History 753  
The Cold War as World Histories

Wednesdays, 7:00pm – 9:30pm  
5245 Humanities Building  
Spring 2005  
University of Wisconsin

Professor Steve J. Stern  
sjstern@wisc.edu  
263-1807  
Office hours in 5105 Humanities:  
Mondays 3:30-5:30pm  
or by appointment (via Nicole Hauge, 3-1808)

Professor Jeremi Suri  
suri@wisc.edu or 263-1852  
5119 Humanities Building  
Office hours: Mondays, 10:AM-Noon  
or by appointment

Course Aims

This is a graduate reading course designed to encourage and facilitate historical research across regions and methodological approaches. In this course we will treat the Cold War as both a *multicultural* and a *multidimensional* historical subject. This involves attention to the many diverse interactions among peoples, institutions, and cultures that pervaded the period. We will analyze the conjunctions and disjunctions between different historical voices: center and periphery, rich and poor, political and social.

The phrase “Cold War as World Histories” indicates that this course seeks to contribute to an emerging and creative scholarly conversation about internationalizing the study and teaching of history. We will define this endeavor broadly to include the following topics, among others: the international state system, world economic systems, decolonization, nationalist revolutions, domestic dissent, détente, human rights activism, and religious revivalism. In examining each of these topics we will rely on many analytical perspectives including, among others: great power diplomacy, imperialist expansion, social mobilization, the politics of memory, race, culture, and gender. “The Cold War as World Histories” situates all of these concerns in a global context that transcends the geographic boundaries of any particular nation-state or the details of any particular set of events. In approaching the Cold War, we will analyze the complex webs of causality that connect thoughts and actions in distant lands.

This course, and its innovative team-taught framework, self-consciously crosses many traditional scholarly boundaries. The instructors have intentionally chosen a diverse group of students with different disciplinary, methodological, geographical, and personal points of view. Through intensive discussions, presentations, and written assignments the collective community – faculty and students – will encourage the exploration, analysis, and synthesis of divergent perspectives on the history of our contemporary world.
**Assigned Readings**

**Books for Purchase at Rainbow Books (426 West Gilman Street):**


**Articles:**

Most of the assigned articles for the seminar are available through the electronic databases accessible at:

http://www.library.wisc.edu/journals

For articles and chapters not available electronically (see the ** indication in the syllabus), the professors will provide a small number of photocopied reading packets for students to share.
**Reading Assignments**

This course includes a heavy load of weekly reading. Students are expected to read all of the assigned materials carefully and critically before each seminar meeting. Focus on each author’s key arguments and how they relate to larger historical concerns and debates – how is the author trying to change the way we think about Cold War history? Interrogate narrative strategies – how does the author assemble his or her story for the purpose of convincing the reader? Pay close attention to sources – how does the author “prove” his or her point? Most important, as the semester progresses think about how the assigned readings relate to one another – how is each author responding to other scholars?

**Weekly Meetings**

The seminar will meet each Wednesday evening for two-and-a-half hours. During the first two hours we will discuss the assigned readings. We will interrogate how each text enhances our understanding of the period under examination as world histories.

During the last half hour of each seminar we will discuss pedagogy. We will contemplate how one might teach the week’s topic in different environments, such as large undergraduate universities, small liberal-arts schools, and community colleges. This part of the seminar should help prepare graduate students for their future teaching duties. Cold War history, world history, and international history are particularly relevant for undergraduate teaching in institutions that are becoming increasingly multicultural.
Applying the Cold War Lenses Assignment (due 2/23):

The readings and discussions for weeks two through five of our course will focus on 4 different conceptual frameworks (“lenses”) for examining the early history of the Cold War. For the first assignment, each student should apply one of these lenses to a particular topic in the history of the Cold War. In consultation with the professors, each student will undertake additional reading on a chosen topic (e.g. the Korean War, the 1953 coup in Iran, the U.S. occupation of Japan, the Sino-Soviet alliance, etc.). Students will then write a 5-page analytical paper that uses one of the Cold War lenses to elucidate the nature of the topic under investigation. This assignment is designed to enhance the student’s conceptual knowledge and his/her empirical understanding of a topic of interest.

On February 23 all students should bring their papers to class with enough copies for distribution to the entire seminar. Each student should also prepare a 5-minute presentation that outlines his/her main arguments and findings. For the purposes of discussion, the professors will group student presentations together, and encourage advance cooperation among students.

The essays should reflect clear thought, detailed analysis, and polished writing. They should be scholarly and creative. Make sure you proofread and revise your essays before submission! Presentations should be organized, engaging, analytical, and succinct. Make sure you plan your presentations carefully and stick to the time limit!
**Document Analysis Assignment (due 5/4):**

At the end of the semester, students will write a 15-20 page paper analyzing a substantial and significant primary document related to at least one of the themes in the course. A qualifying “document” can include any of the following:

1. A published collection of archival papers;
2. An unpublished collection of archival papers;
3. A memoir;
4. A collection of original published writings;
5. A collection of photographs or other art work;
6. A large collection of newspaper and other journalistic sources;
7. An extended oral history;
8. An object from the built environment.

Students should consult with the professors about their selected document by the middle of April. Students are encouraged to select a document from their area of research interest. This essay should bring some of the course’s themes to each student’s personal research agenda. This essay should also be useful for each student’s future endeavors.

The essay should analyze the document, answering the following questions:

1. What was the context for the creation of this document?
2. Whose voice(s) are heard in this document?
3. What does this document contribute to understanding the Cold War as World Histories?
4. How could a historian use this document to write a new history?

The document analysis essays should reflect clear thought, detailed analysis, and polished writing. They should be scholarly and creative. Make sure you proofread and revise your essays before submission!
1/19 Introduction: What does it mean to study the Cold War as World Histories?

1/26 First Lens: The International State System
   John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know*, 1-220, 281-95.

2/2 Second Lens: World Systems

2/9 Third Lens: The View from the “Periphery”
   Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War*, all.

2/16 Fourth Lens: The View from the “Middle Powers”
   **Chen Jian, *China’s Road to the Korean War*, ix-xii, 1-30, 92-157.

Consult with professors on short papers and presentations for next week
2/23 Applying the 4 Lenses

Presentations and Papers in class.

3/2 Cold War Culture
Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb’s Early Light*, all.
Special Movie showing after class: “Dr. Strangelove.”

3/9 The “Cuba Moment”

John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know*, 221-80.

3/16 Domestic Unrest and Détente
Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest*, all.

3/23 Spring Recess – NO CLASS

3/30 The Vietnam Wars
Group 1:
Mark Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America*, all.

Group 2:
4/6 The Angolan Wars

4/13 The Legacies of Atrocities
Steve Stern, *Remembering Pinochet’s Chile*, all.
**Tina Rosenberg, *The Haunted Land: Facing Europe’s Ghosts after Communism*, xi-xxiv, 3-121, 397-407.**

4/20 Iran and the Islamic Revolutions of the late Cold War
Nikki Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*, all.

4/27 The End of the Cold War
Jermi Suri, “Explaining the End of the Cold War: A New Historical Consensus?”
*Journal of Cold War Studies* 4 (Fall 2002), 60-92, available through the Project Muse electronic database.

5/4 Wrap-Up
Final Papers due.