



# CLIMATE HISTORY NEWS

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CLIMATE HISTORY NEWS IS THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CLIMATE HISTORY NETWORK  
– A NETWORK OF INTERDISCIPLINARY SCHOLARS STUDYING PAST CLIMATE CHANGE –  
TO CONTRIBUTE EMAIL [NJCUNIGAN@GMAIL.COM](mailto:NJCUNIGAN@GMAIL.COM)

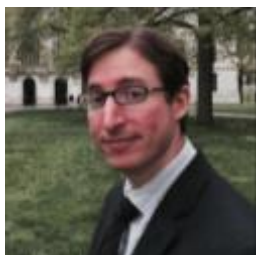
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## Letter from the Founders



Welcome to the latest issue of our quarterly newsletter! We've had an exciting four months at the Climate History Network and HistoricalClimatology.com. As you'll see in this newsletter, many of our feature articles and interviews have focused on social responses to medieval climate changes. We've also redesigned HistoricalClimatology.com, so the site should now be a bit easier to browse and read.

We'd like to thank all of you who submitted abstracts to our sessions at the PAGES Open Science Meeting (OSM), which will be held this May in Zaragoza, Spain. We received over 30 submissions for each session, most of them very promising. We'll work to make our decisions quickly, and hopefully you will hear back soon from the OSM organizers. We'd also like to thank those of you who created and submitted to climate history sessions at the European Geosciences Union this April and panels at the European Society for Environmental History this July. We hope for a strong presence for climate history at both events.



In related news, the American Society for Environmental History has accepted a proposal by Sam White and colleagues at the Ohio State University to host its 2019 conference in Columbus, Ohio. We would like to use this opportunity to draw the attention of American environmental historians to research in climate reconstruction, impacts, and adaptation and to bring more climate history panels to the ASEH. Please

watch for updates and plans in the coming year.

Over at Georgetown, a new wave of workshops proposed by Dagomar Degroot, Sam White, and CHN assistant director Bathsheba Demuth received significant funding from the Georgetown Environment Initiative. The workshops will connect the most innovative climate change and climate history scholars with leading activists and journalists. The big question the workshops will seek to answer: how can scholars more effectively communicate their research to the general public?

In November, we held our first major "Climate Change Conversation" at Georgetown. Climatologist Michael E. Mann spoke to an audience of around 80 people about what historical proxy data can tell us about past, present, and future climate change. He also answered questions on everything from modeling ENSO variations to dealing with the politics of climate change. We are grateful to all of our partners at Georgetown for helping us fund the event.

We close this issue with a list of the latest publications in climate history. As always, just let us know if you have any new books, articles, or projects to announce. Some of the outstanding publications that have come out recently include a major new article by Chantal Camenisch and colleagues in *Climate of the Past* on the cold decade of the 1430s, a new monograph *A Temperate Empire: Making Climate Change in Early America* by Anya Zilberstein, a recent special issue of *Climate Research* on historical and modern drought reconstruction and impacts, and a special issue of *Global and Planetary Change* (in progress) on "Climate Variability and Change in the Mediterranean Region." We're also pleased to announce that a major new textbook project, the *Handbook of Climate History*, has been accepted for publication by Palgrave and (if all goes well with production) should appear in print and online this fall.

Note that our old Climate History Network website URL, ClimateHistoryNetwork.com, has now expired. Please update your links and bookmarks to ClimateHistory.net. Also, note that our Zotero bibliography has had some issues lately, since a separate folder of entries created for the *Handbook of Climate History* was somehow merged with the original database. For now, please pardon the duplicate entries and tags.

As always, please keep us updated with your research, publications, and news in the field.

Dagomar Degroot & Sam White

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## Climate History Podcast



The Climate History Podcast features interviews with some of the most interesting people in climate change research, journalism, and policymaking. It is hosted by Dagomar Degroot. It is the official podcast of the Climate History Network. You can catch up [here](#) on past episodes including interviews with John McNeill, Thomas McGovern, George Hambrecht, Sam White, and Geoffrey Parker.

## Upcoming Events

### ASEH – March 2017

ASEH's annual conference will be held in Chicago, Illinois at the Drake Hotel from March 29 to April 2. The Climate History Network will be hosting an informal lunch gathering on Friday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. We will send more details regarding a specific time and location as the date approaches.

### EGU General Assembly – April 2017

The EGU General Assembly 2017 will bring together geoscientists from all over the world to one meeting covering all disciplines of the Earth, planetary and space sciences. The EGU aims to provide a forum where scientists, especially early career researchers, can present their work and discuss their ideas with experts in all fields of geoscience. The EGU is looking forward to cordially welcoming you in Vienna.

### MedCLIVAR 2018

The next MedCLIVAR conference will be held in Belgrade, Serbia. Serbia is a home country of Milutin Milanković, a climatologist, mathematician, astronomer and civil engineer who gave fundamental contributions to Climate Science. The theme of the 2018 MedClivar conference, "Bridging a Mediterranean Climate", will focus on creating bridges between scientists, research groups, and scholars around the world dealing with typical Mediterranean climates. However, presented research is not only limited to the Mediterranean basin but also includes other areas experiencing this type of climate such as California, the Western Cape of South Africa, and western and south Australia.

## Calls for Papers

### Arcadia

Founded as a partnership between the European Society for Environmental History (ESEH) and the Rachel Carson Center, Arcadia is an online, peer-reviewed publication platform for short, illustrated, and engaging environmental histories. An Arcadia article tells a short (about 750 words) focused, engaging environmental history about any site, event, person, organization, or species as it related to nature and human society. Your text should focus on a specific problem/case and refer to a specific place and time. You should include 2-5 digital objects (videos, images, maps, or other materials). We are currently seeking submissions for our Summer 2017 volume, the deadline is **April 1, 2017**. For more information please visit: <http://www.environmentandsociety.org/arcadia/contribution>.

## Georgetown University's Mellon-Sawyer Postdoctoral Fellowship

Georgetown University is looking for a one-year Mellon-Sawyer Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Environmental Humanities on the subject "Approaching the Anthropocene: Global Culture and Planetary Change." Applicants should be working in the Environmental Humanities, broadly construed, but could come from any humanities discipline, such as Anthropology, Archaeology, Cultural Geography, History, Literary and Cultural Studies, Philosophy, or Religious Studies. The annual salary is \$55,000. Applicants must have their degree in hand by July 1, 2017 and must submit a cover letter summarizing their dissertation work, as well as a CV, a 20 page writing sample, and contact information for three academic references. The application is due *February 1, 2017*. Click [here](#) for more information.

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## Feature Articles and Interviews

### A Conversation with Bruce Campbell



Bruce Campbell is a highly respected historian of medieval economic history. In his long and distinguished career at Queen's University, Belfast, he has belonged to the Departments of Geography, Economic History, History, and the School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology. Recently, he published a major new book: *The Great Transition: Climate, Disease and Society in the Late-Medieval World*. The book transforms how historians have understood the quintessential crisis of Western society - its apparent collapse in the fourteenth century - by rooting it in environmental forces. [More](#)

### Towards a Messy History of Dearth and Climate in Carolingian Europe

*Tim Newfield, Princeton University, and Inga Labuhn, Lund University*



Will climate change trigger widespread food shortages and result in huge excess mortality in our future? Many historians have argued that it has before. Anomalous weather, abrupt climate change, and extreme dearth often work together in articles and books on early medieval demography, economy and environment. Few historians of early medieval Europe would now doubt that severe winters, droughts and other weather extremes led to harvest failures and, through those failures, food shortages and mortality events. [More](#)

### Volcanoes, Comet Crashes, and Changes in the Sun: How Cooling Transformed the World

*Dagomar Degroot, Georgetown University*



The world is warming, and it is warming fast. According to satellites and weather stations, Earth's average annual temperature will smash the instrumental record this year, likely by around 0.1° C. Last year, global temperatures broke the record by around the same amount. That may not seem impressive, but consider this: temperatures have climbed by about 0.1° C *per decade* since the 1980s. In just two years, therefore, our planet catapulted two decades into a hotter future. [More](#)

### Teaching Climate Change by Combining the Humanities and Sciences

*Bathsheba Demuth, Brown University*



Most students at Brown University know Professor Kathleen Hess from the two-semester challenge of organic chemistry. But in a class that debuted this fall, “Exploration of the Chemistry of Renewable Energy,” Dr. Hess blended the tools of her discipline with questions of human impacts on the climate, renewable energy technologies, and the social impact of how energy is generated and used. [More](#)

## Best of the Web

October 2016



The World Passes 400 PPM Threshold. Permanently. [Climate Central](#)  
A Vault to Preserve the World's Glaciers. [CNRS News](#)  
A Timeline of Earth's Average Temperature. [XKCD](#)  
Melting Ice Could Reveal Toxic Cold War Era Waste in Greenland. [Eos](#)  
Arctic Climate Change Revealed in a Luxury Cruise and Haunting Wreck. [Dot Earth](#)  
Conquest of Beijing: Hidden Contributions of Climate Change to the Tumu Crisis, 1449–1450. [Arcadia](#)

November 2016



Living in China's Expanding Deserts. [New York Times](#)  
Year Without a Summer. [Paris Review](#)  
A 1912 News Article Ominously Forecasted the Catastrophic Effects of Fossil Fuels on Climate Change. [Quartz](#)  
Ancient Andes Glaciers Have Lost Half Their Ice in Just 40 years. [New Scientist](#)  
Climate Detectives: What a Historical Climatologist Does. [Climate Snack](#)

December 2016



The Coldest Decade of the Millennium? How the Cold 1430s Led to Famine and Disease. [EGU Blogs](#)  
Mysterious Volcanic Eruption of 1808 Described. [Geology Page](#)  
A Trump Adviser Wants to Scale Back NASA's Ability to Study Climate Change. [Vox](#)  
Ice-Hot News: The "Oldest Ice" Quest has Begun. [EGU Blogs](#)

6,000 Years Ago the Sahara Desert was Tropical, so what Happened? [Science Daily](#)

Huge Reduction in African Dust Plume Impacted Climate 11,000 Years Ago. [Science Daily](#)

## Recent Publications

### **Historical Climatology (including documentary and early instrumental reconstructions, and studies of climate and human history)**

Brázdil, Rudolf, Kateřina Chromá, Hubert Valášek, Lukáš Dolák, and Ladislava Řezníčková. "Damaging Hailstorms in South Moravia, Czech Republic, in the Seventeenth to Twentieth Centuries as Derived from Taxation Records." *Theoretical and Applied Climatology* 123 (2016): 185–98. doi:10.1007/s00704-014-1338-1.

Brázdil, Rudolf, Petr Dobrovolný, Miroslav Trnka, Ulf Büntgen, Ladislava Řezníčková, Oldřich Kotyza, Hubert Valášek, and Petr Stěpánek. "Documentary and Instrumental-Based Drought Indices for the Czech Lands back to AD 1501." *Climate Research* 70 (2016): 103–17. doi:10.3354/cr01380.

Brázdil, Rudolf, Pavel Raška, Miroslav Trnka, Pavel Zahradníček, Hubert Valášek, Petr Dobrovolný, Ladislava Řezníčková, Pavel Tremml, and Zdeněk Stachon. "The Central European Drought of 1947: Causes and Consequences, with Particular Reference to the Czech Lands." *Climate Research* 70 (2016): 161–78. doi:10.3354/cr01387.

Camenisch, C., K. M. Keller, M. Salvisberg, B. Amann, M. Bauch, S. Blumer, R. Brázdil, et al. "The 1430s: A Cold Period of Extraordinary Internal Climate Variability during the Early Spörer Minimum with Social and Economic Impacts in North-Western and Central Europe." *Climate of the Past* 12 (2016): 2107–26. doi:10.5194/cp-12-2107-2016.

Camuffo, Dario, and Antonio della Valle. "A Summer Temperature Bias in Early Alcohol Thermometers." *Climatic Change* 138 (2016): 633–40. doi:10.1007/s10584-016-1760-8.

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### **Proxy-Based Climate Reconstruction (high-resolution studies relevant to human history)**

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