

HIS 510-01: Historiography

Fall 2021

Seminar, 3 credit hours

Time: Wednesdays 2:00-4:50pm

Location: MHRA 2210

Instructor Information:

Dr. Teresa Walch

Email: tmwalch@uncg.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

What is history? How has the profession changed over the past century? How are the stories we tell shaped by the questions we ask, the sources we select, and the wider agendas we set? Contrary to a popular conception that history is merely a narration of an objective past “as it really was,” the study of history is a complex endeavor that involves interpretation. Historiography—the study of *history* as an academic discipline—reveals that the profession’s agendas and approaches have shifted dramatically over time.

In this course, we will explore major theoretical and methodological approaches to history in the modern era. We will begin with a broad overview of the historical profession and then continue by analyzing a particular concept or historiographical approach each week. We will also consider how these approaches informed, built upon, or transformed one another. The readings consist of classical texts by major thinkers as well as monographs and articles that apply their theoretical ideas. One goal of the seminar is to assess the ongoing relevance of these approaches for historians in the present and in the future (that includes you!).

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. distinguish between different methodological and theoretical approaches to history.
2. assess how topic and primary source selections shape the narratives crafted by historians.
3. explain how, why, and when approaches to history have evolved over the past century.
4. develop and strengthen their scholarly profiles by identifying which journals, networks, and listservs are relevant for their own fields.
5. evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of individual approaches to history and critique the practical application of them in journal articles and monographs.
6. synthesize complex arguments and draw connections between texts and bodies of thought via oral presentations and written assignments.

Required Books

Kate Brown, *Manual for Survival: A Chernobyl Guide to the Future* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2019).

Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1995). (available as a [single-user e-book](#) via Jackson Library)

Lynn Hunt, *History: Why It Matters* (Medford: Polity Press, 2018).

Lisa Levenstein, *They Didn't See Us Coming: The Hidden History of Feminism in the Nineties* (New York: Basic Books, 2020). (available as a [2-user e-book](#) via Jackson Library)

Sarah Maza, *Thinking about History* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2017).

Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979). (available as a [single-user e-book](#) via Jackson Library)

Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007). (available as an [unlimited-user e-book](#) via Jackson Library)

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995. (20th anniversary edition, 2015). (available as a [unlimited-user e-book](#) via Jackson Library)

** You may purchase all required books via the [UNCG bookstore](#), online, or elsewhere. Copies of all required books are available via Jackson Library, either as an e-book (indicated above) or on reserve as a hard copy. All other required readings will be made available on Canvas, linked or as an e-reserve. Prior to accessing the e-reserves, you will need to activate your UNCG Box accounts by visiting [box.uncg.edu](#) and logging in with your UNCG username and password.

Assignments & Grading

Participation in Class Discussions (SLOs 1, 2, 3 & 5) – This is a small, reading intensive seminar. Attendance and active participation are crucial. As your instructor, I have endeavored to amass an interesting, and coherent, set of readings. But in this course, I will chiefly be your guide through the historical debates and topics at-hand. Via written assignments and oral presentations, you will have the chance to engage with pressing debates within the historical discipline and to hone your own scholarly voice.

Written Responses (SLOs 1, 2, 3, 5 & 6) – Each week (beginning in Week 2), you will write a 600-word response that reflects a deeper engagement with the weekly readings. Your response should not be a summary of the texts but rather should grapple with the material and reflect a critical analysis on your part. You might choose to identify common threads or contradictions between the various readings, for example. You might evaluate some of the strengths and weaknesses of the methodological approaches at-hand and critique their practical applications in the week's readings. You should conclude your response by posing two open-ended discussion questions that emerge from the readings and that reflect a deep engagement with the issues raised in the readings. You will upload these responses on Canvas as Word documents each week by Tuesday @ 8:00 pm. You may skip up to two weekly responses with no penalty, no explanation needed.

Oral Presentation (SLOs 1, 2, 3, 5 & 6) – On your assigned presentation day, you will begin our discussion of the weekly readings with an approx. 15-minute presentation in which you:

- summarize the authors' main questions & arguments,
- identify their main historiographical and/or methodological interventions,
- draw connections between the assigned readings and the weekly topic,
- provide any critiques of your own of the readings,
- pose 2-3 questions to the class for discussion.

In addition, for the days we read monographs, you will present a short biography of the author. You will also collect reviews of the book and summarize the main points of praise and critique that other scholars have given for the book.

** You will summarize all these points in a printout (max. 1 page) to share with your classmates (10 copies + 1 for yourself) on the day you present so that they can follow along during your presentation. (If you do not have access to a printer, please send me your handout by 8:00pm on Tuesday so that I can print it out for the class). I encourage you all to keep these one-page handouts for future reference. They will be a great help during your graduate studies and in preparation for your qualifying exams.

Scholarly Profile Assignment (SLO 4) – For this assignment, you have the opportunity to build and expand your own scholarly profile. HIS 510 covers a broad swath of territory relevant for all historians. But the necessary breadth means that we need to sacrifice depth in some areas that might be of particular interest to you as historians. Thus, this assignment allows you to start pursuing some of those avenues that interest you most. For this assignment, you will be asked to identify several things:

1. scholarly journals relevant to your field of interest,
2. networks relevant to your field (including scholarly associations, societies, listservs, etc.),
3. grants and fellowships available to people in your field of interest,
4. major historians working in your field,
5. important archives for historians working in your field,
6. a major debate that is currently raging (or has recently reshaped) your field,
7. professional opportunities (internships, further training, professions, etc.) available to people with training in your field.

You will compile this information in a PowerPoint, upload it to Canvas, and briefly present your findings to the class in Week 6, 8, 9, or 10 (we will assign dates in Week 1).

Final Historiographic Essay (SLOs 3, 5 & 6) – For the final assignment, you will write a historiographic essay that builds upon one of the weekly themes/methodological approaches that interests you most. It may (but does not need to) pertain to the major debate in your field that you identify in the “Scholarly Profile Assignment.” You will select 4-5 books and write a review essay (12-15 pages) that examines and critiques the current trends in your selected thematic/methodological approach. You may discuss the selection of these books with me, but I also encourage you to consult with your advisors in your field. You will submit the final essay as a Word document on Canvas.

Your final grade will be assessed as such*:

- 100 Points – Participation in Class Discussions (14 classes, worth up to 8 points each)
 - 0 points: no constructive contributions to discussion
 - 3-4 points: minimal participation
 - 5-6 points: strong participation
 - 7-8 points: outstanding participation
- 100 Points – Written Weekly Responses (12 responses, worth up to 10 points each)
- 100 Points – Oral Presentation
- 50 Points – Building Scholarly Profile Assignment
- 150 Points – Final Historiographic Essay

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.

Assignment Submission and Format

You will submit all assignments in this course electronically on Canvas, either as a Word document or PowerPoint (please see above for details). Only for your oral presentation are you required to bring paper printouts to class. No other assignments will be accepted by paper or by email.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance and participation in the seminar is mandatory. Please arrive to class on time each week. Consistent tardiness will lower your grade. Students who miss 4 classes will automatically fail the course. If you need to miss class, you have one automatic excused absence. In this case, please notify me *ahead* of time. Any absence beyond that can lower your final grade. If other issues arise throughout the semester that will affect your ability to attend class, please be in contact with me.

Communication

I will be in contact with you regularly throughout the semester. I will primarily update you via emails sent to your UNCG email address, so please regularly check your email accounts. At any time throughout the semester, you may send me an email with questions or request to schedule an appointment. I will respond to emails sent to me Monday-Thursday within 24-48 hours. I will respond to emails received Friday-Sunday the following Monday. In general, if you have urgent questions, I encourage you to post your questions to the “General Discussion Board” on Canvas to see if one of your classmates can answer your question.

Technical Support

Students with technical issues with the course and email should contact [6-TECH](#) for support either by email (6tech@uncg.edu), phone (336-256-8324), or chat ([6TECH Help](#)). Please also make me aware of the issue and let me know if there will be any delays in resolving the issue.

Covid-Related Information for UNCG Courses

As we return for fall 2021, the campus community must recognize and address continuing concerns about physical and emotional safety, especially as we will have many more students, faculty, and staff on campus than in the last academic year. As such, all students, faculty, and staff are required to uphold UNCG’s culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. Such actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- [Following face-covering guidelines](#)
- Engaging in proper hand-washing hygiene when possible
- Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19
- Staying home if you are ill
- Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to quarantine or isolate if ill or exposed to someone who is ill.

Instructors will have seating charts for their classes. These are important for facilitating contact tracing should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19. Students must sit in their assigned seats at every class meeting and must not move furniture. Students should not eat or drink during class time.

To make it easier for students to hear their instructor and/or read lips and if conditions permit, instructors who are fully vaccinated and who can maintain at least six feet of distance from students may remove their masks while actively teaching if they choose, but will wear a mask at all other times while in the classroom, including during the periods before and after class

A limited number of disposable masks will be available in classrooms for students who have forgotten theirs. Face coverings will also be available for purchase in the UNCG Campus Bookstore. Students who do not follow masking requirements will be asked to put on a face covering or leave the classroom to retrieve one and only return when they follow the basic requirements to uphold standards of safety and care for the UNCG community. Once students have a face covering, they are permitted to re-enter a class already in progress. Repeated issues may result in conduct action. The course policies regarding attendance and academics remain in effect for partial or full absence from class due to lack of adherence with face covering and other requirements.

For instances where the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) has granted accommodations regarding wearing face coverings, students should contact their instructors to develop appropriate alternatives to class participation and/or activities as needed. Instructors or the student may also contact [OARS](mailto:OARS@uncg.edu) (336.334.5440) who, in consultation with Student Health Services, will review requests for accommodations.

Health and Wellness Statement

Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in the university, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336-334-5874, visiting the website at <https://shs.uncg.edu/> or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, The Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting <https://shs.uncg.edu/srp> or reaching out to recovery@uncg.edu.

Academic Integrity

All the work you submit in this course must be your own. You are expected to properly cite and acknowledge any material that you quote, paraphrase, or summarize. Each student is required to sign UNCG's Academic Integrity Policy on all major work submitted for the course. If you have any questions, I encourage you to visit UNCG's webpages on [plagiarism](#) and [academic integrity](#).

Accommodations

UNCG seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) in 215 Elliott University Center, 334-5440, oars.uncg.edu.

Religious Holidays

It is expected that instructors will make reasonable accommodations for students who have conflicts due to religious obligations. Please make arrangements with me in advance of any such scenario. For more information on UNCG's Religious Obligations policy, visit: [UNCG's Religious Obligations Policy](#).

Note on Syllabus Materials & Updates

If the need arises, there may be adjustments to the syllabus and calendar. In such cases, I will notify you in class or via email with an updated syllabus and calendar within a reasonable timeframe to allow you to adjust as needed.

Course Schedule

Week 1 – Introduction & Overview (August 18)

Sarah Maza, *Thinking about History* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2017).

Geoff Eley "[Becoming a Historian: A Personal Preface](#)," in *A Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005), 1-12.

Week 2 – On Objectivity, Selections, and Vantage Points (August 25)

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995. (20th anniversary edition, 2015)

Peter Novick, "Introduction: Nailing jelly to the wall," *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988), 1-17. (e-reserve)

Thomas Haskell, "[Objectivity is not Neutrality: Rhetoric vs. Practice in Peter Novick's *That Noble Dream*](#)," *History and Theory* 29, no. 2 (1990): 129-157.

Week 3 – Classic & Modern Approaches (September 1)

Selections from Jeremy Popkin, *From Herodotus to H-Net: The Story of Historiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 68-96; 115-117. (e-reserve)

Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), ix-xli, 3-94. (e-reserve)

Leopold von Ranke, "On the Character of Historical Science," in *The Theory and Practice of History*, ed. Georg G. Iggers (New York: Routledge, 2011), 8-16. (e-reserve)

H. R. Trevor-Roper, "[Fernand Braudel, the Annales, and the Mediterranean](#)," *The Journal of Modern History* 44, no. 4 (1972): 468-479.

Week 4 – Marxism (September 8)

Karl Marx, "Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert Tucker (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1978), 3-6. (e-reserve)

Karl Marx, "The German Ideology," Part 1, in *ibid.*, 146-200. (e-reserve)

E. P. Thompson, "[Preface](#)" to *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Open Road Media, 2016), 10-14.

E. P. Thompson, "[Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism](#)," *Past & Present* 38 (1967): 56-97.

Eric J. Hobsbawm, "[Marx and History](#)," *New Left Review* 143 (1984): 39-50.

Week 5 – Social History: History "From Below" (September 15)

Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).

Walter Johnson, "[On Agency](#)," *Journal of Social History* 37, no. 1 (2003): 113-124.

Matthew B. Karush and Peter N. Stearns, "[Five Decades of Social History: An Interview with Peter Stearns](#)," *Journal of Social History* 51, no. 3 (2018): 488-499.

Myriam Cottias and Audra A. Diptée, "[The Future of Slavery: Social History as Radical History](#)," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 53, no. 107 (2020): 9-16.

Week 6 – Cultural History (September 22)

Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture" in *idem.*, [The Interpretation of Culture: Selected Essays](#) (New York, 1973), 3-30.

Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt, "Introduction," in [Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture](#) (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 1-32.

Robert Darnton, "Workers Revolt. The Great Cat Massacre of the Rue Saint-Severin," in *idem.*, [The Great Cat Massacre and other Episodes in French Cultural History](#) (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 75-104.

William H. Sewell, Jr., "[Historical Events as Transformations of Structures: Inventing Revolution at the Bastille](#)," *Theory and Society* 25, no. 6 (1996): 841-888.

Week 7 – No Class – Individual Meetings to Discuss Final Historiographic Paper (September 29)

Week 8 – Microhistory & *Alltagsgeschichte* (History of Everyday Life) (October 6)

Carlo Ginzburg, "[Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I Know about It](#)," *Critical Inquiry* 20, no. 1 (1993): 10-35.

Alf Lüdtke, "[Introduction: What Is the History of Everyday Life and Who Are Its practitioners?](#)" in *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life*, ed. Alf Lüdtke, trans. William Timpler (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 3-40.

Andrew Stuart Bergerson, "Hildesheim in an Age of Pestilence," in *The Work of Memory: New Directions in the Study of German Society and Culture*, ed. Alon Confino and Peter Fritzsche (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 107-135. (e-reserve)

Paul Steege, Andrew Stuart Bergerson, Maureen Healy, and Pamela E. Swett, "[The History of Everyday Life: A Second Chapter](#)," in *The Journal of Modern History* 80, no 2 (June 2008): 358-378.

Week 9 – Postmodernism and Power (October 13)

Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 3-228.

Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), xi-xxiv, 91-102. (e-reserve)

David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1989), 3-9, 39-65. (e-reserve)

Week 10 – Postcolonialism (October 20)

Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

Dipesh Chakrabarty, "[Introduction](#)" and "[Chapter 1: Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History](#)," in *Provincializing Europe. Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, 3-23, 27-46.

Week 11 – Gender & Sexuality (October 27)

Joan Scott, "[Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis](#)," *American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1053-75.

Joanne Meyerowitz, "[A History of 'Gender,'](#)" *American Historical Review* 113, no. 5 (2008): 1346-1356.

Regina Kunzel, "[The Power of Queer History](#)," *American Historical Review* 123, no. 5 (2018): 1560–1582. [Review Essay]

Week 12 – Material & Visual Culture (November 3)

Leora Auslander, "[Beyond Words](#)," *American Historical Review* 110, no. 4 (2005): 1014-1045.

Brandon Schechter, "[Embodied Violence: A Red Army Soldier's Journey as Told by Objects](#)," in *Objects of War: The Material Culture of Conflict and Displacement*, ed. Leora Auslander and Tara Zahra (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018), 139-163.

Tina M. Campt, [Image Matters: Archive, Photography, and the African Diaspora in Europe](#) (Durham: Duke University Press, 2021), 1-70.

Annelie Ramsbrock, "[The 'Face of War' in Weimar Visual Culture](#)," in *The Ethics of Seeing: Photography and Twentieth-Century German History*, ed. Jennifer Evans, Paul Betts, and Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2019), 57-78.

Week 13 – World, Global, and Transnational Histories (November 10)

Lisa Levenstein, *They Didn't See Us Coming: The Hidden History of Feminism in the Nineties*

Akira Iriye, "[The Rise of Global and Transnational History](#)," in *Global and Transnational History: The Past, Present, and Future* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 1-18.

Akira Iriye, "[Transnational History](#)," *Contemporary European History* 13, no. 2 (2004): 211-222. [Review Essay]

Week 14 – Environmental History (November 17)

Kate Brown, *Manual for Survival: A Chernobyl Guide to the Future* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2019).

Paul S. Sutter, "[The World with Us: The State of American Environmental History](#)," *The Journal of American History* 100, no. 1 (2013): 94-119.

Lisa M. Brady, "Has Environmental History Lost Its Way?" *Process: A Blog for American History*, Organization of American Historians, December 15, 2015, <http://www.processhistory.org/has-environmental-history-lost-its-way/> .

**** Please Note: No Class on Wednesday, November 24 (due to UNCG's Thanksgiving holiday break)**

Week 15 – Historians, Memory, and The Public (December 1)

Lynn Hunt, *History: Why It Matters* (Medford: Polity Press, 2018).

Peter Burke, "History as Social Memory," in *Varieties of Cultural History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), 43-59. (e-reserve)

William Cronon, "[Storytelling](#)," *The American Historical Review* 118, no. 1 (2013): 1-19.

Matthew Gabriele, "[Why Historians Are Like Tax Collectors](#)," *Forbes*, March 24, 2019.