



HST 500
HISTORIANS, HISTORIOGRAPHY, AND
THE PRACTICE OF HISTORY

Fall 2016
Morton Hall, Room 212
Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. – 9:15 p.m.

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Office Hours:
Mon. and Wed., 9:30-11:00
and by appointment

This course is designed to introduce you to the approaches and activities that make up the historical profession. It is not a research course. Readings and discussion will focus on kinds and styles of historical writing, the relationship between history and theory, types of sources and approaches to them, professional historical writings, and the role of history in public life. The class is heavily discussion based. Therefore, attendance and participation are mandatory. You are expected to participate in an informed and constructive manner in every class meeting.

At the end of the term, you should be able to:

Identify and analyze different approaches to history.

Articulate the strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches.

Understand some of the major theoretical interventions that have influenced the academic discipline of history

Identify and locate relevant archival and secondary sources on a topic of your own choosing.

Analyze in writing individual works of historiography and historiographical debates. You will do this by situating work(s) in a broad intellectual context and within the frameworks of on-going conversations about various topics.

Read “for argument,” considering how an historian uses evidence and what might be alternative explanations for given data, identifying methodology and orientation and discerning possible authorial biases, etc.

Demonstrate promise in speaking through formal oral presentation and active participation in class discussion.

Reading:

You will be required to read the following books this semester. All are available at the UNCW Bookstore, but I am certain you can purchase them more cheaply online.

Green, Anna and Troup, Kathleen. *The Houses of History: A Critical Reader in Twentieth-Century History and Theory*. New York: New York University Press, 1999.

Novick, Peter. *That Noble Dream: The 'Objectivity Question' and the American Historical Profession*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Thompson, E.P. *The Making of the English Working Class*. New York: Vintage, 1966.

Thomas G. Andrews. *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

Ginzburg, Carlo. *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.

Hackett-Fisher, David. *Paul Revere's Ride*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Scott, Joan Wallach. *Gender and the Politics of History (Revised Edition)*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

Hale, Grace Elizabeth. *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940*. New York: Vintage, 1999.

Amin, Shahid. *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922-1992*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Leffler, Melvyn P. *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2008.

Yuhl, Stephanie E. *A Golden Haze of Memory: The Making of Historic Charleston*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005.

Hoffer, Peter Charles. *Past Imperfect: Facts, Fictions, Fraud, and American History from Bancroft and Parkman to Ambrose, Bellesiles, Ellis, and Goodwin*. New York: Public Affairs, 2007.

NOTE: As described here, you will additionally be required to read a number of articles and book chapters, which I will make available on Blackboard. These are marked with an asterisk (*).

Assignments

Each Wednesday evening you will submit to me three thoughtful, provocative questions based on that week's reading which could serve as the basis for class discussion. These questions are to be submitted via e-mail no later than 12:00 a.m. (midnight) on the night before our class meets. (**NOTE:** Please send them as Microsoft Word attachments)

Each of your three questions should be in the form of a short paragraph. Collectively, they should dazzle me and your classmates with the subtlety of their insights and the depth of knowledge they display! In other words, I do not expect to see short, fact-based questions. You should dig deep and get at the essence of the books or articles in question, probing their strengths and weaknesses. You should try to formulate questions, also, that ask us to bring together the readings for that week. In short, impress me! **NOTE:** I will factor the quality of your questions into your participation grade. Submit essays to fainwt@uncw.edu

Additionally, you will complete:

- One 800-word essay on the components of a historiographical essay (**due August 24**)
- One 800-word essay about a UNCW historian (**due September 7**)
- One 800-word essay on labor and environmental history (**due September 28**)
- One 800-word essay on biography and history (**due October 19**)
- One two-page evaluation of your experience with an online archive (**due November 16**)
- One 5,000-word historiographical essay with an added section exploring avenues for future (hypothetical) archival research on the subject. The final section of the essay should also posit fruitful directions for future research – What questions remain to be answered? How might one go about finding answers? ***HINT:** You might consider imagining your thesis project as you write this paper. (**due December 5**)

Grades will be calculated on the following basis:

- Week 2 essay on the elements of historiographical essays: 5%
- Week 4 essay on a UNCW historian: 5%
- Week 7 comparative essay: 20%
- Week 9 essay on biography: 20%
- Week 13 archive exercise: 10%
- Final paper: 20%
- Participation (includes attendance, oral presentations): 20%

A note on participation grades:

- “A” grades will go to those who show up to class on time, every time, and offer insightful comments multiple times at every session.
- Those who come to class on time, every time, and speak up once or twice each meeting, will receive a B.
- Those who show up punctually and regularly, but who speak up only occasionally can expect a C or a C+.

- If you show up to class on time, every time, but almost never (or never) speak up, you will receive a D.
- If you have spotty attendance you will receive an F.

A note on essay grading:

-An “A” essay:

- Makes a coherent argument that responds to the prompt
- Supports that argument well, giving appropriate and solid evidence
- Is organized coherently and written clearly
- Has a strong analysis, and answers the question: “so what?”

-A “B” essay:

- Has an argument and supports it, but is lacking clarity, coherence or strong analysis.

-A “C” essay:

- Lacks a coherent argument or adequate evidence to support the argument.

-A “D” essay:

- Lacks both, but still presents relevant information in partial answer to the question.

-NOTE: Late papers will be marked down one full letter grade for each day that they are late.

Course Outline:

Introduction

Week One: August 17:

**--Jumping Straight In (Introduction Part 1)
Historiographical Essays**

* Kim Phillips-Fein, “Conservatism: A State of the Field,” *Journal of American History*. Vo. 98, No. 3 (2011), pp. 723-743.

*Athena Syriatou, “National, Imperial, Colonial, and the Political: British Imperial Histories and Their Descendants,” *Historein*, Vol. 12 (2012).

*Philipp Nielsen, “What, Where, and Why is Europe? Some Answers from Recent Historiography,” *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (2010), pp. 701-713.

Assignment: Write an 800-word essay in which you discuss the critical elements of a historiographical essay. What do such essays contain? Why are they important? **Due at the beginning of class on August 24.**

Choose: the name (at random) of a UNCW historian whom you will interview about his/her work and methodology.

Week Two, August 24:

--Who "Does" History and to Whom Does the Past Belong? (Introduction Part 2)

*Eric Foner, "My Life as an Historian," (Parts 1 & 2) from *Who Owns History*, Chapter 1.

*Margaret Macmillan, "Who Owns the Past?," Chapter 3 in *Dangerous Games: The Uses and Abuses of History* (New York: Modern Library, 2008), pp. 33-49.

*Alan Brinkley, "Historians and Their Publics," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 81, No. 3 (1994), pp. 1027-1030.

*Carl L. Becker, "Everyman His Own Historian," Annual Address of the President of the American Historical Association, December 29, 1931, *American Historical Review*, Vol. 37, No. 2, pp. 221-236.

*John Lewis Gaddis, "The Landscape of History" and "Seeing Like a Historian," Chapters 1 & 8 in *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 1-16; 129-151.

Assignment: interview with a UNCW historian (to be chosen at random). Two-page essay about your interview due on Wednesday, **September 7**

Due in Class Today: Essay on the elements of a historiographical essay

The Basics

Week Three, September 3:

--Causation

Green and Troup, *The Houses of History*, pp. 1-11; 87-97.

*Leopold von Ranke, selections, from Roger Wines (ed.) *The Secret of World History: Selected Writings on the Art and Science of History* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1981).

*Thomas Babington Macaulay, "The Task of the Modern Historian," *Edinburgh Review* (1828).

*Marx, excerpt from *The Communist Manifesto*.

*Forward and introduction to Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *The Peasants of Languedoc*.

*Lynn Hunt, "French History in the Last Twenty Years: The Rise and Fall of the *Annales* Paradigm."

Week Four: September 7

--Objectivity. Is it possible?

Green and Troup, *The Houses of History*, pp. 297-307

Novick, *That Noble Dream*, chapters 1-5, 10 and 13.

Due in Class Today: Essay your interview with a UNCW historian.

Week Five, September 14:

--The Individual and History

Green and Troup, *The Houses of History*, pp. 33-43.

E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, part II “The Curse of Adam.”

Week Six: September 21,

-- The Individual and History, revisited

Andrews, *Killing for Coal*

*Gunther Peck, “The Nature of Labor: Fault Lines and Common Ground in Environmental and Labor History,” *Environmental History*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (April 2006), pp. 212-238.

Writing: 800-word comparative analysis of Thompson and Andrews. **Due September 28.**

Approaches to history

Week Seven, September 28:

--Microhistory

Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*

*Tonio Andrade, “A Chinese Farmer, Two African Boys, and a Warlord: Toward a Global Microhistory,” *Journal of World History*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (2010), pp. 573-591.

*Jill Lepore, “Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography,” *Journal of American History*, Vol. 88, No. 1 (2001), pp. 129-144.

Due in Class Today: Comparative essay on Thompson and Andrews

Week Eight: October 5
-- Narrative History & Biography as History

Green and Troup, *The Houses of History*, pp. 204-213.

David Hackett-Fischer, *Paul Revere's Ride*

*Lawrence Stone, "The Revival of Narrative: Reflections on a New Old History," *Past and Present*, No. 85 (November 1979), pp. 3-24.

*Barbara Caine, "Historians and the Question of Biography," Ch. 1 in *Biography and History* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 7-26.

*Barbara Tuchmann, "Biography as a Prism of History," in *Practicing History: Selected Essays* (Random House, 1982), pp. 80-90

Writing: 800-word assessment of biography/narrative as an historical approach. **Due October 19.**

Week Nine, October 12:
--History and (Gender) Theory

Green and Troup, *The Houses of History*, pp. 253-262.

Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*

*Cornelia H. Dayton and Lisa Levenstein, "The Big Tent of U.S. Women's and Gender History: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 99, No. 3 (December 2012); pp. 793-817.

Week Ten, October 19:
--History and (Race) Theory

Hale, *Making Whiteness*

*Peter Kolchin, "Whiteness Studies: The New History of Race in America," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 89, No. 1 (2001), pp. 154-173.

Due in Class Today: Essay on the relationship of history and biography.

Week Eleven, October 26:
--History and Memory

Green and Troup, *The Houses of History*, pp. 277-287.

Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory*

*Robert G. Moeller, "Germans as Victims?: Thoughts on a Post – Cold War History of World War II's Legacies," *History and Memory*, Vol. 17, No. 1-2 (Spring-Winter 2005), pp. 145-194.

Week Twelve, November 2:
--Diplomatic History and International History

Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind*

*Thomas W. Zeiler, "The Diplomatic History Bandwagon: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 95, No. 4 (March 2009), pp. 1053-1073.

*Marc Trachtenberg, "The State of International History," *E-International Relations*, March 9, 2013.

Places and Practices of History

Week Thirteen, November 9:
--Historical Ethics and the Joys/Challenges of Archival Work

Hoffer, *Past Imperfect*

*Sheila Fitzpatrick, "A Spy in the Archives," *London Review of Books*, Vol. 32, No. 23 (2010), pp. 3-8.

*Arlette Farge, "Traces by the Thousands," Chapter 1 of *The Allure of the Archives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), pp. 1-22.

Roy Rosenzweig, "Digital Archives Are a Gift of Wisdom to be Used Wisely," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 24, 2005, vol.51, Issue 42, p. B20-B24 (**Accessible on line**).

Assignments:

Find an on-line archive of relevance to your research interests or use one of the archives mentioned in Rosenzweig article. What topics might you be able to explore using this archive?
Due November 16

Be prepared to discuss your archival discoveries.

History and the Public

Week Fourteen, November 16:

--Public History and Historical Memory

Green and Troup, *The Houses of History*, pp. 230-238.

Yuhl. *A Golden Haze of Memory*

*Richard H. Kohn, "History and the Culture Wars: The Case of the Smithsonian Institution's Enola Gay Exhibition," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 82, No. 3 (Dec., 1995), 1036-1063.

*Rana Mitter, "Behind the Scenes at the Museum: Nationalism, History and Memory in the Beijing War of Resistance Museum, 1987-1997," *The China Quarterly*, No. 161 (Mar., 2000), 279-293.

Due in Class Today: Digital Archives essay

Week Fifteen, November 23

--Thanksgiving Holiday

CLASS DOES NOT MEET

Week Sixteen, November 30

--Wrapping Things Up; Final Thoughts

****NOTE: Your final paper is due on or before Monday, December 5, at 5:00 p.m. Please submit a hard copy to my office mailbox.**