

Brief Course Outline

Course Title: **Monsters: A Human History**

Course Number and Section:

HISTORY

1819F 550

Instructor Name(s): Nina Reid-Maroney

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

Who decides what makes a monster?

This course offers a hands-on introduction to the study and the practice of History, using historically constructed ideas of monsters and concepts of the monstrous as our unifying theme. Our course takes in a range of topics across time and place. Using primary sources drawn from varied global histories and political contexts, the course examines shifting ideas of “the monstrous” and asks what the monstrous reveals about the past. How can studying monsters help us to understand changing concepts of nature, gender, race, reason, spectacle, belief, power, modernity, and ultimately, what makes us human?

Using workshops with archival, print, and digital sources, secondary readings, lectures, and class discussion, the course will introduce you to the practice of history—the ways that historians interpret evidence and make sense of the past.

Although the course material is arranged chronologically, the course is not a survey that tries to connect the dots, nor does it offer an overarching narrative of cause and effect, of inevitable progress, of decline and fall, or of development. Instead, the course moves from one time and place to another, revealing contours of the rich and varied landscapes of the human past. We approach the past in ways that will help you to see patterns and ragged edges, change and continuity, always mindful of the methods, evidence, and interpretive frameworks that historians use to create knowledge about the past.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Recognize and define major themes in recent historical scholarship
2. Use research in the library, archives, and digital repositories to develop practical and transferable skills in finding and weighing evidence
3. Read and analyse primary sources in ways that recognize both their value, and their limitations
4. Write clearly using your own ideas and words
5. Understand the concept of historiography and recognize that historians bring their own scholarly interpretation to bear on the evidence of the past

6. Voice your own critical views, both in class discussion and in written work

7. Consider the contemporary relevance and importance of engaging with the course material

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus* ed. M.K. Joseph. This book is available for purchase at the Western Bookstore—you will need the introductory material in this edition of the text.

All other required readings are posted on our course OWL site

Methods Of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Discussion and reading response worksheets (Wednesdays)	Ongoing	20
Participation in History Workshops	Ongoing	10
Research Proposal	25/10/24	10
Written reflection and research image	22/11/24	5
Primary Source Research essay	06/12/24	25
Final Exam	TBA	30

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.

Saturday, August 3, 2024