Wesleyan University
Department of History
Fall 2017

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HIST 275
Empires on Fire: Revolutions in the Atlantic World

Friday 1:20-4:10pm, BOGH 110

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Office Hours: T/R 1:30-2:30
(or by appointment)
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Course Overview

This class will explore what historians have called the “Age of Revolutions.” The ideas, ideologies, and actions that set empires aflame during the long eighteenth century formed an entangled revolutionary experience that spread from one part of the Atlantic world to the next. From England’s “Glorious Revolution” in 1688 to the American, French, and Haitian revolutions at the end of the eighteenth century, and then on to the South American and Canadian uprisings in the early nineteenth century, this course will examine revolutions not as discrete events but as interrelated processes. By studying the perspectives of leading politicians, regular subjects and citizens, and marginalized groups, students will investigate the wide variety of revolutionary experiences.

Required Readings

Weekly readings will be available online. Some have direct links. For others, either search the title in the Olin catalogue or, for those marked “E-Res” look in the course electronic reserve (search for HIST275, password HIST275).
**SLACK**
This course will use Slack for communication and collaboration needs. You will receive an email to join the course team and its related channels. Visit [www.slack.com](http://www.slack.com) to sign up. OSX, Windows, and Linux desktop apps available, as well as Android and iOS apps for mobile use.

**Assignments**

**Assignment #1: Reading Response Essays** (2@15% = 30%) **DUE: 22 Sept. & 3 Nov.**
For two of our weekly sessions (noted in course calendar), students will write a 5 page (double-spaced) critical analysis for the assigned readings. This response should do three things: summarize the main arguments in each reading, explore thematic links within the articles, and offer a critical assessment of how these readings contribute to our understanding of revolutions. **Due by 10am the day of our meetings.**

** Assignment #2: Discussion Session** (20%)
Each week (or so) a student will lead a discussion session of approximately 30 minutes. **By noon the day before our meetings,** the discussion leader will submit to me an outline of the discussion plan, including: major themes you hope to address; a set of at least 5 discussion questions, each with a brief (2-3 sentences) explanation of why that question is useful; a list of 1 or 2 additional sources (images, short texts, short videos) that you will incorporate into your discussion, with an explanation your selections’ relevance.

**Assignment #3: Research Paper** (30%) **DUE: 1 Dec.**
This 10-page (double-spaced, 12 pt font) paper should explore and expand upon some of the themes that we have discussed in class. The essay should draw from **at least 2 primary sources and 6 secondary sources.** You may use materials we have read in class, but they will not count towards the source minimums. Your paper should **make an argument** and you will be evaluated on: the strength and insightfulness of your thesis; the strength of evidence used to support your claims; organization and structure; and clarity of prose. I encourage you to meet with me to discuss paper ideas.

**Weekly Questions** (10%)
Every week (save for your discussion week), each student must post to the weekly discussion forum at least one question you’d like to address in our meeting. **Questions must be posted before 10am on the day of our meetings.**

**Participation** (10%)
Our weekly meetings will revolve around class discussions. Please come to class prepared to debate, question, and engage with the weekly readings.
Submitting Assignments

Assignments are due in class on the due date. You may submit the paper via email to prevent a late penalty, but you must also provide a hard copy.

Late submissions will be penalized at 5% per day (including weekends).

Please consider using Dropbox, Google Drive, or another cloud-based server. In this day and age, computer crashes are extremely weak reasons for late submissions!

Plagiarism & Honour Code

Plagiarism is a serious offense. Please familiarize yourself with Wesleyan's plagiarism policy and Honour Code here:
http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/standardsregulations/plagiarism.html

http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/honorboard/honorcode.html

When in doubt, cite. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

COURSE CALENDAR

Week 1 (8 Sept)
Introduction | What are Revolutions?
Readings:
David Armitage, “Every Great Revolution is a Civil War”

Week 2 (15 Sept)
The Glorious Revolution of 1688
Readings:
5. English Bill of Rights, 1689

IN CLASS: Pincus discusses 1688
Week 3 (22 Sept) READING RESPONSE DUE

**Revolutions in Ways of Life**

Readings:

Week 4 (29 Sept)

**The American Revolution Part I**

Readings:

Week 5 (6 Oct)

**The American Revolution Part II**

Readings:
Week 6 (13 Oct)
The French Revolution Part I
Readings:
1. Darnton, “The High Enlightenment and the Low-Life of Literature”
3. Friedland, “Métissage: The Merging of Theater and Politics in Revolutionary France,” in Political Actors: Representative Bodies and Theatricality in the Age of the French Revolution
4. Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès, “What is the Third Estate?”
5. “Declarations of the Rights of Man”

Week 7 (20 Oct)
The French Revolution Part II
Readings:
3. Desan, Suzanne, “Broken Bonds: The Revolutionary Practice of Divorce,” in The Family on Trial in Revolutionary France (ERES)
4. Olympe de Gouges, “The Declaration of the Rights of Woman” (September 1791)
5. In class: http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/

Week 8 (27 Oct):
The Haitian Revolution Part I
Readings:
1. Dubois, Laurent, “Fire in the Cane” and “Liberty's Land,” in Avengers of the New World (ERES)
4. “The Free Citizens of Color, Address to the National Assembly,” October 22, 1789

IN CLASS: PBS Egalite FOR ALL DOC
Week 9 (3 Nov)  **READING RESPONSE DUE**

**The Haitian Revolution Part II**

**Readings:**


Week 10 (10 Nov)

**Research Week**

Week 11 (17 Nov)

**Spanish American Revolutions**

**Readings:**

1. Fitz, “Bolivar, U.S.A.”, in *Our Sister Republics* (ERES)


Week 12 (NO CLASS)

Week 13 (1 Dec)

**Canadian Rebellions**

**Readings:**


3. Palmer, “*Popular Radicalism and the Theatrics of Rebellion: The Hybrid Discourse of Dissent in Upper Canada in the 1830s*,” in *Transatlantic Subjects: Ideas,*
Institutions, and Social Experience in Post-Revolutionary British North America, pp. 403-38.


Week 14 (8 Dec) RESEARCH PAPER DUE
Research Paper Presentations