HIS 601: The Origins of Race & Ethnicity

Sara Lipton

Monday, 4:25-7:15 PM, Online

This seminar is designed to help train graduate students in the research and writing of graduate-level research papers, with a focus on issues related to the origins, development, and deployment of ideas about race and/or ethnicity. We will start by reading some short primary sources, scientific discussions, theoretical works, and case studies treating race and ethnicity in the ancient, premodern, and modern worlds. We shall be asking such questions as: When and why did ideas of biological human difference develop? What forms of 'difference' are given salience in various times and cultures? How is 'difference' represented and enacted? How do ideas about race and ethnicity affect politics, social relations, art making, scientific investigation, and civic life? And throughout, we shall discuss how historians frame a question, shape a research project, and present an argument and set of conclusions. Requirements consist of completing all reading assignments and participating actively in class, as well as researching and writing a research paper. In addition, each student will contribute at least one document for general analysis over the course of the term. The second half of the course will be devoted to researching, writing, and presenting working drafts of students’ research papers. The final research paper of ca. 20-30 pages will be due on Dec. 15. **HIS MA/PhD and MAT Social Studies students register for HIS 601.**