

HIS 6934 – 0006 Special Topic in History

Colloquium: Catholic and Protestant Reformations

When history first became a profession, its earliest practitioners fixated on the Reformation and the questions it provoked. Why did Western Christianity splinter in the sixteenth century? Why did so many Catholics cling to medieval traditions? Were Protestants more modern? In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the Reformation continued to provoke historiographical debate. Did Protestant reforms hurt women? Does Christian governance demand violence? And to what extent was the Reformation bound to colonialism?

In this course, we will study the major controversies surrounding the Reformation and evaluate the most important historiographical paradigms about the Reformation. We will give equal attention to Protestant and Catholic reforms. We will meet monumental figures like Luther, Calvin, Loyola, and Teresa of Ávila. At the same time, we will analyze how these figures have been depicted by historians in America, Germany, Mexico, and South Korea, among other places. The goal of this course is to have students become experts in historiographical analysis and global religious history.