

HISTORY 1840G

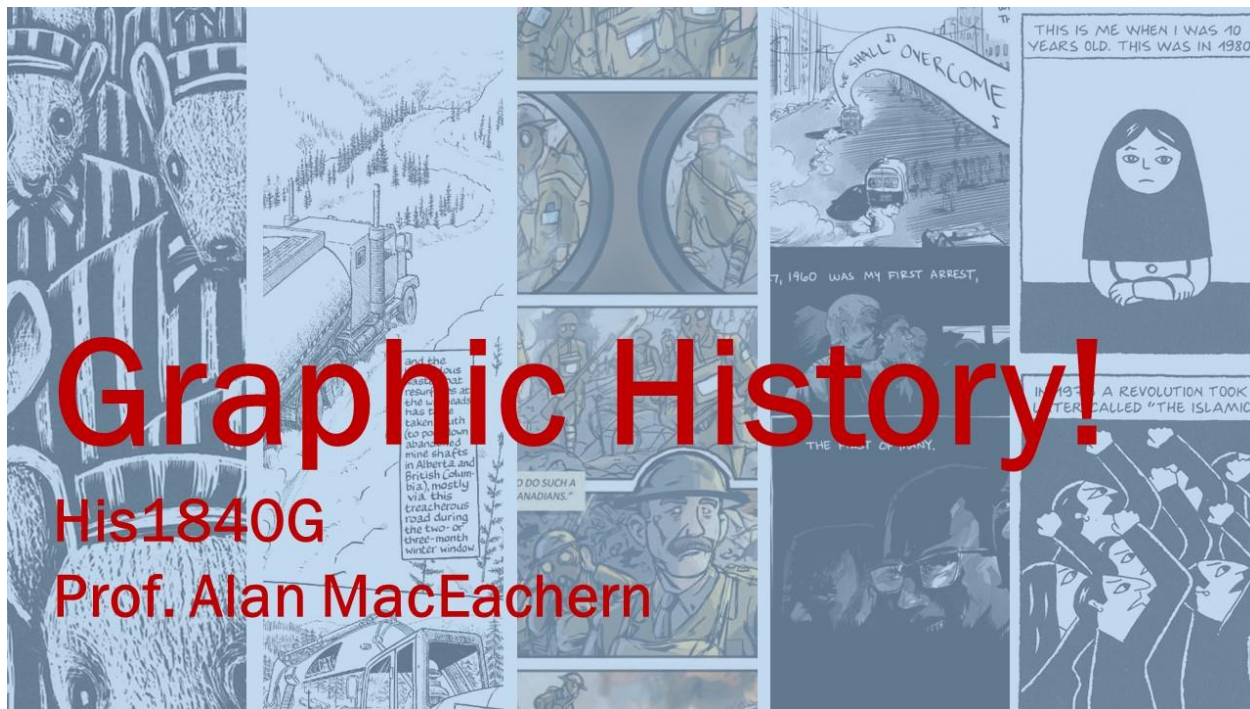
Graphic History!

Winter term 2024

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This is a **draft** syllabus. Please see the course site on OWL for a final version.



Images from *Maus*, *Paying the Land*, *Through Their Eyes*, *March*, & *Persepolis*.

Course description:

In recent decades, the medium of graphic history – historically-themed graphic novels – has had a profound effect on how the past is communicated. Books such as *Maus*, *Persepolis*, *March*, *They Called Us Enemy*, and *Louis Riel* have been so successful in conveying their historical topics to readers that they are effectively transforming how those topics are popularly understood. Graphic adaptations of textual histories such as *The 9/11 Report* and *Sapiens* demonstrate the growing respect accorded this visual medium.

History 1840G, *Graphic History!* examines a series of such books that cover historical events from around the world and across time. The goal is not only to learn more about the events themselves, but also to explore what the visualization of history contributes. As a medium for history, what are graphic history's strengths and weaknesses, its genres and conventions? Does it allow better access to an individual's thoughts and experiences – but at the expense of the broader context and circumstances? Does the interweaving of text and images help to communicate time's passage better than text alone can? What does graphic history teach us about the nature of history itself?

Please note that His1840G involves topics such as war, violence, and gender and racial discrimination. You may find the discussion or visual presentation of such topics upsetting. I will warn students of potentially disturbing content and will expect the class to be sensitive and respectful in discussion with one another. The classroom will provide a space for a critical and civil exchange of ideas.

Learning outcomes:

Through the lectures, readings, and assignments, you will

- gain an understanding of key events, concepts, and figures in global history over the past two centuries,
- learn the history, structure, and conventions of graphic history, and consider how the incorporation of graphic narrative differentiates it from purely textual (or film or other) representations of history,
- identify, evaluate, and develop skills in the interpretation and utilization of primary sources and secondary sources,
- become familiar with the library and electronic resources,
- develop a full understanding of plagiarism,
- develop essay-writing and small-group discussion skills.

Methods of evaluation:

Further information on all assignments will be provided on OWL & in class.

- ***Response papers – due on OWL, 29 January, 12 February, 4 March, & 18 March – 5% each x 4 = 20%***
You are to write and submit a 250-word response paper on each of the 4 graphic histories that are the focus of the course. Each response paper must be submitted before the book is discussed in class.
- ***Graphic history project***
Your major course's major writing assignment is to create a short graphic history of your own. By drawing your own images and text – with the option to incorporate photos, art, maps, etc. that you find online – you will create a graphic history of 6 or more pages (actual sheets of paper or Powerpoint or Google Slides), utilizing the graphic novel elements you have learned this term. Artistic ability is welcome but not required!
 - ***Proposal and bibliography – due on OWL, 12 February – 8%***
You are to submit a 250-word short essay that describes your proposed project, introducing the historical person or event, its historical significance, and the focus you plan to take. You are to include a bibliography of a minimum 5 sources you plan to use to research this history.
 - ***Graphic history – due on OWL, 1 April – 30%***
You are to submit a graphic history of, at minimum, 6 pages or slides. The project must also include a 500-word introduction, but there is no minimum word count (or panel count) for the history itself.
- ***Course engagement – 12%***
Students are to take part in tutorial discussion about lectures and assigned readings. Attendance in tutorials is mandatory, but attendance alone does not constitute participation.

- **Final exam – April exam period – 30%**

The exam will cover all lectures, tutorials, and readings from the term, and will consist of short answer and essay questions.

Make-up exams can only be approved by Academic Counselling. Please see the History Department's [Undergraduate Policies and Statements](#) page for procedures and requirements involving make-up exams.

Absences, Late Assignments, & Course-specific Policies:

- You are to submit your assignments through the course OWL site. Please submit them in Microsoft Word – not as an Adobe PDF – preferably with a file name “[Last name], [assignment]” – ex. “Smith, proposal.” You do not need to submit a paper copy.
- The Faculty of Social Science’s policy statement on plagiarism and the use of plagiarism detection software is outlined in the History Department’s [Undergraduate Policies and Statements](#) page.
- If the Proposal and Bibliography or the Graphic History assignment is submitted late, there is a 3% deduction per day, including weekends. Given the nature of the Response Papers, they must be submitted prior to the beginning of the class in which the book is being first discussed; no late Response Papers will be accepted.

Course materials:

The following books are available in the Western Bookstore. There are copies as well on 1-day reserve at Weldon Library. *Maus* and *Persepolis* are also available on the Internet Archive, as linked below. Beyond that, you are welcome to borrow or share any editions of physical copies or ebooks that you can find.

- Matthew Barrett and Robert Engen, *Through Their Eyes: A Graphic History of Hill 70 and the First World War* (2022).
- Art Spiegelman, *Maus*, [vol.1](#) (1986) and [vol.2](#) (1992).
- Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*, [vol.1](#) (2003) and [vol.2](#) (2004).
- Chester Brown, *Louis Riel* (2003).

All other course readings are available on the course OWL site, through the Weldon Library online system, and/or at the URL given.

Course Schedule: *draft*

- 1. Week of 8 January **Introductions**
- 2. Week of 15 January **What Sequential Art Does for (to) History**
- 3. Week of 22 January
- 4. Week of 29 January **Barrett & Engen, *Through Their Eyes***
- 5. Week of 5 February
- 6. Week of 12 February **Spiegelman, *Maus***
Reading Week
- 7. Week of 26 February
- 8. Week of 4 March **Satrapi, *Persepolis***
****7 March – last day to drop course without academic penalty****
- 9. Week of 11 March

- 10. Week of 18 March **Brown, *Louis Riel***
- 11. Week of 25 March
- 12. Week of 1 April **The Future of the Past?**
- 13. Week of 8 April

Additional Statements:

The use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT is permitted in this course *only* for activities such as brainstorming and refining ideas, drafting an outline to organize thoughts, or checking grammar and style. Beyond that, you may not make use of such tools in the writing of course assignments. Work submitted in this course must be your own. Any use of such tools should be properly documented and cited. (If in doubt, please ask me for clarification.)

Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.