical Histories

Readings: 1) Joseph Taylor, “Knowing the Black Box: Methodological Challenges in Marine Environmental History,” Environmental History 18 (2013): 60-75. 2) Roberts, The Ocean of Life, 105-197 (ch. 7-12).

R October 11 Reconstructing the oceans’ past IV: Cultural approaches

Week Three

T October 16 Untangling disciplinary approaches and evidence: *The Ocean of Life* discussion

Reading: Finish Roberts, *The Ocean of Life*.

**Evaluation essay on Roberts, *The Ocean of Life* due today**

2. Work and play in the oceans

R October 18 Voyaging and ship life


Week Four

T October 23 Observing Science, Representing Science


R October 25 Energy


Week Five

T October 30 Displaying the oceans


R November 1 Trade and transportation


Week Six

T November 6 Bringing Work and Play Together: *Shaping the Shoreline* discussion

Reading: Finish Chiang’s *Shaping the Shoreline*, 155-91 (ch. 7-conclusion).

**Evaluation essay on Chiang’s *Shaping the Shoreline* due today**
3. How can we use history to navigate today’s issues?

Week Seven

T November 13 Multiple-choice exam

R November 15 Marine conservation I Planning, research, and audiences

Week Eight

T November 20 Class cancelled

R November 22 Thanksgiving UCSB closed

Reading: 1. Watch Robert Schwemmer’s talk, “Sinking of the Montebello Oil Tanker during WWII,” Santa Barbara Maritime Museum, June 12, 2012. (1 hours, 39 minutes). 2. Each person in each group should find a different outside source for the exhibit for the next class.

Week Nine

T November 27 Marine conservation II Drafting

R November 29 Case Study Day One Presentation

Week 10

T December 4 Case Study Day Two Revisions

R December 6 Conclusions, Outreach, and Assessment: Why should we study the history of the oceans to navigate the challenges of today and tomorrow?

Final reflection essay due on Monday, December 10, 5 pm, 4011 Bren