

History 612
Historical Writing and Methodology

Fall 2022
Thursdays 2-4:50, MCK 375
Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday 12-1 pm (Zoom or office)

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This course is designed to be an introduction to graduate study in history, with an emphasis on breadth, exploration, and skill-building. This course is specifically oriented to texts that have played an important role in fields outside U.S. history and/or to engage specific methodologies. I have invited other faculty members to participate as guests throughout the term, prioritizing those who are not advising current graduate students to introduce you to the range of thematic and methodological expertise you can seek out in our department.

I'd like us to embrace the idea of a workshop model for our class. Our discussions will be spaces to workshop ideas – to try things out, build on others' ideas, challenge ourselves and each other, and push toward growth through genuine engagement and risk-taking. Especially as this is the hallmark “cohort course” for incoming students, it is a place to make mistakes, support each other, and to learn.

In that spirit, the assignments in this class will use writing as a process of thinking to build an intellectual community. They aim to facilitate intellectual growth, foster essential skills of collaboration, and be enjoyable as well. The two types of assignments are: weekly reading journals and responses, and a book review. Students will also lead weekly class discussions.

How can you succeed in this class?

Come to office hours: I strongly encourage you to visit me during office hours to discuss the class, the process of writing, or studying history in general. I will be available via Zoom on Tuesdays and in person on Thursdays. **Please make sure to meet with me at least once,** preferably before mid-quarter.

Talking with my students about our course material and about graduate school is a true pleasure. Please also be in touch to tell me how you are doing—are you having a tough week? Having trouble with some aspect of the course? I would like to strategize with you. Reach out EARLY if you encounter difficulty.

What if you need an extension?

In my classes, deadlines aren't arbitrary. Instead, they're based on considerations of learning goals, course rhythms, and helping make sure students have what they need to proceed without their work snowballing, balanced with workflow and scheduling. That said, sometimes extensions are necessary. Talk to me *in advance of a deadline* with questions about extensions. When in

doubt: ask! If you foresee a major scheduling conflict, we can work together to find a solution – if at all possible, please plan ahead. If you find yourself struggling with late work that is suddenly snowballing, email me *immediately*. Please raise any concerns right away.

In case of illness or caregiving needs, if you need accommodations for the timing or form of assignments, please communicate with me in advance and we will strive to create an alternative plan to complete required coursework.

How will your course grade be calculated?

40% Weekly written discussions

20% Book review

10% Book review scaffolded steps

20% Active listening and thoughtful contributions to class

10% Class discussion leading: preparation & delivery

In graduate school, the grading scale is foreshortened. The expectation for graduate students is that everyone demonstrates self-motivation to contribute to the best of their ability, strive for excellence, and push themselves to grow. Perfection is not the goal; instead, aim for sustained high-level engagement, writing, and historical skill-building.

A = Especially impressive work that exceeds my expectations at the graduate level

A- = Solid performance, clearly satisfactory for the graduate level

B+ or B = Your performance has fallen somewhat short of expectations in terms of intellectual sophistication or thoroughness

- Any grade below a B is a concerning indication that you have fallen significantly below expectations for graduate work.

UO has resources for you:

Please refer to the on-campus resources distributed by the Division of Graduate Studies, including writing support with [Mike Murashige](#). Talk to me if you'd like additional support for graduate writing and for reading strategies, which I am always happy to discuss.

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 155 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu

Below is a list of the core texts and themes that will structure the course. Please note that we may be adding relevant articles re: theory, methodology and/or historiographic essays. Updates and links to excerpts will be listed on Canvas.

The four books below will be necessary to either purchase or borrow from the library. Please let me know right away if you have any trouble accessing the texts.

- *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, by Michel-Rolph Trouillot
- *The Faces of Honor: Sex, Shame, and Violence in Colonial Latin America*, edited by Lyman Johnson and Sonya Lipsett-Rivera
- *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin* by Jochen Hellbeck
- *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* by William Cronon

Week	Themes	■ Central texts	Guests
Week 1 9/29	The politics of history & the problem of interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Karin Wulf, "Why the History of Vast Early America Matters Today," <i>Aeon</i> (2021) ■ James Sweet, "Is History History?" <i>Perspectives</i> (2022) ■ Malcolm Foley and Priya Satia, "Responses to Is History History?" <i>Perspectives</i> (2022) 	
Week 2 10/06	Place/Time: Haiti & beyond Theme/Methodology: Critical archival history / Post-colonial studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Michel-Rolph Trouillot, <i>Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History</i> (1995), <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Entire book 	Prof. Carlos Aguirre
Week 3 10/13	Place/Time: Early modern Europe Theme/Methodology: Science & Technology Studies (STS) / Intellectual History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Barbara Shapiro, <i>A Culture of Fact</i> (2000), <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intro & Chapter 5 ■ Meet at Special Collections in Knight Library! 	Prof. Vera Keller
Week 4 10/20	Place/Time: 20 th c. South Africa Theme/Methodology: Oral history / Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Belinda Bozzoli, "Interviewing the Women of Phokeng" from <i>The Oral History Reader</i> (2006) 	Prof. Melissa Graboyes
Week 5 10/27	Place/Time: Colonial Latin America Theme/Methodology: Gender and Sexuality / Social History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lyman Johnson and Sonya Lipsett-Rivera, <i>The Faces of Honor: Sex, Shame, and Violence in Colonial Latin America</i> (1998), <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intro., Ch. 5, Ch. 7 	Prof. Reuben Zahler

Week 6 11/03	Place/Time: 20 th c. China Theme/Methodology: Capitalism / Interdisciplinarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Articles by William Sewell and Bryna Goodman <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (Exact texts TBA) 	Prof. Bryna Goodman
Week 7 11/10	Place/Time: 19 th c. U.S. Theme/Methodology: Environment / Spatial History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ William Cronon, <i>Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West</i> (1991), <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ch. 2, Ch. 3, Ch. 5 	Prof. Ocean Howell
Week 8 11/17	Place/Time: 20 th c. USSR Theme/Methodology: Socio-cultural history / Working with sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Jochen Hellbeck, <i>Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin</i> (2006), <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Entire book 	Prof. Julie Hessler
Week 9 11/24	<i>Fall Break</i>		
Week 10 12/01	Wrap-up. Student presentations.		