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**HISTORY 104G**

**MODERN EUROPE**

**1750- PRESENT**

**FALL 2014**

**Tu-Th, 11-12:20 THH 202**



***\*Course Description***

This course falls within the General Education category Cultures and Civilizations I, which is designed to “introduce students to the norms and patterns of civilizations associated with the Greco-Roman and European traditions and the legacy of those traditions in North America.” The course will focus on three main themes, each of which forged new conceptions about human rights and the relationship between the individual and the broader society and state in the context of European nations as well as in their global interactions. These themes include the 1) democratic and industrial revolutions; 2) the emergence of nation-states, imperial conquest, and industrial and cultural technologies that advanced accompanying ideologies; 3) totalitarianism, global warfare, and decolonization. The primary goal of this course is to attain an understanding of the historical roots of the politics and cultures in western societies that had contradictory tendencies, such as advocating freedom and equality while developing inegalitarian legal systems and conquering the territories and resources of non-western people.

Privileging the power of rational thought and the belief in unlimited human potential, the eighteenth-century Enlightenment offered the promise of universal liberty and equality, and the optimistic belief in human progress. But as reformers and revolutionaries attempted to put these lofty ideas into practice, they in turn created new hierarchies and new criteria for excluding people from citizenship and for denying them civil and political rights. Through the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, if the concept “human” applied to everyone, it did not apply to everyone equally, and “rights” varied according to age, class, gender, religious, and racial status. By the early twentieth century, faith in “progress” resulted in the extremes of global warfare, totalitarian ideologies, and genocide. The unifying theme—and challenge—of this course is to understand how people in western

culture conceived of and experienced human rights in various historical contexts, and how they justified denying rights to certain categories of people while privileging others. In this context we will examine power relationships between and among states and individuals, race and ethnic groups, social classes, gender identities, and colonizers and colonized.

Readings:

J-J Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality* (Penguin edition)  
William Doyle, *The French Revolution: A Very Short Introduction*  
Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railroad Journey*  
Joseph Conrad, *The Heart of Darkness* (Norton Edition)  
Henrik Ibsen, *The Doll's House*  
Pat Barker, *Regeneration*  
Griffin, *Fascism*  
Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*

In addition, brief readings will be available electronically on Blackboard.

Requirements will include:

Active participation in weekly TA-led discussion sections, as well as in lectures  
Two 4-6 page papers on the course readings  
Midterm exam  
Final exam

**\*A full syllabus will be available in August.**