

History 9817

United States History and Historiography

Fall Term

Wednesdays 3:30-5:30 pm, Lawson Hall 1227

Professor Rob MacDougall

Department of History

Office: Lawson Hall 2237

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-3 pm

Email: rmacdou@uwo.ca

Course Website: <http://www.robmacdougall.org/9817>

Course Description

Historiography means both the writing of history and the study of historical writing itself. This seminar will introduce you to some major themes and core works of United States historiography, and invite you to develop your skills as readers and critics of historical literature. It is not a comprehensive survey of American history (hardly possible in 13 weeks), but rather a history of historical writing about the United States. We will read and discuss a combination of classic and modern texts—some of the best work in the profession—to see how American historiography has changed over time, and how history is always shaped by the historical, intellectual, and biographical circumstances of those who write it. We will learn a great deal about United States history along the way, but the course is really an intellectual history of history, in the American context.

Some previous coursework in American history will be valuable for this class. If you are interested in History 9817 but do not have prior experience in U.S. history, or if you have any other questions about the course, please email me at rmacdou@uwo.ca.

Assignments and Evaluation

This is a graduate course. Thorough reading and informed discussion—in every seminar—are the central requirements. You are expected to attend every meeting prepared to engage actively with the readings and with each other. Sometimes, you will be asked to hand in or post online a short response to the readings for that week or to complete some other small homework assignment.




You will write one book review (4-6 pages) locating a work of scholarship in its historical context, and one longer essay (10-15 pages) discussing the development of historiography on a specific subject over time. There will be no midterm or final exam.

In-class participation (reading, discussion, insight)	20%	
Short homework assignments / online responses	20%	
Historiographic Book Review (4-6 pages)	20%	due October 19
Historiographic Essay (10-15 pages)	40%	due November 30

Schedule

The readings for this class are extensive. We will discuss strategies for efficient reading, and I will sometimes direct you to focus on particular chapters or elements, but the bottom line is that you are responsible for coming to each class prepared to intelligently discuss all readings assigned. I do not require you to purchase any books and I have not ordered any books at the Campus Bookstore. All readings will be available on reserve at D.B. Weldon Library, at the Centre for American Studies office (SSC 1003), and/or online.


Key


-  Book on reserve shelf at Weldon (1-day loan) and at Centre for American Studies.
-  PDF available on course website or paper photocopy at Centre for American Studies.
-  E-book or journal article available through online library catalogue.


Week 1 September 14 Welcome to the Course


Pierre BAYARD, *How To Talk About Books You Haven't Read* (2007). 


Week 2 September 21 The Unpredictable Past


John HICKS, *The Populist Revolt* (1931), pp. vii-ix, 54-95. 

Richard HOFSTADTER, *The Age of Reform* (1955), pp. 60-93. 


Lawrence GOODWYN, *The Populist Moment* (1978), pp. vii-xxiv, 20-54. 


Barton SHAW, *The Wool-Hat Boys* (1984), pp. 78-90. 


James LIVINGSTON, *Pragmatism, Feminism, and Democracy* (2001), pp. 1-33. 


Charles POSTEL, *The Populist Vision* (2007), pp. 3-22. 


Week 3 September 29 Early, Professional, and Progressive Historians (1800s-1930s)

George BANCROFT, *History of the United States, Volume II* (1840), pp. 450-466. 


Frederick Jackson TURNER, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," (1893), in Martin Ridge, ed., *History, Frontier, and Section*, pp. 59-91. 


Charles BEARD, *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States* (1913), pp. 1-18, 253-291. 


Joyce APPLEBY et al, *Telling the Truth About History* (1994), pp. 91-125. 

David BROWN, *Beyond the Frontier: The Midwestern Voice in Historical Writing* (2009), pp. 25-71. 


Week 4 October 5 The Consensus Historians (1940s-1960s)


Richard HOFSTADTER, *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It* (1948). 

John HIGHAM, "Beyond Consensus: The Historian as Moral Critic," *American Historical Review* 67 (1962): 609-625. 

David BROWN, *Richard Hofstadter: An Intellectual Biography* (2006). 

Week 5 October 12 The New Social History (1960s-1970s)

Herbert GUTMAN, *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America* (1976), pp. xi-xiv, 3-78. 

Ira BERLIN, "Herbert G. Gutman and the American Working Class," in *Power and Culture: Essays on the American Working Class* (1987), pp. 3-69. 

Alice KESSLER-HARRIS, "A New Agenda for American Labor History: A Gendered Analysis and the Question of Class," in *Perspectives on American Labor History* (1989), pp. 217-234. □

Daniel RODGERS, *Age of Fracture* (2011), pp. 77-79, 90-107. □📖

Week 6 October 19 Slavery and Agency

HISTORIOGRAPHIC BOOK REVIEW DUE OCTOBER 19

Ulrich B. PHILLIPS, *American Negro Slavery* (1918), pp. 291-308. □

Stanley ELKINS, *Slavery* (1959), pp. 81-87, 103-139. □

Sterling STUCKEY, "Through the Prism of Folklore: The Black Ethos in Slavery," *Massachusetts Review* 9 (1968): 417-437. □

Robert FOGEL and Stanley ENGERMAN, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of Negro Slavery* (1974), pp. 3-12, 107-117, 144-157. □

Eugene GENOVESE, *Roll Jordan Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (1974), pp. 3-7, 113-149. □

Deborah Gray WHITE, *Ar'n't I a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (1985, Rev. ed. 1999), pp. 1-25. □

Walter JOHNSON, "On Agency," *Journal of Social History* 37 (2003): 113-124. □

Week 7 October 26 Women's History

Eleanor FLEXNER, *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States* (1959), pp. vii-x, 41-61. □

Caroll SMITH-ROSENBERG, "The New Woman and the New History," *Feminist Studies* 3 (1975): 185-198. □

Linda KERBER, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," *Journal of American History* 75 (1988): 9-39. □

Mary RYAN, *Mysteries of Sex: Tracing Women & Men Through American History* (2006). 📖

Laurel Thatcher ULRICH, *Well-Behaved Women Seldom Make History* (2007), pp. 191-222. □

Week 8 November 2 The Cultural Turn (1980s-1990s)

Joan SCOTT, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91 (1986): 1053-1075. □

George CHAUNCEY, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World* (1994). 📖

Gail BEDERMAN, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (1995). 📖

James LIVINGSTON, *The World Turned Inside Out* (2010), pp. 37-54. □

Week 9 November 9 War

Theodore ROOSEVELT, *The Winning of the West* (1889), pp. 180-185. □

Christian APPY, *Working-Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam* (1993). 📖

Emily ROSENBERG, *A Date Which Will Live: Pearl Harbor in American Memory* (2003). 📖

Robert CITINO, "Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction," *American Historical Review* 112 (2007), pp. 1070-1090. □

Week 10 November 16 African-Americans and Civil Rights

Robert WEISBROT, *Freedom Bound: A History of America's Civil Rights Movement* (1990). 📖

Nikhil Pal SINGH, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (2004). 📖

Jacquelyn Dowd HALL, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History* 91 (2005), pp. 1233-1263. □

Eric ARNESEN, "Reconsidering the Long Civil Rights Movement," *Historically Speaking*, 10 (2009), pp. 31-34. □

Week 11 November 23 The New New Political History

Doug ROSSINOW, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (1998). □

Lisa McGIRR, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (2001). □ □

Meg JACOBS and Julian ZELIZER, *The Democratic Experiment: New Directions in American Political History* (2003), pp. 1-19. □

Week 12 November 30 Business History and the History of Capitalism

HISTORIOGRAPHIC ESSAY DUE NOVEMBER 30

Alfred CHANDLER, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (1977). □ □

Richard R. JOHN, "Elaborations, Revisions, Dissents: Alfred D. Chandler, Jr.'s *The Visible Hand* after Twenty Years," *Business History Review* 71:2 (1997), pp. 151-200. □

Bethany MORETON, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart: The Making of Christian Free Enterprise* (2009). □

Sven BECKERT, "History of American Capitalism," in Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr, eds., *American History Now* (2011), pp. 314-335. □

Week 13 December 7 Transnational and Comparative History

Ian TYRELL, *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective since 1789* (2007). □

Jason KAUFMAN, *The Origins of Canadian and American Political Differences* (2009). □

Erez MANELA, "The United States in the World," in Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr, eds., *American History Now* (2011), pp. 201-220. □