

HIS 517
Theme Seminar (Indigenous People)
W 6:30-9:20pm
SBS N-318
Prof. Paul Kelton

This is a readings course on historical studies of Indigenous Peoples whose lands the United States of America now claims. Students will read a selection of core works that cover major themes in Indigenous history from time immemorial to the present. Topics include cultural and demographic changes before and during the European invasion, diplomatic relations with each other and colonizers, confronting and surviving colonialism, and challenges to and defense of sovereignty. The readings will introduce students to the methods of ethnohistory: the use of ethnography/oral history, material culture/archaeology, and written sources to position Indigenous Peoples at the center of historical analysis. Works of engaged scholarship will also be featured: historians who have done their work in consultation and/or collaboration with Indigenous communities. Students will regularly report on books or articles outside of the core readings, and write three book reviews over the course of the semester. For their final projects, PhD students will submit a 15 to 20-page research or historiographical paper on an Indigenous topic that reflects their general or specific interests. MA and MAT students will write a comprehensive essay of 15 pages in which they synthesize the assigned readings of the class in an answer to these questions: “How do scholars of Indigenous Peoples practice engaged scholarship? What insights do these scholars bring to the teaching of American history?”

Prerequisite: Enrollment in History MA or PhD Program or Permission of Instructor.