

# HNRS 240: Reading the Past

## Fall 2017

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**Class Info:** Posted to your Blackboard account

**Office Hours:** Robinson B, Room 344. Office hours: Mondays 10:30-11:30 am, or by appointment (email to schedule).

**Class Schedule:** Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:00-1:15 PM, Planetary Hall 126.

### Assigned Reading

Susan Matt and Peter Stearns, *Doing Emotions History* (U. of Illinois)  
Peter Stearns, *Revolutions in Sorrow* (Paradigm)  
Joanna Bourke, *Fear, a Cultural History* (Virago)

### Online Readings:

Many articles are from the Journal of Social History: you can access them online at <http://jsh.oxfordjournals.org>

### Course Objectives and Goals

This course focuses on the history of emotions, a rapidly growing field that seeks to contribute both to an understanding of the past and to interdisciplinary analysis of emotion itself. Key methodological and analytical issues in the field will be addressed, along with work (both existing and potential) on emotions such as love, shame, fear, and nostalgia. Coverage will focus on American patterns but with opportunities for comparison with other societies. Student participation will be emphasized, including recurrent discussion of why history seems to have undertaken an “emotional” turn and whether this is a desirable direction.

### Academic Honesty and Collaboration

The integrity of the University Community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple practices to follow at all times are that: 1) all work submitted be your own; 2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and 3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No

grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct.

### Assignments

Grades will be based on five components:

1. Each class will be heavily based on **discussion**, with previewed questions in advance on Blackboard.
2. On the first day students will be divided into four groups, with group reports due weeks 4-8 and each individual turning in a relevant summary along with the report.
3. Several short papers, on issues in the readings.
4. A **10-15 page paper** on an emotions history topic: topic selection with instructor approval by week 5; hypothesis presentation to class week 9; paper due last week of course.
5. A **take-home final exam**.

**Note:** A provisional mid-term grade available on class participation, September 7 and October 19 assignments, and the topic report.

### Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignments
Tue, Aug 29	<u>Week 1: Introduction and Emotion</u> Introduction; conduct of course; forming team topic groups What is historical thinking? The idea of periodization	
Thur, Aug 31	Key issues - What is emotion? Why is it hard to define? Why is it a hot topic?	Reading: Matt and Stearns, Introduction Groups meet to organize  Bring an example of historical thinking
Tue, Sept 5	<u>Week 2: Historical change and debate</u> What's emotion history all about? What causes emotion change? An analytical model?	Reading: Matt and Stearns, ch. 3 and 9
Thur, Sept 7	The pros and cons of modernization	Reading: Matt and Stearns, ch. 2; Edward Shorter article, JSH 1986, v. 19 pp. 549-82 <b>2 page paper: Why is it risky to discuss modernization of emotions? OR Why is it helpful to discuss the modernization of emotions?</b>
Tue, Sept 12	Modernization and the Family: New emotional issues; comparative problems	Reading: Stearns, <i>Industrialization in World History</i> 94-102 (on Blackboard)
Thur, Sept 14	<u>Weeks 3-8: Individual emotions</u> Love in the 19 <sup>th</sup> century and since	Reading: Blauvelt article, JSH v. 35; Matt and Stearns, ch. 6 <b>Paper topic due</b>

Date	Topic	Assignments
Tue, Sept 19	Contemporary issues; history of jealousy	
Thur, Sept 21	<u>Week 4: Grief</u> The key transitions of grief	Reading: Stearns, <i>Revolutions in Sorrow</i> , ch. 1-6
Tue, Sept 26	Contemporary patterns and the role of history	Readings: Stearns, <i>Revolutions in Sorrow</i> , remainder
Thur, Sept 28	Group 1 report Grief, Guilt, and Death	The issue: are we “handling” death well in modern society?
Tue, Oct 2	<u>Week 6: Anger</u> American anger history	Reading: Buchanan, “Class Sentiments,” <i>JSH</i> 2014 (48), 72-87.
Thur, Oct 5	Issues in contemporary anger Group 2 report Anger in the US	The issue: are Americans not controlling anger well? Should we have more anger outlets?
Tue, Oct 10	<b>NO CLASS</b>	
Thur, Oct 12	<u>Week 7: Shame and guilt</u> What are the issues of shame in modern history?	Reading: Stearns, Shame article (on Blackboard)
Tue, Oct 17	Is shame rising, and why? Group 3 report	The issue: are we overusing shame?
Thur, Oct 19	<u>Week 8: Fear</u> Key issues in the modern history of fear	Reading: Bourke, <i>Fear</i> , 165-92, 195-229 <b>Reaction paper due on Bourke</b>
Tue, Oct 24	Can we do fear better? Group 4 report: fear and manipulation	The issue: have Americans become too fearful?
Thur, Oct 26 & Tue, Oct 31	<b>Presentation of Student Paper Hypotheses</b>	<b>Hypothesis statements due</b>
Thur, Nov 2	<u>Weeks 10-14: Larger themes</u> What is modern consumerism all about? What connections to emotion?	Reading: Matt, “Children’s Envy,” <i>JSH</i> 2002 (36): 283-302
Tue, Nov 7	Is current consumerism emotionally useful?	

Date	Topic	Assignments
Thur, Nov 9	<u>Week 11: Informalization</u> What is informalization all about?	Reading: Cas Wouters articles in JSH: "Status competition," 1991 (24), 699-717; "Etiquette Books," 2 parts, 1995 (29) 107-24 and 325-39
Tue, Nov 14	Critiquing the thesis, comparing recent change to the changes of "modernization"	
Thur, Nov 16	<u>Week 12: Happiness and sadness</u> Good cheer	Reading: Kotchemidova, "From Good Cheer," JSH 2005 (39), 3-37
Tue, Nov 21	What would a fuller history of joy look like? What would a history of sadness look like?	Reading: Matt and Stearns, ch. 5
	<b>HAPPY THANKSGIVING</b>	
Tue, Nov 28	<u>Week 13: Emotions and politics: where does passion fit?</u> Emotion and earlier American history	Reading: Matt and Stearns, ch. 8
Thur, Nov 30	Emotion and politics today	
Tue, Dec 5	<u>Week 14: Where to go next?</u> Comparative issues	<b>PAPER DUE</b> Reading: Matt and Stearns, ch. 3-4
Thur, Dec 7	Revisiting emotions and parenting Moving forward: What to expect next	
<i>Dec (TBD)</i>	<b><u>FINAL EXAM</u></b> due	