Seven Questions on...

Environmental Diplomacy

Kurk Dorsey, Gretchen Heefner, Toshihiro Higuchi, and Stephen Macekura

Editor's note: *"Seven Questions On..." is a new regular feature in* Passport *that will ask scholars in a particular field to respond to seven questions about their field's historiography, key publications, influences, etc. It is designed to introduce the broader SHAFR community to a variety of perspectives for a given field, as well as serving as a primer for graduate students and non-specialists.* **AJ**

1. What drew you to this field and inspired you to focus on your specific area of international/diplomatic environmental history?

Kurk Dorsey: Since I was a teenager, I have been fascinated by wildlife, especially birds. I started at Cornell as a biology major, thinking I would be a field biologist, until I took Walter LaFeber's foreign policy courses and saw the light. At one point, I read half a sentence in Tom Paterson's textbook about a migratory bird treaty from 1916 and thought that there had to be an interesting story there. There wasn't, but I wrote a book about it anyway! I didn't know what environmental history was until I got to Northwestern and met Art McEvoy, and that fortuitous meeting led me to look for ways to combine diplomatic and environmental history. At Yale, I was very lucky that both Gaddis Smith and Bill Cronon were willing to support my efforts to write a dissertation that dealt with some early 20th century environmental diplomacy between the US and Canada.

Gretchen Heefner: My engagement with environmental history lacks a particularly robust academic pedigree. I was not trained in environmental history nor was I even particularly aware of it as a distinct field until I realized - quite accidentally - that I might be one. In fact, for much of graduate school (and well beyond), I felt like something of a misfit generalist in a world that prizes specialization. If someone asked me: "what is your conference?", I was not sure what to answer. My research dabbled in stories of the U.S. West, social and military histories, U.S. in the world, and–I discovered later–environmental history. While I ultimately found an intellectual home with SHAFR, I have continued to circle at the edges of environmental history because it is the link that stitches together the stories I want to tell.

As a graduate student I was drawn to books by historians of the U.S. west and the environment because they managed to be academically rigorous and good stories. (Not coincidentally these two fields have long been linked). Really, then, I started poking into the field of environmental history because I was looking for models of good storytelling, which always seemed to start with scene-setting. It was not until later that I began to appreciate and notice the methodological and theoretical potential in environmental history.

Since I study the construction of military facilities around the world, the environment was a rather obvious tableau. You cannot write about how a man digs a hole in a glacier without starting to think about the mechanics of the glacier; the way snow changes into ice; or that if it is cold enough it is impossible to operate a metal drill without proper gloves, but proper gloves make operation impossible. The environment changes what the engineer can do with the tools they know and the blueprints they carry.

Toshihiro Higuchi: I was drawn to the study of U.S. foreign relations via my first M.A. thesis on Japan's nuclear disarmament policy that I wrote while in Japan. Being that virtually every aspect of my thesis was deeply tied to the United States, I needed to learn more about the American side of the story before proceeding with a Ph.D. dissertation. That is why I moved to the United States for the History M.A. program at the State University of New York at Albany where I wrote my second M.A. thesis on the Eisenhower administration's nuclear test-ban policy.

I became interested in the environmental dimensions of U.S. foreign relations by accident. I wasn't aware that there was such a thing as environmental history until halfway through my Ph.D. work. Indeed, I had entered Georgetown University wanting to write a dissertation on the social and cultural history of mutually-assured destruction. Then, toward the end of my coursework, I happened to learn about a major conference on the environmental histories of the Cold War that Georgetown historian John McNeill and his colleagues were organizing at the German Historical Institute. The conference theme inspired me to revisit the test ban as one of the first global environmental initiatives during the Cold War.

Stephen Macekura: My introduction to environmental history came from Edmund Russell. I was a Ph.D. student at the University of Virginia. I had arrived at UVA planning to work with Melvyn Leffler. I was focused on U.S. international development and foreign economic policy during the early Cold War. But I took a seminar with Ed on global environmental history that inspired me to study environmental history more closely. Ed helped me to understand how the environmental historian's perspective permits one to ask questions about the connections between policy decisions and their material and ecological consequences; about the ecological basis upon which national power rests; about how environmental ideas constrain or enable different ways of imagining the world and one's place within it. Global environmental history also incorporated analysis of historical change on longer temporal and spatial scales than international/diplomatic historians typically ventured. I found it fascinating.

While I was taking Ed's class, I decided that I wanted to investigate how environmentalism had (or had not) reshaped U.S. foreign policy and the extent to which foreign policy elites had ever incorporated ecological ideas into their policymaking. Those questions led a seminar paper that I researched and wrote about the President Nixon administration's policy towards the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. That paper, in turn, became the basis of my dissertation and later, my first book, *Of Limits and Growth*.

2. Which scholars do you see as having laid the groundwork for the study of enivronmental history in U.S. foreign relations?

KD: In terms of recent historians, both Tom Paterson and Mark Lytle published calls to incorporate environmental history into diplomatic history in the 1990s, but I think it is fair to say that some of our distant forebears were well aware of the way that the environment shaped US relations with the rest of the world. Writing about fisheries diplomacy goes back decades, and after all it was Samuel Flagg Bemis who summarized the species at the core of the 1911 fur seal dispute with Great Britain: "Amphibious is the fur seal, ubiquitous and carnivorous, uniparous, gregarious, and withal polygamous." Of course, it would have been very hard to combine environmental history if scholars like Roderick Nash, Samuel Hays, and Don Worster hadn't done important work to establish environmental history as a field in the 1970s.

GH: I will not be alone in my answer to this: Kurk Dorsey. There have been others, to be sure, but since his 2005 Bernath lecture, "Dealing with the Dinosaur (and its swamp)," Dorsey has continued to implore historians of the U.S. in the world to engage with the environment. (It is worth noting here that the other way around does not seem to be a problem, environmental history has long been interested in international and transnational ties). Dorsey has done just about everything imaginable to jump start this conversation: He has trained students, chaired panels, written justifications, been highly visible across both academic associations, and been a fierce advocate for students and academics interested in linking the two. He even gave the outstanding suggestion to graduate students in his 2005 address (one I now use with my own students): to think about how topics we think we know might be told with an environmental inclination. I am still waiting for an environmental history of containment.

Others that have also been important to how I have come to think about these connections. Given my own work in the Cold War and late 20th century, the work of Kate Brown and Jacob Darwin Hamblin have been instrumental in how I think about the relationships between defense practices and environments. Brown's work, in particular, operates on a number of different scales to show how certain processes (such as plutonium production) can affect individual health, local environments (through contamination and rearrangement of land and place), and global systems.

TH: I believe I am not alone when I say that we are all indebted to Kurk Dorsey for his path-breaking scholarship and tireless advocacy for bringing diplomatic and environmental history together. His wide-ranging work on wildlife hunting and protection (*The Dawn of Conservation Diplomacy*, 1998; *Whales and Nations*, 2013) has not only introduced the environment as a major topic of research in the history of U.S. foreign relations but also advanced the international and transnational turns in historiography by illuminating the trans-border movement of migratory animals and the humans who followed them.

Another trailblazer is Richard P. Tucker, who has played an influential role in greening some of the well-studied themes in the field. His acclaimed book on the U.S.-driven ecological degradation of the tropical world (*Insatiable Appetite*, 2000) has added a new, environmental dimension to the study of the American empire. His co-edited volume with Edmund Russell (*Natural Enemy, Natural Ally*, 2004) has opened a new field of study on the relationship between war and the environment.

SM: I started my research in international/diplomatic history at a propitious time, as there many other scholars doing excellent research linking these fields. Mark Lytle and Kurk Dorsey were pioneers, and they had both published essays in *Diplomatic History* calling for diplomatic historians to incorporate environmental history into their study. Richard Tucker had written about the ecological consequences of the United States' quest for natural resources overseas. Jacob Hamblin was writing about U.S. environmental diplomacy and Cold War attempts to weaponize the non-human world. David Zierler, Lisa Brady, Evelyn Krache Morris, and others were investigating the environmental history of recent U.S. warfighting and toxic chemical use abroad. Tom Robertson and Linda Nash and many more were studying the ecological dimensions of U.S. international development policy. All these scholars greatly influenced my thinking at the time.

3. Discuss how the field has evolved to include different approaches to analyzing international/diplomatic environmental history.

KD: Of all fields that should evolve, ours is probably second only to history of science! Perhaps because it is so young, it really has not evolved, except maybe from some of us taking on relatively low-hanging fruit, like treaties specifically about wildlife, to much more complex negotiations among many nations about very technical subjects. One of the biggest changes that I have seen is a shift in who is writing about the environment in diplomatic history. When I started in the field in the 1990s, it seemed like most of my peers were historians of science, like Jake Hamblin and Kristine Harper, or environmental historians who were interested in transnational issues. Just from perusing recent issues of *Diplomatic History* and *Environmental History* it seems that more people who would label themselves as diplomatic historians are paying attention to the environment, with the environmental historians' interest staying roughly steady. Of course, those labels are hardly permanent-easily scraped off and replaced.

GH: Let me start by reminding readers that the field of environmental/U.S. in the world history remains wide open. In terms of how the field has evolved, I will note a few key topics that highlight some of the most exciting work and promising areas for exploration. Interested readers check out my recent concepts article for *Diplomatic History*, "An Accidental Environmental Historian," for complete and additional citation.

First, I would point to histories of development, particularly during the early Cold War when U.S. personnel fanned out around the world to remake spaces and places. Thomas Robertson's work on this is a great place to start, see especially his 2016 *Cold War History* article. He reminds us that things such as dams, roads, wells, and resource extraction all have what he calls "cascading environmental consequences." Second, while histories of war have long engaged with the environment, a new generation of scholarship is looking beyond how terrain and climate might affect battles, to how environments shape strategies and plans. Lisa Brady

has an overview in, "War from the Ground Up: Integrating Military and Environmental Histories" (2019). Third, the study of commodities and resources has emerged with the field of US in the world in exciting ways. Start with Megan Black's fantastic book, *The Global Interior*. Julia Irwin in her 2021 Bernath lecture (printed in *Diplomatic History* in June of that year) highlights the fourth area where environmental methods seem to have an obvious fit with diplomatic histories: studies of catastrophe and responses to them.

TH: One of the most notable trends in recent scholarship is to explore the mutual constitution of the American empire and the global environment. Megan Black's *The Global Interior* (2018) revealed the hidden role of the Department of the Interior in expanding and exploiting America's mineral frontiers around the world. A number of scholars have also shed light on extreme environments, including the polar regions, desert, seabed, and outer space, as real-world laboratories for forging and asserting (extra)terrestrial American power. One such place, the Bering Strait region, became a front line of resource grab competition between capitalism and communism, as Bathscheba Demuth demonstrated in *Floating Coast* (2020).

The planetary reach of the American empire, civil society, and international institutions after 1945, in turn, radically reshaped the ideas of the global environment. In *Arming Mother Nature* (2013), Jacob Darwin Hamblin explained how a wide range of environmental warfare research sponsored by the U.S. military and its NATO allies gave rise to "catastrophic environmentalism." Stephen Macekura's book, *Of Limits and Growth* (2015), showed how the racialized fears of environmental degradation in the postcolonial world spurred U.S.-based and international environmental NGOs to push the discourse of sustainability into the development agenda. Perrin Selcer's *The Postwar Origins of the Global Environment* (2018) revealed the role of the United Nations in forging a community of experts committed to rendering the global environment legible as a knowable and controllable object for technocratic governance.

These and other critical inquiries into the environmental context of American globalism have done much to diversify the historical actors, analytical perspectives, and archival sources of U.S. foreign relations. As scientists, engineers, NGOs, and international institutions have moved to the foreground of analysis, the knowledge of the environment itself has become an object of historical inquiry. The ecological perspective on the frontiers and borderlands has also underscored the importance of the material culture and lived experience of the people living on the edge of the American empire, including indigenous communities and migrant workers.

SM: The field has evolved in exciting ways. Following Kurk Dorsey's pathbreaking analysis of conservation diplomacy during the early twentieth century, the historiography of environmental diplomacy has grown extensively during the past two decades. So too has the history of major international agreements and environmental issues (such as Rachel Rothschild's study of acid rain and Toshihiro Higuchi's investigation of the international dimensions of nuclear fallout and the origins of the Partial Test Ban Treaty), and there is some very promising work on climate change diplomacy in the pipeline. There has also been some insightful studies of the materiality of U.S. foreign policy. Gretchen Heefner's recent work on extreme landscapes and the construction of military spaces is a great example of this, as is Simone Müller's important research on the United States and the global trade in hazardous wastes.

4. What are some of the challenges faced by scholars working in the field?

KD: The biggest challenge is that just as someone needs Russian language skills to specialize in relations between the United States and Russia/Soviet Union, one needs some sort of scientific background to dig into an environmental issue. I had some knowledge of ecology from my undergraduate biology degree, which was very helpful for my books on wildlife and diplomacy. It doesn't have to be a formal degree, but one probably needs a bit more than a close reading of some of the Wikipedia pages that my undergrads favor. But other than that, the challenges seem minimal: only occasionally are we dealing with highly classified materials, I don't think we have any problems being taken seriously anymore based in part by how often environmental topics show up in *Diplomatic History*, for instance, and there are so many great topics that there is plenty of room for people to make a mark.

GH: Like efforts to integrate diverse fields and methods into our scholarship, time is perhaps the biggest obstacle. Who has time to learn new tools? Another difficulty–perhaps particularly relevant to environmental historians–is the tension between traveling to environments and attending to the costs of travel, both financially and environmentally. This relates to the final conundrum I see, which is the challenge of presentism. Given our global environmental crisis, scholars who engage with environmental issues and questions may find it difficult to avoid/stay clear of contemporary debates. This should not be the case; certainly not all history needs to relate to the here and now. But I think in the field of environmental history the line between activism and scholarship may be increasingly challenging to navigate.

TH: Many of the challenges faced by scholars working in the intersection between diplomatic and environmental history concern archival material. At times, information simply does not exist. Those who created records often ignored the non-human domain altogether or documented it in a selective and inconsistent manner. Even if such information exists, we may fail to recognize it as such. Diaries and journals often include revealing observations on the environment in which a certain event occurred, but historians tend to skip them and, in doing so, remove the event from its environmental context. Moreover, written documents may not suffice. In his 2019 presidential address at the American Historical Association annual meeting, John McNeill spoke of "peak document," underlining the growing importance of scientific and archeological data in studying the deeper past.

The last point leads to another set of challenges. Historians often rely on the best available scientific information to reconstruct the environmental past. Science, however, is a dynamic human enterprise that produces conflicting evidence and interpretations in the process. Science also inevitably involves making assumptions and judgments, not all of which are testable and subject to rigorous peer review. Worse still, as Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway demonstrated in *Merchants of Doubt* (2010), some groups and individuals deliberately cast doubt on a scientific consensus on harmful products and activities to confuse the public, stir a debate, and stall timely action. For environmental historians, then, science is a sort of double-edged sword; it offers a powerful tool to study the past but also has a danger of misrepresentation and even unwittingly aiding the spread of disinformation.

SM: Environmental historians face the same major challenges all historians do: the absence of tenure track jobs, a paucity of research funding, declining support among administrators for the liberal arts in general, etc. In terms of their intellectual labor, there are a few additional challenges. Learning to ask questions like an environmental historian and understanding what it means to take the non-human world seriously in historical study are both time-consuming. It's helpful to have some grounding in the history of ecology and contemporary earth sciences to understand how human activities relate to natural systems, but that, too, takes up both time and resources.

In addition, researching environmental history often requires one to look beyond the typical archives of the diplomatic and international historian - governments and international organizations–and towards those who generate ecological ideas and promote changes in policy–private scientists and other intellectuals, social movement activists, non-governmental organizations. Those materials can be unorganized and incomplete. I've looked at archival materials for small NGOs than were just disorganized boxes of draft reports stashed away in a former official's basement. That can be frustrating, and it can also require creative ways of tracking down primary source material.

5. What are some of the significant questions in the field that you feel need to be addressed in greater detail or, alternatively, which questions need to be reconsidered by contemporary scholars?

KD: This will be a cop out, but the field is so new that I cannot think of anything that needs to be reconsidered. I suppose that we could revisit some of the fisheries disputes that earlier historians wrote about and bring in the methods of environmental history, that is, take more seriously the ways in which nature has been an actor. This idea, that nature is an historical actor, has been the biggest contribution of environmental history as a whole, and it may also be one of the hardest for other historians to integrate into their work. Of course, military historians have long recognized the role of things like weather, climate, forage crops, and tides in shaping the actual tides of war. Likewise, I don't think we have core questions that need to be settled, like we have debates about the origins of the Cold War or the reasons for dropping atomic weapons on Japan. Instead, people in our subfield seem more interested in filling in gaps rather than revising each other's arguments.

GH: We need more about how ideas about environments shape policy decisions and outcomes, as well as how global environments constrained (or provided opportunities) to U.S. operations and activities. Not every story benefits from an environmental reading, but it is worth thinking about where the environment might fit in every topic you consider. I would also like to see more histories of climate change policies and investigations that engage seriously with both policy and the environments at the heart of those policies.

TH: First and foremost, the history of the American empire needs to be brought into a fruitful dialogue with the history of Earth. Until recently, scholars had viewed the two histories as opposite ends of the timescale. Fernand Braudel once declared the natural world to be the immobile and almost timeless structure, likening political events to "surface disturbances, crests of foam that the tides of history carry on their strong backs." As Dipesh Charkraberty has recently noted, however, the geological and human timescales have become increasingly synchronized in the Anthropocene, a term proposed to describe the most recent period in Earth's history where human activities have become a major driver of environmental changes on a planetary scale. A critical inquiry into many and various connections between the American empire and the Anthropocene is timely and urgent, as the whole world now confronts the large-scale and accelerating environmental consequences of Pax Americana.

The blurred boundary between human activities and natural processes in the Anthropocene, in turn, demands a more-than-human approach to the history of U.S. foreign relations. Rejecting the ontological distinction between "humans" and "nature," the more-than-human perspective illustrates their thorough entanglement across multiple scales. For instance, as John McNeill, Emily O'Gorman, and others have shown, humans, mosquitoes, and parasites in the European tropical colonies changed their behavior in response to one another and also shaped the (class-based, racialized, and gendered) ideas of health and illness with far-reaching implications for human and non-human cohabitants alike. Such relational views of the world suggest that, instead of trying to discover the role of nature in U.S. foreign relations as a discrete object, scholars should reconsider the familiar categories of humans and their collectives in relation to the things that both surround and constitute them.

SM: We need more studies of the short and long-term environmental consequences of U.S. foreign policy. I'm thinking here in terms of the inputs necessary to spark and sustain post-1945 U.S. economic growth and military expansion worldwide as well as the results of specific U.S. foreign policy actions, from changing trade policy to war-making, on the non-human world. The United States' empire is also an ecological one. It has used and continues to require vast networks of resources from around the globe, which in turn required the construction of massive infrastructure–of organizations, policies, physical objects–to move things all around the world. The United States has also generated deleterious ecological transformations because of its foreign policies. It has polluted land, air, and sea; it has destroyed lives and homes; it has burned staggering amounts of fossil fuels. It has changed the natural world, and in turn a changed natural world created new constraints and opportunities for further transformation (if not despoliation). Studying the nature, extent, and legacies of the ecological consequences of the United States and its place in the wider world–in both tightly focused local case studies and broad aggregate view –warrants greater study.

6. For someone wanting to start out in international/diplomatic environmental history, what 5-8 books do you consider to be of seminal importance–either the "best" or the most influential titles?

KD: In addition to the authors I mentioned above, start with anything by John McNeill, but especially *Mosquito Empires*

Richard Benedick, *Ozone Diplomacy*

Edwin Martini, *Agent Orange*

Rachel Rothschild, *Poisonous Skies*

Helen Rozwadowski, *The Sea Knows No Boundaries*

Richard Tucker, *Insatiable Appetites*

Lissa Wadewitz, *The Nature of Boundaries*

GH: Ah, this is a tough question! My own interest is

going to significantly shape how I answer this, not only my scholarship but also the texts that influenced me. Bill Cronon's work should not be missed, his essays (many available on his website) are a great way into the field and into the sort of writing that environmental history can encourage. Linda Nash's scholarship has long inspired connections between environmental history, science and technology, and U.S. power. Richard Tucker's work in U.S. exploitation of tropics is a must read *(Insatiable Appetite: The U.S. and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical World*). Dorsey's work (see answer to question 2) is central to shaping how scholars of U.S. foreign policy have thought about the intersection of these fields. For an introduction to the Cold War and environmental history I would look to the edited volume, *Environmental Histories of The Cold War*, edited by J.R. McNeill and Corinna Unger. The essays and authors featured point to a number of topics and approaches to environment/diplomatic history. I will mention again Kate Brown's *Plutopia*, which I think everyone should read. Interested readers should start with a few roundtables and special issues that should generate ideas and reflection. In 2008, *Diplomatic History* ran a forum on "new directions in environmental and diplomatic history," with an introduction by Dorsey and Lytle. The *Journal of American History*'s 2013 roundtable on environmental history more broadly is an excellent introduction to key themes and debates with the field.

TH: Kate Brown, *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1972).

Bathscheba Demuth, *Floating Coast: An Environmental History of the Bering Strait* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2019).

John R. McNeill, *Something New under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth Century World* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000).

Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway, *Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2010).

Edmund Russell, *War and Nature: Fighting Humans and Insects with Chemicals from World War I to "Silent Spring"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

SM: Dorsey, Kurkpatrick. *The Dawn of Conservation Diplomacy: U.S.-Canadian Wildlife Protection Treaties in the Progressive Era*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998.

McNeill, J.R. *Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000.

Biggs, David. *Quagmire: Nation-Building and Nature in the Mekong Delta*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012.

Robertson, Thomas. *The Malthusian Moment: Global Population Growth and the Birth of American Environmentalism*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012.

Brown, Kate. *Plutopia: Nuclear Families in Atomic Cities and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Hamblin, Jacob Darwin. *Arming Mother Nature: The Birth of Catastrophic Environmentalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Rothschild, Rachel. *Poisonous Skies: Acid Rain and the Globalization of Pollution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019.

Demuth, Bathsheba. *Floating Coast: An Environmental History of the Bering Strait*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2020.

7. For someone wanting to teach a course on international/diplomatic environmental history or add environmental history to an existing course on U.S. foreign relations, what core readings and/or media would you suggest?

KD: This is really a challenge, because it is hard to add an environmental angle to the study of the Cold War, for instance, if the students don't have the basics of the Cold War in the first place. My diplomatic and environmental history courses are separate entities with little overlap, although the one place where I am seeing more overlap as I teach is my current research focus, U.S. grain sales to the USSR in the 1970s. The good news is that there are a number of edited collections that could lend an article to flesh out a more traditional topic:

Bsumek, Kinkela, and Lawrence, eds., *Nation-States and the Global Environment*

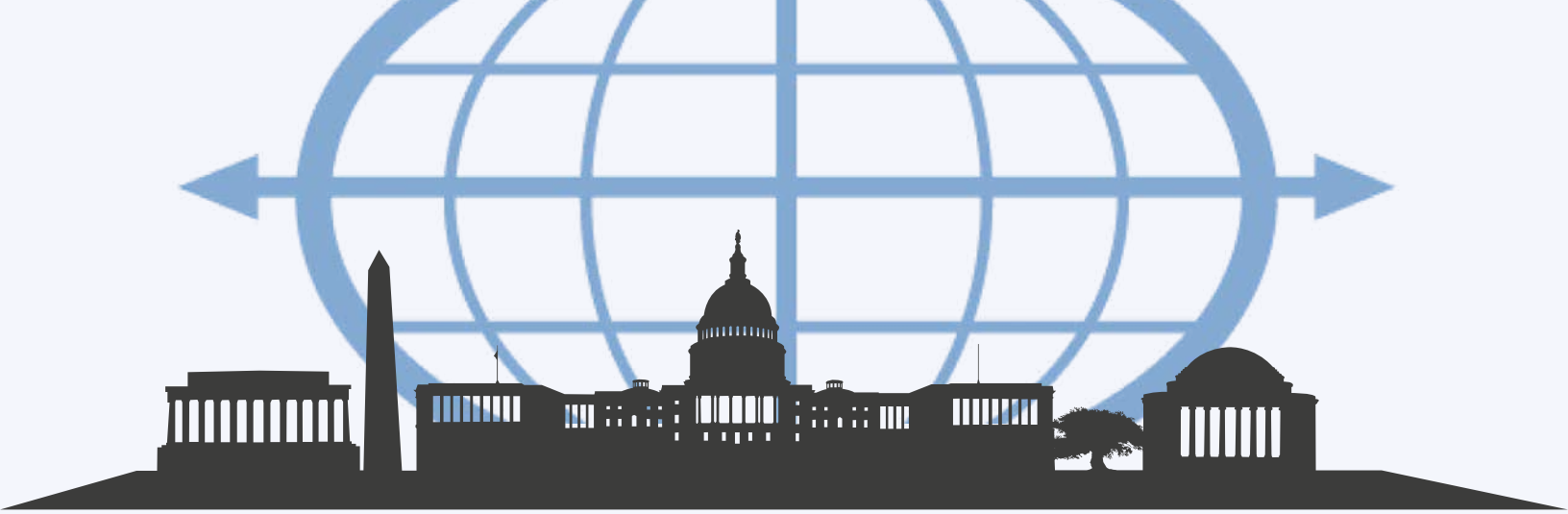
McNeill and Unger, eds., *Environmental Histories of the Cold War*

Diplomatic History had two special issues of note: Volume 32, no. 4 Sept 2008, had a forum "New Directions in Diplomatic and Environmental History;" and Volume 44, no 3, June 2020, had an "Oceans Forum."

GH: I would start by helping students see the environmental histories that are already at the core of U.S. relations with the world. This could be through commodity chain or food histories, for example. But rather than use these examples to illuminate only stories of political economy and resource extraction, students can also think about the environments where things were produced and consumed, or how they traveled. Disease and public health policies are also good places to introduce environmental history into existing courses.

If you want to add additional readings to an existing syllabus that help reframe traditional events, you might consider a chapter from Mark Fiege's *Republic of Nature* (2013), that retells well-known episodes in U.S. history through an environmental lens. His chapters on the railroad (westward expansion), Civil War, the Atomic Sublime, or oil in the 1970s could all be of interest.

As for an assignment, I have asked students to recreate particular moments in the history we are learning about from an environmental angle. For example, what was the setting and environment like in at the Yalta Conference? Reagan's meeting with Gorbachev in Reykjavik? What it would have been like to be on a boat in the Pacific during a nuclear test? They have to try to figure out how to find detailed environmental data (i.e. weather, terrain, climate, what types of flora and fauna one might except), etc. And then they need to put it together. How had the environment in questions changed? Did the event we are looking at change it more? Did people involved talk about the environment? If not, why? It helps us think through



2023 SHAFR ANNUAL MEETING

RENAISSANCE ARLINGTON CAPITAL VIEW

Arlington, VA

June 15 - 17, 2023

KEYNOTE: THOMAS S. BLANTON
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL SECURITY ARCHIVE

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: MARY ANN HEISS
KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

FRIDAY NIGHT SOCIAL EVENT:
POTOMAC DINNER CRUISE

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2023 SHAFR Annual Meeting Friday Night Social Event: Potomac Dinner Cruise

A THREE HOUR CRUISE OF THE MONUMENTS AT NIGHT

Date: Friday, June 16th, 2023
Time: 7pm-10pm
**Boarding Begins at 6pm*
Tickets:

- $100 per person
- $50 Discount for Students/Contingent Faculty/k-12 Teachers
- $10 Bus Ticket

DETAILS

Ticket Includes Dinner and Drinks

Companion Tickets are Available for Purchase

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how we might take environments more seriously as part of history, not merely as the settings on which events unfold.

TH: David Biggs, *Quagmire: Nation-Building and Nature in the Mekong Delta* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012).

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

Kurkpatrick Dorsey, *The Dawn of Conservation Diplomacy: U.S.-Canadian Wildlife Protection Treaties in the Progressive Era* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998).

Jacob Darwin Hamblin, *Arming Mother Nature: The Birth of Catastrophic Environmentalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

John R. McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Richard P. Tucker, *Insatiable Appetite: The United States and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

SM: As background for an undergraduate course on recent international environmental history, there are no better starting points than John McNeill's *Something New Under the Sun* (New York, 2000) and the more recent synthetic volume he co-wrote with and Peter Engelke called *The Great Acceleration* (Cambridge, MA, 2016). Both are encyclopedic in their details, expansive in their topical coverage, and filled with rich anecdotes–perfect material for lectures, in other words.

There are many terrific documentary collections available online related to climate diplomacy that can be the basis of fun primary source-based activities. The National Security Archive has excellent briefing books on specific episodes in climate diplomacy and climate policymaking. This collection on U.S. efforts to lobby for national security exemptions to the Kyoto Protocol, for example, provides a rich documentary collection on how the U.S. constructs foreign policy: https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/environmental-diplomacy/2022-01-20/national-security-and-climate-change-behind-us. And when I run UN climate simulations, I have great success in assigning students different countries to represent in the activity by having them research and analyze a country's past Intended Nationally Determined Contributions: https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/nationally-determined-contributions-ndcs/indcs.