

# **HIST 510-001/615-002 Development of Modern Societies**

**Spring 2024**

This course focuses on the development of modern societies – in the United States, in Europe, and in other key world regions. The course thus serves students with interests in these three categories, with somewhat different readings depending on interest. And the course will be actively comparative. The fundamental issue involves exploring the tension between seeing modern societies largely in terms of economic and industrial change, and taking a wider perspective involving politics, family and gender, and popular culture.

**Instructor:** Peter N. Stearns

**E-mail:** [pstearns@gmu.edu](mailto:pstearns@gmu.edu) (best way to get in touch)

**Class info:** Posted to your Blackboard account

**Office Hours:** By appointment (email to schedule). Regular hours on Tuesdays after 2:45 (but make appointment to be sure of availability). East 207A

**Class Schedule:** Tuesdays, 4:30-7:10 PM, East 134

## **Assessment**

Reviews and short essays 35%: each student will do two book reviews (c. 500 words) and two 5-page papers relating to a relevant issue in your region, involving reading one additional book or cluster of articles for each; one must be on 20<sup>th</sup> century, and will be discussed in class

Class participation 35% (including helping to lead at least one discussion plus a contribution to the session on regions)

Take home final 30% (based on readings and class coverage)

## **Academic Honesty and Collaboration**

The integrity of the University Community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple practices to follow at all times are that: 1) all work submitted be your own; 2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and 3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct.

**Required Texts - NOTE: students may propose alternate readings depending on particular regional interests, within the topical framework of the course**

## **Available for purchase:**

**Note** please check as desired for used copies, electronic versions, and possibilities of sharing

1. Thomas Bender, *A Nation Among Nations: America's Place in World History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), Fenwick E178. B428 2006
2. Peter N. Stearns, *The Industrial Turn in World History* (New York: Routledge, 2016)
3. Diego Holstein, *A Brief History of Now* (Palgrave, 2021) (may also be available as ebook)
4. Florian Bieber, *Debating Nationalism* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020).
5. Peter N. Stearns, *Happiness in World History* (New York: Routledge, 2021)
6. David Stasavage, *Decline and rise of democracy* (Princeton: Princeton U Press, 2021)

**Available as E-books:**

1. Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), ProQuest E-Book, Fenwick HT861. D74 2009
2. (optional) Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), ACLS Humanities E-Book, Fenwick HQ792. U5 M57 2004

**Class Schedule:**

Date	Topic	Assignment
Week 1, Tuesday, January 16 <sup>th</sup>	Main Themes in Modern History  Issues of Periodization	Reading: John Hall article on Japan  Question: When does modern history begin?
Week 2 Tuesday, January 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Cultural Change	Stearns article on Romantic Love and Clarke article on Death and the Enlightenment  Keith Thomas article on Magic (available on Blackboard)
Week 3 Tuesday, January 30 <sup>th</sup>	"Modernization" and the Industrial Revolution	Stearns, <i>Industrial Turn</i>
Week 4 Tuesday, February 6 <sup>th</sup>	US in World History and American Exceptionalism	Bender  <b>DUE: first book review</b>
Week 5 Tuesday, February 13 <sup>th</sup>	The Issue of Regions in World History	Reading Cemil Aydin article on What is the Muslim World, ed. Haselby; and Emilio Lamo de Espinosa, "Is Latin America Part of the West", on Blackboard

		Each student will pick a region and comment briefly on issues in dealing with it in modern world history
Week 6 Tuesday, February 20 <sup>th</sup>	Nationalism and Imperialism	Bieber KATHERINE  Ashkat Rathi, “The Lies Brits Tell Themselves, On Blackboard  <b>DUE: first short paper</b>
Week 7 Tuesday, February 27 <sup>th</sup>	Abolitionism	Drescher  ANNE
Spring Break, March 4 <sup>th</sup> through March 10 <sup>th</sup>		
Week 8 Tuesday, March 12 <sup>th</sup>	Democracy	Stasavage KEVIN
Week 9  Tuesday, March 19 <sup>th</sup>	Feminism and global women’s history  Also, to discuss: contemporary periodization	Stearns Gender ch 11, on Blackboard
Week 10  Tuesday, March 26 <sup>th</sup>	Childrearing	Mintz OR “Globalization and Childhood” special issue of J. of Social History 2005 available thru JStor  <b>DUE: second book review</b>
Week 11  Tuesday, April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Consumerism	Frank Trentman, “How Humans Became Consumers” Atlantic 2016, on Blackboard  HUNTER
Week 12  Tuesday, April 9 <sup>th</sup>	Cold War and Globalization	Holstein; Zeiler article on Blackboard  VINCENT
Week 13  Tuesday, April 16 <sup>th</sup>	Class Presentations of Second Short Paper	<b>DUE: paper</b>

Week 14  Tuesday, April 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Happiness and modern world history   <i>*LAST CLASS*</i>	Stearns, Happiness in World History
<i>May</i>		<b><u>FINAL EXAM DUE</u></b>

Appendix with citations for additional articles, essays and book chapters:

Hall, John. "Japan: From Prehistory to Modern Times" (New York, Delacorte Press, 1970). Chapters 14-16.

Thomas, Keith. *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991). Chapter 18.

Stearns, Peter. "Romantic Love" In *a Cultural History of Love in the Age of Empire* (Bloomsbury, 2020).

Clarke, Joseph. "Why may not man be one day immortal?: rethinking death in the age of enlightenment" In, *The Routledge History of Death Since 1800*. (London: Routledge, 2020). Pg. 177-193.

Emilio Lana de Espinosa, "Is Latin America Part of the West," *Elcano* Dec. 4, 2017

Stearns, Peter *Gender in World History* (Routledge 2022) ch 11 (on Blackboard)

Rathi, Ashkat, "The lies Brits tell themselves about how they left behind a better India:< Quart India, Aug 15, 2007, on Blackboard

Ayin, Cemil. "What is the Muslim World?" *Aeon* (website), 2017.  
<https://www.google.com/amp/s/aeon.co/amp/essays/the-idea-of-a-muslim-world-is-both-modern-and-misleading>

Trentman, Frank. "How Humans Became 'Consumers': A History" *The Atlantic*. November 29, 2016.

Zeiler, Thomas W. "Just Do It! Globalization for Diplomatic Historians." *Diplomatic history* 25, no. 4 (October 1, 2001): 529–551.