



Hist 2033-4

Reacting to the Past

Fall 2017

Professor Leslie Tuttle

MWF 9:30-10:20/135 French House

***Reacting to the Past* is an innovative way to study history. The dynamics of history come alive through elaborate simulations in which students play the roles of historical characters. In Fall 2017 the course focuses on two key moments in modern history:**

Rousseau, Burke, and Revolution in France, 1791 plunges students into the intellectual, political, and ideological currents that surged through revolutionary Paris in the summer of 1791. Students are leaders of major factions within the National Assembly (and in the streets outside) as it struggles to create a constitution amidst internal chaos and threats of foreign invasion. Will the king retain power? Are slaves, women, and Jews entitled to the “rights of man”? Is violence a legitimate means of changing society or of purging it of dangerous enemies? In wrestling with these issues, students consult Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Social Contract* and Edmund Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, among other texts.

Defining a Nation: India on the Eve of Independence, 1945 is set at Simla, in the foothills of the Himalayas, where the British viceroy has invited leaders of various religious and political constituencies to work out the future of Britain’s largest colony. Will the British transfer power to the Indian National Congress, which claims to speak for all Indians? As British authority wanes, smoldering tensions among Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs increasingly flare into violent riots that threaten to ignite all India.. Students struggle to reconcile religious identity with nation building—perhaps the most intractable and important issue of the modern world. Texts include the literature of Hindu revival (Chatterjee, Tagore and Tilak); the Koran and the literature of Islamic nationalism (Iqbal); and the writings of Ambedkar, Nehru, Jinnah, and Gandhi.

Grades are based on active participation in class discussion and debates, written assignments composed in the voice of one’s character, and a midterm and final exam that test historical understanding of the events we study. **NB: Success in this course depends on regular attendance and participation.** Questions? write to ltuttle@lsu.edu