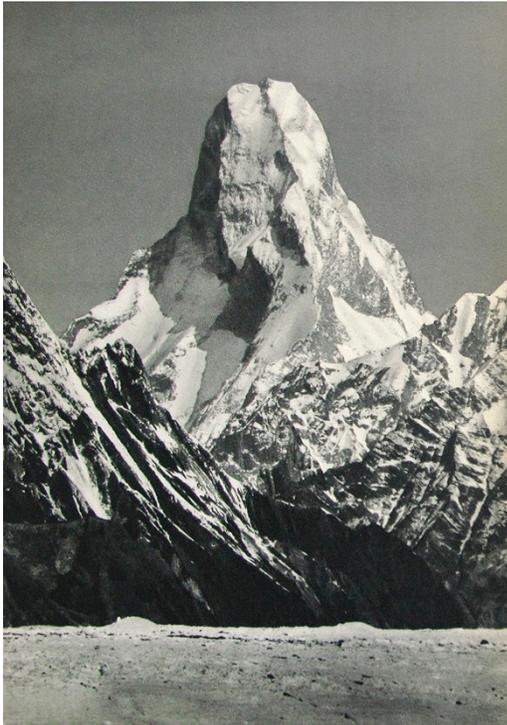


HSTR 467 – History of Mountaineering
The Greater Ranges
Spring 2016
W 15:10-17:40
Wilson 1153

Those who go to the mountains must give everything. That's all there is to it.
Daphne du Maurier

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Course Description



Welcome to HSTR 467 – History of Mountaineering. This semester, our geographical focus will be on the so-called Greater Ranges – the high ranges of Asia that contain all of the world’s peaks higher than 7,000 meters – although we will be taking some academic excursions to other parts of the world, as well. We will take a three pronged approach to the history of mountaineering: first, we’ll look at the origins of modern mountaineering, the “basic” history of mountaineering in the Greater Ranges, and the historiography of mountaineering. Next, we’ll consider the ways in which mountaineering has been represented in popular culture, and how that reflects on the historiography. From the inspirational accounts of the early and mid-20th century to the “disaster porn” narratives like *Into Thin Air*, how has mountaineering been represented – and how have mountaineers represented themselves – at various periods? Finally, we’ll think about the ways in which these spaces, such as Tibet, Pakistan, India, and China have been

represented and imagined by foreigners, as seen through the history and historiography of mountaineering. Along the way, we will consider how mountains and mountaineering relate to many issues - gender, imperialism, and race, among others - through reading, looking at, and watching a wide variety of materials, from serious academic monographs to popular accounts of first ascents and traumatic disasters.

Required Texts

Peter Bayers, *Imperial Ascent: Mountaineering, Masculinity & Empire*
René Daumal, *Mount Analogue: A Tale of Non-Euclidean and Symbolically Authentic Mountaineering Adventures*
Heinrich Harrer, *Seven Years in Tibet*
Heinrich Harrer, *The White Spider: The Story of the North Face of the Eiger*
Maurice Herzog, *Annapurna: The First Conquest of an 8000-Meter Peak*
Charles Houston & Robert Bates, *K2: The Savage Mountain*
Maurice Isserman & Stewart Weaver, *Fallen Giants: A History of Himalayan Mountaineering from the Age of Empire to the Age of Extremes*
Jon Krakauer, *Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mt. Everest Disaster*
Robert Macfarlane, *Mountains of the Mind: Adventures in Reaching the Summit*
Sherry Ortner, *Life and Death on Mount Everest: Sherpas and Himalayan Mountaineering*
David Roberts, *True Summit: What Really Happened on the Legendary Ascent of Annapurna*

These are all available for purchase at the bookstore. Many of them are available **very** cheaply on Amazon & other sites; unless specifically noted, it doesn't matter which edition you have. Please be careful with e-book editions: you *will* need to cite page numbers, which many e-books *do not* include.

Other readings will be uploaded to the "Readings" tab on the course site.



Grading

Seminar Participation	30%
Final Essay	30%
Weekly Responses	20%
Book Review	10%
Film Review	10%

All assignments must be completed in order to receive a passing grade for the course

Course Objectives

- I. To gain a better understanding of the role of mountaineering and representations of mountaineering in the modern world
- II. To attain a better grasp on how popular culture reflects discourse, and how it may also shape perceptions.
- III. To further hone the ability to read, discuss, and write about a wide variety of materials in a thoughtful, critical manner.



Expectations and Policies

Participation

This course is a seminar: the success of our weekly meetings will largely depend on everyone being engaged members of the course. It is imperative that everyone arrive at course meetings having completed the reading for the week, **having** the reading for the week in class (bringing the book and/or hard-copy of articles), and ready to have a lively discussion that delves deeply into our materials.

Everyone will lead seminar at least *twice* throughout the semester. Leaders should not “teach” the text: the intent is to help facilitate the conversation, not dominate it. Discussion leaders should (like everyone!) take notes as they read, with special attention to key details and questions that arise during reading. What topics or

themes are particularly problematic or interesting? What connections can we draw to other works in the course, or beyond the course? What connections do we see with history more broadly, and in contemporary life?

“Class Consciousness”

To reiterate, this is a seminar, and it is *imperative* that all members arrive each week ready to contribute in a serious manner. If you want to “coast” in a class and rely on me and/or your classmates to pick up the slack each week, please: find another class to join. I am here to facilitate discussion and clarify certain points, but my role is not the same as it is in a lecture based course, where largely *I* talk, and *you* listen. In this class, *you* talk, and *I* (and *we*) listen and respond. It is very easy to rely on a few talkative, reliable members of seminar & “check out.” This has a negative impact on the class as a whole, and is not fair to the people who show up each week having really engaged with the assigned materials. Course meetings will be more productive, more interesting, and more fun with everyone prepared to talk about the materials and to each other. I want to foster a sense of “class consciousness”: not in the Marxist sense, but in relation to the fact that we are *all* responsible for the success or failure of the seminar, and we will *all* be better off if we put the required minimum effort (and then some, hopefully) into the class. If you are not willing to do this, please realize that 30% of your grade depends on your participation & it will be very difficult to get a passing grade for the course as a whole.

Attendance

As this is a course that depends on participation (and also meets only once a week), attendance is mandatory. You may miss one meeting without penalty; missing more than three courses will result in a failing grade for the course. If you have a personal, family, or medical emergency, please speak with me as soon as possible so we can discuss solutions for continuing in or passing the course.

Reading Responses

Each week, you will be expected to post a short (approximately 550 words) reading response to the course blog by Tuesday evening. The point is not to rehash the main argument of the piece(s), but to raise questions for discussion, explore areas you found particularly enlightening or problematic, etc. Before seminar, you should take a look at your classmates' responses – the ideas will hopefully help stimulate discussion.

Electronics

Please turn **ALL** electronic devices (cell phones, iPads, laptops, etc.) **OFF** in class and put them away. Staring at your phone or checking your email is disrespectful to the seminar as a whole. If you are concerned about this and/or have dispensation for special use, please come speak with me.

Communication with me

I am available during my posted office hours (or by appointment). I am also available by email. Please allow 24-48 hours for a response (excluding weekends), although I will generally get back to you much sooner than that. Please use my email address listed at the top of this syllabus. If you have emailed me and have *not* received a response in a timely manner, **please speak with me and let me know**. Emails do get lost in the ether with an alarming frequency! Please check your listed preferred university email and the course site regularly.



Plagiarism and other conduct issues

You are expected to abide by the MSU Student Conduct Code. Any plagiarism, cheating or other academic dishonesty will be met with an F for the assignment & possibly the course and will be reported to the Provost's Office. Please don't test me on this.

Students With Disabilities

If you have a documented disability for which you are or may be requesting accommodation(s), please contact me and Disability Services as soon as possible.

How to address me

You are welcome to call me Maggie or Professor (or Dr.) Greene, whichever you are most comfortable with. Please do not refer to me as Miss, Ms., Mrs., or Ma'am. In email communication, please refrain from treating your missive like a text message to a friend: it's professional communication and should be approached as such.

The Course Site & Assignments

The course site may be found at <http://www.sintellectual.org/hstr467/>. I will email everyone an invitation so you can take control of your user profile, which you will be using to post your weekly responses, as well as most of your other assignments. Everyone will have "Author" access, which means you may make and publish your own posts. If you have *any* issues, please email me as soon as possible (I am both professor and tech support for purposes of this class!)



and I will help you troubleshoot or walk you through issues. I've prepared a basic guide to posting on WP for those who may not be familiar with platform & we will spend some time getting acquainted with it during our first course meeting.

PDFs of the course readings (other than the assigned monographs) & supplementary readings (PDFs & links) can be found under the "Readings" and "Resources" tab. Some pages are password protected (see the WP guide for the password). Some PDFs are hosted on other sites (e.g., Box). Please let me know **right away** if you have **any** trouble accessing any of the readings.

The D2L shell is operational, and you can find a copy of the syllabus hosted there, as well as a link to the course site. Other than that, all activity should be happening on the blog. **One important exception:** a copy of your final paper **must be submitted to D2L**.

Opt-out: While you can't opt out of posting on the blog entirely, you are welcome to have a pseudonym as your display name (your username will remain the same no matter what, but you can select how you'd like your name to be displayed). I'd really encourage us to keep this as "outward facing" as possible, but understand concerns about having your writing up for anyone to stumble across: so please come speak to me if you have other concerns about privacy, and we can work something out (e.g., password protected posts).

Weekly Writing Assignment

Each week, you will need to post a response to the course site by 11:59 PM on Tuesday. Your response should be approximately 550 words. They should *not* be rehashing introductory information, plot details, etc., but should demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the materials for the week. You may focus on one or several. I encourage you to bring up questions that would be appropriate for group discussion in the course of your analysis. You should take time to read your classmates' responses; this helps facilitate discussion during our scheduled meeting.

Film & Book Review Assignments

At some point this semester (the timing is up to you, but it *must* be done before 4/27), you will be expected to post a film review and a book review (of a book we are *not* reading in class & a film we have not viewed) to the course site. I have put together a (by no means exhaustive) list of books you may wish to consider, found under the "Resources" tab of the course site. They should be approximately 1000 words each. These do not necessarily have to be related to mountaineering in the Greater Ranges, but do need to be mountaineering related (and yes, this may include some wonderfully terrible things like *Vertical Limit*). You **must** get my approval for your selections, and your reviews **must** engage with the academic themes of this course.

Final essay

Your final writing assignment for this class will be a long-form essay of between 3000 and 3500 words (approx. 12-14 pages, double-spaced), which is worth 30% of your final grade. **Topics will be selected by you, according to your interests.** I am happy to help you refine ideas you may have into something suitable for a final project, but this should really be driven by you. The only requirement is that it should be related to the subject of mountaineering – particularly mountaineering in the Greater Ranges, though this is not *absolutely* necessary – and the themes of the course in some manner. We will be doing some workshopping of your ideas/writing in class (see schedule below) so you can get feedback from me and your classmates.

You will need **at least six sources**. Two should be **primary sources**, and two should be **outside sources** (things we didn't read for class. Supplementary readings may count for these). You **must** have a mix of primary and secondary sources.

Timeline:

By **Week 9** (3/9), you should have a tentative topic as well as a list of sources (these may be things we've read in class, but you should have made some effort to look outside of class readings for sources). These will be posted to the course site & we will discuss them in class.

Between Week 9 & Week 14, we will spend an hour in the library with one of our wonderful librarians to look at MSU resources and how to use them.

By **Week 15** (4/19), you should have a firm topic and list of sources (this should include secondary *and* primary sources). For Week 15, please post your final topic & list of sources, as well as a brief introduction on the course site of one of your important sources or group of sources. We will discuss these in class.

By **Week 16** (4/27) – the last week of class – you should be well into the writing of your final project. We will head over to Colombo's towards the end of seminar that day & grab some food and beverages & discuss the outcomes of your final projects.

Your project will be due by 11:59 PM on **Thursday, May 5** (finals week).





****THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE****

Readings should be completed by the class meeting they are listed under

Week 1 (1/13) Introduction

Class agenda: ♪♪Getting to know you, getting to know all about you (and the seminar)... ♪♪

Reading: Mazzolini, “Food, Waste, and Judgment on Mount Everest”

Things to do this week:

- Get set up to use the course website (<http://www.sintellectual.org/hstr467>) & familiarize yourself with WordPress.
- Post a short post introducing yourself to all of us. Why did you decide to take this course? What is your relationship to mountains and mountaineering, if any?
- By Tuesday night (1/19), post a short reading response for the week 2 readings (don't forget to raise some questions for discussion!). Please *read everyone's posts before coming to seminar*.
- **NB:** Many weeks, we have several different readings: you don't need to cover *all* of them in your reading response, though you do need to show general engagement with the major themes across the readings (they were not selected randomly!).

Week 2 (1/20) – Mountains as Metaphor

Reading: Daumel, *Mount Analogue*; Du Maurier, “Monte Verità”

Reading response due by 1/19

Week 3 (1/27) *Mountain Gloom & Mountain Glory: Earl(ier) European Perspectives*

Reading: Macfarlane, *Mountains of the Mind*; Nicolson, *Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory* (excerpts); Pratt, *Imperial Eyes* (excerpts)

Reading response due by 1/26

Week 4 (2/3) *Mountaineering and Empire*

Reading: Weaver & Isserman, *Fallen Giants* (preface – chapter 5); Hansen, “The Dancing Lamas of Everest”; Debarbieux and Rudaz, *The Mountain* (excerpt)

In class: *The Epic of Everest* (portions of documentary – in class)

Reading response due by 2/2

Week 5 (2/10) *Mountaineering & Gender*

Reading: Bayers, *Imperial Ascent*; Frohlick, “Wanting the Children and Wanting K2”; Ives, “Sharp End: Off the Map”; Schrepfer, *Nature’s Altars* (excerpt)

Reading response due by 2/9

Week 6 (2/17) *The Drama of Mountaineering*

Reading: Harrier, *The White Spider*; Barcott, “Cliffhangers: The Fatal Descent of the Mountain-Climbing Memoir”

Reading response due by 2/16

Week 7 (2/24) *The Greater Ranges*

Reading: Weaver & Isserman, *Fallen Giants* (ch 6 - 8); Herzog, *Annapurna*; Rak, “Social Climbing on Annapurna”

Reading response due by 2/23

Week 8 (3/2) *Imagining Mountains & Places*

Reading: Harrier, *Seven Years in Tibet*; McKay, “‘Truth,’ Perception, and Politics: The British Construction of an Image of Tibet”

In class: *The Epic of Everest* (portions of documentary – in class)

Reading response due by 3/1

Week 9 (3/9) *The Drama of Conquest*

Reading: Houston & Bates, *K2: The Savage Summit*; Palmer, “‘Shit Happens’”: The Selling of Risk in Extreme Sport”

Reading response due by 3/8

Tentative paper topic + proposed sources due by 3/8 (post on the course site)

Week 10 (3/16): SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS!

NB: Maggie will be at a conference & may therefore be spotty on email. Not that anyone would be emailing her during spring break, of course.

Week 11 (3/23) *The Age of Extremes*

Reading: Weaver & Isserman, *Fallen Giants* (ch 9-10); Krakauer, *Into Thin Air*; Frohlick, "Negotiating the 'Global' within the Global Playscapes of Mount Everest"
Reading response due by 3/22

Week 12 (3/30) *The Price of Conquest*

Reading: Ortner, *Life and Death on Mount Everest*
Reading response due by 3/29

NB: Maggie will be at a conference from 3/31-4/3 & may therefore be spotty on email

Week 13 (4/6) *Controversies at the Top of the World*

Reading: Roberts, *True Summit*; Articles on contemporary mountaineering debates
Reading response due by 4/5

Week 14 (4/13) *Imagining Through Mountaineering*

Reading: Said, *Orientalism* (excerpts); Slemon, "Climbing Mount Everest: Postcolonialism in the Culture of Ascent"; TBD
In class: *K2: Siren of the Himalayas* (documentary)
Reading response due by 4/12

Week 15 (4/20)

- TBD

By 4/19, post your firm topic and list of sources, plus a brief introduction on the course site of one of your important sources or group of sources. We will discuss these in class.

Week 16 (4/27)

- Final thoughts & then over to Columbo's

****FINAL PAPERS DUE BY 11:59 PM, THURSDAY MAY 5th****