Junior and Senior Seminars for Spring 2023

**Junior Seminars**

HSTRY 388 A (TTh 1230-150), taught by Prof. Julie Osborn—“Reimagining the Seventies: Historiography, Historical Method, and 1970s America.”

The United States in the 1970s is often considered the twentieth-century's most forgettable decade, a footnote between the tumultuous 1960s and the Reagan revolution. In this class we will join a small chorus of historians who have attempted to take the decade seriously, as it was a period marked by important political shifts, economic restructuring, meaningful conversations about “morality,” religion and sex/gender and the backlash that swiftly met these new ideas. The goal of this 388 is to use the 1970s as our shared temporal home base but to bring in each student’s individual interests in terms of methodology and subfield. The goal of this 388 is to deepen your understanding of what it means to practice history, think historically, generate cogent historical questions, and produce sophisticated historical writing that engages primary and secondary sources from the US in the 1970s.

HSTRY 388 B (MW 1000-1120), taught by Prof. Bruce Hevly— Colloquium in the History of Science: “Early Modern Revolutions, Military and Scientific.”

In this year's seminar, we will look at two historiographically controversial ideas: that of the Scientific Revolution and of an early modern Military Revolution.  We will discuss the origins of these ideas, what made them appealing to historians, how they were related, and how they have been criticized and revised.  Over the course of the quarter, students will develop a research proposal relevant to one of these subjects (or both) and practice the skills of defining a topic, compiling a bibliography, framing a research question, developing a starting point for it, and creating a research plan.  The goal is to prepare students for undertaking work in a senior seminar (for history majors) or in the capstone seminar and senior thesis (for History and Philosophy of Science majors). This junior seminar is cross-listed with HST 390, the junior colloquium in history of science.

HSTRY 388 C (TTh 1130-120PM), taught by Prof. Ross Coen—”Polar Exploration and Its Literature.”

The history of polar exploration is commonly understood in terms of the dramatic, romantic, and oftentimes tragic exploits of intrepid mariners such as Ernest Shackleton, Roald Amundsen, and Sir John Franklin. And while such stories abound in the literature and will be a significant part of the course, humankind’s connection to the Arctic and Antarctic touches on deeper historical themes such as nationalism, colonialism, science, geographical misconceptions, Indigenous cultures, racial theories, the biological impact of cold, and the advances and limits of technology. This course will trace the evolution of polar exploration, focusing on the 19th and 20th centuries, to demonstrate that exploration is an integral part of being human. Students will work with primary sources, read and discuss secondary works, think and write analytically, and hone their skills in developing evidence-based arguments.

**Senior Seminars**

HSTRY 494 A (M 330-520PM), taught by Prof. Vicente Rafael—“American Empire in Comparative Perspective.”

The theme for this colloquium is **the United States Empire in Comparative Perspective.** We will read some of the more recent scholarship that situates US national and imperial histories in relation to other imperial and postcolonial histories--for example, those of Spain, Britain, Native American and an emergent "Third World"--around such topics as imperial ideology, war, slavery and abolition, nationalism, settler colonialism and diplomacy; along the axis of race, gender and immigration. The goal of the course is to develop some ways of thinking critically and comparatively about the paradoxical nature of the United States as simultaneously an empire and a republic, at once peripheral and central to the spread and mutation of a certain “Western” civilization, a place founded on democratic institutions and ideas, yet sustained by undemocratic practices and ideologies.

HSTRY 494 B (T 1030-1220), taught by Prof. Elena Campbell—“History and Memory.” (counts for Writing)

This seminar will focus on the problem of collective memory as viewed from the perspective of its social, political and cultural functions, as well as its institutional and cultural expressions. We shall explore the process by which societies construct and make sense of their past through the examination of different forms of commemoration (celebrations, monuments, museums, archives). Special attention will be paid to the relationship between memory and national identity. The case studies will focus on Russia and will be analyzed in comparison with examples from other countries. Finally, we shall discuss the analytical potential of the concept of social memory for historians and other scholars.

HSTRY 498 A (T 130-320PM), taught by Prof. Kyle Haddad-Fonda—“Cold War and the Olympics.” (counts for Writing)

International sport, as George Orwell wrote in 1945, constituted “war minus the shooting.” The Olympic Games, therefore, are a lens through which we can examine a variety of themes that were fundamental to the international history of the Cold War era: ideology, national identity, race, technology, popular activism, the role of the media, the position of women in society, and the relationship between the state and its citizens. For our class discussions, students will explore seven specific topics related to the Olympic Games that had broad ramifications for politics and society. Such topics may include, for example, the defections of Hungarian athletes after the 1956 Summer Olympics, the rivalry between the two Chinas within the Olympic movement, the U.S. government’s use of black athletes in its diplomatic outreach in Africa, and the emergence of East Germany’s state-sponsored doping program. As in every iteration of HSTRY 498, the main goal of this course is for students to produce a substantial piece of original scholarship based on primary source research. Students will have broad leeway to choose a topic that interests them (though of course it must be in some way related to the Olympic Games between 1948 and 1994) and will work with close guidance from the instructor to produce a research paper due at the end of the quarter.