

Enquiry-Based Learning Session #2 - Early Examples of Ecological Awareness

History 3355: Nature, Culture, and the Canadian Environment

18 July 2012

For several decades, environmental historians contended that the North American conservation movement had its roots with political and economic elites in urban centres in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. One of the main proponents of this view was Samuel P. Hays, perhaps best articulated in his *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency* (1959). In the 1990s, however, some environmental historians started to revise this thesis, arguing instead that conservation had its roots in utilitarian notions of nature in the countryside in the eighteenth and nineteenth century.

For this week's EBL session, you will read the introduction of the book *Common Lands, Common People* by Richard W. Judd, one of original framers of the notion that conservation emerged in the countryside, not in urban centres. The second reading is a small article by Graeme Wynn, and this article provides useful information about how New Brunswick developed economically and where people lived prior to Confederation. It should be noted that the Wynn article mentions the Acadians very little - the Acadians remained isolated from New Brunswick political culture until the end of the nineteenth century, so it is likely that they were simply not included in the government reports, accounts, and censuses from the period.

There are no "points for consideration" this week. Instead, I will be handing out information on some primary documents in class, and then you will examine the documents assigned to your groups as possible examples of "countryside conservation" in early colonial New Brunswick. Consider this week's readings as contextual readings in preparation for the in-class exercise.

Note - The Judd book is available "on reserve" at the Harriet Irving Library, while the Wynn article is available through an Internet link provided below.

Readings:

Richard W. Judd, *Common Lands, Common People: The Origins of Conservation in Northern New England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 1-12 ("Introduction").

Graeme Wynn, "Populations Patterns in Pre-Confederation New Brunswick," *Acadiensis* X, no. 2 (Spring 1981): 124-138. Available online from this table of contents, under "Documents": <http://journals.hil.unb.ca/index.php/Acadiensis/issue/view/958/showToc>.