

HISTORY DEPARTMENT - SPRING 2024
COLLOQUIUM (392W) COURSE OFFERINGS

H. 392W (004) 35758 1964: Society, Politics, Culture
Prof. P. Conolly-Smith Thursdays 3:10-6:00pm - In person

This course examines the many developments in American society, politics, and culture during the watershed year of 1964. Major course topics include civil rights, the 1964 election, student protest and the rise of the New Left (vs. the emerging New Right) and, in the realm of culture: the Beatles, Muhammad Ali, and the 1964 World's Fair—all before the backdrop of the gradually escalating Vietnam War.

H. 392W (002) 35764 MEDIEVAL EUROPE, A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE?
Prof. T. Billado-Lotson Tuesdays 1:40- 4:30pm - In person

A popular conception of the medieval period as a particularly brutal and violent one is evident in movies like Braveheart, which the MPAA rated “R for brutal medieval warfare.” This image is not just a popular one, though. Medieval historians have described the central Middle Ages as a particularly violent period in which “rapacious” knights, who were “oppression incarnate,” usurped public power, erased any vestige of true law, and basically made life miserable for everyone else. This course will examine these images of a violent Middle Ages and will address questions about violence that are ignored in the scholarship that presents a “violent” Middle Ages, such as: What, exactly, is violence? Are certain acts violent? Or only when performed by certain actors? Can non-physical acts, including speech-acts, be termed “violent”? Can we compare violence within and across societies? Is “violence” even a useful category of historical analysis? Were the central Middle Ages so very violent in comparison to other medieval periods? Or in comparison to other periods of European history?

H. 392W (005) 35756 AMERICA IN THE 1960s

Prof. C. Giardina Wednesdays 4:30-7:20PM – In Person

How did the socially conscious, uproarious, irreverent “Sixties” evolve from the quietism of the 1950s? What has been the impact of this period of deep and rapid change? From the signature social movements to hallmark legislation, from the counterculture to the political murders and assassination of leader after leader, the course will explore the highs and lows of this tumultuous decade. The course will include the role of Queens College activists on campus and nationally.

H. 392W (003) 35762

ITALY AND THE JEWS

Prof. F. Bregoli

Mondays 1:40-4:30pm - In person

This course focuses on the history of the Jews in Italy from the early Middle Ages to the modern period. Although Italian Jews have always been a tiny fraction of world Jewry, their achievements are great. Highly integrated and engaged in the culture of their times, Italian Jews are historically at home both in the Jewish and in the Italian world. How does the particular case of Italian Jewry illuminate the broader Jewish experience? The class will pay attention to the specificities of Italian Jewry by concentrating on interactions between Jews and non-Jews within the broader context of Italian history. We will consider topics such as the social life of the Jews in the Middle Ages, Jewish intellectual life during the Renaissance, the Ghettos, Italian Jewish art, Jews in the Risorgimento, Italian anti-Semitism, Jews under Fascism, and WWII and its aftermath.

H. 392W (006) 37975 THE DECISIVE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP ON LATE 20TH CENTURY HISTORICAL TRANSITIONS: APARTHEID TO INTEGRATION IN SOUTH AFRICA, COMMUNISM TO LIBERALISM IN EASTERN EUROPE, AND THE BREAKUP OF YUGOSLAVIA

Hybrid with some Asynchronous Classes

Prof. L. Tsilas

Mondays 3:10-5:50pm

For most of the 20th Century, major political developments caused unspeakable disasters and suffering and impacted the lives of hundreds of millions of people. Its last two decades, however, were an era of major transition, the consequences of which have been seminal for political, economic, and social developments in Eurasia, Transatlantic Relations, and Africa. The collapse of communism put an end to one of the biggest political, economic, and social experiments in history, while the end of apartheid drew the final nail into the coffin of colonialism. Rarely before has there ever been an era of greater historical transitions, which still reverberate on the global political scene. By examining these momentous historical changes, the course aims at familiarizing students with these specific major changes, but at the same time guiding them to form a more general, conceptual approach on the defining role and impact of leadership. Professor Tsilas will also draw on his personal experience as Greek Ambassador, which made him an eyewitness to some of this history.

This course will take a case-study approach in examining momentous changes that occurred in different regions of the globe during the 20th century. The instructor, Ambassador Loucas Tsilas, is currently the Director of the Onassis Foundation in New York and before that, had a full career in the Greek foreign service, including terms as his country's ambassador to South Africa and the U.S. as well as a period of service in Romania. Ambassador Tsilas will apply his own firsthand experiences in an examination of three 20th century movements in detail: the transition from communism to liberalism in Eastern Europe; the transition from apartheid to integration in South Africa; and new developments in southeastern Europe during the 1990s.