

Historical Methods

This course introduces students to the principal analytical frameworks that have shaped historians' work over the past half century. Students will examine both the theoretical justifications historians have given, and the practical concerns historians have faced, in selecting these frameworks for analysis. Perhaps the most important question with which students will grapple is: How have historians mined their sources in order to give credence to their representations of the past? Students will discover that, regardless of the contexts they are examining and the sources they are employing, particular problems of interpretation and representation arise time and time again among practitioners of the discipline.

Course texts: Consult the term schedule below for the readings that are required of students before each seminar. All of the readings are accessible through the library and, in the case of articles, through the electronic resources section of the library website. Please consult the instructor if you are unfamiliar with how to use these resources. Despite the availability of the texts at the library, however, I would **STRONGLY** recommend that students purchase most, if not all, of the following texts, which are readily available through amazon.ca or chapters.ca:

- E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*
- C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins*
- James Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*
- Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*
- Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*
- Joan Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (revised edition)
- Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests*
- Edward Said, *Orientalism*
- Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Spivak, eds., *Selected Subaltern Studies*
- Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*

N.B. Students are to keep in mind that the required readings listed in the schedule below represent only the MINIMUM that they must complete before seminar. The professor encourages students in the course to read well beyond the assigned pages in the various texts. Further, by the end of the course, students must read at least eight of the above texts recommended for purchase IN THEIR ENTIRETY.

Evaluation:

Weekly responses	25%
Presentation	10%
Term paper	40%
Class participation	25%

Weekly responses: Students are expected to write a one-page response to each week's readings BEFORE class, and submit that response to the professor at the end of class. The response may venture to critique the readings, ask questions about ideas contained therein, or simply identify points of particular interest that the student thinks worthy of discussion in class. What are the author's concerns? What are the assumptions that inform the work? What are the author's sources, and how has the author used those sources?

Term paper: Through the term, in consultation with the professor, History 814 students will develop a topic for, and write, a term paper. The term paper will explore the analytical frameworks that have dominated historical writing in their particular area of research. Having introduced the historiography, students will then propose how they intend to engage with and move beyond previous approaches to their area of research, with specific reference to the works discussed in this seminar. Term papers are evaluated for clarity, organization, insight, and originality. Faulty grammar, spelling, and syntax reduce clarity, and will thus reduce your grade. Grades are final and not subject to negotiation. Term papers submitted after the deadline receive a penalty of ten percent for the first day late; for each additional day late, a further five percent will be deducted. The instructor will not accept submissions beyond a week from the given deadline. Extensions of deadlines will only be granted in the event of a documented health or family crisis.

Presentation: Students will give fifteen-minute presentations on the subject of their term papers during one of the final two seminars.

Class participation: Discussion and debate are the foundation of the work students will undertake in this course. Students are expected to arrive each Thursday having carefully scrutinized the readings for the week, and prepared to offer an analysis and critique of each of those readings. The function of the professor is to moderate debate, to offer suggestions for directions of discussion, and to provide context for the readings. The professor expects students to leave no received notion or conventional wisdom unchallenged. Attending class is, thus, understandably, an integral part of the course. Unexcused absences from class will lead to a failing grade in the course as a whole. Please consult the instructor BEFORE SEMINAR should you have to miss classes for health or family reasons. Completion of the readings before class and a consistent effort to contribute to class discussions will be rewarded with high marks in this category. Lateness and poor preparation for class will be penalized.

Course regulations: I will not tolerate cheating or plagiarism. These are extremely serious academic offences which may lead to loss of credit, suspension, expulsion from the University, or the revocation of a degree. In student papers, it is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. If you are having trouble with a concept or assignment, meet with the instructor well before the relevant deadlines. Keep in mind that poor, but legitimate, performance in a given assignment is far preferable to jeopardizing your academic career through fraud. All students in this class are to read and understand SFU policies on plagiarism and academic honesty. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations.

Term schedule:

September 4th
Introduction

September 11th

"Point of Departure" or "When Historians Attack": The 1948 Arab-Israeli War

- Avi Shlaim, "The Debate About 1948," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 27 (1995), 287-304.
- Shabtai Tevet, "Charging Israel With Original Sin," *Commentary* 88, 3 (September 1989), 24-33.
- Nur Masalha, "A Critique of Benny Morris," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 21, 1 (Autumn 1991), 90-97.
- Benny Morris, "Response to Finkelstein and Masalha," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 21, 1 (Autumn 1991), 98-114.

Part I. Frameworks for Historical Analysis

September 18th
Class

- Karl Marx, "The German Ideology," in Robert C. Tucker, ed. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, second edition, 146-200.
- E. P. Thompson, "Preface," "Standards and Experiences," and "Community," *The Making of the English Working Class*, 8-13, 347-384, 441-469.

[recommended films: *Land and Freedom*, *La Terra Trema*, *Matewan*, *L'Argent*]

September 25th

Agency

- C. L. R. James, "The San Domingo Masses Begin," "The Rise of Toussaint," and "The White Slave-Owners Again," *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, second edition, revised, 85-91, 145-162, 174-198.
- James C. Scott, "The Public Transcript as a Respectable Performance" and "The Infrapolitics of Subordinate Groups," *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, 45-69 and 183-201.
- Timothy Mitchell, "Everyday Metaphors of Power," *Theory and Society* 19, 5 (October 1990), 545-577.

[recommended films: *Salt of the Earth*, *The Servant*, *Battle of Algiers*, *Playtime*]

October 2nd

Power

- Mark Philp, "Michel Foucault," in Quentin Skinner, ed. *The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences*, 65-81.
- Michel Foucault, "Right of Death and Power Over Life," *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, 133-159.
- Timothy Mitchell, "An Appearance of Order," *Colonising Egypt*, 63-94.

[recommended films: *The Matrix*, *Punishment Park*, *The Conversation*, *Red Desert*]

October 9th

Gender

- Joan W. Scott and Louise A. Tilly, "Women's Work and the Family in Nineteenth-Century Europe," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 17, 1 (January 1975), 36-64.
- Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis" and "Women in The Making of the English Working Class," *Gender and the Politics of History*, revised edition, 28-50 and 68-90.
- Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, "'Lofty Pine and Clinging Vine': Living With Gender in the Middle Class," *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, 397-415.

[recommended films: *Silences of the Palace*, *The Cranes Are Flying*, *The Trial of Joan of Arc*, *All About My Mother*]

October 16th

Culture

- Bernard Cohn, "An Anthropologist Among the Historians: A Field Study" and "History and Anthropology: The State of Play," *An Anthropologist Among the Historians and Other Essays*, 1-17 and 18-49.
- Inga Clendinnen, "Finding Out" and "Assent," *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1517-1570*, 131-138 and 161-189.
- Carlo Ginzburg, "The Inquisitor as Anthropologist," *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*, 156-164.

[recommended films: *The 400 Blows*, *Pickpocket*, *Wedding in Galilee*, *Kadosh*]

Part II. Problems of Historical Representation

October 23rd

The East

- Edward W. Said, "Introduction," *Orientalism*, 1-28.
- James Clifford, "On Orientalism," *The Predicament of Culture*, 255-276.
- Johannes Fabian, "Time and the Emerging Other," *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*, 1-35.
- Steven Feierman, "Africa in History: The End of Universal Narratives," in Gyan Prakash, ed. *After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and Postcolonial Displacements*, 40-65.

[recommended films: *Lawrence of Arabia*]

October 30th

The Nation

- Bernard Cohn, "The Transformation of Objects into Artifacts, Antiquities, and Art in Nineteenth-Century India," *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, 76-105.
- Hugh Trevor-Roper, "The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland," in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition*, 15-41.
- Benedict Anderson, "Census, Map, Museum," *Imagined Communities*, revised edition, 163-185.

- Mary Poovey, "Figures of Arithmetic, Figures of Speech: The Discourse of Statistics in the 1830s," in James Chandler, Arnold I. Davidson, and Harry Harootunian, eds. *Questions of Evidence: Proof, Practice, and Persuasion Across the Disciplines*, 401-421.

[recommended films: *Gandhi*, *I Am Cuba*, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, *Paths of Glory*]

November 6th

The Subaltern

- Ranajit Guha, "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India," in Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Spivak, eds. *Selected Subaltern Studies*, 37-44.
- Rosalind O'Hanlon, "Recovering the Subject: *Subaltern Studies* and Histories of Resistance in Colonial South Asia," in Vinayak Chaturverdi, ed. *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial*, 72-115.
- Ranajit Guha, "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency," in Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner, eds. *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*, 336-371.
- Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History," *Provincializing Europe*, 27-46.

[recommended films: *The Wide Blue Road*, *The Bicycle Thief*, *The Wind That Shakes the Barley*, *The Dreamlife of Angels*]

November 13th

From Experience to Memory

- Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The Two Histories of Capital," *Provincializing Europe*, 47-71.
- Joan Scott, "The Evidence of Experience," in James Chandler, Arnold I. Davidson, and Harry Harootunian, eds. *Questions of Evidence: Proof, Practice, and Persuasion Across the Disciplines*, 363-387.
- Thomas Holt, "Experience and the Politics of Intellectual Inquiry," in James Chandler, Arnold I. Davidson, and Harry Harootunian, eds. *Questions of Evidence*, 388-396.
- Joan Scott, "A Rejoinder to Thomas C. Holt," in James Chandler, Arnold I. Davidson, and Harry Harootunian, eds. *Questions of Evidence*, 397-400.
- Martin Jay, "Of Plots, Witnesses, and Judgments," in Saul Friedlander, ed. *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution"*, 97-107.
- Ted Swedenburg, "The Palestinian Peasant as National Signifier," *Anthropological Quarterly* 63, 1 (January 1990), 18-30.

[recommended films: *Citizen Kane*, *Lone Star*]

November 20th

Presentations 1

November 27th

Presentations 2 and Conclusion