Global History II: The Age of Carbon, 1750–The Present

History 250-2-01
Harris Hall 107
Mon., Wed., Fri. 10:00am–10:50am
Introductory undergraduate lecture

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Section teachers

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Please note: This syllabus is for the *lecture* component of the course. You will also receive, from your section teacher, a syllabus with expectations for your discussion section, grading policies, and a more precise schedule of readings.

Course description

This course offers an introduction to the main episodes and themes in modern history. Unlike other history classes, however, the focus will be not on a particular region or nation, but on the planet, taken as a whole. That broad scope will allow us to better understand large-scale phenomena, such as slavery, empire, nationalism, the industrial revolution, international communism, carbon-based energy use, the two world wars, the Cold War, the spread of HIV/AIDS, and globalization. Attention will also be given to key historical events that, although of national scope, had global significance, such as independence movements in the United States and India or revolutions in France, Russia, and China. Ideally, you will gain from this class not only a familiarity with the basics of modern history but also an understanding of the ways in which the various parts of the modern world relate to each other.

Components of the course and grading

Reading

Reading assignments will be almost always under 200 pages per week, often under 150 pages. You'll be expected to do all of the reading carefully before your discussion section—see your section syllabus for a schedule of which readings you'll be responsible for by which discussion section. As you read, I strongly advise that you take notes. Some people do this by underlining key passages and writing notes in the margins (note: do *not* do this in library books!). Others prefer to take notes in a notebook or on a computer. Any system you would like to use is fine, but it is important that you keep some kind of record, because we'll be going through a lot of material over the course of the quarter and it will be hard to keep track of it all if you are not writing things down.

There is no textbook for this class. If you find yourself struggling with the basics of world history, then you may want to acquire a textbook for reference. I'd recommend the following three, all of which you can order from the library via UBorrow.

- Peter Stearns et al, *World Civilizations: The Global Experience*, parts 5–6 (2011)
- Robert W. Strayer, *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History*, vol. 2 (2008)
- Robert Tignor et al, *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart*, vol. C (2011)

If you want something that covers key episodes in global history but is more advanced than a textbook, try the earlier volumes of Hobsbawm's quartet: *Age of Revolution, 1789–1848* (1962), *Age of Capital: 1848–1875* (1975), and *Age of Empire, 1874–1914* (1987).

Discussion section

The center of this course will be your discussion section, which will be your opportunity to talk about the readings and, to a lesser degree, the lectures. Attendance and participation are mandatory. The discussion section accounts for the largest single portion of your grade, 30%. Each section teacher will specify on his section syllabus how that grade will be apportioned.

Midterm and final

The exams in this class will cover material from lectures and from the assigned readings. The question format on both will be varied and will likely include passage identifications, image identifications, chronologies (where you will be required to place events and texts in order), multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, and essays. Your exams will be graded anonymously.

There is no option for an early final.

Essays—format

Each essay should feature an interesting, non-obvious thesis; clear, correct, and persuasive prose; and properly formatted citations in either of the two systems described in Kate Turabian's *Manual for Writers* (any edition—available in the library). They should be 4–5 pages (not counting bibliography), double spaced, in 12-pt Times New Roman font, and with 1-inch page margins. Hand a print copy of each essay in by the deadline set by your section teacher and retain a digital copy for yourself.

Each essay assignment asks you to analyze a single reading for this class. But you will probably want to draw on other assigned readings in the course of making your argument.

Do not put your name on your essays. Instead, sign them with the middle letter and three numbers of your NetID. So, if your NetID is onr256, sign your essays N256. This will allow us to grade your work anonymously.

First essay

Interpret Jules Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1872) in terms of one of the following themes, each of which is the subject of a lecture: time, space, empire, capitalism, the nation-state, or racism. For whichever keyword you choose, write a thesis-driven essay explaining how Verne's novel engages with that theme.

Second essay

Choose at least one of Carl Barks's *Uncle Scrooge* stories (1954–56) and interpret it within the context of the themes of this course (note, you can discuss more than one). Your essay should display a familiarity with the analysis of the Disney comics offered by Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart, although you are by no means obliged to agree with them.

Grading

First essay:	15%	Discussion section:	30%
Second essay:	15%	Final:	25%
Midterm:	15%		

Appealing grades

All grading will be anonymous. If, after receiving a graded paper or exam back, you are confused by the grade or feel that it is not an accurate representation of your work, you have two options:

1. Make an appointment with your section teacher and ask for a clarification. You can then sit down and talk about your work, grading standards, possibilities for improvement, and so on.
2. Submit to your section teacher, in writing, an account of why you felt that the grade you received was inaccurate. If appropriate, they will be happy to regrade your work. This will not result in a lower grade.

It's fine if you'd like to meet with your section teacher and then, after that meeting, request a regrade, but regrade requests must be made in writing and not during office hours.

Plagiarism

An easy way for an undergraduate to destroy her college career is by plagiarizing. The college's rules concerning academic integrity can be found at www.northwestern.edu/uascc. Please read them, as you will be held accountable to them. The main principles you need to know are these:

1) If you are relying on somebody else's ideas or information, cite that person as the source.
2) If you use someone else's words, enclose those words in quotation marks and cite that person as the source.
3) Using someone else's writing as the foundation for your own writing, even if you modify their sentences in the process, still counts as relying on someone else's work. Since there is really no way to properly cite another text as the source for your prose, don't ever do this.

All suspected cases of plagiarism will be immediately reported to the dean's office.

In my experience, plagiarism happens when a student gets herself into a bind. She hasn't done the reading, or hasn't understood it, and now she has to write a paper that she doesn't have time to write. So she finds something that someone else has written, shifts it around, and presents it as her own work, sometimes without fully acknowledging to herself how much she has relied on her outside source. *This is remarkably easy to catch*. If you find yourself facing the choice of turning in clearly inadequate work or turning in plagiarized work, please trust me that you are better off choosing the former. If you turn in inadequate work, the worst thing that can happen to you is that you will get a bad grade on that particular assignment. If you turn in plagiarized work and get caught, the *best* thing that can happen to you is that you will fail the assignment and be reported to the administration. More likely, you will fail the entire course and get reported to the administration. The worst that can happen to you is that you will have a disciplinary hearing and be expelled.

In the case of one student turning in a paper that has been copied from another student, *both* students will be reported immediately to the dean's office.

Electronics

Laptops and tablets are great for note-taking, but they carry an enormous potential to distract both their users and, more importantly, anyone sitting behind their users (especially if the user in question strays from note-taking to Facebooking). So I'll request that, if you plan to use a laptop or other electronic device, you sit in the leftmost section of the classroom. I'll also request that you monitor your own behavior and ask yourself whether your computer is helping you learn or distracting you (and others). Internet surfing, phones, headphones, and noise-creating devices are prohibited and will be punished—not without some small amount of glee on my part—by public shaming.

Course books

These books are available at the university bookstore in Norris (except for the course reader). I have also placed them on reserve at the library. It does not matter which edition or, in the case of Verne, which translation of the books you buy or use.

- George M. Fredrickson, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002)
- Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914–1991* (1994; New York: Vintage Books, 1996)
- James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998)—available online through the library.
- Jules Verne, *Around the World in Eighty Days*, trans. George Makepeace Towle (1872; New York: Dover Publications, 2000)—this book is in the public domain and thus can be obtained online for free.
- Course reader, available at Quartet Digital Printing, 825 Clark Street

Schedule of readings and assignments (see section syllabus for precise dates)

Week of April 1
Tues. Introduction—Note, class is on Tuesday, not Monday
Wed. Geography
Fri. Carbon

Readings (41pp.):
- Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848* (1962 New York: Vintage, 1996), chap. 1 in reader (19pp.)
- J. R. McNeill, *Something New under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000), chap. 1 (22pp.)

Week of April 8
Mon. Capitalism
Wed. Revolution
Fri. The nation-state

Readings (117pp.):
- James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State* (1998), introduction, chaps. 1–3 (100pp.)
- Ken Alder, *The Measure of All Things: The Seven-Year Odyssey and Hidden Error that Transformed the World* (New York: The Free Press, 2002), excerpt from chap. 5 in reader (17pp.)

Week of April 15
Mon. Time
Wed. Space
Fri. Empire

Readings (208pp.):
- Jules Verne, *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1872) (170 pp.)
- Mohandas K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj, or Indian Home Rule* (1909) chaps. 4–7, 9–12, 16–17, and 19–20 chaps. 4–7, 9–12, 16–17, and 19–20 in reader (38pp.)

Week of April 22
Mon. Racism
Wed. Class
Fri. War

Readings (173pp.):
- George M. Fredrickson, *Racism* (2002), introduction and chaps. 1–2 (96pp.)
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848), excerpts in reader (20pp.)
- Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), chap. 6 in reader (57pp.)
- First essay due

Week of April 29
Mon. Nationalism
Wed. Communism
Fri. MIDTERM

Readings (87pp.):
- Erez Manela, "Dawn of a New Era: The 'Wilsonian Moment' in Colonial Contexts and the Transformation of World Order, 1917-1920" in *Competing Visions of World Order: Global Moments and Movements, 1880s–1930s*, ed. Sebastian Conrad and Dominic Saschsenmaier (New York: Palgrave, 2007) in reader (29pp.)
- Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes* (1994), chaps. 2 and 13 (58pp.)

Week of May 6
Mon. The economy
Wed. The holocaust
Fri. Imperial war

Readings (118pp.):
- Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes* (1994), chaps. 3–5 (92pp.)
- Eberhard Jäckel, "Germany's Way into the Second World War," in *The Burden of German History, 1919–1945*, ed. Michael Laffan (London: Methuen, 1988), in reader (6pp.)
- Janam Mukherjee, *Hungry Bengal: War, Famine, Riots, and the End of Empire, 1939–1946* (forthcoming), introduction in reader (20pp.)

Week of May 13
Mon. Hegemony
Wed. Decolonization
Fri. Cold war

Readings (140pp., plus 69pp. of comic books):
- Carl Barks, "Tralla La" (1954), "The Seven Cities of Cibola" (1954), and "The Lost Crown of Genghis Khan" (1956) posted on course Blackboard site (69pp.)
- Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart, *How to Read Donald Duck* (1971; New York: I. G. Editions, 1991), preface, introduction and chapters 3–4 in reader (30pp.)
- Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009), chaps. 2–3 in reader (79pp.)
- Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes* (1994), chap. 8 (31pp.)

Week of May 20
Mon. Development
Wed. Gender
Fri. Human Rights

Readings (115pp.):
- Michael Adas, "Modernization Theory and the American Revival of the Scientific and Technological Standards of Social Achievement and Human Worth," in *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War*, ed. David Engerman et al. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003) in reader (21pp.)
- James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), chaps. 1–2 in reader (70pp.)
- Daniel Sargent, "Oasis in the Desert? America's Human Rights Rediscovery" (2013) in in *The Breakthrough: Human Rights in the 1970s*, ed. Jan Eckel and Samuel Moyn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, forthcoming) in reader (24pp.)
- Second essay due

Week of May 27
Mon. No lecture—Memorial Day
Wed. Globalization
Fri. Poverty

Readings (75pp.):
- Doreen Massey, "A Global Sense of Place" (1994) in reader (8pp.)
- Thomas Pogge, "Priorities of Global Justice" *Metaphilosophy* 21 (2001) in reader (19pp.)
- Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), chap. 5 and pp. 156–163 (48pp.)

Week of June 3
Mon. The environment

Readings (32pp.):
- J. R. McNeill, *Something New under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000), chap 4 in reader (32pp.)

FINAL: Tuesday, June 11, 9am–11am, 107 Harris Hall.