

HIS 397: Seminar in Comparative History
Professor Jonathan Skaff

Book Review 1

Due: Wed., March 2

- Hard copy due in class with the **grading sheet on the reverse attached**.
- Electronic Copy submitted to the D2L Dropbox

Length: 800 words (approximately 3 double-spaced pages in 12 point font)

Topic:

Write a book review of *Guns, Germs and Steel* in a format suitable for publication in a scholarly journal, such as the *American Historical Review*. This type of book review places more weight on the scholarly merits of a publication than its entertainment value. The intended audience of the review is professional historians and other scholars. A good review should be concise and illuminating. The primary function of a good academic book review is to evaluate how effectively the author defends his/her thesis.

The title of your paper should be the book's bibliographic citation in Chicago A (Turabian Bibliography) format. Your review should describe the author's research methodology (think about the types of sources and author's "scientific" approach), summarize the author's thesis and major arguments, and critique (positively or negatively) the author's methodology, thesis, arguments or other aspects of the book. Your critique should consider whether *Guns, Germs and Steel* succeeds as a comparative and/or global history.

Evaluation of Papers:

80% of the grade will be based on content. Content grades of A will be awarded to papers that effectively summarize and critique of the book's methodology, thesis and major arguments.

The other 20% will be based upon grammar and word usage (4%), spelling, capitalization and punctuation (4%), organization (4%), readability (4%), and bibliographic citation of the book at the top of the first page in Chicago A format (4%).

Grading sheet (attach to paper)

I. Content (80%)

Summary of methodology, thesis and arguments: ___Excellent ___Good ___Fair ___Poor

Critique of methodology, thesis and arguments: ___Excellent ___Good ___Fair ___Poor

A=72-80, B=64-71, C=56-63, D=48-55, F=47 or lower _____

II. Writing mechanics (20%)

A=4, B=3.5, C=3, D=2.5, F=2 or lower

Grammar and word usage (4%) _____

Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation (4%) _____

Organization (4%) _____

Readability (4%) _____

Bibliographic citation (Chicago A) (4%) _____

Total _____

Correction Symbols Used in Grading Paper

agr	wrong agreement (noun-verb or noun-noun)
awk	awkward sentence
cit	citation needed
frag	sentence fragment (usually a sentence that lacks a verb)
org	organization problems
redun	redundant (using different words to say the same thing more than once)
rep	repetitious use of the same word
run-on	run-on sentence
sp	wrong spelling
trans	poor transition (between sentences or paragraphs)
tn	wrong verb tense
unc	unclear phrase, sentence, or paragraph
wf	wrong grammatical form of word
ww	wrong word usage
¶	new paragraph needed