

## DHP H205: THE HISTORIAN'S ART AND CURRENT AFFAIRS- Sulmaan Khan

### Course Description:

We all use history, whether consciously or unconsciously, to understand the present and make decisions about the future. But we misuse it all too often and to our peril. Through a series of case studies, this course aims to give students the historical powers they need as they go out into the world: empathy, detachment, and relentless scepticism.

### Assignments:

Three four page papers and one take-home final exam.

### Required readings:

Ernest May and Richard Neustadt, *Thinking in Time*.  
Barbara Tuchman, *The Guns of August*.  
Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*.  
M.E. Sarotte, *1989*.  
Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*.  
Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision*.  
Caroline Fraser, *Rewilding the World*.

Additional readings available on Trunk.

### Note:

Doing all the readings thoroughly is important. You will get nothing out of the course if you do not complete the readings; experience shows that your grade will suffer too (you cannot do the assignments competently without having done the reading). One of the skills you will need in the course--- and in life--- is the ability to digest large amounts of information accurately in a short time. The only way of developing this skill is practice.

It might prove helpful to read as many of the books as you can before the semester starts.

*The Guns of August* is the reading assignment for the first session. That means you are to come to class having completed it.

### Electronics Policy

The use of laptops or other electronic devices is not permitted in this class.

### Sessions:

- 1) The Origins of World War I. Readings: Tuchman, *The Guns of August*

- 2) The Cuban Missile Crisis. Readings: May and Neustadt, xi-16, Kennedy Tapes, excerpts
- 3) World War I: Analogies Today. Readings: Kissinger, excerpts, FT coverage.
- 4) Appeasement. Readings: Chamberlain, Churchill, and all; Snyder.
- 5) The Sicilian Expedition. Readings: Thucydides, excerpts.
- 6) Korea. Readings: May and Neustadt, 34-48, Truman, excerpts
- 7) Vietnam. Readings: May and Neustadt, 75-90, 157-171, Halberstam, excerpts
- 8) The Many Endings of the Cold War. Readings: *Cambridge History of The Cold War*, excerpts. **First paper due.**
- 9) American Lessons from the Cold War---and Beyond. Readings: Bush National Security Strategy, Fukuyama, “The End of History?”, Goldberg, “The Obama Doctrine”.
- 10) Russian Lessons from the Cold War. Readings: Freeland, excerpts, Alexievich, excerpts, Sarotte, “A Broken Promise?”
- 11) Crimea. Readings: Kramer, CWIHP Working Paper, Saakashvili, “Let Georgia Be a Lesson for what will happen to Ukraine,” Snyder, “Fascism, Russia, and Ukraine”
- 12) China’s Lessons from the Cold War. Readings: Sarotte, “China’s Fear of Contagion”, Jan Wong, excerpts, Kissinger, excerpts.
- 13) An Exercise in Placement: Xi Jinping. Readings: Osnos, Xi.
- 14) Placing Japan: The Okinawa Base and More. FT coverage; Yamada.
- 15) Taiwan Tangle. Readings TBA. **Second paper due.**

- 16) Revolutions: Velvet. Readings: M.E.Sarotte, 1989; NYT, “Obama Hails Poland as Model for Arab Nations in Upheaval.”
- 17) Shifting Power: Big History. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*.
- 18) The “Liberal World Order”. Readings TBA.
- 19) The Trump Presidency As Contemporary History. Readings TBA.
- 20) Analogies in Court: Japanese-American Internment and the Muslim Ban.  
Readings TBA.
- 21) Surprise Attack: Pearl Harbour and 9/11. Readings: Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision*, May and Neustadt, 9/11 Commission Report (extracts).
- 22) The Environment as a Security Problem. Readings: Fraser, *Rewilding the World*; Brook, excerpts, Parker, excerpts. FT coverage.
- 23) The Great Game and Af-Pak. Readings: Kipling, *Kim*, Mason and Johnson, “No Sign Until the Burst of Fire”.
- 24) The Historian as Grand Strategist. Readings: Kissinger, “The White Revolutionary”, National Security Archive, Memcons, excerpts, Kissinger, *White House Years*, excerpts. **Third paper due.**
- 25) The Historian as Prophet. Readings: Gaddis, excerpts, Kennan, “The Long Telegram”.
- 26) Thinking like a Historian. Readings: May and Neustadt. **Final exam due.**