

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
510: Historiography—Writing History From Above and Below

Fall Semester 2018

Instructor: Dr. Emily J. Levine

DESCRIPTION

What constitutes an appropriate historical method? What sources are valid and why? What justifies who and what gets included and the topics that are ignored? What makes writing history different from reading Wikipedia? This course focuses on how the answers to these questions have changed over time by using two approaches to the study of history—one traditional/political approach from “above” and one social/everyday approach from “below.”

This course offers an introduction to the themes and approaches that have been influential in the historical profession from the late 19th century through to today. It is intended for advanced undergraduates who are planning to teach history or enter into the historical profession, essential for graduate students who wish to be literate in the field, and open to anyone who is interested in rigorously interrogating texts for their presentations of argument, objectivity, perspective, and narrative. Readings include works from such philosophers and practicing historians as Bloch, Ranke, Freud, Thompson, Foucault, Scott, and Chakrabarty.

History is about the stories that we tell ourselves about who we are. That process is inevitably implicated in the debates and struggles of our communities, nations, and the world. As we trace these approaches over time, it becomes clear who is included and excluded in different versions; the identity of historical subjects as well as practitioners become crucial questions in this analysis.

LEARNING GOALS

- Students will gain “professional literacy” in the field and familiarity with major thinkers, debates, and approaches in the field of history.
- Students will improve their ability to compare competing approaches and schools of thoughts and to develop their informed and critical assessments of these approaches.
- Students will improve their ability to present their own historical narratives and arguments that are in dialogue with the field and substantiated by sources
- Students will improve their ability to express themselves critically, clearly, and persuasively, orally and in writing.
- In surveying historical approaches that are informed by gender, race, culture, class and sexuality, students will gain a perspective from the historical discipline

that will enhance and enrich disciplinary and interdisciplinary understanding of these issues (WGS).

- Students will gain an appreciation for how selection, narrative, and subject matter is interconnected with the contexts in which we write (WGS).

COURSE POLICIES (Adopted with advice from Dr. Elliott, DGS)

Attendance:

A student who is not present at the beginning of class will be marked “absent.” You may miss 1 class without penalty. However, please use your one unpenalized absence wisely, reserving it for an emergency or serious sickness. More than one absence will lower your final grade. Missing a total of 4 or more classes (one-third of the semester) will result in an automatic “F” for the course. No exceptions. Students are responsible for completing on time all work assigned (or due) on days in which they are absent.

Participation:

You are expected to complete each week’s reading before class so that you can participate constructively in class discussion. You must be attentive and engaged during class. Sleeping in class, arriving late, or leaving class early without permission will cause you to be given a zero for participation that day. Cell phones and laptops should be turned off and stored away.

Presentations:

Graduate students will make 3 informal presentations [worth 35 points each] and undergraduate students will make 2 informal presentations to the class [worth 50 points each]. Guidelines for the presentation assignments will be distributed in class. Students will be required to provide one-page handouts summarizing their presentations for the class (included as part of the presentation grade).

Written Work:

There will be two papers over the course of the semester. The first paper will be due Friday, October 14th and the second paper will be due Tuesday, November 22nd. There will be a cumulative take-home final exam. The details of the paper assignments will be distributed in class a week before the paper is due.

Academic Integrity Policy:

All work submitted in your name must be your own original work for this class with proper citation or credit given to all sources. All papers will be turned in using *turnitin* on Canvas which automatically scans your paper for plagiarism. Each student should be familiar with the Academic Integrity Policy, and the penalties for plagiarism. Please see this UNCG website for more details:
<http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/>

You may also wish to review these pedagogical tools from the AHA website on plagiarism:

http://www.historians.org/governance/pd/curriculum/plagiarism_intro.htm

Grade Breakdown (courtesy of Dr. Elliott, DGS).

100 Points: Participation in class discussion (You can earn up to 10 points per class. We meet 14 times. No constructive contributions to discussion = 0 points. Minimal participation = 5-6 points. Strong participation = 7-8 points. Outstanding participation = 9-10 points).

100 Points: Class Presentations. Undergrads will do 2 presentations worth 50 point each. Graduate students will do 3 presentations worth 35 points each.

100 Points: First Paper

100 Points: Second Paper

100 Points: Final Take Home Exam

Final Grade Scale:

A 465-500; A- 450-464; B+ 435-449; B 415-434; B- 400-414; C+ 385-399; C 365-384; C- 350-364; D+ 335-349; D 315-334; D- 300-314; F 299 or less.

REQUIRED READING

Readings:

The books listed below are available for purchase at the bookstore and on overnight Reserve at Jackson Library. If you purchase from another outlet be mindful of the ISBN code. Other articles and video/film can be accessed through the class Canvas site and are marked with an asterisk.

Required Books:

Carolyn Kay Steedman, *Landscape for a Good Woman: Story of Two Lives*. (New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers UP, 2000; orig. publ. 1986) ISBN-10: 0813512581.

Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Vintage Books, 1995) ISBN-10: 0679752552.

Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, 2007; original 2000). ISBN 9780691130019

Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: A. Knopf, 2014; Vintage Reprint, 2015). ISBN-10: 0375713964.

Siegfried Kracauer, *The Last things Before the Last* (Princeton, NJ, 2013; original 1969)

CALENDAR

Week 1 INTRODUCTION

Aug. 15 Two different historical schools—Herodotus and Thucydides

Reading:

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 1, circa 440 B.C.E., pp. 1–64.*
Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (Penguin Books, 1954), circa 431 B.C.E., pp. 35–67.*

Week 2 CLASSIC APPROACHES

Aug. 22

Reading:

Wilhelm Von Humboldt, “On the Historian’s Task” (1821) and Leopold von Ranke, “On the Character of Historical Science” (1830s) in Georg G. Iggers and Konrad von Moltke, eds., Leopold von Ranke, *The Theory and Practice of History* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1973), pp. 5–28 and 33–46.*
Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (1931)*
Marc Bloch, “Historical Analysis” in *The Historian’s Craft* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953, 1963), pp. 138–189.*

Week 3 MORAL ECONOMY AND IMAGINED COMMUNITY: MODELS OF CULTURAL COHESION

Aug. 29

Reading:

Lorraine Daston, “The Moral Economy of Science,” *Osiris* 10 (1995), 3–24.*
E.P. Thompson, “The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the 18th Century,” *Past and Present* 50, 1 (1971): 76–136.*
Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and the Spread of Nationalism* (revised ed. 1991 [orig. 1983], “Chapter 2: Cultural Roots,” 9–36; “Chapter 3: The Origins of National Consciousness,” 37–46.*

Week 4 MICROHISTORY, ANTHROPOLOGY, AND THE ‘NEW’ CULTURAL HISTORY

- Sept. 5** **Reading:**
 Robert Darnton, “Workers Revolt: the great cat massacre of the Rue St. –Séverin,” in Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*, pp. 75–104.*
 Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture” in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York 2000), pp. 3–32.*
 Lawrence W. Levine, “William Shakespeare in America” in *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp. 13–81.*
- Week 5** **THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF IDEAS**
- Sept. 12** **Reading:**
Book: Carolyn Kay Steedman, *Landscape for a Good Woman: Story of Two Lives*. (New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers UP, 2000; orig. publ. 1986).
 Peter Gay, Chapter 4, *Freud for Historians* (New York: Oxford, 1985).*
- Week 6** **CLASS CANCELLED**
- Sept. 17** **Office Hours (Recommended)**
- Sept. 19** **No class**
- Due: First Paper, Friday September 21st, online by 5pm.**
- Week 7** **GENDER HISTORY**
- Sept. 26** **Reading:**
 Joan W. Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis” *American Historical Review* 91 (1986): 1053–75.*
 Laura Lee Downs, “If ‘Woman’ is Just an Empty Category, Then Why Am I Afraid to Walk Alone at Night? Identity Politics Meets the Postmodern Subject” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 35, no. 2 (Apr., 1993): 414–437.*

Gail Hershatter and Wang Zheng, "Chinese History: A Useful Category of Gender Analysis" *American Historical Review* 113 (December 2008): 1404–1421.*

Week 8 **POST-MODERNISM**

Oct. 3 **Reading:**
Book: Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

Week 9 **POST-COLONIALISM**

Oct. 10 **Reading:**
Book: Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton U. Press, 2000).
Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the Pacific* (Princeton U. Press, 1992), 3-22.*

Week 10 **ECONOMY, GLOBALIZATION, GLOBAL HISTORY**

Oct. 17 **Reading**
Book: Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: A. Knopf, 2014; Vintage, 2015).
Blog: Sam Moyn and Andrew Sartori, "What is Global Intellectual History—If It Should Exist At All?" (February 23, 2015)*

Week 11 **SPACE, PLACE, AND ENVIRONMENT**

Oct. 24 **Reading:**
William Cronon, "The Uses of Environmental History," Presidential Address, ASEH, *Environmental History Review* 17, no. 3 (Fall 1993): 1–22.*
Frederik Albritton Johnsson, "Rival Ecologies of Global Commerce: Adam Smith and the Natural Historians," *American Historical Review* 115: 5 (December 2010): 1342–1363.*
Dolores Hayden, Chapter 3: Place Memory and Urban Preservation, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, 1995).*

Week 12

THE END OF HISTORY

Oct. 31

Reading:

Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History**

Due: Friday, November 2nd, Second Paper, Online by 5pm.

Week 13

THE FUTURE OF HISTORY

Selections:

Nov. 7

View:

William Cronon, "Storytelling," 2013 Presidential Address, AHA.*

Reading:

Book: Siegfried Kracauer, *The Last Things Before the Last*

Week 14

HISTORY AS COMMUNITY, ANALOGY, AND ADVOCACY

Nov. 14

Informal Presentations

Reading:

D.J. Cohen and R. Rosenzweig, Introduction, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web* (Philadelphia, 2005).*

Jo Guldi and David Armitage, "The History Manifesto" online at <http://historymanifesto.cambridge.org>.*

Graham Allison and Niall Ferguson, "Establish a White House Council of Historical Advisers Now," (August 2016).*

Week 15

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Nov. 19

Pick up take-home exam

Nov. 21

No Class

Week 16

Nov. 28 Take-home exam due, 5pm online.

Have a great winter break!