This seminar is about the cultural, political, and social forms which may be associated with what is called the “modern” world. Therefore it raises the following questions: can what is called “modern” be located in a particular time or space? Has what is called “modern” political, cultural, or social characteristics? What might they be? Which historians have written on this subject? What evidence might be assembled to study this subject? What inferences and conclusions about what might be called the “modern” world can be drawn from such evidence?

Readings:

Menand, The Metaphysical Club
Stansky, On Or About December 1910
Goldhill, Who Needs Greek
Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions
Prakash, Another Reason
Said, Orientalism

Course Requirements: attendance, readings, discussion, no caps, industry, good-will, a sense of humor, two book reviews and one research design. No internet citations or e-mail submissions. Be guided by the Chicago Manual of Style in making citations. Read the New York Times each day. Make a daily appearance in the library.

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