

HIST 34505
Spring 2021
Arabs in American Eyes

Place: LWSN 1142
Day and Time: M-W-F, 8:30 am – 9:20 am

Instructor: Professor Holden
Student Hours: M, 10 am – 12 noon
Email: sholden@purdue.edu

Ever since Barbary pirates preyed on hapless ships in the Mediterranean Sea, Americans have employed the Middle East and North Africa as an exotic backdrop for a variety of popular publications, such as travel accounts and novels. These descriptions of a foreign land do not always provide an accurate portrait of the Arab-Islamic world, but an author's comparisons between life abroad and life at home provide insight into American values and attitudes. This course explores US relations with the Arab world over 300 years, using American writings on the Middle East and North Africa as a prism for viewing evolving conceptions of national identity and global power in the United States. Assigned readings include eighteenth-century captivity narratives, nineteenth-century travel accounts, and twentieth-century films, novels and magazine articles. In the present day, an era fraught with new tensions between these two regions, this class aims to identify both continuity and change in American perceptions of this region of the world.

Learning Outcomes

- *Topical*
 - To consider the long literary tradition of US writing on the Middle East and North Africa.
 - To consider American descriptions of foreign places as a window onto American life.
- *Analytical*
 - To develop skills of critical thinking and problem solving.
 - To converse about ideas and improve verbal communication.

This class attends to skills critical for making a positive impression on employers: ability to interact with people, problem-solving skills, oral communication, and written communication.

Course Materials and Preparations

The assignment for each class is *underneath* the specific day and lecture. It is under the line Class Preparations. Students should prepare assignments for each topic *before* each class meeting.

Most readings are on Blackboard, except for the following text: Susanna Haswell Rowson, *Slaves in Algiers, or a Struggle for Freedom* (1794; reprint, Copley Publishing Group, 2016).

Course Evaluations

Essay #1 20%
Essay #2 20%

Essay #3 20%
 Essay #4 20%
 Engagement 20%

Students will produce *4 polished pieces of writing* that address class readings. These essays require students to construct an original argument based on primary sources assigned for the class (no outside research). In the syllabus, I list dates when the assignment will be announced and the due date. I grade these essays based on the coherence of the argument, analysis of text and clarity of expression. The essays must be between 3 and 4 pages (no more/no less) in 12-point type-face, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. I will deduct 5 points for each day this essay is late.

Student engagement is important. Students should read and reflect upon assigned materials before our class in order to discuss the day's topic. Our class is nearly exclusively discussion. I have set up discussion boards on Brightspace and would like consistent engagement with the response questions that I have put below most readings. This can form a basis for class discussion. Your participation in the discussion board and in class participation will be evaluated at the end of the semester. I will base this grade on your consistent and meaningful comments on the readings.

Email etiquette is important. If you contact me, please email sholden@purdue.edu. You should put the course number and query in the subject line (HIST 250, book review). I would like you to use a formal salutation (Dear Professor Holden) and close with your full name (Sincerely, Chris Paul). Consider grammar and punctuation when writing the email. If I want to send supplementary questions or cancel a class, I will email the class list. So, please check your Purdue email daily.

18 January (M) Martin Luther King Day (no class)

20 January (W) Introduction

22 January (F) Initial Thoughts about Images of Arab World

Class Preparations

Official Trailer, "[Delta Force](#)," 1987

[Moz Jobrani](#), Iranian-American comedian, on terrorism, 2011.

Key and Peele, [Islamic women](#), 2012

"[Prince Ali](#)," from Disney's Aladdin, 2019

Response #1: What do you know about the Middle East and North Africa as well as the relationship of the US with this region of the world? What are the sources of your knowledge?

25 January (M) American Orientalism

Class Preparations

Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945* (University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 9-42.

Response #2: What does Douglas Little identify as the principal components of American Orientalism? What set of preconceived notions does he associate with this term?

27 January (W) Colonial America and the Ottoman Empire

Class Preparations

Timothy Marr, “Drying Up the Euphrates’: Muslims, Millennialism, and Early American Missionary Enterprise,” in *US-Middle East Historical Encounters: a Critical Survey*, Abbas Amanat and Magnus T. Bernhardsson, ed.s (University Press of Florida, 2007), 60-76.

Cotton Mather, “The Glory of Goodness,” in *White Slaves, African Masters: An Anthology of American Barbary Captivity Narratives*, Paul Baepler, ed. (University of Chicago Press, 1999), 61-72.

Response #3: What are the main points and thesis of Mather’s sermon? How does his sermon reveal insights on American society in the era in which he lived? What are these insights?

29 January (F) The Lessons of Independence

Class Preparations

Lawrence A. Peskin, “The Lessons of Independence: How the Algerian Crisis Shaped Early American Identity,” *Diplomatic History*, 28, no. 3 (2004): 297-319.

John Foss, “A Journal of Captivity and Sufferings,” in *White Slaves, African Masters: An Anthology of American Barbary Captivity Narratives*, Paul Baepler, ed. (University of Chicago Press, 1999), 71-102.

Response #4: What does Foss identify as the differences between American captives and North African captors? How does that then help him to define the national character of the US?

1 February (M) Synthesis Day (Or, Catch Up)

3 February (W) Republican Feminism and Imperial Fantasies, pt. 1

Class Preparations

Jan E. Lewis, “A Revolution for Whom? Women in the Era of American Revolution,” in *A Companion to American Women’s History*, ed. Nancy Hewitt (Blackwell Publishing, 2002)

Susanna Haswell Rowson, *Slaves in Algiers, or a Struggle for Freedom*, ed. Jennifer Margulis and Karen M. Poremski (1794; reprint, Copley Publishing Group, 2016), to p. 28.

Response #5: Examine the first pages of this play with care. Who has written it, and why? What does the “Prologue” contribute to the readers (viewers) understanding of the play? And what do you make of the opening scene? Where is it set, and with what effect?

5 February (F) Republican Feminism and Imperial Fantasies, pt. 2

Class Preparations

Susanna Haswell Rowson, *Slaves in Algiers, or a Struggle for Freedom*, ed. Jennifer Margulis and Karen M. Poremski (1794; reprint, Copley Publishing Group, 2016), to end.

Response #6: How does Rowson’s play edify its audience? What is Rowson’s political purpose? Rowson’s father was a British officer who fought in the American Revolution. Given this family history, how might this play act as what one scholar termed a “declaration of citizenship”?

8 February (M) The Lessons of the Barbary Wars

Class Preparations

Robert J. Allison, “Americans and the Muslim World—First Encounters,” in *The Middle East and the United States*, 6th ed., David W. Lesch and Mark L. Haas, ed. (Routledge, 2012), 19-29.

Response #7: Allison writes of “the Muslim world as a counterpoint to American values. What does the term counterpoint signify? What counterpoints have we encountered so far in our class?

10 February (W) Remembering the Barbary Wars

Class Preparations

Patrick Taulère and Kim Hawkins, “The Battle of Tripoli,” 2004 (45 min.)

Mike Pesca, “Day to Day” on NPR, “[The Iraq-Barbary Comparison](#),” 26 February 2007 (4 min.)

C. Hitchens, “To the Shores of Tripoli,” *Time Magazine*, 5 July 2004.

Response #8: How do the Barbary Wars lend themselves to historical analogies?

12 February (F) Synthesis Day (Or, Catch Up)

ASSIGN ESSAY #1—DUE 2/22/20 AT 5 PM

15 February (M) Imaginings of Arab World in the US

Class Preparations

Susan Nance, *How the Arabian Nights Inspired the American Dream, 1790-1935* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 19-78 (chapters 1 and 2).

17 February (W) Reading Day (No Class)

19 February (F) Ottoman Constantinople

Class Preparations

Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad* (1869; reprint, Wordsworth Classics, 2010), chapters 33-34.

Response #9: What is the focus of Twain's account of Istanbul? Where do you perceive him engaging with the Ottoman capital as a "counterpoint" to the US and American values?

22 February (M) Imagining the Holy Land, Pt. 1

Class Preparations

David Wallace, *Walking the Bible*, episode 1, 2006 (54 min.)

William C. Prime, *Tent Life in the Holy Land* (1857), 68-84 and 129-141 (chapters 5 and 9).

Response #10: How would you compare the PBS film by David Wallace with Prime's images of the very same Middle East region 150 years before? What is the tone each takes with this land?

Essay #1 Due *TODAY* (2/22/2020) at 5 pm

24 February (W) Imagining the Holy Land, Pt. 2

Class Preparations

Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad* (1869; reprint, Wordsworth Classics, 2010), chapters 41-54.

Response #11: Who is a Pilgrim? Who is a Sinner? What adjectives would Twain use to define each of these types of people? And why? Would Twain identify himself as Pilgrim or Sinner?

26 February (F) Imagining the Holy Land, Pt. 3

Class Preparations

Response #12: How does Twain conform to the reverent and romantic approaches to travel description presented by both William Prime and Bruce Feiler? And how does he upturn these approaches? In what way does his description provide a counterpoint for the US and American values? upturned traditional reverent and romantic approaches to travel writing

1 March (M) Orientalist Art

Class Preparations

View the following paintings of Frederic Edwin Church:

- [*Jerusalem, From the Mount of Olives*](#) (1870)

[Letter from Charles Emory Smith to Theodore Roosevelt](#), 21 May 1904. Theodore Roosevelt Papers. Library of Congress Manuscript Division.

“American Marines May Invade Morocco,” *The New York Times* (29 May 1904), 1.

Ian Perdicaris, “In Raissuli’s Hands,” in *White Slaves, African Masters: An Anthology of American Barbary Captivity Narratives*, Paul Baepler, ed. (University of Chicago Press, 1999), 285-301.

Response #16: What happened to Ian Perdicaris? And how does he describe his experience? What is the tone of his article? How does he feel about Raissuli? Is he merely a bandit?

15 March (M) Raisuli Redux

Class Preparations

John Milius, “The Wind and the Lion,” 1975 (2 hrs.)

Response #17: What changes did the director of this film make? With what effect of the viewer? How is the viewer supposed to feel about Raisuli, the US, women?

17 March (W) World War I in the Arab World, pt. 1

Class Preparations

James Gelvin and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 6th ed. (Routledge, 2018), 139-160.

“[World War I through Arab Eyes](#),” episodes 1 and 2, *Al Jazeera*, 2014 (43 min. each)

19 March (F) World War I in the Arab World, pt. 2

Class Preparations

Essay #2 due *TODAY* (3/19/2020) at 5 pm

22 March (M) Americans in Wartime Mesopotamia

Class Preparations

“Baghdad Sketches,” Kermit Roosevelt, *War in the Garden of Eden* (Scribner’s, 1919), 135-149.

“Round about Time,” Eleanor Egan, *The War in the Cradle of the World* (Harper and Brothers, 1918), 246-258.

C.M Cursetjee, *The Land of the Date*, in Stacy E. Holden, *A Documentary History of Modern Iraq* (University Press of Florida, 2021), 39-42

Response #18: Compare and contrast the wartime descriptions in Baghdad by K. Roosevelt (President Roosevelt's son and an honorary Captain in British Army) and Eleanor Egan (American journalist). What are their attitudes toward the peoples and places they encounter while in Baghdad? What specific events and facts do they recount? And where do the facts that they present to their readers slip into interpretation? How does their account differ from that of Cursetjee, a lawyer from India with Persian heritage, who traveled to Basra during the war?

24 March (W) The King-Crane Report

Class Preparations

James Gelvin, "The Ironic Legacy of the King-Crane Commission," in *The Middle East and the United States*, David W. Lesch and Mark L. Haas, ed.s (Routledge, 2012), 30-46.

The General Syrian Congress, "Memorandum Presented to the King-Crane Commission," in *The Israel-Arab Reader: A Documentary History of the Middle East Conflict*, 8th ed., Walter Laqueur and Dan Schueftan, ed.s (Penguin, 2016), 21-23.

Zionist Commission to Palestine, "[Statement to the International Commission on Turkey-American Section](#)," June 1919, King Crane Digital Collection, Oberlin College Archives.

The King-Crane Commission, "Recommendations," in *The Middle East and the United States*, David W. Lesch and Mark L. Haas, ed.s (Routledge, 2012), 23-25.

Response #19: How might the history of the Middle East have been different if American politicians in DC has read the King Crane Report and implemented its recommendations?

26 March (F) Synthesis Day (Or, Catch Up)

29 March (M) US Attitudes towards European Imperialism, pt. 1

Class Preparations

Erez Manela, "Woodrow Wilson and the Ugliest of Treacheries," *The New York Times* (9 March 2019).

Stacy E. Holden, "Edith Wharton's Moroccan Clichés," *History Today* (5 November 2020).

Edith Wharton, *In Morocco* (1920; reprint, John Beaufoy Publishing, 2015), prologue and 1-15.

Response #20: Does Wharton's travelogue undermine or support French colonial endeavors? How does she convey this support to her American readers, since US policy is not set yet?

31 March (W) US Attitudes towards European Imperialism, pt. 2

Class Preparations

“Imperialist Nostalgia,” in Renato Rosaldo, *Culture & Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Beacon Press, 1993), 68-87.

Edith Wharton, *In Morocco* (1920; reprint, John Beaufoy Publishing, 2015), 35-55.

Response #21: What is imperialist nostalgia? How does this concept differ from American Orientalism? What evidence of imperialist nostalgia appears in Wharton’s description of Fez?

2 April (F) US Attitudes towards European Imperialism, pt. 3

Class Preparations

Edith Wharton, *In Morocco* (1920; reprint, John Beaufoy Publishing, 2015), 73-94.

Response #22: Assess Wharton’s descriptions of the women she encounters in Morocco. How might these descriptions provide a counterpoint to Western life? And with what effect?

ASSIGN ESSAY #3—DUE 4/12/20 at 5 PM

5 April (M) Arab Whiteness in Early-20th c. America, pt. 1

Class Preparations

Sarah Gualtieri, “Becoming ‘White’: Race, Religion and the Foundations of Syrian/Lebanese Ethnicity in the United States,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 20, no. 4 (Summer 2001), 29-58.

Khaled A. Beydoun, “Between Muslim and White: The Legal Construction of Arab American Identity,” *New York University Annual Survey of American Law*, 69, no. 1 (2013), 29-76.

7 April (W) Arab Whiteness in Early-20th c. America, pt. 2

9 April (F) The Sheik as Hero and Villain, pt. 1 (Reading Day)

Class Preparations

“The Spectacular East: Romantic Orientalism in America,” Hsu-Ming Teo, *Desert Passions: Orientalism and Romance Novels* (University of Texas Press, 2012), 109-143.

“Review of The Sheik,” *The Washington Times* (27 November 1921), 7, Chronicling America Online Archive, Library of Congress.

George Melford, “[The Sheik](#),” 1921 (1 hr., 20 min.)

12 April (M) The Sheik as Hero and Villain, pt. 2

26 April (M) Post 9/11 Desert Romances, pt. 1

Class Preparations

Amira Jarmakani, “‘The Sheik Who Loved Me’: Romancing the War on Terror, *Signs* 35, no. 4 (Summer 2010), 993-1017.

Maisey Yates, *Forged in Desert Heat* (Harlequin Presents, 2013), selection.

Response #27: How would this book have changed if it took place in a European capital? Why is the desert central to the plot of this romance as well as for Ana and Sheik Zafar?

28 April (W) Post 9/11 Desert Romances, pt. 2

Class Preparations

30 April (F) Synthesis Day (Or, Catch Up)

Grading

ASSIGN ESSAY #4—DUE 5/6/2020 AT 5 PM

- A = 94-100
- A- = 90-93
- B+ = 87-89
- B = 84-86
- B- = 80-83
- C+ = 77-79
- C = 74-76
- C- = 70-73

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

There is a link to Purdue Counseling and Psychological Services on Brightspace, under the Student Services and Resources section. **If you feel stress, anxiety and/or overwhelmed, try [WellTrack](#)**, with information and tools at your fingertips, available to you at any time. **If you need support and information about options and resources**, please contact or see the [Office of the Dean of Students](#). Call 765-494-1747. Hours of operation are M-F, 8 am- 5 pm. **If you find yourself struggling to find a healthy balance between academics, social life, stress**, etc. sign up for free one-on-one virtual or in-person sessions with a [Purdue Wellness Coach at RecWell](#). Student coaches can help you navigate through barriers and challenges toward your goals throughout the semester. Sign up is completely free and can be done on BoilerConnect. If you have any questions, please contact Purdue Wellness at evans240@purdue.edu.

In cases of absences due to circumstances beyond a student's control, and in cases of bereavement, the student or the student's representative should contact the Office of the Dean of Students. See, http://www.purdue.edu/studentregulations/regulations_procedures/classes.html.

COVID Policies

COVID makes it difficult to evaluate student participation. Purdue guidelines state, "***Students are expected to attend in-person courses when they are able.***" If student feels ill, have symptoms associated with COVID-19, or suspect they have been exposed to the virus, they should stay home and contact the Protect Purdue Health Center (496-INFO). When students cannot come to class, they should email me. I will help them understand how best to cover missed material and provide an opportunity to increase class engagement. Most classes will be uploaded to Brightspace as a Boilercast for quarantined students. Class engagement (attendance or, if you cannot attend, communication with me) will not be graded (and so cannot bring your grade down). But I reserve the right to raise your grade based on a student's engagement.

If you must quarantine, please email me so we can communicate about continuing remotely. You must work with the Protect Purdue Health Center (PPHC) to get documentation and support, like access to an Academic Case Manager who can provide you with guidelines and resources around communicating with your instructors, be available for academic support, and offer suggestions for how to be successful when learning remotely. Your Academic Case Manager can be reached at acmg@purdue.edu. Importantly, if you find yourself too sick to progress in the course, notify your academic case manager and notify me via email to make any necessary arrangements.

The [Protect Purdue Plan](#) includes the [Protect Purdue Pledge](#), which is campus policy. As such all members of the Purdue community must comply with the required health and safety guidelines. Required behaviors in this class include: staying home and contacting the Protect Purdue Health Center (496-INFO) if you feel ill or know you have been exposed to the virus, properly wearing a mask in classrooms and campus buildings at all times (the mask should cover nose and mouth, no eating or drinking in the classroom), disinfecting desk and other workspaces before and after use, maintaining appropriate social distancing with peers and instructors (including when entering/exiting classrooms), refraining from moving furniture, avoiding shared use of personal items, maintaining robust hygiene (e.g., handwashing, disposal of tissues) prior to, during and after class, and following all safety directions from the instructor.

Students who do not engage in these behaviors will be offered the opportunity to comply. If non-compliance continues, possible results include instructors asking the student to leave class and instructors dismissing the class. Students who do not comply with the required health behaviors are violating the University Code of Conduct and will be reported to the Dean of Students Office with sanctions ranging from educational requirements to dismissal from the university.

Any student who has substantial reason to believe that another person in a campus room (e.g., classroom) is threatening the safety of others by not complying may leave the room without consequence. The student is encouraged to report the behavior to and discuss the next steps with their instructor. Students also have the option of reporting the behavior to the [Office of the Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). See also [Purdue University Bill of Student Rights](#).

The deadlines and grading policies are subject to changes in the event of a major campus emergency. Any changes will be emailed and posted on Brightspace when class resumes.

Other University Policies

Plagiarism Will Not Be Tolerated at Purdue University: *Plagiarism is a crime, and students can be expelled for turning in a paper that they did not write. Copying a person's work verbatim is not the only form of plagiarism. In some cases, plagiarism involves paraphrasing the idea of another without a footnote or the repetition of another author's phrase. Students are advised to consult Purdue University's Guide to Academic Integrity for guidelines at: <http://www.purdue.edu/ODOS/osrr/integrity.htm>. Plagiarized work will receive a 0, and the professor reserves the right to forward the case to the administration for further review by a dean.*

Purdue University Policy Prohibits Academic Dishonesty: *Purdue prohibits "dishonesty in connection with any University activity. Cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University are examples of dishonesty." [Part 5, Section III-B-2-a, Student Regulations] Furthermore, the University Senate has stipulated that "the commitment of acts of cheating, lying, and deceit in any of their diverse forms (such as the use of substitutes for taking examinations, the use of illegal cribs, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) is dishonest and must not be tolerated. Moreover, knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts is in itself dishonest." [University Senate Document 72-18, December 15, 1972] <https://www.purdue.edu/odos/academic-integrity/>*

Purdue University Policy Prohibits Discrimination: *Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. Purdue University prohibits discrimination against any member of the University community on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, genetic information, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, or status as a veteran. The University will conduct its programs, services and activities consistent with applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and orders and in conformance with the procedures and limitations as set forth in [Executive Memorandum No. D-1](#), which provides specific contractual rights and remedies. Any student who believes they have been discriminated against may visit www.purdue.edu/report-hate to submit a complaint to the Office of Institutional Equity. Information may be reported anonymously. http://www.purdue.edu/purdue/ea_eou_statement.html*

Accessibility and Accommodation: *Purdue University strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, you are welcome to let me know so that we can discuss options. You are also encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: drc@purdue.edu or by phone: 765-494-1247.*

Disclaimer: *In case of a major campus emergency, the requirements on this syllabus are subject to changes required by a revised semester calendar. Any changes will be posted, once the course resumes, on the course website. It may also be obtained by contacting the instructor via email.*