THE HISTORY OF MODERN EUROPE

Environment and History in Europe

History 3240, Fall 2013
MWF 8:30 AM-9:20 AM
Main 119

Professor Marc Landry, marc.landry@usu.edu
Office Hours: MWF 11:30 AM-12:30 PM and by appointment, 321J Old Main
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Course Description

This upper-level course is designed to explore the history of modern Europe until the post-WWII period. The guiding theme for the course will be the significance of the natural environment in modern European history. Like all history, the history of modern Europe unfolded in the setting of natural environments and this context is often crucial for understanding historical outcomes. Notions about nature, and interactions with the environment, moreover, often assumed center stage in this historical drama. In this course we will be delving deeply into the study of modern Europe. As a seminar-style class, it also requires reading and discussing a wide variety of challenging texts. In addition you will gain skills at a number of tasks critical to performing historical research, but useful in all walks of life.

Learning Outcomes:

History 3240 is designed to develop:

Historical Knowledge
- identifying both key events in the history of modern Europe and how change occurs over time
- describing the influence of politics, economics, social organization, culture, and environment on historical events
- analyzing the ways in which factors such as race, gender, class, ethnicity, region, and religion influence historical narratives

Historical Thinking
- recognizing the “pastness” of the past, and explaining the influence of the past on the present
- interpreting the complexity and diversity of historical situations
- recognizing a range of historical viewpoints and competing historical narratives
- analyzing cause and effect relationships and multiple causation

**Historical Skills**

- developing skills in critical thinking and reading to evaluate debates among historians and analyze historical interpretations
- assessing the credibility of primary and secondary sources
- formulating historical questions and obtaining historical information from a variety of sources
- communicating historical information in a variety of ways
- writing a well-organized historical argument based on historical evidence

**Required Books**

Marco Armiero, *A Rugged Nation: Mountains and the Making of Modern Italy*


Mark Cioc, *The Rhine: An Eco-biography, 1815-2000*

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

**Assessments, Grading, and Expectations**

**Assessments**

Class Participation: 25%

In a seminar, discussion is perhaps the most critical component of the course. Throughout the semester, we will be discussing the assigned readings, mostly (but not always) in specific sessions. Your participation grade will depend on your ability to demonstrate your engagement with these readings through effective discussion. It will also depend on your ability to engage your classmates in a courteous manner. I expect all reading assignments to be completed by the day indicated. Attendance at every session is mandatory, and unexcused absences will negatively impact your grade. See the section on attendance for more information.

Analysis of a primary source: 15% *(due October 7)*

This assignment is an opportunity for you to dabble with the historian’s brick and mortar: primary sources. I will provide several primary sources for you to choose from. In a 5-page essay you must analyze the significance of the source, and formulate an argument explaining how the source might be used by a historian. Prior to submission, I will give more detailed instructions on this assignment and its assessment.

Annotated Bibliography: 15% *(due November 8)*

It is my sincere hope that during the course of the semester, your interest in a particular aspect or theme of modern European history is sparked. Whether or not this actually happens, you will be responsible for compiling an annotated bibliography on a special aspect of European history. Putting together an annotated bibliography is one typical way that historians first approach a research topic they are interested in exploring, and
this assignment also represents a first step in a broader project for you. An annotated bibliography is like a normal bibliography, however underneath all of the titles you write a few sentences explaining its main point in reference to your area of interest. All students must come to office hours in order to verify their topic with me before beginning. More details about this assignment to be given in class.

Class Presentation: 15% (due week of December 2-6)
As a further step towards expertise in the topic you selected for your annotated bibliography, you will prepare a short presentation on the topic for your classmates. How long these presentations can be will ultimately depend on class size. Paying attention to and engaging with student presentations will factor significantly into your participation grade as well. More details in class.

Final Paper: 30% (due December 13, but I'm very happy to have them earlier!)
The final component of your assessment is a longer paper that represents the culmination of your engagement with the special topic you chose to explore. Building off of your annotated bibliography, and your in-class presentation, this final paper will be an 8-10 page (including bibliography) in-depth analysis of the readings. After having completed this literature review, you will be in a good position to formulate an original research project on the topic, should that be of interest. Further details in class.

Grading
My goal is to assess and evaluate your work as accurately and fairly as possible, and to return your work to you in a timely fashion. Studies have shown that blind assessment is one of the best methods to avoid instructor bias. To that end, I will ask you submit all papers with your name and any identifiers placed at the end. You can expect all assignments to be returned to you the week after submission.

Policy on overdue work
The deadlines in the course schedule are firm. However, if problems arise or if you experience difficulties during the semester, please do let me know. Extensions will be granted for reasonable purposes, but requests must occur no later than one week before an assignment is due. Late assignments will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade per day overdue.

Appealing grades
If a student believes that an assignment deserves more credit than was awarded, the student may appeal to me for reconsideration. Students must wait at least one day after receiving the grade before making an appeal. The appeal must include a written explanation of the rationale for the grade adjustment. Remember, grade adjustments can also be downward.

Communications Policy
During the week I will respond to all email inquiries within a 24-hour time period, excluding 10pm-6am. I will try to keep this schedule during weekends and holidays as well, but these are times when I may not be checking my email regularly.
**Attendance**
Attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absences will lower your participation grade. You should make every effort to be present when we meet. The second absence will result in the lowering of your participation grade by a full letter grade. The third absence will result in a zero for your participation grade. To avoid these penalties, you must speak with me prior to any absence except in the case of an emergency. If an emergency occurs, contact me as soon as possible to be excused from class.

**Classroom Policies**

**Classroom conduct**
For a seminar to be successful, classroom civility is crucial. I want to ensure that everyone feels comfortable contributing to our weekly discussions. Different perspectives and opinions will surely surface during the course of the semester. Indeed this is to be encouraged as part of the class discussion process—as long as we treat one another with decency and respect. I expect no problems as this is basic common courtesy. However, if at any point during the semester you have concerns along these lines, please let me know.

**Classroom technology**
Please silence cell phones and other communication devices during class. Surfing the web or engaging in other non-class-related activity during class is unacceptable and will negatively affect your participation grade. Classroom technology use must not interfere with other students' ability to participate.

**Course Guidelines**

**Academic Honesty**
I expect students to abide by the policies on academic honesty outlined by Utah State University and implicit in the Honor Pledge you've made as students. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Anyone using another's work without attribution, no matter the source, may be failed. You should review USU's academic honesty policy here:

**Student Resources**

**Academic Support:**
Two resources which students should take advantage of are the Academic Resource Center (http://www.usu.edu/arc/) and the Department of English Writing Center (http://writing.usu.edu/). The Academic Resource Center helps students to study and learn
more effectively. And contrary to the name, the Department of English Writing Center is open to students of all majors who would like help with any kind of writing.

Special Needs:
If you have special needs, please contact me as soon as possible. Students who require accommodations for the course should contact the Disability Resource Center, located in the University Inn, Room 101 (435-797-2444), Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Or visit their website: http://www.usu.edu/drc/

Course Schedule

**Week 1: Introduction to Modern European History**
Monday, August 26: Why Are You Here? Course Introduction
Wednesday, August 28: What is Modern European History? Or Why you Should Pay Attention to Course Titles?
Reading: http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/01/09/where-is-europe/?_r=0
Friday, August 30: What is Environmental History?
Reading: Cioc, *The Rhine* (Intro, ch. 1-2)

**Week 2: Working with Sources**
Monday, September 2: Labor Day! (No Class)
Wednesday, September 4: Primary Sources
Friday, September 6: Secondary Sources
Reading: Cioc, *The Rhine* (ch. 3-4)

**Week 3: The French Revolution**
Monday, September 9: The French Revolution
Wednesday, September 11: Environmental Consequences of the Revolution
Reading: Blackbourn, “The Man Who Tamed the Wild Rhine”
Friday, September 13: The Rhine
Reading: Cioc, *The Rhine* (ch. 5-6)

**Week 4: The Industrial Revolution**
Monday, September 16: The Fossil Fuel Revolution
Wednesday, September 18: The Nature of the Industrial Revolution
Reading: Steinberg, “An Ecological Perspective on the Origins of Industrialization”
Friday, September 20: The Rhine Conclusion
Reading: Cioc, *The Rhine* (ch. 7-8)

**Week 5: Revolutionary Consequences**
Monday, September 23: Primary Source Analysis Discussion
Reading: Begin Shelley, Frankenstein
Wednesday, September 25: Urbanization and Industrialization in the Early 19th Century
Friday, September 27: Environmental Context of the Transition
Reading: Tomory, "Environmental History of the Early British Gas Industry"

**Week 6: Reaction**
Monday, September 30: Romanticism
Wednesday, October 2: Romantics and Nature
Reading: Steigerwald, “The Cultural Enframing of Nature”
Friday, October 4: Frankenstein Discussion
Reading: Complete Shelley, Frankenstein by October 4

Week 7: The Rise of the Nation
Monday, October 7: Revolutions of 1848 and Processes of National Unification
(Primary Source analysis due)
Wednesday, October 9: Library/Special Collections Visit
Friday, October 11: Discussion
Reading: Armiero, Rugged Nation (Intro, Wild Mountains, Rebel Mountains)

Week 8: Industrialization and Mass Politics
Monday, October 14: New Technologies and Global Transformations
Wednesday, October 16: White Coal
Thursday, October 17 (Class meets on Thurs. due to fall break): Rugged Nation Discussion
Reading: Armiero, Rugged Nation (finish book)

Week 9: Imperialism and Colonialism
Monday, October 21: Annotated Bibliography Discussion
Wednesday, October 23: Europe Conquers the World
Friday, October 25: Imperialism Discussion
Readings: Curtain, “The Environment Beyond Europe”; Conte, “Colonial Science”

Week 10: The Great War
Monday, October 28: The First World War
Wednesday, October 30: The Great War and the Environment
Readings: Brantz, "Environments of Death"; Keller, "The Alps Roar"
Friday, November 1: Environmental Consequences of the Peace
Reading: Landry, “Environmental Consequences of the Peace”

Week 11: Revolution
Monday, November 4: Final Paper Discussion
Wednesday, November 6: The Russian Revolution
Friday, November 8: Revolution Discussion
Annotated Bibliography Due!

Week 12: The Second World War
Monday, November 11: The Origins of the Second World War
Wednesday, November 13: The World at War
Reading: Bess, Light Green Society (parts I and II)
Friday, November 15: World War II and the Environment Discussion
Reading: Hall, "World War II and the Axis of Disease"; Pearson "Creating the Natural Fortress"

Week 13: The Cold War
Monday, November 18: Student Presentation Discussion
Reading: Bess, Light Green Society (parts III and IV)
Wednesday, November 20: The Cold War
Friday, November 22: Environmental Histories of the Cold War
Readings: McNeill and Unger, Environmental Histories of the Cold War (Intro, ch. 1)

Week 14: Postwar
Monday, November 25: Light-Green Society Discussion
Reading: Bess, *Light-Green Society* (finish for discussion)

No Class Wednesday 11/27, 11/29 (Happy Thanksgiving!)

**Week 15: Topics in Modern Europe Presentations**
Monday, December 2: Student Presentations
Wednesday, December 4: Student Presentations
Friday, December 6: Student Presentations/Conclusion

Final Paper Due Dec 13 @ 12:00 PM (but I’m very happy to have them earlier!)