

History 1027: Honors World History
France, India, Rwanda: Reacting to the Past
MWF 2:00-2:50, Prof. Hamilton, srhamilton@auburn.edu



This class asks you to imagine what it would be like to be a person different from yourself in a time and place wholly unfamiliar. Over the course of the semester, you might be a French aristocrat, the leader of an Indian village, and a Nigerian ambassador; or you might be a member of a rioting mob, a disciple of Gandhi, and a European journalist.

Rather than a series of names and dates, the class is structured around three pivotal moments in world history, which we will explore through elaborate games, set in the past. In each game, you will each be assigned a character from the past and various "victory objectives" to achieve through negotiation with your fellow classmates and through oral and written work. In order to understand your character and the circumstances that surround him or her, you will read major texts in the history of ideas and discuss their real-world implications, before engaging in extended role-plays during class. By closely studying the documents and ideas surrounding them, you will gain new perspectives on much larger issues, as well as gaining a detailed understanding of the events themselves. You will learn to think about the past through the ideas and events that shaped real people's lives, with dramatic impacts on the world we live in.

Spring 2017 Games

Game 1, The French Revolution, 1791. The Old Regime is crumbling, and the National Assembly struggles to create a constitution amidst internal chaos, riots in the streets, and threats of foreign invasion.

Game 2, The Decolonization of India, 1945. At the end of a war fought to end oppression and injustice, British authority over the Indian subcontinent wanes, while smoldering tensions among Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Communists and others increasingly flare into violent riots that threaten to engulf all India. Representatives of the diverse population seek to chart a path towards independence.

Game 3, The Rwandan Genocide, 1994. Genocidal massacres are spreading across the African state of Rwanda, and the United Nations struggles to decide on a response.

What Auburn students are saying about playing games with Prof. Hamilton

"One of the best class experiences I've had here at Auburn."

"I've never had such entertaining and interactive classes while at Auburn. It was cool to see the entire class get invested in the material and start to understand complex debates."

"I loved the games we played. They really brought everything we'd been talking about and learning about together in one huge discussion."

"I learned more about the issues through playing a certain role."

"Group work was done in a way that made the class a ton of fun and helped me get to know my fellow classmates."

"It has pushed me to not only think of events historically, but also try to eliminate my own personal bias and look at it without my 21st century lens."

"This built a community out of our class."

Come and join the game!