

History 941: Indians and Empires

Spring 2006

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Office Hours: Wed. 9:30-11am and by apt.

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Course Description:

This course explores the recent proliferation of scholarship on Indian-imperial relations throughout North American colonial spheres from 1500 to 1900. It examines Indian responses to Spanish, Dutch, French, English, and lastly American and Canadian colonialisms and interrogates commonplace periodization, geographic, and conceptual approaches to North American history. It presupposes an advanced familiarity with American historiography and concludes with an examination of recent developments in American Indian political autonomy, contextualizing them within a larger assessment of Indian-imperial and Indian-state relations.

Course Organization:

Each session's readings are thematically organized and connect to form a broad overview of the field. Issues of encounter, Native responses to contact, and the ensuing revolutions that remade indigenous and Euro-American societies alike are among the primary foci. Questions of Indian-white relations, US Indian policy, historical memory, orality, and representational authority are also considered.

Course Requirements:

Students are responsible for a series of assigned readings, common assignments, individual presentations, a bibliography, and either a final research paper or historiography review.

1) Readings and individual presentations:

Each week's discussion revolves around a series of common texts. Following week three, there will be individual presentations drawn from the recommended readings (* below indicate presentation texts). Each presentation should offer supplemental historical and interpretive context for that week's subject and should raise a series of questions about the week's readings as a whole. Each presenter, in short, should draw thematic parallels and differences with the week's common readings, should take no more than 15 minutes, prepare a 1200-1500 word book report summarizing the presentation's substantive and interpretive contributions, as well as circulate via the class email list a series of discussion starting-points for that week's session. Such proposed questions should be sent before 9pm the day before class. The presentation and book review will constitute 20% of the course grade.

2) Reaction pieces and seminar attendance/participation

For the first two (2) sessions, there will be reaction pieces due via email. Each reaction piece must address a series of questions (see below), offering a 750-1000 word response

circulated to the entire class via email before 9am the day of class (students must also deliver their responses to the instructor's box by 9am in typed and double-spaced format).

Seminar discussion is critical to student learning and course success, and attendance is mandatory. Any conflicts must be brought to the instructor's attention prior to any absence. Students who miss a seminar must prepare a book report similar in size and context to the individual presentations chosen from the presentation list. Seminar participation and the reaction pieces will constitute 30% of the final grade.

3) Bibliographies and final papers

Students have two options for their final projects. Students currently working on research projects relating to any aspect of American Indian history can submit evolving thesis chapters, article submissions, or other directed research projects as their final paper. These projects must receive prior consent, must include a detailed outline and bibliography, should be no longer than 8000 words (30-35 pages), and should be properly referenced. If working on a particularly focused chapter, article, or paper, a 500-word precise/abstract outlying the project's central aims and scholarly contributions must also be included.

The other option is a final historiography paper no longer than 5000 words (18-24 pages) due during finals week. Each historiography paper should chart the changing interpretations/debates/critical issues at the core of a particular subfield of Indian history. Given the course's organizing focus on regional and periodization schemes, in-depth analyses of a particular region and/or epoch might form suitable topics. Each student must identify a suitable topic with the instructor by Week 11.

All students must develop an extended bibliography based on their research or historiography topic. Each bibliography should include at a minimum: 30 secondary accounts of the subject (both articles as well as monographs) along with at least 10 clearly identified primary source collections, collected papers, volumes, indexes, and/or research guides related to the subject. These bibliographies should essentially map the secondary literature and identify potential avenues for research. They are to be handed in with the final papers. Final papers and bibliographies will constitute 50% of the course grade.

Conference Alert:

Students pursuing individual research projects or promising historiography reviews may consider submitting papers for the 7th Annual Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) American Indian Studies Graduate Student Conference to be held at Indiana University, April 21-22nd. This nationally prominent conference is the centerpiece for the CIC/Big Ten's American Indian Studies Consortium, the nation's only graduate-focused, intercollegiate association for American Indian Studies run out of the D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian History at the Newberry Library in Chicago. Annual paper prizes will be awarded. For further information, please visit:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~aisri/index.shtml>

Vans of UW-Madison participants have attended this conference in years past and may again this year.

Course Reading Materials: