HIST 315: Global Histories

How big is too big? How far back in time can historians go? How best to understand the relationship between science and history? What counts as evidence? What accounts for the rise (or return, some would argue) of world/global history? What does it portend for the future of microhistory?

In short, the aim of HIST 315 is to create a space in which to explore the history and historiographical implications of macro-historical frameworks, including world history, global history, deep history, and big history. While we will certainly delve into traditional global- or world-historical topics like the "long nineteenth century," our focus will be on problems of approach, methodology, theory, and philosophy of history--especially with respect to recent historiographical trends over the past three decades. For History majors, this seminar counts toward the "History and Theory" module. This year the seminar is being cross-listed with the Center for the Humanities (CHUM), where the instructor is a faculty fellow. The spring semester theme of the Center is "Grand Narratives/Modest Proposals," which intersects directly with issues we will be addressing. Students are strongly encouraged to attend the Monday night lectures at the Center. They are fun and intellectually stimulating too. The Center theme and lecture schedule may be viewed here.

Assignments:

The goal of these assignments is to ensure that students take an active, indeed, leading role in the seminar.

- weekly response posts: 100-200 words, commenting on and raising questions from the readings (due noon on Wednesdays). [20%]
- seminar deliberations [30%]: Students will take the lead in the seminar deliberations. To this end:
  1. each week (save for week 8, when we will discuss 1857) one or two students (depending on the seminar demographics) will be tasked with leading discussion, raising questions (drawing on the weekly comments as appropriate and supplementing them with their own observations and questions), and moderating the
2. each week *(save for weeks 7 and 8)* one student will present on a major text (e.g., Fernand Braudel's *Mediterranean*) or school/approach (e.g., *Subaltern Studies*) pertinent to the global-historiographical approach or problem under consideration.

3. students will design the final two sessions of the semester (teams will be created)
   
   - four two-page essays: analytical reviews of the readings in weeks 1-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-11. **These are due on Fridays at 5 p.m. in weeks 3, 5, 8, 11.** [40%]
   - attendance/participation [10%]

**General Policies:**

Late work will be penalized. Failure to submit work will result in a zero for the assignment in question.

While disagreement is inevitable, all seminar participants are expect to treat everyone with respect and courtesy.

We will take a 10 minute break at the halfway mark each week.

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**31 January**

**Week 1: Introduction**

- Ramses Delafontaine’s Review of Armitage and Guldi, *The History Manifesto* (Cambridge 2014), History News Network [Note: You do NOT need to read the *Manifesto* itself. The link is provided in case you wish to examine it. Also, there are many reviews of this controversial text; feel free to explore them.]
7 February

Week 2. World/Global History: A History


14 February

Week 3. Eurocentrism and History

- Dominic Sachsenmeier, "World History as Ecumenical History?" *Journal of World History* 18, 4 (Dec. 2007), pp. 465-489
21 February

Week 4. Deep History

- Andrew Shryock and Daniel Lord Smail (eds.), Deep History: The Architecture of Past and Present, "Introduction," pp. 3-20

28 February

Week 5: Big History

- Julia Adeney Thomas, "History and Biology in the Anthropocene: Problems of Scale, Problems of Value," American Historical Review (Dec 2014), pp. 1587-1607
7 March

Week 6: Time

- John Zammito, "Koselleck’s Philosophy of Historical Time(s) and the Practice of History," History and Theory 43 (February 2004), pp. 124-135
- Donna R. Gabaccia, "Is It about Time?" Social Science History, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Spring 2010), pp. 1-12
- Brian Fay, "Hammer Time," History and Theory 52 (February 2013), pp. 91-109

Spring Recess

Midsemester Recess Begins March 9, 10 P.M. And Ends March 26, 8 A.M.

28 March

Week 7: The Global Nineteenth Century


- Professor Catherine Hall, review in Reviews in History

https://moodle1718.wesleyan.edu/course/view.php?id=3771


- Review by J. R. McNeill in the American Historical Review
- Patrick Manning, "The World of the Nineteenth Century," H-Net reviews
- Samuel Moyn's review in Prospect Magazine
- Fritz Stern's review in the New York Review of Books

4 April
Week 8: Global 1857
- Readings TBA

11 April
Week 9: Microhistory

18 April

**Week 10: Scale**


25 April

**Week 11: Global microhistory versus Microglobal history?**


• Anne Gerritson, “Scales of a Local: The Place of Locality in a


2 May

Week 12: TBD [student design]

9 May

Week 13: TBD [student design]