The purpose of the summer assignment is not to give you an exhaustive amount of reading to do before you come in the door in August. The purpose is to get you thinking like world historians by getting you to consider various themes that are important to the discipline. Most importantly, we hope that the summer reading assignment will get you to begin thinking about the world as a single system and not as a series of independent isolated regions. The reading assignment is as follows below:

*This Fleeting World—A Short History of Humanity* (2008), David Christian

--This text may be found in bookstores, but even easier would be ordering a used copy online or downloading it to an e-reader, tablet, or smart phone (it took me literally 10 seconds to get on my Kindle app).

-- You will need to *actively* read this book. You can, for example, underline or highlight events, take notes [many students like taking ESPeN notes by trying to isolate economic, social/cultural, political, and environmental issues], etc

--You will only need to read **THE FIRST TWO PARTS** (“The Foraging Era” and “The Agrarian Era”).

--Specifically you will want to focus on the following issues and themes:

--Periodization in world history (in other words, what defines certain periods?... ex/why does the author believe our modern era begins in 1750?)

--Change and continuity over time and what causes those changes

--Human interactions with the environment

--The expansion of economic systems over time

--How the world functions as a single region throughout history

--You will be evaluated through a roundtable discussion and quiz at the beginning of the semester in August, so you want to be prepared for that.

This seminar is worth **100 points**.

a. **35 points** for your notes when you walk through the door. These notes need to be THOROUGH! You need specific examples and even page numbers in your notes. Make sure that you have enough information to actively participate in EACH question (for example, one bullet per question is NOT enough to engage in a discussion and will result in a low score for this section).
b. **30 points** for your discussion in the inner circle. As an active member of the discussion you need to make at least 2 comments. These comments need to cite textual evidence in order to receive full credit. Making vague/generic comments will not gain you any points.

c. **35 points** for outer-circle notes. As the inner circle is discussing, you will be taking active notes on points that they make, questions that you would like clarified concerning this topic, and comments that you would have made if you were a part of this discussion.

**Socratic Seminar Topics/Questions (15 total questions)**

**Topic: The Foraging Era**

1. What foundations were laid during the foraging era that make humans a unique species?
2. How is it possible to understand foraging societies without written evidence? What method, to you, is most useful?
3. What are some advantages of living in a foraging society? Disadvantages?
4. What are some clear causes of change that took humans from the foraging to agrarian era?
5. What, in your opinion, is the single most important legacy of the foraging era? Cite evidence!

**Topic: The Agrarian Era**

6. Did agriculture do more to help or harm humans? Site evidence!
7. How did the development of agriculture lead to the creation of human social hierarchies? Gender differences?
8. How did agriculture lead to the formation of cities and states? What methods have they used to exert and strengthen their power?
9. With the development of agriculture, what relationship developed between agriculturalists and pastoralists? Do you feel this relationship still exists in the 21st century? Why or why not?
10. What, in your opinion, was the most important shift for human societies in the agrarian period? Why? Explain.
Rules of the Seminar:

1. Be prepared so that you can actively participate! Your grade depends on this!
2. Use textual evidence to receive credit for your response. You must cite the text and use specific examples to support your statements. You will not receive credit for your statement if it is vague/generic.
3. Do NOT interrupt your classmates.
4. Do NOT talk while another person is talking (whether you are in the inner circle or the outer circle).
5. Do NOT look for your comment/notes while your classmate is speaking. Make sure to give them your eye contact and listen attentively so that you can respond appropriately (and not repeat what they just said because you weren’t listening!)
6. When responding make sure to reference the comment that was just made by your classmate.
7. When in the outer circle, make sure you are taking notes (these will be turned in and will be a part of your grade).
In addition to the summer reading assignment, YOU WILL NEED A PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENT READER FOR THIS CLASS, and the one we are using is *The Human Record* by Andrea and Overfield, 5th edition, 2004.

![The Human Record](image1.png)

You will be needing both volumes I and II. This is NOT TO BE READ OVER THE SUMMER ENTIRELY, but you will BE RESPONSIBLE FOR READING SELECTED DOCUMENTS FROM VOLUME I OVER THE SUMMER IN PREPARATION FOR THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASS. There are DIRT CHEAP copies available on the websites listed below, and I suggest that you purchase the cheapest copy you can find starting at a PENNY (with shipping included, you shouldn’t be paying more than $10, but most of you will get a copy for less than that... EARLY PURCHASE MEANS LOWER PRICE!!!). Remember, you should be purchasing this used and be sure that you **buy the 5th edition** as the documents and pages in each book change significantly. Below are some links that may lead you to various websites where you can find these texts at a discounted rate. Remember, EVERY STUDENT will need to have these TWO volumes for class this year. Cheers!

The following are your selected documents that you are to read over the summer in preparation for the first week of class. The idea with the assigned documents is to (1) be able to answer all questions for analysis, and (2) be able to assess historical PATTERNS of ancient history within the text. For instance, you should jot down the author’s point of view (i.e. problems, concerns, fears, goals, hopes and dreams). Additionally, write down your thoughts of how & why the reading reflects the historical themes of human-environment interaction, government/political issues, and development of culture and social structures.

**Human Record Vol. 1 - pgs. 5-22**

**Human Record Vol. 1 - pgs. 24-34**

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