

HSTR 207CS: Science and Technology in World History

WRITING STUDIO III The Role of History

In the last studio, you presented your topic, a bird's-eye view of the issue you want to pursue, some ideas about how you might want to pursue it, and some of the sources you will use.

In this studio, you will engage the question of how the study of history can help inform your topic. You should write about two pages.

Begin with a brief paragraph that again introduces the scientific or technological subject you have chosen to analyze.

Then, in the second paragraph, introduce how the topic engages questions at the intersection of science and society. What are the social and cultural forces (economic, political, religious, ideological, etc.) that are intertwined with your topic? How does your topic in science and technology impinge on broader questions we have discussed in this class (empire, economic systems, nation-states, social hierarchies, the creation of authority, etc.)?

Then, in the rest of your essay, describe how the themes in this course (socio-trophic cascades, enviro-technical systems, social-scientific relationships, technological fixes, risk management, and ecological models, to name just a few) help you analyze your topic. You will want to use (and cite) the material found in Johnson's *The Invention of Air*, Harari's *Sapiens*, and the other readings in this course, to help you tease out how a humanistic approach helps you analyze the issues involved.

The point of this assignment is to begin to apply what you have learned in the history of science and technology (focused on different but related questions than you are researching) to your specific topic. This is at the heart of the historian's craft, and central to analytical reasoning.

Bibliography

In addition to the two-page paper on your topic, you are required to include a bibliography of the material that helped you think historically about your topic. This might include Johnson, Harari, the other readings in the course, or material you have found that pertain specifically to the historical aspects of your chosen subject.