Call for Papers

Environmental History
Strand: Challenging the Boom to Bust Narrative

From Boom to Bust
Australian Historical Association Conference,
4 – 8 July 2016
Ballarat, Victoria


In recent years, the Australian Historical Association conference has attracted a growing number of environmental history papers and panels. At the 2015 Sydney AHA conference, at least 20 papers were within this specialisation treating topics including landscape, human-animal relations, place making, mining and events such as floods. In this time of serious environmental crisis, experienced at many levels, the organising committee of the 2016 AHA has agreed to further encourage work in this important area with a dedicated environmental history strand including a round table session.

The conference theme ‘From Boom to Bust’ is a timely provocation for environmental historians at all levels, from postgraduate students to senior professors. Although boom to bust (and back) is a familiar trope within history at large, environmental historians including Professor Libby Robin as editor of a book with that title remind us that Australia’s environment may be better understood as a pulse ecology. Australian flora and fauna are adapted to longer and more irregular rhythms of scarcity and plenty, rather than the more predictable seasonal cycles of the northern hemisphere. Beyond the particularities of this continent, the theme challenges environmental historians to explore other global instances of boom and bust. Booms and busts might help us to interrogate nature/culture debates, environmental politics, animal studies, and critical heritage studies in new ways.

The convenors of the strand warmly invite scholars at all levels, within and outside of the academy, to submit proposals for panels or individual papers noting a preference to be included in the environmental history sessions. We would be delighted to see papers from colleagues in and working on environmental histories of all regions of the world. We hope to arrange for publication of the best of these papers in a journal special issue or edited volume.
We especially encourage postgraduate students to propose papers or panels. Two prizes are specifically dedicated to early career scholars (the Jill Roe Prize, administered by the AHA; and the Ken Inglis Prize, administered by Australian Historical Studies) and our hope is that supervisors will encourage students to participate in these prestigious competitions. [http://www.theaha.org.au/awards-and-prizes/](http://www.theaha.org.au/awards-and-prizes/)

The Mike Smith prize for Australian Environmental History, offered by the Australian Academy of Science and the National Museum of Australia, will also be open in 2016. [http://www.nma.gov.au/history/research/research_centre/prizes_and_awards](http://www.nma.gov.au/history/research/research_centre/prizes_and_awards)

We see the 2016 AHA environmental history strand as an opportunity for postgraduate students to develop their ideas in a collegial space with feedback provided by the senior scholars of the field.

Proposals consisting of an abstract of 200 words per paper, together with a 60 word author biography, should be submitted to: [aha2016@federation.edu.au](mailto:aha2016@federation.edu.au) by Wednesday 3 February 2016 with Environmental History noted as the preferred strand.

**Update: deadline now extended to Friday 4 March 2016**

Enquiries about these sessions may be made to:

Jodi Frawley, Queensland University of Technology: [j2.frawley@qut.edu.au](mailto:j2.frawley@qut.edu.au)

Nancy Cushing, University of Newcastle: [nancy.cushing@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:nancy.cushing@newcastle.edu.au)

Chris McConville: [cccx3@icloud.com](mailto:cccx3@icloud.com)

Enquiries about the conference as a whole should be directed to:
Email: [aha2016@federation.edu.au](mailto:aha2016@federation.edu.au) tel: +61 3 5327 9599