Dr. Gregory T. Cushman specializes in global environmental history, Latin American history, Pacific history, science, technology, and engineering. His award-winning book Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World: A Global Ecological History is one of the first studies to examine the environmental and cultural history of the modern world from the perspective of the whole Pacific Basin and demonstrates how humble bird excrement changed the course of modern history, starting from the guano islands of Peru.

Prussian scientist and explorer Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859) is a central figure in Latin America’s cultural history and the region’s participation in the Age of Revolutions. Scholars’ continued avoidance of Alexander von Humboldt’s sexuality is one of the most troubling features of “Humboldtism”: the systematic elision of Humboldt’s social relations and intellectual influences from his biography and the history of science. Did Humboldt’s sexuality influence his intellectual networks and the ways in which he perceived the world? This presentation will explore the abundant empirical evidence of Humboldt’s queer sexuality—particularly his relationship with two celebrated Creole naturalists from late-colonial Colombia and Ecuador—and theoretical perspectives that can be used to answer these questions.