

History 201: Introduction to Historical Methodology

Spring 2004

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Office Hours: T 1:30-3:30, Th 1- 2:30 p.m.
and by appointment

This course is designed to do three main things:

- to help you think about what history is, what it means, its uses and abuses;
- to understand the different types of history and variety of approaches that historians take;
- to teach you to do history, i.e., to propose questions about the past that you will try to answer by a careful examination of documentary evidence.

This is a practical, hands-on class in which you move beyond reading history to actually become historians.

Your grade will be based on:

Participation, 10 percent	
Book review, 10 percent	Due 9/24
Journal tour and article summary, 10 percent	Due 10/1
Historiographical essay, 20 percent	Due 10/22
Source analysis, 10 percent	Due 11/5
Annotated bibliography, 10 percent	Due 11/19
Research paper, 30 percent	Due 12/13

Required texts:

- Arnold, John H. *History: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Benjamin, Thomas. *La Revolución: Mexico's Great Revolution as Memory, Myth, and History*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000.
- Storey, William Kelleher. *Writing History: A Guide for Students*. Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. University of Chicago Press, 1997.
- Wilson, Norman. J. *History in Crisis? Recent Directions in Historiography*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1999.

Article packet

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
Jan. 20	Introduction – Video: "Who Owns History?" Lecture: Overview of the Mexican Revolution Exercise: Is the Mexican Revolution Dead?	

Jan. 27	Library tour – meet at Reference Desk at 7 p.m. Choosing a research topic The history of history	Storey, Intro and Ch. 1 Arnold, Ch. 1-3 Wilson, Ch. 1
Feb. 3	Types of history Types of sources The classic view of the Revolution Book reviews	Arnold, Ch. 4-7; Wilson, Ch. 2 Storey, Ch. 2 Tannenbaum, <i>Peace by Revolution</i> Raaf review of Knight, <i>The Mexican Revolution</i> Wasserman review of Hart, <i>Revolutionary Mexico</i> RESEARCH TOPIC DUE
Feb. 10	Theory, Causality, Actors, Processes Objectivity/subjectivity Writing history Guest historian: Dave Schmitz	Foran, “Reinventing the Mexican Revolution” Article TBA Storey, Ch. 3 BOOK REVIEW DUE
Feb. 17	Revisionism Economic history Quantitative methodology Historian: Charlip on economic history	Bailey, “Revisionism and the Recent Historiography...” Wilkie, <i>The Mexican Revolution</i> Wilkie, “New Hypotheses for Statistical Research...” ARTICLE SUMMARY/ JOURNAL TOUR DUE
Feb. 24	Political history & political sociology Sociology and history Guest historian: Lynn Sharp	Benjamin, “The Leviathan on the Zocalo” Britton, “The Disappearance and Rediscovery of the Mexican Revolution” Joseph, “Mexico’s ‘Popular Revolution’”
March 2	Marxist theory Looking at Labor Guest historian: Nina Lerman	Knight, “The Mexican Revolution: Bourgeois? Nationalist? Or just a ‘Great Rebellion?’ Vanderwood, “Resurveying the Mexican Revolution” Knight, “The Working Class and the Mexican Revolution” Hart, “The Urban Working Class and the Mexican Revolution” HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY DUE
March 9	Using sources Reading primary sources Primary sources, everyday people Guest historian: Brian Dott	Storey, Ch. 4 Documents from the Mexican revolution Beezley, “In Search of Everyday Mexicans”
SPRING BREAK – March 15 – 26		
March 30	Ethnicity and anthropology	Fowler-Salamini, “The Boom in Regional Studies” Chassen-Lopez, Francie R. “Maderismo or Mixtec empire?”

	Guest historian: Andrea Winkler	Meyers, "Seasons of Rebellion" SOURCE ANALYSIS DUE
April 6	Women/gender/sexuality Annotated bibliography Guest historian: Kyra Nourse	VanYoung, "Making Leviathan Sneeze: Vaughan, "Women School Teachers" Lamadrid, "El Corrido del Tomóchic" Bliss, "The Science of Redemption" Kirby, Frida Kahlo
April 13	Space, identity, gender, discourse, ritual, hegemony	Vaughan, "Cultural Approaches to Peasant Politics" Martin, "Contesting Authenticity" ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE
Wed., April 14 – Skotheim lecture, Stephen G. Rabe		
April 20	The uses/abuses of history Writing the paper	Gilbert, "Rewriting History" Storey, Ch. 5-10 RESEARCH PAPER OUTLINE DUE
April 27		RESEARCH PAPERS DUE
May 4		
May 11	Research roundtable	

NOVELISTS ON HISTORY

“...I can read poetry and plays, and things of that sort, and do not dislike travels. But history, real solemn history, I cannot be interested in. Can you?”

“Yes, I am fond of history.”

“I wish I were too. I read it a little as a duty; but it tells me nothing that does not either vex or weary me. The quarrels of popes and kings, with wars and pestilences in every page; the men all so good for nothing, and hardly any women at all, it is very tiresome; and yet I often think it odd that it should be so dull, for a great deal of it must be invention. The speeches that are put into the heroes’ mouths, their thoughts and designs; the chief of all this must be invention, and invention is what delights me in other books.”

“Historians you think,” said Miss Tilney, “are not happy in their flights of fancy. They display imagination without raising interest. I am fond of history, and am very well contented to take the false with the true. In the principal facts they have sources of intelligence in former histories and records, which may be as much depended on, I conclude, as anything that does not actually pass under one’s own observation; and as for the little embellishments you speak of, they are embellishments, and I like them as such. ...”

“You are fond of history! And so are Mr. Allen and my father; and I have two brothers who do not dislike it. So many instances within my small circle of friends is remarkable! At this rate, I shall not pity the writers of history any longer. If people like to read their books, it is all very well; but to be at so much trouble in filling great volumes, which, as I used to think, nobody would willingly ever look into, to be labouring only for the torment of little boys and girls, always struck me as a hard fate; and though I know it is all very right and necessary, I have often wondered at the person’s courage that could sit down on purpose to do it.”

“That little boys and girls should be tormented,” said Henry, “is what no one at all acquainted with human nature in a civilised state can deny; but in behalf of our most distinguished historians, I must observe, that they might well be offended at being supposed to have no higher aim; and that by their method and style they are perfectly well qualified to torment readers of the most advanced reason and mature time of life. I use the verb ‘to torment,’ as I observed to be your own method, instead of ‘to instruct,’ supposing them to be now admitted as synonymous.”

Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*

The Complete Novels of Jane Austen, NY: Modern Library, n.d., 1122-23

Memory is fiction. We select the brightest and the darkest, ignoring what we are ashamed of, and so embroider the broad tapestry of our lives. Through photography and the written word I try desperately to conquer the transitory nature of my existence, to trap moments before they evanesce, to untangle the confusion of my past. Every instant disappears in a breath and immediately becomes the past; reality is ephemeral and changing, pure longing. With these photographs and these pages I keep memories alive; they are my grasp on a truth that is fleeting, but truth nonetheless; they prove that these events happened and that these people passed through my destiny. ...I write to elucidate the ancient secrets of my childhood, to define my identity, to create my own legend. In the end, the only thing we have in abundance is the memory we have woven.

Isabel Allende, *Portrait in Sepia*, NY: Harper Collins, 2001, 303-4

WHAT IS HISTORY?

- “Nothing capable of being memorized is history.” R. G. Collingwood
- “History repeats itself.” Plutarch
- “History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce.” Karl Marx
- “History is little else than a picture of human crimes and misfortunes.” Voltaire
- “History is written by the victors.” Winston Churchill
- “History is a vast early warning system.” Norman Cousins
- “Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” George Santayana
- “We learn from history that we do not learn from history.” Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel
- “History is the version of past events that people have decided to agree upon.” Napoleon
- “History is more or less bunk.” Henry Ford
- “Not to know what happened before one was born is to remain always a child.” Cicero
- “History is a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past.” E.H. Carr
- “From now on you’ll be history. You’ll be his-, you’ll be his-, you’ll be history. And we will glorify your name. And you will be a bust, be a bust, be a bust, in the Hall of Fame.”
Munchkins, “The Wizard of Oz”