

Fall 2010
History 218

The World in the Twentieth Century

(www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/world)

Instructor: Jeff Jones	jwjones@uncg.edu
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Office Hours: M 9-10:00; T 3:30-4:30; W 2:30-3:30 and by appointment	
Teaching Assistants: Katrin Deil and James Hall (2323 MHRA)	

Course Description

This class examines global issues in the contemporary world, focusing mainly on the post-World War II period, from the dropping of atomic bombs on Japan in August 1945, to the complex, high-tech, evolving world of today. We will view this history from the point of view of those living it, including students in the class themselves. Everyone has an “historical consciousness,” an understanding of the way the world became what it is today, and the main purpose of this class is to introduce students to alternative ways of interpreting history by weighing the merits of differing points of view. We will examine the world by regions with a number of themes in mind: the Cold War; the rise & fall of communism; nationalism; the rise of terrorism; de-colonization/neo-colonialism; the international economy; racial, ethnic, & religious conflict; gender; class; & environmental issues.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to ...

- Comprehend that history is not just the memorization of dates and facts, but rather the *interpretation* of the past
- Analyze the key terms, facts, and events in contemporary world history and thereby exhibit an informed historical perspective
- Critically appraise varying historical arguments and clearly express their own interpretations
- Critically read and distinguish between different types of historical sources and “read between the lines” of differing points of view
- Analyze primary source material and gain insight on how to interpret history through such sources
- Apply principles and generalizations learned in this class to other problems and situations
- Synthesize and integrate information and ideas as well as distinguish between fact and opinion

Course Readings:

- *Three Cups of Tea*, Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin (New York: Penguin, 2006)
- *When Heaven & Earth Changed Places*, Le Ly Hayslip (New York: Plume, 2003)
- *A Long Way Gone*, Ishmael Beah (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2007)
- Online material identified below

Course Web Page: The extensive course web page at www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/world has class notes and readings; Video and Audio Archives; Maps; Visual Tours; Internet Resources; and Internet Assignments. We will also utilize aspects of the Blackboard course web page.

Course Activities:	Two 3-4 page papers	15% each
	Midterm Exam	15%
	Participation	30%
	Final Exam	25%

Papers: There are two papers for the course (3-4 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font) that are worth 15% each. The first is a set topic at the beginning of the semester (see the assignment below), while the other one allows for a choice of possible topics (see the topics on the course web page and the due date below). Refer to the Paper Guidelines for these assignments. All essays will be graded on the basis of these criteria:

- 1) Level of analysis/argumentation. Present a thoughtful argument and interpretation, *not* a mere summary of facts. (Note: it does not matter which side of an issue one argues, only how well or how poorly one makes the argument).
- 2) Use of evidence. The material you select to support your thesis must be relevant and must clearly back up your argument.
- 3) Clarity of communication. You must present the evidence and express your argument in a clear, comprehensible manner.

A = excellent performance on all three criteria.
B = above average on all three, or excellent on some tempered by flaws in others.
C = average across the board, or above average in part but with significant flaws.
D = below average overall performance.

Exams: There is a midterm and a final for the course comprised of Identifications and Short Answer Questions. The exams cover *only* the part of the course for which they are designated so they are *not cumulative*. However, the final exam includes a comprehensive Take Home Essay (worth 10% of the overall course grade) that draws on broad themes dealt with all semester.

Participation: Your 30% participation grade is based on the Discussion Sections led by the Teaching Assistants. The grade consists of online Discussion Posts (1-2 paragraphs in response to the readings as designated below), Internet Assignments, and Reaction Pieces (1-2 pages; these are intended to be your reaction to or opinion of the readings—not a summary—illustrated with specific examples from the material to support your interpretation) to the readings noted below. **Attendance is required in the Discussion Sections;** each unexcused absence will lead to three points being subtracted from the final participation grade.

Grading: Grades are compiled on a point system. For example, if you make 88 on the 1st paper (13.2/15) + 90 on the 2nd paper (13.5/15) + 86 on the Mid-term (12.9/15) + 90 on participation (27/30) + 88 on the Final (13.2/15) + 90 on your Final Take Home Essay (9/10), your Final Grade = **88.8 = 89** or B+. Grades will be posted on Blackboard.

Lecture & Assignment Schedule:

Monday, August 23. Introduction to the Course

****1st Paper Assignment:** **In your opinion, what were the main reasons US President Harry Truman decided to use atomic bombs on Japan in August 1945? Do you agree or disagree with his decision?** Required Sources: “Thank God for the Atomic Bomb” by Paul Fussell;

“Hiroshima: Needless Slaughter, Useful Terror” by William Blum; *Extra!* Update, “Media to Smithsonian: History is Bunk”; Government documents (Stimson’s diary entry and President Truman’s meeting with advisers); *Basic Information on the Bomb*; “Second Guessing Hiroshima”; “Hiroshima: Was it Necessary?” by Doug Long; A Petition to the President of the United States; “The Decision That Launched the *Enola Gay*” by John Correll; and “Diary Shows Tojo Resisted Surrender Till End” by Mari Yamaguchi; view the video clip “Truman and the Bomb” (19:45). Optional sources: web pages and material you identify. Refer to the Paper Guidelines for how to do citations and other questions regarding this assignment. **Due: Wednesday, September 8**

Wednesday, August 25. The Origins of the Cold War

{NOTE: WE WILL NOT HAVE DISCUSSION SECTIONS THIS WEEK; MEET IN FERGUSON 100 AT 11:00 ON FRIDAY}

Friday, August 27. The Origins of the Cold War (cont’d).

Monday, August 30. The Cold War (cont’d) & Marxism-Leninism in the Soviet Union

Wednesday, September 1. Stalinism in the USSR & Truman’s Decision to Bomb Japan

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, September 3: the material for the 1st Paper Assignment listed above; **BRING AN OUTLINE OF YOUR PAPER WITH A CLEARLY STATED THESIS and 2-3 SUPPORTING POINTS TO TURN IN**
Friday, September 3. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Wednesday, September 8. The USSR After Stalin

- **1st Paper Due in class**
- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, September 10: 1) Excerpts from *Stalin* by Hiroaki Kuromiya; 2) Speech by Soviet leader Andrei Zhdanov and the Truman Doctrine; 3) Excerpts from *Putin’s Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, ed. by Dale Herspring; **POST YOUR REACTIONS TO THESE READINGS ON YOUR DISCUSSION SECTION’S BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BOARD BY THURSDAY AT NOON**
Friday, September 10. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

BEGIN READING *Three Cups of Tea*; ****RP** due Friday, September 24

Monday, September 13. India: The Struggle for Independence

Wednesday, September 15. India: the Struggle for Independence (cont’d)

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, September 17: *Time*’s Man of the Year for 1930: Mohandas K. Gandhi; excerpts from *Nectar in a Sieve* by Kamala Markandaya; and “Who are India’s Untouchables?” by Tim O’Neill and Heidi Schultz; **POST YOUR REACTION TO THESE READINGS ON YOUR DISCUSSION SECTION’S BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BOARD BY THURSDAY AT NOON**
Friday, September 17. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, September 20. A Region in Conflict: India & Pakistan

Wednesday, September 22. Afghanistan: A Country in Turmoil

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, September 24: *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin; ****Reaction Piece due in Discussion Sections**
Friday, September 24. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

BEGIN READING *When Heaven & Earth Changed Places*; ****RP** due Friday, October 15

Monday, September 27. Afghanistan in the “War on Terrorism”

Wednesday, September 29. China: from Confucianism to Communism

{NOTE: WE WILL NOT HAVE DISCUSSION SECTIONS THIS WEEK; MEET IN FERGUSON 100 AT 11:00 ON FRIDAY}

Friday, October 1. Mao & China’s “Constant Revolution”

Monday, October 4. China Since Mao

Wednesday, October 6. The Origins of the Vietnam War

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, October 8: “Lei Feng, Chairman Mao’s Good Little Fighter”; and “Father is Close, Mother is Close, but Neither Is as Close as Chairman Mao” from *Wild Swans* by Jung Chang; **POST YOUR REACTION TO THESE READINGS ON YOUR DISCUSSION SECTION’S BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BOARD BY THURSDAY AT NOON**

Friday, October 8. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Wednesday, October 13. The US in Vietnam

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, October 15: *When Heaven & Earth Changed Places* by Le Ly Hayslip; ****Reaction Piece due in Discussion Sections**

Friday, October 15. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, October 18. The US in Vietnam (cont’d)

Wednesday, October 20. **MID-TERM EXAM**

{NOTE: WE WILL NOT HAVE DISCUSSION SECTIONS THIS WEEK; MEET IN FERGUSON 100 AT 11:00 ON FRIDAY}

Friday, October 22. Iran: From Secularism to Fundamentalism

Monday, October 25. Iran: From Secularism to Fundamentalism (cont’d)

Wednesday, October 27. Iraq & Kuwait: A Collision Course

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, October 29: “Excerpts from the 9/11 National Commission Report on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States” (Chapters 7 & 10) and do the Internet Assignment “What Would Muhammad Drive?” and **POST YOUR REACTION**

**TO THIS MATERIAL ON YOUR DISCUSSION SECTION'S BLACKBOARD
DISCUSSION BOARD BY THURSDAY AT NOON**

Friday, October 29. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, November 1. Wars in the Persian Gulf

Wednesday, November 3. Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict

**{NOTE: WE WILL NOT HAVE DISCUSSION SECTIONS THIS WEEK; MEET IN
FERGUSON 100 AT 11:00 ON FRIDAY}**

Friday, November 5. The Arab-Israeli Conflict (cont'd)

BEGIN READING *A Long Way Gone*; ****RP** due Friday, November 19

Monday, November 8. The Arab-Israeli Conflict (cont'd)

Wednesday, November 10. The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Is there hope for peace?

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, November 12: Excerpt from *In Search of Fatima: A Palestinian Story* by Ghada Karmi and “*In Search of Fatima* by Ghada Karmi: Review” by Natalie Bennett; ****Reaction Piece due in Discussion Sections**

Friday, November 12. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, November 15. Genocide in Rwanda

Wednesday, November 17. Genocide in Rwanda (cont'd) & Sierra Leone

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, November 19: *A Long Way Gone* by Ishmael Beah; ****Reaction Piece due in Discussion Sections**

Friday, November 19. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, November 22. Genocide in Darfur

Monday, November 29. South America: Argentina

Wednesday, December 1. South America: Chile. **2nd Paper Due in class**

**{NOTE: WE WILL NOT HAVE DISCUSSION SECTIONS THIS WEEK; MEET IN
FERGUSON 100 AT 11:00 ON FRIDAY}**

Friday, December 3. Central America: Guatemala

Monday, December 6. TBA

Final Exam: Monday, December 13 Noon-3:00