

History 120F Spotlight on History: Mao's Red Guards
TTH 9:30-10:45, Spring 2021, Lovejoy 302

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History

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Office Hours: Due to Covid office hours will be held by appointment

Course Catalogue Description

China, 1966: Chairman Mao's Red Guards, student activists turned paramilitaries, spearheaded the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Sanctioned by Mao and protected by the People's Liberation Army, they embroiled the country in mob violence, political purges, iconoclastic destruction, and mass executions. Defined by loyalty to Mao, their ideological crusade saturated daily life, violently enforcing an orthodox interpretation of Mao's writings as the sole criterion of historical truth – before the Red Guards themselves faced reeducation as “sent down youth” in the countryside. This writing-intensive course explores these students' experiences, foregrounding the role of language, rhetoric, and genre in the Red Guards' formation, power, and identity.

Course Goals/Objectives

- Investigate the Red Guards' role in the Cultural Revolution and the changes over time in their political power and cultural memory as a case study of the role of students in revolutionary movements.
- Read across a wide range of sources including scholarship, archival documents, photojournalism, documentary, and memoir.
- Explore how different kinds of texts demand different methods of close analysis.
- Consider how and why different genres of writing by and about Red Guards produced different historical and ethical understandings of their identities and experiences.
- Use our investigation of cross genre reading to broaden students' skills and experiences as writers.
- Help students develop a writing process for analyzing sources and crafting arguments.

Course Materials

Readings will be drawn from a variety of sources, including scholarly sources, archival documents, speeches, essays, photojournalism, documentary, and memoirs.

I completely understand the financial burden purchasing extensive book lists may place on students. I have worked hard to limit the number of book purchases and to provide digital copies of as many materials as I can. There are three core texts (all three are memoirs) that students will need to acquire. The three required texts are available for purchase through the Colby bookstore. You are also welcome to purchase from a different source. Feel free to use electronic copies. All other course readings will be posted/linked to Moodle.

Required Texts:

Rae Yang, *Spider Eaters* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997)

**(available as an ebook through the Colby Library)

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/colby/detail.action?docID=1132025>

Liang Xiaosheng, *Confessions of a Red Guard* trans. Howard Goldblatt (Portland: Merwin Asia, 2018)

Anchee Min, *Red Azalea* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1994) **any edition

Course Requirements and Policies

Course Requirements

Class Participation and Attendance 15%

Midterm Exam 10%

Writing Group Short Assignments and Workshops 10%

Paper 1 – Rhetorical Analysis 20%

Paper 2 – Research Question and Annotated Bibliography 20%

Paper 3/Final Paper – Research Based Argument 25%

Midterm Exam

There will be a written in class exam on *March 4*. The Exam will cover major events in Modern Chinese History. The purpose of this exam is to concretely establish a timeline and series of key events and figures for your continued reference throughout the course. Review sheet to be handed out separately.

Writing Groups

You will each be assigned a writing group (approx. 4 students per group) for the duration of the semester. This group will provide our structure for a series of assignments over the course of the semester as well as creating smaller cohort without our classroom. Working collaboratively over multiple assignments and an extended period of time will facilitate more nuanced engagement with one another's writing as a process. At the same time, the writing groups will create classroom community while practicing social distancing. Your writing groups will collaboratively produce smaller written assignments for class workshops (such as source summaries).

Major Writing Assignments

The course progression is centered around three major writing assignments:

- Rhetorical Analysis (RA)
- Research Question and Annotated Bibliography (RQB)
- Research Based Argument (RBA)

The shorter collaborative and in class writings as well as the RA and RQB work toward the RBA in a concrete way. In this way the assignments build on each other, breaking the RBA down into pieces of a larger project that you will work on over the course of the entire semester.

Paper #1/Rhetorical Analysis: (5 pages) For this assignment you will pick one of Mao Zedong's writings to analyze. The focus will be on close reading and identification of argument, specifically drawing on analysis of the rhetorical devices and arguments that make up the source. You may (but are not required to) use the scholarly materials from our class to supplement your analysis.

Paper #2/Research Question and Annotated Bibliography: (5-7 pages) For this assignment you will begin working toward your final research project. With a research question and potential hypothesis in mind, you will compare the arguments, contexts, and interactions between 4-6 objects of study. This assignment formulates a research question, introduces the state of the field surrounding your research question, and weaves together an annotated bibliography within this context.

Paper #3/Research Based Argument: The RBA (10 pages) is a research-based argument (as it relates to your own area of interest) on an aspect of revolution's cultural and/or intellectual history.

Course Schedule

For each class a detailed, daily schedule (including readings and assignments) is posted on Moodle. Below is a semester overview of key dates and major assignments:

Key Dates

March 4: Midterm Exam on Key Dates in Modern Chinese History

March 9: Spring Weekend – No Class

March 16: Rhetorical Analysis, Version 1

March 23: Rhetorical Analysis, Version 2

March 30: Paper #2 Introduction and Research Question

April 6: Paper #2, Version 1 (Intro, Research Q, Source Analyses, Bibliography)

April 13: Paper #2, Version 2

April 15: Spring Weekend – No Class

May 4: RBA Version 1

***** Final Paper (RBA Version 2 Due Tuesday May 19 by 11:59pm EST.
Submit electronically on Moodle*****

College Policies

Respect for Diversity

It is my intent that students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my

intent to present materials and activities that are inclusive and respectful of all persons, no matter their gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics.

You may feel challenged and sometimes outside of your comfort zone in this course. The topics will raise questions about many deeply personal issues and materials will often be graphic and emotional. My intent is for us to grapple with these challenges together. And to think deeply about their origins, histories, and implications that we may develop more nuanced perspectives and become more critically attuned to the discourses in which we participate.

I have attempted to avoid scheduling exams during major religious holidays. If, however, I have inadvertently scheduled an exam or major deadline that creates a conflict with your religious observances, please let me know within two weeks of the start of classes so that we can make other arrangements. Colby College is supportive of the religious practices of its students, faculty, and staff. The College is committed to ensuring that all students are able to observe their religious beliefs without academic penalty.

Academic Accommodations

I am available to discuss academic accommodations that any student with a documented disability may require. Please note that you'll need to provide a letter from the Dean of Studies Office documenting your approved accommodations. *Please meet with me within two weeks of the start of the semester to make a request for accommodations* so that we can work together with the College to make the appropriate arrangements for you. Kate McLaughlin, Associate Director of Access and Disability Services (kmclaugh@colby.edu) is the primary contact for accommodations and any questions related to educational testing and documentation.

Mental health: I care about my students' well-being and understand they may face mental health challenges. Students are encouraged to seek support from the College's available resources, including your advising dean and Counseling Services. (For immediate care, please call 207-859-4490 and press "0" to reach the on-call counselor.) I am willing to discuss reasonable accommodations during a crisis, but to fulfill our educational mission, students are expected to adhere to the attendance policy. Failure to do so because of mental health challenges may require consultation with the Dean of Studies Office.

Academic Integrity & Consequences for Academic Dishonesty

Honesty, integrity, and personal responsibility are cornerstones of a Colby education and provide the foundation for scholarly inquiry, intellectual discourse, and an open and welcoming campus community. These values are articulated in the [Colby Affirmation](#) and are central to this course. You are expected to demonstrate academic honesty in all aspects of this course. If you understand our course expectations, give credit to those whose work you rely on, and submit your best work, you are highly unlikely to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: violating clearly stated rules for taking an exam or completing homework; plagiarism (including material from sources without a citation and quotation marks around any borrowed words); claiming another's work or a modification of another's work as one's own; buying or attempting to buy papers or projects for a course; fabricating information or citations; knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty; misrepresentations to faculty within the context of a course; and submitting the same work, including an essay that you wrote, in more than one course without the permission of the instructors.

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense against the college. *Sanctions for academic dishonesty are assigned by an academic review board and may include:* failure on the assignment, failure in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the College.

For more on recognizing and avoiding plagiarism, see: libguides.colby.edu/avoidingplagiarism.
For resources and information on academic integrity, see: www.colby.edu/academicintegrity.