

CfP: Conference on Environment and Identity in the Americas

**University of Essex
10-11 September 2020**

Keynote speakers: Professor Waskar Ari (University of Nebraska-Lincoln, USA) and Professor Vinita Damodaran (University of Sussex)

Opening remarks: Professor Andrew Canessa (University of Essex)

This two-day interdisciplinary conference will bring together postgraduate and early career scholars working on environmental humanities in the Americas. The natural world has emerged as a lens by which to examine vital political, social and economic concerns. The notion of the environment as shaped by human forces is now a well established principle in environmental history. Rather than being timeless and static, scholars have shown that the environment has been actively shaped and repurposed over time by its human and non-human inhabitants (Cronon, 1983). At the same time, human relationships with the natural world have been powerfully mediated through the categories of class, race and gender. Others have pointed to the centrality of ecological domination in the rise of global capitalism in the Americas, understanding capitalism as a 'world-ecological project' (Moore, 2010).

But how to include also the non-human, or other-than human in historical and social enquiry? How has the concept of 'nature' changed over time? What can history inform us about the relationship between identity, politics and nature? This conference aims to interrogate and historicise the connections between the natural world and identity (ethnic, political, sexual, racial or other) in the Americas.

It therefore seeks contributions relating to, but not limited to:

- *Indigenous/afro-descendant peoples and the environment*
- *Historical and contemporary struggles over land and resources in the Americas*
- *Extractivism and (eco)imperialism in the Americas*
- *The environment and the ontological turn*
- *Cultural responses to the natural world in the Americas*
- *Historicising nature and the non-human*
- *Marxism, capitalism and nature*
- *Feminist movements and the environment*

The keynotes will be delivered by Professor Vinita Damodaran, a scholar in South Asian studies and environmental history, and Professor Waskar Ari, (University of Nebraska-Lincoln, USA), an historian of indigenous movements in the Andes.

This two-day conference will take place at the University of Essex on **September 10-11, 2020**. We encourage submissions from scholars at all career stages and from all disciplines.

Please send abstracts of 250 words to EnvironmentConf2020@gmail.com by **13 March 2020** at the latest and include a brief bio in your email. Proposals are welcome in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese.

Principal organiser: Olivia Arigho-Stiles (University of Essex)

Key dates

- CfP announcement: January 2020
- Deadline for submissions: 13 March 2020
- Programme announcement: May 2020
- Conference: 10-11 September

Notes

Cronon, William. 1983. *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*. New York: Hill and Wang.

Moore, Jason. 2010. "‘This lofty mountain of silver could conquer the whole world’: Potosí and the political ecology of underdevelopment, 1545-1800", *The Journal of Philosophical Economics*, IV:1, 58-103