

Prof. Luo (luoweiwei@grinnell.edu)
MWF 10:00-10:50 am, N3110
Office Hours M/F 3-4 pm, and by appointment (online)

HIS 295-02 **Kungfu Panda:** **Chinese Environmental History**



Pandas might not be able to fight back with martial arts (Kungfu), but humans, with sustained effort (Kungfu), might just be able to save them all. The human toll, political challenges, and global impacts created by environmental degradation in contemporary China have attracted widespread attention. But because most discussions of China's environmental problems attribute them to the country's post-1979 economic growth, they tend to overlook processes with deep roots in China's past. To gain a fuller understanding of China's environmental dilemmas, this class investigates key topics in contemporary as well as pre-modern Chinese environmental history.

Required Books:

Jonathan Watts, *When a Billion Chinese Jump: How China Will Save Mankind—or Destroy It* (2010)

Ed Grumbine, *Where the Dragon Meets the Angry River: Nature and Power in the People's Republic of China* (2011)

Other readings will be posted on P-Web as PDF files.

Class Policies

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Academic honesty:

In all assignments written for this course, you must abide by the College's rules on plagiarism. (http://catalog.grinnell.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=2537#Honesty_in_Academic_Work) Do not submit someone else's work as your own, quote from a source without citing it, or provide inappropriate help to a classmate on exams and assignments. If you paraphrase or quote any text from another you must indicate where the text comes from. Failure to comply with the requirement of academic honesty may result in receiving no credit for the assignment in question or even failing the course in cases of serious academic dishonesty. If you are in doubt about any of the rules, please consult with me, or the professionals in the Writing Lab, *before* submitting your class materials and assignments.

Religious holidays:

Grinnell College offers alternative options to complete academic work for students who observe holy days. Please contact me within the first 2 weeks of the semester if you would like to discuss a specific instance that applies to you.

Inclusive classroom and student accessibility services:

I strive to create a fully inclusive classroom. Thus I welcome individual students to approach me about distinctive learning needs. In particular, I encourage students with disabilities, including invisible or non-apparent disabilities such as chronic illness, learning disabilities, and psychiatric disabilities, to discuss reasonable accommodations with me, and to have a conversation about how our classroom or course activities could impact the disability and what accommodations would be essential to you.

You will also need to have a conversation about and provide documentation of your disability to the Coordinator for Disability Resources, located on the ground level floor of Steiner Hall (641-269-3124).

Attendance and extension policies:

I understand the unique challenges you will likely face this semester as we commence classes within the context of a pandemic, and I will provide flexibility, when possible, for students who need to miss class sessions. If you have legitimate reasons to miss class or turn in an assignment late, please let me know in advance and supply relevant documentation. I am also happy to work with you to develop a plan for continue to maintain progress in the course if you need to miss a number of classes. If you face other challenges in personal life that makes it necessary for you to request extensions on assignments, you are also encouraged to talk to me.

Class Requirements:

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Attendance and Participation (30%): You are expected to attend class and participate actively throughout the semester. Lectures and discussions are essential to learning in this class. All readings are to be completed prior to the class period for which they have been assigned. You should come to class prepared to discuss them in detail, with questions and points for discussion prepared. Attendance (10%) will be taken at every meeting (after drop/add period). Participation (20%) includes taking part in discussions, completing assignments, and other learning activities associated with the class.

Reflection Papers (20%) There will be two reflection papers (10% each) of 2-3 pages (double-spaced) at different points of the semester for you to review and process what you have learned up to that point. *For more information, see Assignment Sheet* (will be posted under Assignment on PWeb).

Midterm Investigation Plan (15%): This is a 3-4 page (double-spaced) statement that delineates what you plan to work on for your final investigation project. This is the scaffolding of your final project (see below). A detailed prompt will be given on how to complete this proposal. *For more information, see Assignment Sheet* (will be posted under Assignment on PWeb).

Final Project: Investigation Report and Brief Presentation (30%+5%=35%). Write up an analytical report for the purpose of investigative journalism. This report includes a clear statement of your research question, a review of the relevant literature, and a historical analysis that explains the perspectives from which one should approach the current problems. The emphasis of this exercise is not on reaching a final conclusion for your research, but rather the basis on which conclusions could be drawn. You will also work on a brief presentation that shares your findings in class. *For more information, see respective Assignment Sheets* (will be posted under Assignment on PWeb).

Grading Scale:

93-100% A	83-86% B	70-76% C
90-92% A-	80-82% B-	60-69% D
87-89% B+	77-79% C+	below 60% F

Course Schedule

Readings and due dates are subject to change

Date	Topic	Assignments
8/27 F	Introduction	Syllabus
8/30 M	China's Environmental Challenges	Shapiro, "Introduction: The Big Picture"

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9/1 W	The Long View	Elvin, “Humans vs. Elephants’: The Three Thousand Years War”
9/3 F	Politics and Weather	Brook, “Dragon Spotting”
9/6 M	Chinese Concept and Philosophy of Nature	Anderson, <i>Food and Environment</i> , chp 4 (pt 1)
9/8 W	Ancient Chinese Sustainability	Anderson, <i>Food and Environment</i> , chp 4 (pt 2)
9/10 F	Colonialism and Environmental Changes	Scott, The Art of Not Being Governed (excerpt) Marks, <i>China</i> (excerpt: ecology of islands)
9/13 M	The Peril of Pearl	Schlesinger, “Pearl Thieves and Perfect Order”
9/15 W	A Mushroom’s Perspective	Schlesinger, “The Mushroom Crisis”
9/17 F	Urban/Rural Relations in An Agrarian Society	Xue, “Treasure Nightsoil as if it were Gold”
9/20 M	Property Rights and Environmental Changes in Premodern China	Aihara, “Forests as Commons” Marks, “Land Clearance in the Eighteenth Century”*

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9/22 W	Gender and the Environment: Drought Demons	Ter Haar, "Wicked Women and Evil Emperors" https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0148072#sec003 *Reflection paper 1
9/24 F	Climate Change and the Little Ice Age	Marks, "It never used to snow" (excerpt) Parker, Global Crisis (excerpt)
9/27 M	Famine I	Sen, <i>Poverty and Famine</i> (excerpt) Wong, "Coping with Poverty and Famine"
9/29 W	Famine II	Edgerton-Tarpley, "Tears from Iron" (cannibalism) *Read about North China Famine here: http://www.disasterhistory.org/north-china-famine-1876-79
10/1 F	The Chinese Household	Harrell, "Socio-Ecosystem of the Chinese Household"
10/4 M	The Chinese Pharmacy and Environmental History I	Lei, "Housewives as Kitchen-Pharmacists" *Explore Youtube channel: Rosalina's Kitchen

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10/6 W	The Chinese Pharmacy and Environmental History II	Ellis, <i>Tiger Bone and Rhino Horn</i> (Intro and any one chapter)
10/8 F	Epidemics and Modernity	Knabb, “Scientific Internationalisation and the Manchurian Plague of 1910/1911”
10/11 M	Public Health and Disease Control	Poon, “Cholera, Public Health, and the Politics of Water in Republican Guangzhou” Or McPherson, “Cholera in China, 1820-1930: An Aspect of the Internationalization of Infectious Disease”
10/13 W	War and Ecology I	Muscolino, <i>The Ecology of War in China</i> (edited chapter 1)
10/15 F	<i>Mao’s Great Famine (2012)</i>	Shapiro, <i>Mao’s War Against Nature</i> (excerpt)
	10/16-24 Fall Break	
10/25 M	Subduing Nature In-Class	Shapiro, <i>Mao’s War Against Nature</i> (excerpt)

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10/27 W	War and Ecology II In-Class	Rogaski, "Nature, Annihilation, and Modernity: China's Korean War Germ Warfare Experience Revisited"
10/29 F	Rural Sustainability Online	Tilt, <i>The Struggle for Sustainability in Rural China</i> (Chapter 1)
11/1 M	Urban Environment In-Class	Sheppard, "Ghost Cities"
11/3 W	Made in China In-Class	<i>When a Billion Chinese Jump</i> (Assigned chapters)
11/5 F	Documentary: "Under the Dome" Online (no meeting)	
11/8 M	Carbon Democracy? In-Class	Mitchell, <i>Carbon Democracy</i> (excerpt) Freese, <i>Coal</i> (excerpt)
11/10 W	The Angry River In-Class	<i>Where the Dragon Meets the Angry River</i> (Assigned chapters)

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11/12 F	Politics of Water Online	Mertha, “China’s Hydraulic Society”? <i>*China from the Inside</i>
11/15 M	Nationalism and Environmentalism In-Class	Shapiro, “Sustainable Development and National Identity”
11/17 W	Film discussion-- <i>What’s for Dinner</i> In-Class	Viewing Guide Lander et al, “History of Pigs in China”
11/19 F	Global Webs of Consumption I Online	Watson, “China’s Big Mac Attacks” *Reflection paper 2 due Saturday
11/22 M	Global Webs of Consumption II In-Class	Economy and Levi, “China Goes Out” (excerpt)
11/24 W	Food Safety and Nostalgia In-Class	Yan, “Food Safety and Social Risks in Contemporary China” <i>*Explore Li Ziqi’s Youtube Channel</i> https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoC47do520os_4DBMEFGg4A

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	11/26 Thanksgiving no class	<i>*Optional final project topic check-in</i>
11/29 M	Green Public Sphere In-Class	Yang and Calhoun, "Media, Civil Society, and the Rise of a Green Public Sphere in China"
12/1 W	The Field of Chinese Environmental History In-Class	Perdue, "The Environmental History of China"
12/3 F	Looking back and looking forward In-Class	Cronon, "The Uses of Environmental History"
12/6 M	Presentations Online	
12/8 W	Presentations Online	
12/10 F	Presentations Online	
	Exam week	Final project due