History of European Exploration HIS

Mondays, 2-4.40, RRL 362

Instructor: Dorinda Outram, d.outram@rochester.edu

Office hours Mondays and Thursdays 11-12.

This course counts towards Clusters in Global History, History of Science, and European History.

It concentrates on the second heroic age of European exploration in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It is focused on the opening up of the Pacific world and of the American West, and also examines thematic issues such as scientific travel and contact between cultures.

It was exploration which laid the foundations for the modern global world. Europeans circumnavigated the globe, encountered strange peoples and cultures, made collections, observations and maps, and set up markets and trade routes.

Course organization

Each class consists of discussion of the week’s reading. Each student is asked to contribute two ‘think-pieces’ on the reading for each week. From the think-pieces I expect critical engagement with the week’s reading.

Time is set aside for students to meet individually with Prof. Outram to discuss their draft midterm (10 pp.) and term papers. (20pp.) There is no final test.

Evaluation: Mid-term 25%, final exam 35%, ‘think-pieces’ 20%, discussion participation 20%.

Course Outline:

1. January 27, Introductory lecture and class organization. For next time, read:
3. February 10. Captain Cook’s First Voyage in Edwards, ed. The Journals of Captain Cook; Salmond, Trial of the Cannibal Dog 1-164
4. February 17. Captain Cook’s second voyage in Edwards; Salmond 165-292
5. February 24. Captain Cook’s third Voyage in Edwards; Salmond, 293-432
6. March 3 Individual Sessions
7. March 10: Spring Break, no class
8. March 17 Culture Contact: Lamb, Part I; Patricia Seed, Ceremonies of Possession, 1-15 (on Blackboard); Alan Frost. ‘New South Wales as Terra Nullius: The British Denial of Aboriginal Land Right’, Historical Journal, 1973, 517-23 (on Blackboard)


11. April 7: Alexander von Humboldt: Science, Ethnography and Culture Contact: Humboldt, Personal Narrative


14. April 28 Individual Appointments with Prof Outram

15. DUE Dates: mid-term paper due March 17 to be handed IN IN CLASS; Term Paper Due Date, May 5