

HIST 428

People, Polar Bears, Pipelines: A History of the Arctic (Problems in the Social and Economic History of Canada)

Simon Fraser University
Spring 2016



Meetings: Tuesdays 1:30-5:20 pm, BLU 11911

Canvas: <https://canvas.sfu.ca/courses/24981>

Instructor: Dr. Tina Adcock (tina.adcock@sfu.ca)

Office hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 11 am-12 pm, AQ 6236

Course description

As global warming accelerates and polar ice melts, the Arctic is fast becoming a “hot” topic of conversation worldwide. Canada is a circumpolar country with sizable Arctic territories, yet most Canadians have never been north of sixty. This course introduces students to the recent human and environmental history of the Canadian North, focusing principally on the Northwest Territories, the Yukon, and Nunavut. We will explore the multiple, often contradictory “ideas of North” that Inuit, Dene, Métis, and Euro-Canadian peoples have constructed over the last 150 years. We will examine key social themes and transformations, including cross-cultural trade, Christianization, and modernization, from both Indigenous and sojourner perspectives. We’ll also learn how people have behaved toward and understood northern environments by studying different cultural traditions of renewable and non-renewable resource use, environmental knowledge, and adaptation to environmental change. Students will hone their analytical and interpretive skills through encounters with textual and audiovisual sources that present conflicting, even radically divergent accounts of Arctic history. They will leave the course able to debunk common myths about the region’s past and present, and to think critically and responsibly about its future.

Course objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able:

- To compare and contrast different “ideas of North,” and to situate each idea within specific historical and historiographical contexts
- To assess the causes and consequences of major social transformations in the Canadian North from multiple perspectives
- To appraise how and why different actors and institutions have altered northern Canadian environments, and with what consequences
- To compare and contrast disparate representations of key northern historical events
- To practice and hone the skills of analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating primary and secondary documents in oral and written forms.

Course readings

There is one required text for this course:

William R. Morrison. *True North: The Yukon and Northwest Territories*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998. \$44.00.

The following books may also prove useful when preparing for meetings or assignments. I have placed copies of each, as well as Morrison's book, on reserve at Bennett Library:

Robert Bone. *The Canadian North: Issues and Challenges*. 4th edition. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Ken S. Coates and William R. Morrison. *Land of the Midnight Sun: A History of the Yukon*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005.

Morris Zaslow. *The Opening of the Canadian North, 1870-1914* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1971) and *The Northward Expansion of Canada, 1914-1967* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1988).

John Bennett and Susan Rowley, comps. and eds. *Uqalurait: An Oral History of Nunavut*. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004. [Both the hard copy and e-book are on reserve.]

All other assigned readings are available on, or linked to from the course's Canvas website. Readings should be completed for the date under which they are listed.

Because this is a small class, it's vital that everyone takes the time to read all of the articles carefully each week in order to ensure good discussions. With this in mind, I have deliberately striven to keep reading loads manageable.

Course evaluation

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Participation	20%
Four short essays	80% (20% each)

Participation

Please plan to attend every meeting. If you have to be absent unexpectedly, please let me know as a courtesy. If you know you will have to miss a meeting due to religious observances/practices or another such conflict (e.g. athletic competitions, interviews for professional programs), please let me know as soon as possible.

Please come to class with hard copies of the readings or with the files easily accessible on your laptop or tablet. You should be prepared to reflect critically, both in written and spoken form, on readings, audiovisual material, and other primary and secondary sources that we shall encounter. I also expect you to listen to your peers and engage with their viewpoints, and to practice expressing your ideas and arguments clearly, concisely, and convincingly.

As part of your participation in this course, you are expected to do the following:

- **Lead one seminar discussion**, for which you will sign up at our first meeting. I will outline the expectations related to this role early on in the term.
- Weeks 2, 4-6, 9, and 11-12 only: email a "discussion cheat-sheet" to me no later than Tuesday at 12:30 pm, which should contain 1-2 questions or observations per assigned reading. You will not have to submit a cheat-sheet the week you lead the discussion.

Course assignments

This class requires you to write four essays (1000-1250 words or approximately 4-5 pages each) over the course of the semester. For each, you will be given a short list of primary and/or secondary sources relating to a course topic, and asked to write an interpretive essay in response to a specific question. Each assignment is designed to exercise a different set of historian's muscles. Together, they constitute a total-body workout that may leave you a little tired, but also (I hope) a stronger writer and thinker than before. I will give specific instructions for each assignment in separate handouts.

These assignments are an experiment in adapting Oxbridge-style supervisions to a Canadian university setting. The idea is that undergraduates write short essays frequently (sometimes weekly), which they then discuss with their professor and peers in small-group settings. You are therefore expected to bring a rough draft of each essay in hard copy to the following meetings:

- First paper: **Tuesday, January 19th**
- Second paper: **Tuesday, February 23rd**
- Third paper: **Tuesday, March 15th**
- Fourth paper: **Tuesday, April 5th.**

Depending on the essay (and I'll let you know), you will then either discuss the rough draft one-on-one with me or with a peer, or present the substance of your paper to your classmates. Finally, you will revise the paper as necessary and submit the final draft electronically or in hard copy no later than 5 pm on the following dates:

- First paper: **Friday, January 29th**
- Second paper: **Friday, March 4th**
- Third paper: **Friday, March 25th**
- Fourth paper: **Friday, April 15th.**

Policies regarding assignments

You may submit assignments either in hard copy to my departmental mailbox or as a Word or PDF document attached to an email. Please include your name, the date, and some kind of descriptive title on the first page. A separate title page is not necessary. Please also number the pages of the assignment. All assignments must be word-processed, using standard 1-inch margins, at least 1.5-inch spacing, and 11 or 12-point font. Please use Chicago style (notes and bibliography) for footnotes or endnotes, and for lists of works cited. If you are not familiar with this style of citation, here is a quick general guide:

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

A late assignment will have **5%** of its final mark subtracted for each day it is late, including weekends, up to a maximum of **four days** or **20%**. After that point, assignments will not be accepted except by prior arrangement. Extensions must be requested at least 72 hours in advance of an assignment's due date. Please do not request an extension unless serious personal or medical circumstances warrant one.

Academic honesty

By enrolling in classes at SFU, you have consented to a student contract that includes a commitment to academic honesty:

<http://www.sfu.ca/students/calendar/2015/spring/fees-and-regulations/student-contract/academic-honesty.html>

It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand what constitutes academic dishonesty, which includes but is not limited to plagiarism. This guide clarifies what actions are considered academically honest and dishonest at SFU:

<http://www.sfu.ca/students/academicintegrity/resources/academichonestyguide.html>

Classroom etiquette

Please arrive to class in a timely fashion. Please also do not leave the room during class unless it is absolutely, physically unavoidable.

Please turn your cell phones to silent and refrain from using them during class. Feel free to use your laptop, tablet, or netbook to take notes or look up things, but please don't use such devices in ways (Facebook, YouTube, etc) that will disrupt the attention of others around you. This is particularly important in such a small class.

I may make changes to the syllabus during the term. I will always notify you of these, and will post a revised version of the syllabus or reading schedule to the course's Canvas homepage.

Course schedule: Topics, readings, and due dates

***NB:** Starred weeks indicate those for which you need to email a discussion cheat-sheet to me no later than 12:30 pm on Tuesday.

Week 1: Locating the North

Meeting: Tuesday January 5

Readings: Morrison, *True North*, chapters 1-2 (1-35)

*Week 2: Ideas of North

Meeting: Tuesday January 12

Readings: S.D. Grant, "Myths of the North in the Canadian Ethos," *Northern Review* 3/4 (1989): 15-41
 Janice Cavell, "The Second Frontier: The North in English-Canadian Historical Writing," *Canadian Historical Review* 83.3 (2002): 364-389
 Andrew Stuhl, "The politics of the 'New North': putting history and geography at stake in Arctic futures," *The Polar Journal* 3.1 (2013): 94-119
 Shelagh D. Grant, "Inuit History in the Next Millennium: Challenges and Rewards," in *Northern Visions: New Perspectives on the North in Canadian History* (2001), 91-106

Week 3: Franklin & the uses of history

Meeting: Tuesday January 19

Readings: Morrison, *True North*, chapter 5 (62-77)
 Janice Cavell, "Comparing Mythologies: Twentieth-Century Canadian Constructions of Sir John Franklin," in *Canadas of the Mind: The Making and Unmaking of Canadian Nationalisms in the Twentieth Century* (2007), 15-45
 Adriana Cracuin, "The Franklin Mystery," *Literary Review of Canada* (May 2012): <http://reviewcanada.ca/magazine/2012/05/the-franklin-mystery/>

Tina Adcock, "Why Should We Care About the *Erebus* (or *Terror*)?"
 ActiveHistory.ca, September 15, 2014: <http://activehistory.ca/2014/09/why-should-we-care-about-the-erebus-or-terror/>
 Paul Watson, "The Wreck of HMS Erebus: How a Landmark Discovery Triggered A Fight for Canada's History," *Buzzfeed Canada*, September 14, 2015: <http://www.buzzfeed.com/paulwatson/the-wreck-of-erebus>

***Bring rough draft of first essay to class**

*Week 4: Whales, Inuit, & whalers

Meeting: Tuesday January 26

Readings: John R. Bockstoe and Daniel B. Botkin, "The Historical Status and Reduction of the Western Arctic Bowhead Whale (*Balaena mysticetus*) Population by the Pelagic Whaling Industry, 1848-1914," *Reports of the International Whaling Commission*, Special Issue 5 (1983): 107-141
 Karen Routledge, "'The Desolate Shores of a Frozen Zone': American Whalers in Cumberland Sound, 1851-68," in *North by Degree: New Perspectives on Arctic Exploration* (2013), 146-184
 Frédéric Laugrand and Jarich Oosten, "The Whale, Representing the Whole," in *Hunters, Predators and Prey: Inuit Perceptions of Animals* (2014), 308-341

***First essay due Friday, January 29 by 5 pm**

*Week 5: The Klondike

Meeting: Tuesday February 2

Readings: Julie Cruikshank, "Images of Society in Klondike Gold Rush Narratives: Skookum Jim and the Discovery of Gold," *Ethnohistory* 39.1 (Winter 1992): 20-41
 Kathryn Morse, "The Culture of Gold Mining," in *The Nature of Gold: An Environmental History of the Klondike Gold Rush* (2003), 115-137
 Charlene Porsild, "The Scarlet Ladder: Work and Social Life in Dawson's Underworld," in *Gamblers and Dreamers: Women, Men, and Community in the Klondike* (1998), 99-136
 Jonathan Peyton, "'A strange enough way': An embodied natural history of experience, animals and food on the Teslin Trail," *Geoforum* 58 (2015): 14-22
 Optional: Morrison, *True North*, chapter 6 (78-104)

Tuesday February 9—No class (Reading Week)

*Week 6: Shamanism & Christianity

Meeting: Tuesday February 16

Readings: Morrison, *True North*, 54-61
 Christopher D. Trott, "The Dialectics of 'Us' and 'Other': Anglican Missionary Photographs of the Inuit," *American Review of Canadian Studies* 31.1-2 (2001): 171-190
 Jarich Oosten, Frédéric Laugrand, and Cornelius Remie, "Perceptions of Decline: Inuit Shamanism in the Canadian Arctic," *Ethnohistory* 53.3 (Summer 2006): 445-477
 Shelagh D. Grant, "Religious fanaticism at Leaf River, Ungava, 1931," *Études Inuit Studies* 21.1-2 (1997): 159-188

Week 7: Animals & the fur trade

Meeting: Tuesday February 23

Readings: Morrison, *True North*, 44–54

John Sandlos, “Landscaping Desire: Poetics, Politics in the Early Biological Surveys of the Canadian North,” *Space & Culture* 6.4 (2003): 394–414

Paul Nadasdy, “‘It’s Not Really Knowledge At All, It’s More a Way of Life,’” in *Hunters and Bureaucrats: Power, Knowledge, and Aboriginal-State Relations in the Southwest Yukon* (2003), 60–113

George Colpitts, “Itinerant Jewish and Arabic Trading in the Dene’s North, 1916–1930,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 24.1 (2013): 163–213

***Bring rough draft of second paper to class**

Week 8: Exploration & sovereignty

Meeting: Tuesday March 1 (hopefully at the Vancouver Maritime Museum; TBC)

Readings: Morrison, *True North*, chapter 7 (105–129)

Janice Cavell, “‘A little more latitude’: explorers, politicians, and Canadian Arctic policy during the Laurier era,” *Polar Record* 47.4 (2011): 289–309

Peter Geller, “More Than ‘A Mass of Ice and Snow’: Visualizing the State in ‘Canada’s Arctic,’” in *Northern Exposures: Photographing and Filming the Canadian North, 1920–1945* (2004), 17–50

Royal Canadian Mounted Police, *Reports and Other Papers Relating to the Two Voyages of the R.C.M. Police Schooner ‘St Roch’...* (1945), 5–26

***Second paper due Friday, March 4 by 5 pm**

*Week 9: Militarizing the North

Meeting: Tuesday March 8

Film: “Canol” (1945)

Readings: Morrison, *True North*, chapter 8 (130–151)

Richard Finnie, “The Epic of Canol,” *Canadian Geographical Journal* 34 (March 1947): 137–139

Philip Fradkin, “The First and Forgotten Pipeline,” *Audubon* 79.6 (November 1977): 59–79

K.S. Coates and W.R. Morrison, “Men, Women, and the Northwest Defense Projects,” in *The Alaska Highway in World War II: The U.S. Army of Occupation in Canada’s Northwest* (1992), 124–157

P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Matthew Farish, “The Cold War on Canadian Soil: Militarizing a Northern Environment,” *Environmental History* 12.3 (2007): 920–50

Week 10: Mining bodies & communities

Meeting: Tuesday March 15

Film: “Village of Widows” (1999)

Readings etc.: Arn Keeling and John Sandlos, “Environmental Justice Goes Underground? Historical Notes from Canada’s Northern Mining Frontier,” *Environmental Justice* 2.3 (2009): 117–125

George Blondin, *When the World Was New: Stories of the Sahtu Dene* (1990), 78–79

“Deline and the Bomb” (CBC radio documentary, 2008):

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/deline-and-the-bomb-1.3182194>

“Welcome to Pine Point” (NFB, 2011): <http://pinepoint.nfb.ca/>
 John Sandlos and Arn Keeling, “Claiming the New North: Development and Colonialism at the Pine Point Mine, Northwest Territories, Canada,”
Environment and History 18 (2012): 5-34

***Bring rough draft of third paper to class**

*Week 11: High modernism goes North

Meeting: Tuesday March 22
 Film: “Qimmit: A Clash of Two Truths” (2010)
 Readings: Morrison, *True North*, chapter 9 (152-167)
 Frédéric Laugrand et al., “‘The saddest time of my life’: relocating the Ahiammiut from Ennadai Lake (1950-1958),” *Polar Record* 46.2 (2010): 113-135
 Matthew Farish and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, “High modernism in the Arctic: planning Frobisher Bay and Inuvik,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 35.3 (2009): 517-544
 Frank James Tester, “Mad dogs and (mostly) Englishmen: Colonial relations, commodities, and the fate of Inuit sled dogs,” *Études Inuit Studies* 34.2 (2010): 129-147
 Ad Astra Comix, “Dogs” (2015):
<http://adastracomix.com/2015/03/25/introducing-dogs-a-new-ad-astra-comix-original/>

***Third paper due Friday, March 25 by 5 pm**

*Week 12: Oil, gas, & self-determination

Meeting: Tuesday March 29
 Readings: Morrison, *True North*, chapter 10 (168-188)
 Paul Sabin, “Voices from the Hydrocarbon Frontier: Canada’s Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry (1974-1977),” *Environmental History Review* 19.1 (1995): 17-48
 Thomas R. Berger, *Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland* (1977) [excerpts]

Week 13: Climate change & the “future history” of the Arctic

Meeting: Tuesday April 5
 Film: “Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change” (2010)
 Readings: James D. Ford et al., “Climate change policy responses for Canada’s Inuit population: The importance of and opportunities for adaptation,” *Global Environmental Change* 20.1 (2010): 177-191
 Emilie S. Cameron, “Securing Indigenous politics: A critique of the vulnerability and adaptation approach to the human dimensions of climate change in the Canadian Arctic,” *Global Environmental Change* 22 (2012): 103-114
 Martha Dowsley et al., “Should we turn the tent? Inuit women and climate change,” *Études Inuit Studies* 34.1 (2010): 151-165
 Emilie Cameron, Rebecca Mearns and Janet Tamalik McGrath, “Translating Climate Change: Adaptation, Resilience, and Climate Politics in Nunavut, Canada,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 105.2 (2015): 274-283

***Bring rough draft of fourth paper to class**

***Fourth paper due Friday, April 15 by 5 pm**