

Social Studies 98pl: Empire and colonialism in the modern world
Tuesdays, 4:00pm-5:59pm, WJH 303

Daragh Grant

Office hours: Wednesday 9am-11am (by appointment)

I. Course description

This tutorial will expose students to the scholarship on modern empire from across the fields of anthropology, history, law, and political science. Students will be asked to consider the differences and commonalities in empires across space and time. They will also explore how relations of empire and colonialism were constituted through structures of law and of economic relations, as well as how notions of race and culture were shaped by imperial encounters. Finally, the readings for this tutorial will introduce students to a range of methodological approaches to the study of empire, and will invite them to consider the strengths and weaknesses of these different approaches.

II. Course Objectives and Requirements

In addition to familiarizing you with prominent scholarly contributions to debates on empire and colonialism, this course will improve your ability to:

- Read closely and critically
- Read across disciplinary divides
- Engage in scholarly conversation with your peers
- Develop and refine a research question of your own
- Craft a research paper that contributes to existing scholarly debates

The writing assignments for this class are designed with these objectives in mind.

Participation

This tutorial will be run in seminar format, and students are expected to have completed the readings before class and to be prepared to engage actively in class discussions. The cultivation of an effective classroom discussion depends on each student being willing to play different roles. Rather than thinking about a discussion seminar as an environment for students to pose questions about the texts to the instructor, a more effective classroom discussion will result from students being willing to pose questions of interpretation or clarification not only to the instructor, but also to their peers. Students are encouraged to pose questions about the text, to volunteer to answer those questions, and to ask one another, as well as the instructor, to clarify key concepts or ideas that are being used in the discussion.

- Attendance at all tutorials is mandatory, and absences will be excused only in case of illness or emergency.
- Please be aware that laptops and tablets are only permitted in class for the purposes of accessing readings posted online. A failure to abide by this restriction will lead to a ban on

such devices. You are not permitted to use your cell phones in class under any circumstances.

Analyzing a primary text

On February 9, students will be required to submit a short paper (4 page) analyzing one or more of the primary texts that we read in week one. This paper should draw attention to the imperial or colonial logics that are evident in the text, but it should also seek to uncover the context of the author's writing and to be sensitive to the historical specificity of the concepts that the author is using. Finally, and most challenging, students are expected to try to uncover information about indigenous forms of life by reading these sources *against the grain*. Because the documentary records of colonists and imperial officials are often the only records we have of forms of indigenous resistance to empire and colonialism, it is imperative that we learn how to read these sources against the intentions of their authors, to discover information that the author might not even know that they know and to use this to identify clues and hints about indigenous life that lurk beneath the surface of the author's text. The goal of this assignment is to give students a sense of the challenges of working with primary materials, and to invite them to think creatively about addressing such challenges.

Weekly Presentations

Beginning on February 9 (week 2), one or more students will be asked to prepare a short presentation (5 double-spaced pages) each week based on the assigned reading. Presentations should address the strengths and weaknesses of the assigned text(s) and should identify puzzles that arise out of the reading assignments. Students will also be expected to make connections to previous weeks' readings as well as to materials studied as part of Social Studies 10. Most importantly, students should use their presentations to take a position on the author's argument by stating and developing a thesis and defending that thesis with evidence from the text. Students should circulate their presentation to their peers 24 hours ahead of class, and all other members of the tutorial are expected to arrive having read the presentation and prepared to respond to the presenter's remarks. Each student will present twice in the semester (once in collaboration with another student)

Research Prospectus

Identifying and crafting an appropriate research question is a difficult skill to hone, and it is one that will be crucial to your thesis-writing process. In developing your final paper topic, you will be required to fulfill four short writing assignments.

- First, in week 4 (February 23) you will draft a 1-2 page research memo identifying a focused topic for your final paper, three potential questions falling under the purview of this topic, and the significance of each of these questions. You will meet with me in week 5 to discuss your topic in light of this memo.
- Second, in week 5 (March 1) you will submit a research memo (1-2 pages) that presents a single refined research question. The memo must connect this question to a conceptual puzzle or problem and must make clear the stakes of resolving this puzzle or problem.
- Third, in week 6 (March 8), you will submit an annotated bibliography (3-4 pages) of texts relevant to your research question.
- Finally, in week 7 (March 21), you will submit a prospectus (5 double-spaced pages). The prospectus should offer an account of why the question is important and worth answering, it

should indicate how you expect to answer the question (thesis, theoretical approach, method etc.), and should include a rough outline of how the paper will be organized. Class on March 22 will be replaced by a prospectus workshop. Students will discuss one another's research prospectuses and offer constructive criticisms. Prospectuses should be circulated to the class by email before 6pm on Monday March 21.

When developing your final paper topics, you are welcome to suggest topics that were not directly covered by the readings but that are otherwise related to the themes of the class (empire, colonialism, race, slavery, etc.). Irrespective of what question is identified for the paper, it must be a question that can be answered within the confines of a research paper.

Research Paper

The final paper is due (by email) on Friday, May 6th before 6pm. The final paper should be 20-25 pages long, double-spaced, 12-font, with 1-inch margins.

Note: I will not read drafts of the final research paper, but students are welcome to meet with me in office hours to discuss their papers. Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, verified by a Resident Dean.

III. Course Policies

Academic honesty

The Harvard College honor code reads:

Members of the Harvard College community commit themselves to producing academic work of integrity – that is, work that adheres to the scholarly and intellectual standards of accurate attribution of sources, appropriate collection and use of data, and transparent acknowledgement of the contribution of others to their ideas, discoveries, interpretations, and conclusions. Cheating on exams or problem sets, plagiarizing or misrepresenting the ideas or language of someone else as one's own, falsifying data, or any other instance of academic dishonesty violates the standards of our community, as well as the standards of the wider world of learning and affairs.¹

Any proven case of plagiarism will result in an automatic failure of the course, and will be referred to the University for further disciplinary action. In addition to the guidelines on academic integrity and plagiarism contained in the student handbook and the honor code, I consider any submission of work for which a student has received credit in another class to constitute academic dishonesty. If students remain unsure of the definition of plagiarism, please feel free to ask me for clarification in office hours or over email. To give a sense of how seriously plagiarism is taken in the academic profession, please read the statement from the American Historical Association at the end of this syllabus, which offers a succinct definition of plagiarism and its consequences.² For help citing sources, see: <http://usingsources.fas.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do>.

¹ <http://honor.fas.harvard.edu/honor-code>

² American Historical Association, *Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct* (Washington DC, 2011)

Most importantly, should a student find that they are in a difficult situation, such that they are tempted to plagiarize, they should contact me instead. I can offer help and advice in such situations, but cannot be of help if I do not know that there is a problem.

Harvard Grading Policy

A, A-	Earned by work whose excellent quality indicates a full mastery of the subject and, in the case of A, is of extraordinary distinction.
B+, B, B-	Earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student's full engagement with the course requirements and activities.
C+, C, C-	Earned by work that indicates an adequate and satisfactory comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and participating in class activities.
D+, D, D-	Earned by work that is unsatisfactory but that indicates some minimal command of the course materials and some minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.
E	Earned by work that is unsatisfactory and unworthy of course credit.

Late Assignment Policy

Late assignments will be penalized by 2/3 of a letter grade for every 24 hours they are late (e.g. an A-paper handed in a day late becomes a B). Exceptions will be made only for medical or personal emergencies, which must be certified by a doctor or a resident dean.

Office Hours

Office hours are a useful opportunity for students to talk through their plans for the final research paper. All students are required to meet with me to discuss their choice of topic for the research paper. I also require students to come to my office hours at least twice more during the semester to discuss the progress they are making on the final paper. I am also happy to meet with students to discuss the readings and assignments, and it is especially important that students see me if at any point they are struggling with the requirements of the class. Office hours are by appointment only.

Disability Accommodations

Any student with a documented disability who is in need of additional academic accommodations should contact me at the beginning of the semester.

IV. Grade Distribution

Attendance	10%
Participation	10%
Analyzing primary text	5%
Presentations	15%
Research memo 1: Topic	5%
Research memo 2: Refined question	5%
Annotated Bibliography	5%
Prospectus	5%
Participation at prospectus workshop	5%
Final Paper	35%

V. Required Texts:

Students will need to purchase or otherwise obtain the following books:

1. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Harvest Books, 1976)
2. Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Harvard University Press, 2013)
3. Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton University Press, 1996)
4. Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, 20th Anniversary Edition (Beacon Press, 2015)
5. Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum*, trans. G.L. Ulmen (Telos Press, 2003)
7. David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Duke University Press, 2004)
8. Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Duke University Press, 1995)

Readings marked with an asterisk (*) will be made available electronically

VI. Required Schedule:

February 2 The Birth of Early Modern European Empire

*Christopher Columbus, "Letter to Raphael Sanchez," March 14, 1492/93

*Pope Nicholas V, "The Bull *Romanus Pontifex*," 8 January 1455

*Pope Alexander VI, "The Bull *Inter Caetera*," 4 May 1493

*Hernán Cortés, "The First Letter, to the Queen Doña Juana and to the Emperor, Charles V," c. 1519

*Francisco de Vitoria, "On the American Indians," c. 1532

*Francisco de Vitoria, "Letter to Miguel de Arcos, OP," November 8, 1534

February 9 The problem of "Culture" in the Study of Empire

*John Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Volume 1: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa* (University of Chicago Press, 1991), 1-48

*Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History* (University of Chicago Press, 1987), vii-xix, 104-56

*William H. Sewell, Jr., "The Concept(s) of Culture," *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation* (University of Chicago Press, 2005), 152-74

Analysis of primary text due in class

February 16 Race and Empire I: The Problem of Silence

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, 20th Anniversary Edition (Beacon Press, 2015), xvii-156

February 23, Race and Empire II: Race and Sexuality in the Colony

Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Duke University Press, 1995), 1-210

Research memo 1 (topic) due in class

**** Required Office hours meeting this week (by appointment)**

March 1, Law and Empire I

Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum*, trans. G.L. Ulmen (Telos Press, 2003), 37-212

Research memo 2 (refined question) due in class

March 8 Law and Empire II

Schmitt, *Nomos of the Earth*, 214-355

*Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400-1900* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1-39, 279-300

Annotated bibliography due in class

****Research prospectus due by 6pm on Monday March 21**

- March 22 Prospectus Workshop
- Students to present prospectuses for final paper in a group workshop. Students should read all pre-circulated prospectuses.
- March 29 Economy, Empire, and Slavery I
- *Karl Marx, *Capital: Volume 1*, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Penguin, 1976), 873-6, 931-40
- Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Harvard University Press, 2013), 1-208.
- April 5 Economy, Empire, and Slavery II
- Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams*, 209-422
- *Onur Ulas Ince, "Primitive Accumulation, New Enclosures, and Global Land Grabs: A Theoretical Intervention" *Rural Sociology* 79 (2014): 104-131
- April 12 The new imperialism
- Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Part Two: "Imperialism," xvii-xxii, 123-304
- April 19 Colonial subjection and locating sites of resistance
- Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton University Press, 1996), 3-180
- *Ranjit Guha, "The Prose of Counterinsurgency," in *Selected Subaltern Studies*, eds. Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Oxford University Press, 1988), 45-86
- April 26 Rethinking empire and colonialism in the post-colonial moment
- David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Duke University Press, 2004), 1-222
- *Engseng Ho, "Empire through Diasporic Eyes: A View from the Other Boat," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 46 (2004): 210-246

Final paper due by email on May 6 (6pm)

historians. Although they recognize the legitimacy of restricting access to some sources for national security, proprietary, and privacy reasons, they have a professional interest in opposing unnecessary restrictions whenever appropriate.

Historians sometimes appropriately agree to restrictive conditions about the use of particular sources. Certain kinds of research, certain forms of employment, and certain techniques (for instance, in conducting oral history interviews) sometimes entail promises about what a historian will and will not do with the resulting knowledge. Historians should honor all such promises. They should respect the confidentiality of clients, students, employers, and others with whom they have a professional relationship. At much as possible, though, they should also strive to serve the historical profession's preference for open access to, and public discussion of, the historical record. They should define any confidentiality requirements before their research begins, and give public notice of any conditions or rules that may affect the content of their work.

4. Plagiarism

The word *plagiarism* derives from Latin roots: *plagiarius*, an abductor, and *plagiare*, to steal. **The expropriation of another author's work, and the presentation of it as one's own, constitutes plagiarism and is a serious violation of the ethics of scholarship.** It seriously undermines the credibility of the plagiarist, and can do irreparable harm to a historian's career.

In addition to the harm that plagiarism does to the pursuit of truth, it can also be an offense against the literary rights of the original author and the property rights of the copyright owner. Detection can therefore result not only in sanctions (such as dismissal from a graduate program, denial of promotion, or termination of employment) but in legal action as well. As a practical matter, plagiarism between scholars rarely goes to court, in part because legal concepts, such as infringement of copyright, are narrower than ethical standards that guide professional conduct. **The real penalty for plagiarism is the abhorrence of the community of scholars.**

Plagiarism includes more subtle abuses than simply expropriating the exact wording of another author without attribution. Plagiarism can also include the limited borrowing, without sufficient attribution, of another person's distinctive and significant research findings or interpretations. Of course, historical knowledge is cumulative, and thus in some contexts—such as textbooks, encyclopedia articles, broad syntheses, and certain forms of public presentation—the form of attribution, and the permissible extent of dependence on prior scholarship, citation, and other forms of attribution will differ from what is expected in more limited monographs. As knowledge is disseminated to a wide public, it loses some of its personal reference. What belongs to whom becomes less distinct. But even in textbooks a historian should acknowledge the sources of recent or distinctive findings and interpretations, those not yet a part of the common understanding of the profession. Similarly, while some forms of historical work do not lend themselves to explicit attribution (e.g., films and exhibitions), every effort should be made to give due credit to scholarship informing such work.

Plagiarism, then, takes many forms. The clearest abuse is the use of another's language without quotation marks and citation. More subtle abuses include the appropriation of concepts, data, or notes all disguised in newly crafted sentences, or reference to a borrowed work in an early note and then extensive further use without subsequent attribution. Borrowing unexamined primary source references from a secondary work without citing that work is likewise inappropriate. All such tactics reflect an unworthy disregard for the contributions of others.

No matter what the context, **the best professional practice for avoiding a charge of plagiarism is always to be explicit, thorough, and generous in acknowledging one's intellectual debts.**

All who participate in the community of inquiry, as amateurs or as professionals, as students or as established historians, have an obligation to oppose deception. This obligation bears with special weight on teachers of graduate seminars. They are critical in shaping a young historian's perception of the ethics of scholarship. It is therefore incumbent on graduate teachers to seek opportuni-

ties for making the seminar also a workshop in scholarly integrity. After leaving graduate school, every historian will have to depend primarily on vigilant self-criticism. Throughout our lives none of us can cease to question the claims to originality that our work makes and the sort of credit it grants to others.

The first line of defense against plagiarism is the formation of work habits that protect a scholar from plagiarism. The plagiarist's standard defense—that he or she was misled by hastily taken and imperfect notes—is plausible only in the context of a wider tolerance of shoddy work. A basic rule of good note-taking requires every researcher to distinguish scrupulously between exact quotation and paraphrase.

The second line of defense against plagiarism is organized and punitive. Every institution that includes or represents a body of scholars has an obligation to establish procedures designed to clarify and uphold their ethical standards. Every institution that employs historians bears an especially critical responsibility to maintain the integrity and reputation of its staff. This applies to government agencies, corporations, publishing firms, and public service organizations such as museums and libraries, as surely as it does to educational facilities. Usually, it is the employing institution that is expected to investigate charges of plagiarism promptly and impartially and to invoke appropriate sanctions when the charges are sustained. Penalties for scholarly misconduct should vary according to the seriousness of the offense, and the protections of due process should always apply. A persistent pattern of deception may justify public disclosure or even termination of a career; some scattered misappropriations may warrant a formal reprimand.

All historians share responsibility for defending high standards of intellectual integrity. When appraising manuscripts for publication, reviewing books, or evaluating peers for placement, promotion, and tenure, scholars must evaluate the honesty and reliability with which the historian uses primary and secondary source materials. Scholarship flourishes in an atmosphere of openness and candor, which should include the scrutiny and public discussion of academic deception.