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GHIS/GPOL6134
Monday 4:00-5:50
6 E. 16th St., room 704

Historical Methods and Sources

Historical Methods and Sources offers theoretical perspectives on and practical training in historical research, writing, and representation. We begin by exploring debates surrounding what history is: as mode of narrative, form of textuality, and as a set of relationships to the past. The remainder of the course provides hands-on training in what historians do: identify archives; locate, choose, and interpret primary sources; place research in its relevant intellectual and scholarly contexts; assess the existing literature; review books; design research; and intervene in historiographic debates by crafting original arguments. Individual projects will be tailored toward students' research interests, building toward (or enhancing) work on their MA theses. This course is mandatory for all Historical Studies Masters students and for all PhD students doing joint programs in history, but it is open to all NSSR graduate students who are interested in historical research and methodology.

You will need to purchase new or used copies of the following course materials:

Audio:

- Lin Manuel-Miranda, *Hamilton: An American Musical* (2016)*

Books:

- Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Harvard University Press, 1983)
- Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990. Orig. 1978.)
- John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.)
- Jo Guldi and David Armitage, *The History Manifesto* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014.) *
- Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986).
- Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002.)

All other readings are uploaded to Canvas: * indicates online access.

Assignments:

Assignments are due on the dates indicated in Canvas. Please put them in your calendar.

Week 1 | January 22 | Introduction

Week 2 | January 29 | Perspective and Objectivity

- John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.)
- Peter Novick, "[The European Legacy: Ranke, Bacon, and Flaubert](#)," in *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 21-46.

Online discussion: share your project with the class.

Week 3 | February 5 | Evidence, Interpretation, and Argument

- Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*
- Robert Finlay, "[The Refashioning of Martin Guerre](#)," *American Historical Review*, v. 93 no. 3 (June, 1988), 553-571.
- Natalie Zemon Davis, "[On the Lane](#)," *American Historical Review*, v. 93 no. 3 (June, 1988), 572-603.

Week 4 | February 12 | Interrogating the Archive

- Carolyn Steedman, *Dust*
- Joan Scott, "[The Evidence of Experience](#)," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Summer, 1991), pp. 773-797.

Assignment: Identify your archive

February 19 | President's Day | NO CLASS

Week 5 | February 26 | Asking A Question

- Thomas Haskell, "[Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility](#)," Part 1, *American Historical Review*, Vol. 90, No. 2 (April, 1985), pp. 339-361.
- Thomas Haskell, "[Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility](#)," Part 2, *American Historical Review*, Vol. 90, No. 3 (June, 1985), pp. 547-566.

Week 6 | March 5 | Individual Meetings | NO CLASS

Week 7 | March 12 | What is the Subject?

- Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*

SPRING BREAK

Week 8 | March 26 | What's The Story?

Excerpts from *Historians on Hamilton: How a Blockbuster Musical Restaged America's Past* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2018):

- Renee C. Romano and Claire Bond Potter, "History is Happening in Manhattan," 1-15.
- William Hogeland, "From Ron Chernow's *Alexander Hamilton* to *Hamilton: An American Musical*," 17-41.
- Lyra D. Monteiro, "Race-Conscious Casting and the Erasure of the Black Past in *Hamilton*," 58-70.
- David Waldstreicher and Jeffrey L. Pasley, "*Hamilton* as Founders' Chic: A Neo-Federalist, Anti-Slavery, Usable Past?" 137-166.
- Renee C. Romano, "*Hamilton*: A New American Civic Myth," 297-323.

Additional Reading:

- Ron Chernow, "The Oldest Revolutionary War Widow," *Alexander Hamilton* (New York: Penguin Books, 20014),1-6.

Audio:

- Lin Manuel-Miranda, *Hamilton: An American Musical* (2016).

Evening Event: *Historians on Hamilton Book Launch, 6:00-8:00 PM.*

Week 9 | April 2 | Individual Meetings | NO CLASS

Week 10 | April 9 | Big History

- Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*

Week 11 | April 16 | Comparative Methods

- Jürgen Kocka, "[Comparison and Beyond](#)," *History and Theory* vol. 42 no. 1 (February, 2003), 39-44.
- Dylan C. Penningroth, "[The Claims of Slaves and Ex-Slaves to Family and Property](#): A Transatlantic Comparison," *The American Historical Review*, vol. 112, no. 4 (October, 2007), pp. 1039-69.
- Theda Skocpol, "Explaining Social Revolutions: Alternatives to Existing Theories," *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 3-46.

Week 12 | April 23 | Queer Methods and Intimate Histories

- Jan Ellen Lewis, "The White Jeffersons," *Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson: History, Memory and Civic Culture* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1999), 127-160.
- Horacio N. Roque Rodriguez and Nan Alamilla Boyd, "The Body and Knowledge in Queer Oral History," in *Bodies of Evidence: The Practice of Queer Oral History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1-21.
- Claire Bond Potter, "[Queer Hoover: Sex, Lies and Political History](#)," *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, vol. 15, no. 3 (September, 2006), 355-381.
- Elizabeth Reis, "[Transgender Identity at a Crossroads](#): A Close Reading of a 'Queer' Story from 1857," *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, vol. 12, no. 3 (Fall 2014), 652-665.

Week 13 | April 30 | The Relevance of Historical Method to Contemporary Thought

- Jo Guldi and David Armitage, *The History Manifesto* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014.)

Week 14 | May 7 | Presentations

Week 15 | May 14 | Final Work Due

Upload Final Paper to Canvas

Grading, Preparation and Attendance:

This is a graduate class: it is important to be prepared for every session to make the most of it. This means *doing the readings and thinking about them*, and coming to class *ready to talk about them*.

Two of the weeks are devoted to individual meetings with me about your project. Again, it is important to arrive at these meetings as prepared as you can be to discuss your work and move on to the next stage of your project.

Attendance is obviously important: two absences may result in a lowered grade; more than two absences may result in asking you to withdraw from the class.

Your grade will be determined by the following formula:

- 20% = short assignments
- 30% = participation
- 50% = final work

University Resources Include:

- *Meeting with me.* Please [email me](#) to set up an appointment. I prefer to meet during business hours, but if your schedule precludes this, I can be flexible. Part of my job is to help students outside of class, consult about the broader mission of your education or your thesis, and just go have coffee.
- *Other members of the NSSR faculty.* As you develop your project, you may become aware that there are other faculty, in the history department and elsewhere, who can give you advice, direct you to research, and consult about the archives you are using.
- *The library.* Librarians can be particularly helpful in guiding you through research required for this course, how to use a data base, how to assemble a body of literature, and how to search for the exact source you need. In fact, they are paid to do this for faculty and students alike. As a New School student, you may also access all library services at [New York University's Bobst Library \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#), and as a citizen of New York, you are entitled to use all the research resources of the New York Public Library system. Remember that Internet research is not always the best way to find or retrieve what you need. Google and other search engines tend to give you what you already know, not what you don't know, or specialized research that best suits your needs.

- [*The University Learning Center*](#). Like librarians, learning center professionals are there to help you do your work. You don't have to be struggling, only desire to improve some aspect of your work: taking better notes, writing more lucidly, and reading faster would be a few of the basic skills a student might want to improve.
- [*Disability Services*](#). In keeping with the university's policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations is welcome to meet with me privately. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to contact Student Disability Service (SDS). SDS will conduct an intake and, if appropriate, the Director will provide an academic accommodation notification letter for you to bring to me. At that point, I will review the letter with you and discuss these accommodations in relation to this course. If you have already been diagnosed with cognitive or physical disability, this is where you go to ensure that you have equal access to an education. If you have ever struggled with school, seen a pattern in those struggles, or are frustrated in your attempts to plan, work effectively, or stay organized, you might want to consult with this office to see if they can support you. Equal access to education for all disabilities may include: extra time for graded work, an assistant to help you, or other accommodations.