

History Courses

HIST 2105* M. McComb

Crime and Punishment in Medieval Europe

TR 11:40-12:55

All past and present societies confront the fundamental problem of what should be done with those who violate society's rules and customs and why they should be punished. Despite its modern reputation for illogical violence and brutality, medieval Europe is no exception to this principle. Medieval societies held ideas about punishment and redress for offense and injury which while very different were no less complex than our own.

This course is structured around two fundamental questions: how did medieval societies punish and why – in their own minds – did they do so? Our investigation of these questions will lead us to consider the array of social and physical punishments these authorities used to confront crime, sin, and social disorder.

Through a mixture of corporal punishments, rituals of shame and exclusion, and incarceration, medieval elites attempted to create orderly societies and disciplined individuals. Through the lens of punishment, we will further dig into the ideas medieval people held about gender, social identity, personal honor, and the human body.

HIST 2391* Parmenter, J.

AMST 2391

From Terra Incognita to Territories of Nation-States: Early American History in Two Dozen Maps

MWF 10:10-11:00

This course engages the rich cartographic record of colonial North America via an in-depth analysis of two dozen iconic maps. Integrating visual and textual analysis, students will assess human representations of space across cultural boundaries, explore change over time in the mapmaking practices of indigenous peoples and various European intruders, and study the evolving relationship between cartography and power, attending particularly to the process by which mapping promoted a revolutionary new understanding of American geography as composed of the bounded territories of nation-states.

History Courses

HIST 2460* Minawi, M.

NES 2640

The Age of Suleiman the Magnificent

TR 2:55-4:10

Required Prereq: HIST 1561

Much has been written about the so-called "Golden Age" of the Ottoman Empire, some based on documentary evidence, while other based on the fertile imagination of foreign diplomats, artists, and historians alike. In this seminar, we will explore the myths surrounding the Age of Suleiman the Magnificent, and the role they have played in the telling of the popular history of the Middle East, and the so-called "rise and fall" of Islamic civilization. How do seemingly innocuous stories about the decadence of the court, the loose morality of the "oriental" and the imagined Harem continue to impact our perception of the so-called "East" and in what way do they still define some of the very questions even contemporary researchers and journalists ask? Relying on a combination of popular history books, academic monographs, critiques of the genre of the "history of great men," and works of historical fiction, this seminar is meant to introduce undergraduate students interested in getting a sense of Ottoman popular history between 1500-1700, while being mindful of the power of storytelling in works of history and the perils of myth-making.

HIST 2521* Weil, R.

England's Age of Revolutions, 1500-1815

MW 11:15-12:05*

Why did a relatively poor, marginal island garner a reputation for rebelliousness and embark on radical (though often failed) experiments in toleration and democracy over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? This course explores the social, religious and political upheavals that rocked the British Isles, from the Henrician reformation to the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Topics include: the relationship of puritanism to political radicalism; the trial and execution of King Charles I, anti-Catholicism as an ideology; the twinned threats of theocracy and Cromwellian military rule; the role of the press and public opinion in early modern politics, the struggle for and limits of religious toleration, and the relationship of revolutions in England to violence in Scotland and Ireland. Finally, we will look at how the memory of earlier revolutions shaped British responses to the American and French Revolutions.

History Courses

HIST 2560 **Strauss, B.**

CLAS 2680

War & Peace in Greece and Rome

TR 10:10-11:25

In ancient Greece and Rome, government did little besides wage war and raise taxes, culture focused on war, warriors gloried in battle, and civilians tried to get out of the way. This course surveys the impact of war and the rarity of peace in the ancient world. Topics include: "why war?"; the face of battle; leadership; strategy, operations, and tactics; women and war; intelligence and information-gathering; diplomacy and peacemaking; militarism; war and slavery; the archaeology of warfare. Readings in translation include selections from Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Caesar, Livy, Tacitus, Josephus, and Ammianus Marcellinus. (pre-1800/non-US)

HIST 2660 **Parmenter, J.**

AMST 2660

Everything You Know about Indians is Wrong: Unlearning Native American History (HB)

AIS 2660

MW 9:05-9:55

One thing many Americans think they know is their Indians: Pocahontas, the First Thanksgiving, fighting cowboys, reservation poverty, and casino riches. Under our very noses, however, Native American history has evolved into one of the most exciting, dynamic, and contentious fields of inquiry into America's past. It is now safer to assume, as Comanche historian Paul Chaat Smith has pointed out, that everything you know about Indians is in fact wrong. Most people have much to "unlearn" about Native American history before true learning can take place. This course aims to achieve that end by (re)introducing students to key themes and trends in the history of North America's indigenous nations. Employing an issues-oriented approach, the course stresses the ongoing complexity of Native American societies' engagements with varieties of settler colonialism since 1492 and dedicates itself to a concerted program of myth-busting. As such, the course will provide numerous opportunities for students to develop their critical thinking and reading skills. (pre-1800)

History Courses

HIST 2742 Falk, O.

MEDV 2130

Cultures of the Middle Ages: Medieval Frontiers Societies (HB) (CA-AS)

TR 10:10-11:25

It's bad enough to run up against a border: at least you know where you stand. The frontier, however -- that fuzzy, murky zone that envelops the border while making its precise contours invisible -- is far more ambiguous, dangerous ground to tread. People, ideas, and other contraband criss-cross it; men (and sometimes women) make their own law; cultures clash and conspire together. At the margins of Europe -- Ireland, Wales, Scandinavia, Poland, Germany, the Low Countries, Spain, Sicily, the Levant -- medieval people discovered what every Trekkie knows: final frontiers, spaces of both oppression and opportunity. This course will explore some of the exchanges, friendly and otherwise, that took place at the edges of the medieval world, seeding many of the more radical developments which shaped the modern world.

HIST 2970 Litvak, Olga

Imperial Russia (HB) (HA-AS)

MW 8:40-9:55

This course surveys the history of Imperial Russia, from its ninth-century Kievan beginnings to its rapid disintegration under the pressure of the First World War. Lectures will draw special attention to recurrent acts of revolutionary transformation that punctuate Russia's long tradition of "internal colonization." We will look at the creation of Russian culture, politics and society between the ninth century and the nineteenth as an exercise in empire-building — a project that originated with the enterprising princes of medieval Moscow, collapsed with the end of the Riurikid dynasty at the turn of the seventeenth century, spectacularly revived in eighteenth-century St. Petersburg, under the standard-bearer or the reforming Romanovs, Peter the Great, and eventually taken up by some of the most articulate representatives of a late-imperial intelligentsia whose dreams of Russian greatness were even more extravagant than those of the tsar. Topics for discussion include: the Russian translation of Greek Christianity, Russia's fraught relationship with Western Europe, the paradox of imperial modernization and the continual recourse, in Russian literary, musical, and visual cultures to an image of Russia as a frontier society without a state.

History Courses

HIST 4405 **Jonsson, M.**

RELST 4404*

Magic and Demonic Creatures between Reformation and Enlightenment

R 12:20-2:15

This course examines beliefs in magic and magical creatures, looking at how the occult organized all aspects of early modern life. Scientists believed that magic could help them create gold, doctors practiced blood magic, and court magistrates sentenced Jews or elderly women to death for allegedly performing devilish rituals on small children. Through the course readings, both primary and secondary, we will analyze how the superstitious was mobilized within struggles between Catholics and Protestants, the nobility and the peasantry, and within emergent Enlightenment philosophy. In particular we will discuss why witches or werewolves were imagined (and hunted) in the period, what that can tell us about the cultural climate of the time, but also how their meaning could morph into the familiar horror staples of our own world. (pre-1800)

HIST 4761 **Falk, O.**

HIST 6761

Anglo-Saxon England (HB)

MEDV 4761

MEDV 6761

T 2:30-4:25

The people who invaded the isle of Britain after the withdrawal of Roman government in the early fifth century, and who dominated it until the establishment of Norman rule in the late eleventh century, are responsible for some of the best-known and most enduring legacies of the Middle Ages: Beowulf and Bede's Ecclesiastical History, the archbishoprics of Canterbury and York, Alfred the Great and Æthelred the Unready. This course examines the Anglo-Saxons in their early-medieval context, focusing especially on the cooperation between history and its sister disciplines – archaeology, literary criticism, and others – that is so vital for shedding light on this distant, opaque era.

History Courses

HIST 4950 Weil, R.

FGSS 4950
HIST 6905*

Gender, Power, and Authority in England 1600-1800

M 2:30-4:25

Limited to 15 students.

It is a truism that early modern society was a 'patriarchal' one in which men had authority -- but how did that authority operate and what were its limits? How did the exercise of power between men and women intersect with religious, literary, legal and political institutions? We will approach these questions chronologically, examining the impact of the Reformation, the English Revolution, the Enlightenment, the rise of middle class and polite culture. We will also explore them methodologically and generically, with an eye to how different kinds of evidence and sources can produce different kinds of conclusions. Historians' hypotheses will be tested by analysis of primary sources.

HIST 6905* Weil, R.

FGSS 4950
HIST 4950

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