

Department of History, University of Pittsburgh
HIST 1001: Introductory Seminar: Reading and Writing World History
Spring Semester 2012
Class No. 26549
Wednesday, 9:30 – 11:55 a.m., 3701 Posvar

Instructor: Patrick Manning
Office Hour: Mondays, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon, 3904 Posvar Hall
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Topic:

The purpose of this required seminar for history majors is build your strength in reading historical works and in writing critical essays, and also to expand your skills in historical research by focusing on the difference between primary and secondary sources.

This version of the seminar involves reading and writing on topics on aspects of world history. By “world history” is meant large-scale approaches to the past, ranging over wide spaces, long periods of time, and a range of interacting issues. The four books we will read this semester convey quite different approaches to world history: the history of Asia as seen through the lives of key individuals; an interpretation of recent U.S. empire that puts it in the context of empires throughout history; an environmental history of the twentieth-century world; and an analysis of human history from the beginning to the present through the experience of migration.

Your work in the course will begin with reading and discussing the books. In addition you will give oral reports and written critiques of each book, then identify primary and secondary sources used in each book and analyze those sources. The final course assignment is a paper of ten pages (2500 words) in which you select a topic and write an interpretation of the past that takes a world-historical approach.

Required Books (these books to be read in Weeks 1 to 5):

Gordon, Stewart, *When Asia Was the World*
Maier, Charles, *Among Empires*
McNeill, John R., *Something New Under the Sun*
Manning, Patrick, *Migration in World History*

Course Organization:

We will spend three weeks on each of the four books for this course. In each case you will read the book and report on it in the first week (either orally or in writing). Then you will read the book again and report on it in the second week (either orally or in writing) to get a deeper sense of what it contains. In the third week you will select sources used in the book (either primary or secondary sources), locate those sources, and write a brief analysis of the sources. We will complete this series of steps four times, for each of the four books.

In addition, you will write a final paper of ten pages in length (2500 words). You will select the topic, but you must make the argument that the paper will be world-historical in scope. The paper is due during Finals Week, but in preparing it you are to

submit a topic (week 9), a bibliography (week 10), an abstract (week 11), and you are to give an oral presentation on the paper (week 15).

Handouts to be posted on Courseweb during the semester will provide additional detail on how to prepare oral reports, written critiques, and on how to locate and analyze primary and secondary sources. For the final paper, you will receive additional hints on topic selection, bibliography, abstracts, and on the organization and writing of the final paper. In addition, further readings on the study of world history will be made available.

Course Activities and Grades

- Four oral reports at 6% each (24%)
- Four written critiques at 6% each (24%)
- Four source analyses at 3% each (12%)
- Abstract of final paper (5%)
- Final paper (20%)
- Attendance and discussion (15%)

Weekly Activities and Reading:

Week 1. (Jan. 4)

Introduction

Week 2. (Jan. 11)

Read Gordon, *When Asia Was the World*

Assignment: Group A – oral report on Gordon
Group B – written critique of Gordon

Week 3. (Jan. 18)

Read Gordon, *When Asia Was the World*

Assignment: Group A – written critique of Gordon
Group B – oral report on Gordon

Week 4. (Jan. 25)

Read primary or secondary sources relevant to Gordon book

Assignment: Group A – analysis of primary sources
Group B – analysis of secondary sources

Week 5. (Feb. 1)

Read Maier, *Among Empires*

Assignment: Group A – written report on Maier
Group B – oral critique of Maier

Week 6. (Feb. 8)

Read Maier, *Among Empires*

Assignment: Group A – oral critique of Maier
Group B – written report on Maier

Week 7. (Feb. 15)

Read primary or secondary sources relevant to Maier book

Assignment: Group A – analysis of secondary sources
Group B – analysis of primary sources

Week 8. (Feb. 22)

Read McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun*

Assignment: Group A – oral report on McNeill
Group B – written critique of McNeill

Week 9. (Feb. 29)

Read McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun*

Assignment: Group A – written critique of McNeill
Group B – oral report on McNeill
Groups A and B – submit topic for final paper

Spring Break (March 7)

Week 10. (March 14)

Read primary or secondary sources relevant to McNeill book

Assignment: Group A – analysis of primary sources
Group B – analysis of secondary sources
Groups A and B – submit bibliography for final paper

Week 11. (March 21)

Assignment: Groups A and B – Submit abstract of final paper

Week 12. (March 28)

Read Manning, *Migration in World History*

Assignment: Group A – written report on Manning
Group B – oral critique of Manning

Week 13. (April 4)

Read Manning, *Migration in World History*

Assignment: Group A – oral critique of Manning
Group B – written report on Manning
Groups A and B – submit outline of final paper

Week 14. (April 11)

Read primary or secondary sources relevant to Manning book

Assignment: Group A – analysis of secondary sources
Group B – analysis of primary sources

Week 15 (April 18)

Assignment: Groups A and B – Oral presentation of final paper in class

April 23 (Exam Week)

Assignment: Submit final paper