**Junior and Senior Seminar Descriptions for Spring 2025**

**Junior Seminars:**

HSTRY 388  A
**TOPIC: “Star-Spangled Facism”**
SLN: 15318
W 1:30-3:20pm

Prof. Susan Glenn

*“No swastikas in an American fascism, but Stars and Stripes (or Stars and Bars) and Christian crosses. No fascist salute, but mass recitations of the pledge of allegiance. These symbols contain no whiff of fascism in themselves, of course, but an American fascism would transform them into obligatory litmus tests for detecting the internal enemy.”*~Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (2004), 202.

Could Fascism come to the United States? In the 1930s and 1940s, American journalists and social critics warned of and debated the possibility that a home-grown, “star-spangled,” form of “fascism” would end democracy as they knew it.  In this course, we will explore the basis of that fear. Our readings will cover the persistence of racial terror, the mass production and distribution of antisemitic conspiracy theories, the transnational exchange of antisemitic and pro-fascist ideology, the formation of homegrown pro-Nazi groups, among them the Christian Front and the Silver Shirts, the influence of Charles Lindbergh and the “America First” movement, the proliferation of neo-Nazi and far right racist groups during and after WWII, and more recent expressions of alarm about the fascist potential of Trump and his MAGA movement.

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HSTRY 388  B
**TOPIC: “Victorian Natural Philosophy”**
SLN: 15319
MW 12:30-2:20pm

Prof. Bruce Hevly

This course fulfills a degree requirement for those majoring in History and Philosophy of Science or minoring in History of Science.  It is also open to all history students as a junior seminar.

While scholars such as Deborah Harkness have argued for the use of the word "science" in English as early as the 16th century, by tradition the history of science has seen nineteenth-century Britain as the site of definition for modern usages of "science" and "scientist".  Victorians negotiated over the establishment of specialized disciplines, such as geology; over proper methods to arrive at the truth, by reference to the history of science distilled into philosophy; over the relationships between science and religion; over evolution in biology and energy in physics; and over the place of science as a bulwark of social orthodoxy.  We will sample readings on all of these topics, discussing them in class, and each student will pursue a topic of particular interest.

The seminar is designed to help students make the transition from lecture courses in history to the kind of independent work expected of history majors in the senior year.  Each member of the seminar will practice defining a research topic, generating a bibliography, writing a literature review essay, and producing a project proposal and a research plan.

This is a W course.

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HSTRY 388  C
**TOPIC: “How Republics Die”**
SLN: 15320
TTh 11:00-12:20pm

Prof. Raymond Jonas

How do republics die? In this course we examine the demise of two consequential republics: revolutionary France and Weimar Germany.

The French republic arose in the same era as the American republic as part of a broad “Atlantic revolution.” Yet while the American republic flourished, the French republic collapsed within ten years, toppled by Napoléon Bonaparte, who established an authoritarian regime in its place. The republic founded in Germany in the aftermath of the First World War endured in difficult circumstances until the electoral victory of the Nazi Party created the opportunity for its destruction. In this course, we will look at these cases individually and comparatively. We will examine how each republic came to be, exploring their values, their precedents, and the circumstances present at their founding. We’ll also explore the personalities and events that undermined them and the consequences that flowed from their demise.

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HSTRY 388  D
**TOPIC: “The Persian Gulf and Palestine”**
SLN: 15321
TTh 1:30-3:20pm

Prof. Arbella Bet-Shlimon

In this seminar, we will read and write about the Persian Gulf and the countries and places linked to and through it, with a particular focus on the Gulf’s links with Palestine. We will consider political and economic transformations in these regions through an era of European and American imperialism; histories of racist and ethnicized differentiation; partition, migration, and diaspora; and other topics. Today, the countries bordering the Gulf—including Iran, Qatar, and the Gulf states in the Abraham Accords—play critical roles in Palestinian and Israeli politics. This course will excavate and examine histories that contextualize and challenge common wisdom about these recent events. In the process, we will think through how historical knowledge is produced by closely reading, discussing, and writing about primary and secondary sources in the classroom and in the library.

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**Senior Seminars**

HSTRY 494  A
**TOPIC: “American Empire in Comparative Perspective”**
SLN: 15324
T 3:30-5:20pm

Prof. Vicente Rafael

The theme for this colloquium is the United States Empire in Comparative Perspective. We will read some of the more recent scholarship that situates U.S. 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, 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.

This is a Writing (W) credits course.

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HSTRY 494  B
**TOPIC: “History and Memory”**
SLN: 15325
Tuesday 9:30-11:20am

Prof. Elena Campbell

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.

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HSTRY 498  A
**TOPIC: “Before Roe: Reproductive Politics Across the United States, 1967-73”**
SLN: 15327
W 1:30-3:20pm

Prof. Lynn Thomas

This class will explore a period in U.S. history that is very similar to our own, a period when abortion laws varied dramatically by state. In the six years prior to the Supreme Court’s decision in *Roe v. Wade*, guaranteeing a constitutional right to abortion, 14 states – including Washington – loosened legal restrictions on accessing abortion care. This course will examine why and how those legal changes took place, and who were the people and organizations who supported and opposed them. Students will design research projects focused on a particular state, exploring how abortion debates in the late 1960s and early 1970s were shaped by broader political shifts and struggles around healthcare, sexuality, family, race, women's rights, and religious beliefs.

The UW History Department is home to the online civil rights and labor history consortium, a set of website projects. Students in some earlier history 498 seminars have been involved in producing these projects and there may be an opportunity for some students in this class to publish their research papers. You will find the projects here: <https://depts.washington.edu/civilr/research_reports.htm>

This is a writing (W) credits course.

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HSTRY 498  B
**TOPIC: “The Civil Rights Movement”**
SLN: 15328
Th 12:30-2:20pm

Prof. Travis Wright

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, television screens, newspaper headlines, and radio broadcasts blazed with stories of sit-ins, demonstrations, Supreme Court rulings, and landmark legislation like the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts. These events reshaped American society, leaving behind an enduring legacy that continues to spark debate and activism today. But what do we remember about the Civil Rights Movement, and what stories remain untold? How do these moments connect to ongoing struggles for racial justice?

This seminar seeks to answer these questions through an in-depth examination of the Civil Rights Movement. We will use a wide range of primary and secondary sources (films, music, oral histories, memoirs, recent scholarship, and more) to invesetigate the origins and evolution of the movement, exploring not only its iconic leaders and landmark protests but also the lesser-known activists and strategies that fueled and sustained its progress. Additionally, we will consider how the Black struggle for civil rights intersected with contemporaneous feminist, gay rights, labor, and antiwar movements. Through our discussions and research, we will reflect on the movement's profound achievements, its limitations, and its lasting impact on modern society. By the quarter's end, each student will have produced a substantive research paper, grounded in primary and secondary sources.