VISIONS OF AMAZONIA

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VISIONS OF AMAZONIA

Week 1: March 27 What Is Amazonia?
Week 2: April 3 Native Peoples
Week 3: April 10 The Naturalists
Week 4: April 17 The Anthropologists
Week 5: April 24 The Novelists
Week 6: May 1 The Environmentalists
Natural Vegetation

- Tropical rain forest
- Tropical semideciduous forest
- Paraná pine forest
- Transitional palm forest
- Thorny scrub (caatinga)
- Savanna* (cerrado)
- Grassland
- Mangrove and/or dune vegetation (coastal)
- Perennially or periodically wet land

*Savanna grass, low trees, shrubs; ranging from grassland with scattered trees and shrubs to scrub woodland.
THE PRECURSORS: BEFORE ENVIRONMENTALISM

- Nineteenth-century foreign naturalists
- Brazilian naturalists (early 20th century)
- Anthropologists (foreign and Brazilian)
EUCLIDES DA CUNHA
(1866-1909)

military engineer

Canudos massacre (1897)

travels in Amazonia after Canudos

“last unwritten page of Genesis”

tragic death

Os sertões (1902)

Rebellion in the Backlands (1944)
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR AMAZONIAN RESEARCH

created in 1952

INPA - Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazônia

Manaus, Amazonas, Brazil
PHILIP FEARNSIDE

- (1947)
- Colorado College, UC-Berkeley
- Long-time researcher at INPA
- Deforestation and greenhouse gases
THE DELUGE

- Military regime (1964-1985)
- Transamazon Highway
- Men without land, land without men
- The massive destruction begins
- Mining, lumbering, prospecting, fires, cattle
População em 1996
CHICO MENDES

- Born 1944
- Second generation rubber tapper
- Learns to read and write at age 18
- 1975 – Rubber Tappers Union
- 1985 meeting in Brasília
- Becomes environmental icon
- Assassinate in December 1988
INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS
1980s

▶ “save the rainforest”
▶ movies and books
▶ invitations to talk
LEVELS OF DESTRUCTION

- 80,000 fires per year
- 7,000 square miles per year
- Area the size of Belgium
- Soot equivalent to volcanic eruption
- Peak in mid-1990s, Peaking again now
- 15-20% of forest destroyed
- President Jair Bolsonaro (2019-?)
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BACK TO THE BIG PICTURE

- Something for everyone
- Eden
- Green Hell
- Will continue to fascinate us