Fall 2014: Paul Erickson, William Pinch, Magda Teter

**HISTORY 362**  
**ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY HISTORIOGRAPHY**

This course is designed to introduce history majors to a range of problems and critical practices in the discipline of history as it is practiced today. The semester is divided into five parts:

- **Part I:** Ethical and Public Dimensions of History (weeks 1 and 2)
- **Part II:** Schools of Historical Thought (weeks 3, 4, and 5)
- **Part III:** Historical Interpretations and Primary Sources (weeks 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.1)
- **Part IV:** Varieties of Evidence (weeks 10.2, 11, 12, and 13)
- **Part V:** Conclusion (week 14)

There will be several different kinds of writing assignments:

- 4 short (2 page) discussion papers and a 5-7 page essay on the case study in Part III;
- brief responses to questions about the readings on days when the above papers are not due;
- and a final project that involves the preparation of a research proposal (12-15 pages).

For full descriptions of these assignments go to pages 6-7.

Readings will be drawn from the following books that are available at Broad Street Books and from readings available digitally on the Moodle for this course. The books below are also on reserve in Olin Library:

- Nadia Idle & Alex Nunns, eds., *Tweets from Tahrir* (2011) pb

For this course as well as for their senior essays and theses, students are expected to format footnotes, endnotes, and bibliographies according to the 15th edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* (available on-line through a link on Moodle). Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 7th edition (2008), briefly summarizes these conventions. **EndNote** is a software program that facilitates this formatting, prevents errors, and saves time. Students will learn about this program at one of the mandatory **EndNote** workshops scheduled on 23 and 25 September (noon to 1 pm).

Please note: In conformance with university policy class will be held on Tuesday 25 November and all students are expected to be in attendance.

**Disability Resources**

Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and provide documentation of the disability. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Disability Resources as soon as possible.

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Dean Patey in Disability Resources, located in North College, Room 021, or call 860-685-5581 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations.
PART I: Ethical and Public Dimensions of History

Week One: History, Historians, and Ethics

Tuesday, September 2:

Margaret MacMillan, Dangerous Games: The Uses and Abuses of History (New York, 2009), 3-11, 35-49.

NOTE: Sign up sheets for paper submission dates must be completed by 4 Sept.

Thursday, September 4:


Week Two: History and Memory

Tuesday, September 9:

Michael Kort, ed., Columbia Guide to Hiroshima and the Bomb (N.Y, 2007), pp. 4-5, 8-13, 81-82, 96-104; (only peruse Kort as a source of information for questions that may come up in the following readings).

Thursday, September 11:

Sanford Levinson Written In Stone, entire.

SPECIAL NOON LECTURE, September 11: Professor Erik Grimmer-Solem, "Blind Spot on the Right: The Wehrmacht, the Holocaust and the Politics of Commemoration in Contemporary Germany." PAC 001, 12-1 p.m. This is a required class event. Lunch will be provided.

PART II: Schools of Historical Thought

Week Three: History, the Nation, and Class

[NB: Be sure to complete sign-up sheets for next week’s Endnote Sessions]

Tuesday, September 16: Historicism and National Histories

Georg G. Iggers, “Classical Historicism as a Model for Historical Scholarship," idem, Historiography in the Twentieth Century: From Scientific Objectivity to the Postmodern Challenge (Middletown, CT, 1997), 23-30, 164-66

Leopold von Ranke, Preface to *Histories of the Latin and Germanic Nations, 1494-1514* (1824) and Preface to *History of the Popes, Their Church and State* (1834) in Adam Budd (ed.) *The Modern Historiography Reader: Western Sources* (London: Routledge, 2009), 172-177


Thursday, September 18: **Marxism and “History from Below”**


Introduction to *Past and Present* inaugural issue (1952), in Budd (ed.) *Modern Historiography Reader*, 277-280


**Week Four: Beyond the Nation**

Tuesday, September 23: **Annales**


23 SEPTEMBER, NOON-1, Endnote workshop (lunch will be provided), ALLBRITTON 204—Sign up in section

25 SEPTEMBER, NOON-1, Endnote workshop (lunch will be provided), ALLBRITTON 204—Sign up in section

Thursday, September 25: **Identity: Gender and Race in History**


Joan Wallach Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis”, in Budd, ed., *Modern Historiography Reader*, 389-397

Optional video interview: A Conversation with Joan Wallach Scott (2009)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrknwNI818Y

Friday, September 26, 12 noon – Preliminary approval of research proposal topic due on Moodle

**Week Five: Planetary Flows**

Tuesday, September 30: **Transnational, World, and Global History**


Thursday, October 2: **Deep History**


PART III: Historical Interpretations and Primary Sources

Monday, October 6, 12 noon – Final Project, Part 1 - Definition of the problem and bibliography (5%) due on Moodle.

Week Six: Modeling Historical Debate

Tuesday, October 7: Natalie Zemon Davis, Return of Martin Guerre

Note: Students will also give brief oral reports on their research topics.

Tuesday, October 7, FILM SCREENING: “The Return of Martin Guerre”, 7 p.m., PAC 001. Dinner will be provided.

Thursday, October 9: Evidence and the Role of Imagination


Week Seven: The Making of a Field: New World Identities

Tuesday, October 14:


Thursday, October 16:


Week Eight: A Case Study: The Conquest of Mexico

Tuesday, October 21, NO CLASS - FALL BREAK
Wednesday, October 22: Stephen Berry, University of Georgia, “CSI Dixie: Death Investigation and the Civil War South,” 4:15 p.m., Willis 112. **Attendance Recommended.**

Thursday, October 23: Spanish Sources (1):

**Chronology, Names, Maps, and Words**

**Week Nine: The Conquest of Mexico con’t.**

Tuesday, October 28: Spanish Sources (2):


Thursday, October 30: Nahuatl Sources:

**A Brief Note about Readings from Nahuatl Sources**

The following selections from James Lockhart, ed. and trans., *We People Here: Nahuatl Accounts of the Conquest of Mexico* (Eugene, OR, 2004; orig. UCLA, 1993):


Extract from The Annals of Tlatelolco, **odd numbered pages** in pp. 257-69.

Extract from The Codex Aubin, **odd numbered pages** in pp. 275-79.


**Week Ten: The Conquest of Mexico (cont.)**

Tuesday, November 4:

Discussion of the Conquest of Mexico from Spanish and Nahuatl Sources

**Reminder:** Paper on conquest of Mexico is due on Moodle **no later than midnight Nov. 3.**

**Part IV: Varieties of Evidence**

Thursday, November 6: **Written Evidence**

*Tweets from Tahrir*, eds. Nadia Idle and Alex Nunns (N. Y., 2011) (entire book)

**Week Eleven: Word and Image**

Tuesday, November 11: **Oral Evidence**

Joan Sangster, “Telling our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History,” Robert Perks and


Tuesday, November 11, 12-1 p.m. Screening of "Looking for an Icon". PAC 001. Lunch will be provided.

Thursday, November 13: **Visual Evidence**


Mon., Nov. 17, 12 noon - Bibliographic essay, part 2 of final project is due on Moodle (10%)

**Week Twelve: Text and Object**

Tuesday, November 18: **Into the Archives: Discoveries & Obstacles**

[NOTE: We will meet in the lobby of Olin Library at 9 a.m. No readings in advance, but note the Rizzo talk this evening, below.]

Tuesday, November 18: Lorena Rizzo, Bielefeld University, “Aesthetics of the Prisons: The Breakwater Prison Albums in Capetown, 1890s-1900,” 8 p.m. Venue TBA. **Attendance Required**.

Thursday, November 20: **Material Culture**


[NOTE: Meet at the Observatory on Foss Hill at 9 a.m.]

**Week Thirteen: Numbers**

Tuesday, November 25: **Quantitative Evidence**


Thursday, November 27: NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING BREAK

**Part V: Conclusion**

**Week Fourteen: Our obligations as Historians**

Tuesday, December 2: **Student oral reports on the primary sources for their research proposals.**

Thursday, December 4: **Reflections on History & Historiography**
de Baets, “A Declaration of the Responsibilities of Present Generations Toward Past Generations,” *History and Theory* 43 (Dec 2004): 130, 133-139 (these pages are selections from the article)  
AHA Standards on Professional Conduct

**Fri., Dec. 13, 7 p.m. – Research Proposal, part 3 of Final Project is Due on Moodle (15%)**
Note: For this course as well as for their senior essays and theses, students are expected to format footnotes, endnotes, and bibliographies according to the 15th edition of The Chicago Manual of Style. It is available on-line through a link on the course Moodle.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Class Discussion and attendance = 20% of grade:

Students are expected to attend all classes, to arrive on time, to complete the readings for the day, and to make insightful contributions to class discussion. Lateness will count as absence.

Reading Responses = 5% of the grade:

These are brief, informally written, not graded responses to questions posed by the instructor. They are due on the days that students do not submit discussion papers. In order for these responses to be a resource for all students and to be eligible for credit, they must be submitted on Moodle by 11:59 p.m. on the day before the class meets.

Four 2-page Discussion Papers on the assigned readings = 30% of grade:

By Thursday, Sept. 4th, sign up in sections for four specific dates. The papers are due on the relevant Moodle Assignments link by 12 midnight on the day they are discussed. Discussion papers may not be turned in after the pertinent class discussion and no make ups will be allowed. Students are responsible for remembering the dates they have chosen. You must choose your four paper dates according to the following parameters:

- One date from Part I: Ethical and Public Dimensions of History (weeks 1 and 2)
- One date from Part II: Schools of Historical Thought (weeks 3, 4, and 5) [excluding Tuesday Oct 14]
- One date from Part III: Historical Interpretations and Primary Sources (weeks 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 [Tues only])
- One date from Part IV: Varieties of Historical Evidence (weeks 10 [Thurs only], 11, 12, and 13)

The papers should adhere strictly to the following format: in four paragraphs each paper will state (1) the argument of the reading(s); (2) the evidence on which the argument is based; (3) a critique of the argument(s); and (4) significant methodological questions raised by the reading(s). Ordinarily, each discussion paper should cover the day’s entire reading assignment. However, if there are more than two readings assigned, you may choose to focus on only two, but the choice should be defensible based on thematic connections.

Essay for Case Study in Part III (5-7 pages) = 15% of grade: Due on Moodle by 11:59 p.m., Monday, Nov. 3.

Imagine that you have been asked by a prestigious academic publisher to write a historical account of the Spanish conquest of Mexico. Using as a point of departure or as an illustration any event(s) or participant(s) in the sources assigned on the conquest, construct a historical account of the Spanish conquest or of an aspect of the conquest. (Do not use sources other than the primary sources assigned here.) Be sure to use both Spanish and Nahuatl sources and to think about their strengths and limitations. How would you mesh (or not) your sources? What methodological problems would you raise? What solutions (if any) would you propose to solve them? What explanations would you discard and what explanations would you find viable? What conclusions would you reach in your effort to construct a historical account?

Final Project = 30% of grade: Prepare a research proposal, which will include:

Preliminary approval of the topic – a 1-2 sentence description - Due on Moodle by Friday, September 26, 12 noon.

In order to obtain preliminary approval students will meet individually with the instructor no later, and preferably earlier, than the last week of September to discuss the viability of the proposed topic. Please identify the languages that you can read.
Part 1 - Definition of the problem and preliminary bibliography (5%) – Due on Moodle by **Monday, October 7, 12 noon**:  

Prepare a brief essay (2 pages) that defines the historical problem you wish to research in connection with your selected topic and that identifies the significant issues associated with it. Identify at least three primary sources that you could consult this semester in connection with your research problem. Is there an archive that you would have to travel to use? If so, in a paragraph, investigate and describe what it might offer you even if you will not be able to use it until you begin your research next summer.

Part 2 - Historiographical/bibliographical Essay (10%) – Due on Moodle by **Mon., Nov. 17, 12 noon**:  

Prepare a 5-page essay that situates your subject in a context of relevant scholarship. You will need to discuss how the subject has been investigated over time and to what effects, that is: What kinds of questions are historians asking about this topic? Are there differences in the kinds of questions being asked? How would you account for these differences? What are the implications of following one line of investigation or explanation rather than another? What is at stake in these different approaches? Discuss the works you select in chronological order (by date of publication) from the earliest to the most recent. Include footnotes and a bibliography. Both should be formatted according to the 16th edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*, which is one of the formats available in EndNote.

You may wish to consult a “review essay” that treats the topic you would like to investigate or offers an example of a historiographical/bibliographical essay. An example from our syllabus is Michael Kort, ed., *Columbia Guide to Hiroshima and the Bomb* (N.Y., 2007), pp. 8-13, or James H. Sweet, "Mistaken Identities? Olaudah Equiano, Domingo Álvares, and the Methodological Challenges of Studying the African Diaspora," *American Historical Review*, 114:2 (April 2009), 279-306. You may also look for review essays in a wide variety of historical journals, among them, the *Journal of Modern History*, *American Historical Review*, *Journal of American History*, *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Journal of African History*, *Latin American Research Review*, *History Workshop*, *Hispanic American Historical Review*, *Journal of Social History*, *International Labor and Working Class History*, *Speculum*, *Renaissance Quarterly*, *History and Theory*, and others. If you read foreign languages, there are additional historical journals available to you; for specific suggestions speak with your professor or with the library staff at Olin.

Part 3 - Research Proposal (15%) – Due on Moodle by **Friday, December 12, 7 p.m.**:  

Propose your own research plan. This should include: the primary sources/evidence you will need, how your research will address the problem you have posed, and the implications of your work for the larger body of existing research in the field. Include properly formatted footnotes at the bottom of each page and a properly formatted bibliography at the end.

This part of the assignment must include evidence of revisions of Parts 1 and 2 (This will count as 1/3 of Part 3 of the final project – in other words 5% of your final grade). Include properly formatted footnotes at the bottom of each page and a properly formatted bibliography at the end of the research plan.

Total of 12-15 pages.