

Spring 2010 Topics courses for History

Hist194-03, MWF 9:40 am-10:40

Introduction to Modern European Women's History, 1500-Present, Professor Ae Leah Soine

This course traces the history of women in Europe since 1500. The organization is broadly chronological as we look at patterns of everyday life for women of various classes, regions, and eras. Given the daunting breadth of this course, we will focus on particular moments that illuminate an era or suggest significant historical change. Students will be challenged to recognize the contributions of many individual and groups of women in various historical movements and eras, as well as posit alternative chronologies reflective of women's unique historical experiences. Reoccurring themes in the readings, lectures, and discussions will include women's roles in: feminist or proto-feminist consciousness; roles within the household, family, and society; citizenship, suffrage, governance, and political power; class, religious, and social milieus or movements; and national, imperial, or wartime mobilizations.

Hist294-02, M 1:10-4:10 pm

Remembering the Modern City, Professor Ernesto Capello

This class interrogates the role that memory and history played in the formation of modern urban identities by reviewing theoretical literature on urban memory, a series of case studies, and hands-on archival research. We will be treating the layering of metaphorical significance upon particular zones or sites within an urban landscape that demarcate social memory of groups at the local, urban, provincial, or national level. We will be particularly concerned with the role of the state (local, provincial national) in fostering an official memory landscape within cities, the role of historic preservationists especially as regards zoning and planning decisions, and the creation of heritage tourism. We shall also be attending to the contestation that is inherent in the inscription of a particular narrative upon the urban fabric, highlighting moments in which subaltern group attempted to interrogate the memory landscape of the dominant culture, etc. Our theoretical conversation will be complemented by attention to a series of case studies of individual cities, including Paris, New York, New Orleans, Buenos Aires, and Oaxaca. We will also be considering the memory landscape of the Twin Cities in site visits and archival research with a particular emphasis upon the history of public art and the remembering of Rondo.

Hist294-03, MWF 03:30 pm-04:30

Farm and Forest: African Environmental History, Professor Jamie Monson

This course will explore the complex interaction between the African physical world or "nature" (plants, soils, water, climate) and "culture" (human society) over time, from the pre-colonial period through colonization and independence. We will also seek to understand the cultural and symbolic meanings historically associated with the African natural world, both for African societies and for non-Africans who have been engaged with the continent. We will delve into controversies about land use, population growth, wildlife conservation, desertification and other topics. Each student will gain insight into a particular issue or case study through an independent research project.

Hist294-05, MWF 1:10 pm-2:10

Europe and the World Wars, 1900-1950, Professor Ae Leah Soine

For much of the first half of the twentieth century, Europeans seemed to be preparing for war, at war, or recovering from war. This course will explore the diverse experiences of the world wars in Europe through the eyes of world and national leaders, soldiers and civilians, children and adults, collaborators and resistance fighters. It will also introduce students to key scholarly debates over issues of the causes of World Wars I and II, Nazi collaboration versus resistance, and whether the world wars are best understood as a single era of modern warfare or two distinct military and social conflicts separated by

an era of peace. Students will be expected to read and analyze a variety of primary and secondary historical sources with the intention of understanding better the political, social, economic, and moral values that were tested by this dynamic era of total war and fragile peace.

Hist294-06, MWF 2:20 pm-3:20

Transnational Origins of the European Welfare State, 1848-Present, Professor Ae Leah Soine

The European welfare state of the post-World War II era has been praised as the hallmark of post-war socio-economic recovery and stability, generous state-funded systems of education, health-care, and social safety nets, and models of social justice and human equity. Yet, critics have come to see these developments as propping up a system plagued by inefficiency, bloated government bureaucracies, and tainted with socialism. This course will explore the origins and development of European social welfare out of the early industrialized economies of Great Britain, the United States, and Germany, and their

development into modern debates over the ideal level of government intervention and obligation to its citizens and non-citizens. Specific topics will include the rationalization of poor laws in the nineteenth century, the introduction of worker's insurance and pensions, the collaborative role of American and European women in the creation of modern social welfare programs and systems, the real and imagined relationship between social welfare and socialism, the politicization of health and welfare, and the nature of a post-war European consensus on the welfare state in the context of the Cold War and contemporary American health care debates.