

HIST 1099 (Section 20): The US in the Space Age

Instructor: Andrew J. Ross

Summer 2024: 07.08.2024 – 08.09.2024

Course Meetings

Monday-Thursday 1:10 - 3:05 PM

Building ###

Contacting the Instructor

Email: ajr155@georgetown.edu

Office Hours: Friday, 1-3 PM, and by appointment

Course Description:

This course will cover the history of American imagination, comprehension, exploration, and utilization of Outer Space from around 1945 to 2000. Our view on the subject will be broad. Using both primary and secondary sources, we will hone our skills of historical analysis across a variety of subjects including: the geopolitics of space technologies, the domestic social dilemmas related to space flight, and our evolving knowledge of space environments, to name a few. We will discuss popular narratives of space adventure, such as Star Wars and Dune, and contextualize these narratives within their Earthly politics. We will examine the scientific studies of space, and what these sciences say about U.S. priorities. Who gets to visit space? Whose visions and stories of space have become widely circulated? For what purposes do Americans go to space, at all? All of these questions will be explored. We will see how exactly American experiences in space have been bound back down to the planet we inhabit and all of its complex social, political, and economic legacies.

About the 1099 Format:

HIST 1099 is one of the required core classes in History. All sections of HIST 1099 fulfill the same role, though each instructor will develop a specific topic. The general aim of HIST 1099 is to introduce students to various elements of historical work and thinking, within the context of looking at a particular historical period, event, or theme in some depth. Though lectures and discussion will focus on particular topics, there will also be class exercises, assignments, and readings that will allow instructors and students to explore how historians identify, define, and employ primary sources of all types, how historians analyze those sources, how they formulate questions, how they engage with the work of prior historians, and how they aim to reconstruct various elements of the human experience in particular times and places.

Please note that if you receive AP/IB placement or credit, you cannot take HIST 1099 (or 007 or 008) for credit.

Course Goals:

Students will learn to:

- Understand the role of space in the formation and evolution of social, political, economic, and geostrategic histories in the United States
- Differentiate between primary and secondary historical sources
- Analyze archival documents, positing arguments about the significance of a primary source within its broader context
- Identify the sources, structure, and intervention embedded within secondary sources, drawing out the historian's argument and the primary sources upon which they relied
- Narrate the historiographical development of a given scholarly literature, noting how historians have interpreted histories differently, shifted their focus on historical events, or changed their methods of analysis over time

Course Materials

I believe in making your education as affordable as possible. Therefore, all of your course material will be available on Canvas. Your only financial responsibility will be transportation to the few field trips we will be taking to museums and archival centers. Your means of transportation (Metro, carpool, Lyft, unicycle) is up to you.

Items may be added or subtracted during the semester at the instructor's discretion.

Grading System

A: 94-100; A-: 90-93; B+: 87-89; B: 83-86; B-: 80-82; etc.

Course Assignments and Grading:

Written assignments should be written double-spaced in 12-point font with standard side margins. Use whichever font you are most comfortable working with. All assignments should be submitted on Canvas.

Thoughtful, Courteous, and Informed Participation (25%)

We will spend a great deal of time in this class discussing assigned readings as a group. For this to be useful, everyone needs to come to class having read all of the assigned materials and be prepared to share their opinions with their classmates. There are rarely “correct” ways to read historical sources; many opinions are valid and important. Everyone has something to bring to the table, so please share your own thoughts, and please listen carefully and respectfully to what your classmates are saying. I will keep a record of every contribution that you make in class. However, you will not be graded on the quantity of your contributions, you will be graded on the quality. The person who speaks most will not necessarily receive the best grade.

A good contribution in class has two characteristics. First, it must be relevant to the discussion taking place (so pay careful attention to the questions being discussed, and to the thoughts and opinions of your classmates). Second, it must be informed by the assigned readings, so try to talk about specific things in the readings that interested you (you might say “I found it interesting when NASA did X”, or “I think Lisa Ruth Rand makes an interesting argument about Y”). Sharing academic opinions in a seminar is a skill that people learn over time. If you do not feel particularly confident sharing opinions, please feel free to discuss this with me at any time. It is my job to help you develop skills in this class, so I will be happy to help!

In our discussions, keep in mind the power dynamics that shape the “real world” that enter into our classroom. Do not interrupt or disregard the contributions of your peers. Avoid flippancy in your remarks. If someone says something you disagree with, you are expected to respond respectfully to facilitate a productive discussion.

Any absence during the semester due to sickness, religious holidays, extra-curriculum activities, GRE/GMAT/LSAT exams, job interviews or familial affairs, must be reported to your instructor in advance by email. No unreported absence is allowed, except for the allowance of one (1) unscheduled absence. Every absence in addition to the one (1) allowable unscheduled absence will result in a five (5)-point penalty against the total score. The severity of this deduction is due to the concentrated nature of summer course scheduling. Missing one summer class is equivalent to missing two classes during the academic year so it is imperative you be as attendant as possible. This penalty can be avoided if such absences accompany the prompt submission of the Dean’s letters or doctor’s notes.

Primary Source Analysis (20%)

For this assignment you will select, describe, and analyze a document from the options provided on Canvas or the NASA History Office website. Your options include the primary sources available in: *Orbital Futures: Selected Documents in Air Force Space History* (On Canvas); *Exploring the Unknown: Selected Documents in the History of the U.S. Civil Space Program* (on Canvas); the Aeronautics and Space Reports of the President available on the NASA History

Office website

(<https://www.nasa.gov/history/history-publications-and-resources/aeronautics-and-space-report-of-the-president/>); or the NASA Oral Histories also available on the NASA History Office website (<https://www.nasa.gov/history/history-publications-and-resources/oral-histories/>).

Vital to this assignment will be your attendance and concentration on our Primary Source Workshop in Week 1 of classes. During this workshop we will cover what primary sources are and how historians analyze them. I will refer to the primary source guide sheets available on Canvas which will be helpful for you to understand the mechanics of historical analysis. I encourage you to use them as a template as you work through the assignment.

Your analysis should be between 750 and 900 words. Your response should raise analytical questions (and offer suggested answers), while demonstrating an awareness of the source's limitations. You will be graded on your ability to make arguments about the source, demonstrate your critical thinking, and write clearly and persuasively. You are required to meet at least once with me during office hours or at a time mutually agreed upon to discuss how you plan to approach this assignment.

Secondary Source Analysis (20%)

For this assignment you will select, review, and analyze one of two readings for this course: either Daniel Immerwahr's article *The Quileute Dune: Frank Herbert, Indigeneity, and Empire* (2022) or his article *The Galactic Vietnam, Technology, Modernization, and Empire in George Lucas's Star Wars* (2022). Your analysis should identify what argument the scholar attempted to make, how they structured their argument, what sources they relied upon, and whether or not their evidence aligned with their claims.

Vital to this assignment will be your attendance and concentration on our Secondary Source Workshop in Week 1 of classes. I will refer to the secondary source guide sheets available on Canvas which will be helpful for you to understand the mechanics of historical analysis. Your paper should be between 1000 and 1200 words.

Historiographical Essay (35%)

This will be the final assignment for the course. For this assignment you will choose a subject which you identify from the course reading and describe how the scholarship on that subject has evolved over time. This may be any topic you identify from the reading—it could be gender and space exploration, the weaponization of space, environmental science and space technologies, US domestic politics and civilian space programs, just to give you some ideas. There are plenty more out there available for you to develop. Key questions you should consider are: what sources are the authors relying upon? What secondary literature do they reference? Do they see themselves building upon earlier arguments? Rebutting these arguments? Or examining previously unexplored fields of research?

You must include at least 5 readings within this essay. You are required to meet at least once with me during office hours or at a time mutually agreed upon to discuss what topic you have chosen, which readings you plan to examine, and what developments you see over time.

Citations:

For historical writing, the indication of sources is essential. You must follow Chicago Manual of Style for your writing assignments. Visit https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/chicago_manual_of_style_17th_edition.html to identify the proper citation format for any given secondary source. Do not use an in-text reference or endnote system. Use the footnote function that should be available in your word-processing software. See also the citation guide sheet provided on Canvas.

Academic Honesty

I am required to report violations of the university's rules concerning academic integrity, as described in the Student Handbook. Fair use of sources is part of your training as a scholar and community member. If you have any questions about whether something in your writing might constitute plagiarism, come to see me about it before submitting your assignment—preferably well in advance of the due date. You are also invited to bring it up in class. We will all benefit from hashing out fair use issues openly. Details on the Honor System:

<https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/>

University Protocols & Resources:

Sexual Misconduct

Georgetown University and its faculty and staff are committed to supporting survivors and those impacted by sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, and stalking. Georgetown requires faculty members, unless otherwise designated as confidential, to report all disclosures of sexual misconduct to the University Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator. If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a professor or staff member in or outside of the classroom (with the exception of disclosures in papers), that faculty or staff member must report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator, or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. The coordinator will, in turn, reach out to the student to provide support, resources, and the option to meet. Please note that the student is not required to meet with the Title IX coordinator and no action will be taken without the student's awareness. More information about reporting options and resources can be found on the Sexual Misconduct Website:

<https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/resourcecenter>.

If you would prefer to speak to someone confidentially, Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources that can provide support and assistance. These resources include:

- Health Education Services: Sexual Assault Response and Prevention: sarp@georgetown.edu
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS): 202.687.6985

Additional resources are included below:

- Georgetown Self-Care Resource Guide: <https://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/health-promotion/self-care/>
- Georgetown Wellness Wheel: <https://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/hoya-wellness-wheel/>
- Georgetown Guide to Recognizing Students in Distress: <https://studentaffairs.georgetown.edu/studentoutreach/facultystaffresources/>

Pregnancy Modifications and Adjustments

Georgetown University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for pregnant students. At any point throughout their pregnancy students may request adjustments/modifications based on general pregnancy needs or accommodations based on a pregnancy-related complication or medical need. Students may also request accommodations following labor and delivery based on a complication or medical need.

To request pregnancy modifications, please complete the [SCS Pregnancy Modification Request Form](https://forms.gle/ZBfASxui7u13A8TU6): <https://forms.gle/ZBfASxui7u13A8TU6>

More information about pregnancy modifications can be found on the Title IX Georgetown University Website: <https://titleix.georgetown.edu/title-ix-pregnancy/student-pregnancy/>

Campus Resources:

- CAPS: Stress and Mental Health: <https://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/mental-health/>
 - Please do not hesitate to contact me if you are overwhelmed by coursework or need assistance in reaching out to CAPS.
- Academic Support Center: <https://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/>

- Please let me know of any accommodations you have as soon as possible so that I can best modify my instruction to your needs.
- Gender Inclusivity: <https://lgbtq.georgetown.edu/resources/transatgu/>
 - Please let me know your preferred name and pronouns.

Course Schedule and Readings

Week 1 – The Space Age before NASA

July 8 – Course Introduction

Reading for next class: Emily S. Rosenberg, “Far Out: The Space Age in American Culture” in *Remembering the Space Age*, ed. Steven J. Dick (Washington: NASA History Division, 2008), 157-184

July 9 – Primary Source Workshop and Reading Discussion

Reading for next class: James E. David, “Forging Close Ties in NASA’s Early Years” in *Spies and Shuttles: NASA’s Secret Relationships with the DoD and CIA* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2015), 13-33

July 10 – Secondary Source Workshop and Reading Discussion

Reading for next class: Brenda Plummer, “The Newest South: Race and Space on the Dixie Frontier” in *NASA’s Long Civil Rights Movement*, eds. Brian C. Odom and Stephen P. Waring (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2019), 61-108

July 11 – Lecture and Reading Discussion

Reading for next class: Roger D. Launius, “Space Technology and the Rise of the US Surveillance State” in *The Surveillance Imperative: Geosciences during the Cold War and Beyond*, eds. Simone Turchetti and Peder Roberts, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 147-170

Reading for next class: Kim McQuaid, “Race, Gender, and Space Exploration: A Chapter in the Social History of the Space Age” *Journal of American Studies* 41, no. 2 (2007): 405-434

Week 2 – Reaching Orbit and Beyond

July 15 – Screening of *Dune* (2021)

Reading for next class: Daniel Immerwahr, “The Quileute Dune: Frank Herbert, Indigeneity, and Empire,” *Journal of American Studies* 56, iss. 2 (May 2022): 191-216

Assignment Due: Identify Primary Source & Schedule Meeting on the Source

July 16 – Lecture and Reading Discussion

Reading for next class: Dagomar Degroot, “One Small Step for Man, One Giant Leap for Moon Microbes? Interpretations of Risk and the Limits of Quarantine in NASA’s Apollo Program” *Isis* 114, no. 2 (June 2023): __

July 17 – Visit to the Washington DC, National Air and Space Museum

Reading for next class: Stuart Banner “Sovereignty in Space” in *Who Owns the Sky? The Struggle to Control Airspace from the Wright Brothers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 262-288

July 18 – Lecture and Reading Discussion

Reading for next class: Sylvia D. Fries, “2001 to 1984: Political Environment and the Design of NASA’s Space Station System,” *Technology and Culture* 29, no. 3 (July 1988): 568-93

Reading for next class: John Krige, “NASA as an Instrument of U.S. Foreign Policy,” in *Societal Impact of Spaceflight*, eds. Steven J. Dick and Roger D. Launius (Washington: NASA History Division, 2007), 207-218

Assignment Due: Secondary Source Analysis (Option 1), Sunday, July 21 at 11:59pm

Week 3 – Building Space Infrastructure in the 1970s

July 22 – Historiography Analysis Workshop and Reading Discussion

Reading for next class: Neil M. Maher, “Spaceship Earth: Civil Rights and NASA’s War on Poverty” in *Apollo in the Age of Aquarius* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017), 11-53

Assignment Due: Identify Historiographical Essay Subject and Schedule Meeting

July 23 – Lecture and Reading Discussion

Reading for next class: Peter L. Hays, “NASA and the Department of Defense: Enduring Themes in Three Key Areas,” in *Critical Issues in the History of Spaceflight*, eds. Steven J. Dick and Roger D. Launius (Washington: NASA History Office, 2006), 199-238

July 24 – Visit to the Washington DC, NASA History Office

Reading for next class: Neil M. Maher, “Heavenly Bodies: ‘Manned Spaceflight’ and the Women’s Movement” in *Apollo in the Age of Aquarius* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017), 137-182

July 25 – Lecture and Reading Discussion

Reading for next class: Lisa Ruth Rand, “Falling Cosmos: Nuclear Reentry and the Environmental History of Earth Orbit,” *Environmental History* 24, no. 1 (January 2019): 78-103

Reading for next class: Hugh R. Slotten, “Satellite Communications, Globalization, and the Cold War,” *Technology and Culture* 43, no. 2 (April 2002): 315-50

Assignment Due: Primary Source Analysis, Sunday, July 28 at 11:59pm

Week 4 – Weaponizing Space in the 1980s

July 29 – Screening of Star Wars (1977)

Reading for next class: Daniel Immerwahr, “The Galactic Vietnam: Technology, Modernization, and Empire in George Lucas's *Star Wars*” in *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Relations: New Histories*, eds. Christopher McKnight Nichols and David Milne (New York: Columbia University Press, 2022), 435-451

July 30 – Lecture and Reading Discussion

Reading for next class: Asif Siddiqi, “Dispersed Sites: San Marco and the Launch from Kenya” in *How Knowledge Moves: Writing the Transnational History of Science and Technology*, ed. John Krige (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2019), 175-200

July 31 – Visit to the Chantilly, VA National Air and Space Museum Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center

Reading for next class: Hoff, Joan. “The Presidency, Congress, and the Deceleration of the US Space Program in the 1970s,” in *Spaceflight and the Myth of Presidential Leadership*, ed. Roger D. Launius and Howard E. McCurdy (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 92–132

August 1 – Lecture and Reading Discussion

Reading for next class: Neil M. Maher, “Bringing the Environment Back In: A Transnational History of Landsat” in *How Knowledge Moves: Writing the Transnational History of Science and Technology*, ed. John Krige (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2019), 201-226

Reading for next class: Cathleen Lewis, “Arnaldo Tamayo Méndez and Guion Bluford: The Last Cold War Race Battle” in *NASA's Long Civil Rights*, eds. Odom & Waring (Gainesville, University of Florida Press, 2019), 146-166

Assignment Due: Secondary Source Analysis (Option 2), Sunday, August 4th, 11:59pm

Week 5 – The Space Age after the Cold War

August 5 – Lecture and Reading Discussion

Reading for next class: Teasel Muir-Harmony, “The Limits of U.S. Science Diplomacy in the Space Age: Project Apollo at the 1970 Osaka World Exposition” *Pacific Historical Review* 88, no. 4, (Fall 2019): 590-618

August 6 – Lecture and Reading Discussion

Reading for next class: Keith Snedegar, “The Congressional Black Caucus and the Closure of NASA’s Satellite Tracking Station at Hartebeesthoek, in *NASA’s Long Civil Rights*, eds. Odom & Waring (Gainesville, University of Florida Press, 2019), 167-179

August 7 – Lecture and Reading Discussion

Reading for next class: Andrew J. Butrica, “The ‘Right’ Stuff: The Reagan Revolution and the US Space Program” in *Remembering the Space Age*, ed. Steven J. Dick (Washington: NASA History Office, 2008), 121–134

August 8 – Class Wrap Up

Last Assigned Readings: Gretchen Heefner, “Missiles and Memory: Dismantling South Dakota’s Cold War,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 181-203

Last Assigned Readings: James E. David, “NASA’s Applications Satellites and National Security Requirements” in *Spies and Shuttles: NASA’s Secret Relationships with the DoD and CIA* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2015), 244-276

Assignment Due: Historiographical Essay