

HIST 201: Historian's Craft
Explorers, Colonizers & Travelers: Travel Writing as Historical Sources
TuTh 9:30-10:45 in Grainger 2190,
Fall 2015

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Discussion-sections (starting week 2).

301	M 9:55-10:45AM	2611 Humanities
302	M 12:05-12:55AM	2231 Humanities
303	M 2:25-3:15PM	2241 Humanities

DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVE

The “Historian’s Craft” courses offer an opportunity to experience the excitement and rewards of doing historical research. Through engagement with primary sources, you will ask and define historical questions, find and analyze evidence, assess and discuss historical interpretations of same sources, build a bibliography, and try out making a historical argument—all skills that are central to the history major. Upon successful completion of this course, you will be prepared to undertake substantial historical research and writing in a variety of courses, including the HIST 600 seminar.

This particular historian’s craft course focuses on European travel writing from the Early Modern Atlantic world (the Americas and West Africa). European travel accounts are some of the most important and fascinating historical sources to the histories of America, Africa, and many other corners of the world in the early modern period. They are also some of the most difficult historical sources to navigate and interpret. They were all written by male European explorers, colonists, or travelers, who had little or no knowledge of the lands and peoples they were encountering and they often only indirectly—if at all—answer many of the questions we are interested in asking about Native American or African history. Despite these complications, historians wrestling with Early Modern travel accounts have found different ways to employ them as historical sources, and these accounts are therefore a perfect place to start broaching questions about historical methodology and practice. We will read and work with travel accounts along with historical interpretations based on these same sources, and discuss different methodological and theoretical approaches to get a sense of how different perspectives shape how historians interpret and use primary sources.

As other Comm-B courses this course involves substantial instruction in the four modes of literacy (that is, speaking, reading, writing, and listening) and focuses on developing the following skills:

- Asking questions. Developing historical questions through engagement with different kinds of sources and posing questions to prompt productive group discussion.
- Finding sources. Learning the logic of footnotes, bibliographies, libraries, and archives,

and consulting them to identify and locate source materials. Taking advantage of the range of library resources including interlibrary loan.

- Evaluating sources. Determining the perspective, credibility, and utility of source materials. Distinguishing between primary and secondary material for a particular topic. Identifying the perspective or authorial stance of a source. Summarizing an argument presented in a text. Distinguishing between the content of a source and its meaning in relation to a particular question.
- Developing and presenting an argument. Using sources appropriately to create, modify, and support tentative conclusions and new questions.
- Making an argument. Identifying the parts of an argument and how to support it convincingly.
- Communicating ideas and research findings effectively through formal and informal written and oral presentations.

READINGS

All required readings are in a course packet available in

Social Science Copy Center. Sewell Hall, Room 6120, 1180 Observatory Drive. Ph. 262-5396.
copycenter@ls.wisc.edu Hours: 7:45 A.M. to 11:45 A.M. 12:30 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.

(See further description of work and requirements below schedule)

Schedule

Wk 1 (Th 9/3) Introduction to the course and syllabus (Incl. opening lecture & questions)

Week 2 Travel writing as historical sources

Readings: Rampolla. *A Pocket Guide*, 1-21 + Mancall. *Travel Narratives*, 3-18.

- Tu 9/8 Early Modern European travel writing as historical sources
- Th 9/10 The European expansion in the Atlantic world, 1500-1850

❖ **All readings should be done before lecture on Tuesday!**

Week 3 Finding and assessing sources

Reading: Ames. *The Globe Encompassed*, 1-19 + 60-78 + 132-143.

- Tu 9/15 Assessing a source. Making an annotated bibliography
- Th 9/17 Visit to Memorial Library (incl. library exercise)

❖ **Sections start this week!**

❖ **Library exercise due on learn@UW Wedn 9/16 at 10PM**

1st historical example: The Spanish Conquest of America, 1492-1530

Week 4 Historical context

Reading: Weber. *The Spanish Frontier* (1994), 1-59.

- Tu 9/22 The Spanish Conquest of America
- Th 9/24 Travel accounts from “New Spain”: What histories do they tell?

Week 5 Reading primary sources

Reading: Cabeza de Vaca. *Relación* (1542).

- Tu 9/29 Understanding a source
- Th 10/1 Contextualizing a source

Week 6 Interpreting primary sources

Readings: Goodman. “Mercantilism” (2005) + Taylor. “Cabeza de Vaca” (2008)

- Tu 10/6 Historical perspectives

- Th 10/8 Making a historical argument
 - ❖ **Annotated bibliography due 10/5 in section!**

2nd historical example: The English colonization of Virginia, 1607-1630

Week 7 Historical context

Reading: Rountree. *John Smith's Chesapeake Voyages, 1607-1609* (2007).

- Tu 10/13 Virginia Algonquin Society
- Th 10/15 English colonization of Virginia

Week 8 Finding primary sources

- Tu 10/20 Visit to the Historical Society (Incl. library exercise)
- Th 10/22 Sources to Pocahontas' history

❖ **Library exercise due on learn@UW Wedn 10/21 at 10PM**

Week 9 Reading primary sources

Reading: Ralph Hamor. *A True Discourse Of The Present Estate of Virginia* (1615)

- Tu 10/27 What can we know?
- Th 10/29 Building a history from travel accounts

Week 10 Interpreting primary sources

Readings: Brown. "The Anglo-Indian" (1996) + Townsend. *Pocahontas* (2008)

- Tu 11/3 The many histories about Pocahontas
- Th 11/5 Making a historical argument

3rd historical example: The Atlantic Slave Trade, 18th century

Week 11 Historical context

Reading: Lindsay. *Captives as Commodities* (2008), 1-83.

- Tu 11/10 The Atlantic Slave Trade
- Th 11/12 The Atlantic Slave Trade II

Week 12 Finding primary sources

Readings: Robinson. *A Sailor Boy's Experience* (1867)

- Tu 11/17 Sources to the Atlantic slave trade
- Th 11/19 Visit to the special collections at Memorial Library (incl. exercise)

❖ **Library exercise due on learn@UW Th 11/19 10/21 at 10PM!**

❖ **Drafts due 11/16 in section!**

Week 13 Thanksgiving week

- Tu 11/24 No lecture: individual meetings as needed
- Th 11/26 Thanksgiving

❖ **Peer reviews due 11/23 in section!**

Week 14 Reading primary sources

Reading: Equiano. *The Interesting Narrative* (1789)

- Tu 12/1 Understanding a source
- Th 12/3 Contextualizing a source

Week 15 Interpreting sources

Readings: Caretta. *Equiano* (2005) + Sweet "Mistaken Identities?" (2009)

- Tu 12/8 Historical questions
- Th 12/10 Historical arguments

Week 16

- Monday – last sections!
- Tu 12/15 Last class - party & evaluation

❖ **Final papers due 12/14 in sections!**

WORK & COURSE POLICIES

Note-taking (lecture or section)

One time during the semester you will be responsible for taking notes (on a laptop or by hand) to share with the rest of the class.

Oral presentations (in lecture and section)

In line with other Comm-B courses you will make two brief oral presentations (5 minutes) – one in section and one in lecture – discussing a topic of your choice relating to class. Topic has to be approved by your TA or me ahead of time.

Attendance and active participation is required!

Participation: Attendance and active participation is mandatory. All students must speak in our discussions, frequently. If you do not feel comfortable speaking in class, please let me know so we can work together on ways to make it easier for you. You may miss class twice without it directly affecting your grade (save your absences for illness or emergency).

Religious holidays: Absences due to religious holidays are excused. However, you must inform me at least two weeks in advance if you are missing a seminar meeting for religious reasons.

Policy on late responses

Responses turned in late will be penalized by 5% - and an additional 5% for each 24 hours that they are late after that. No responses will be accepted more than one week after the due date.

Grade breakdown

Annotated bibliography	5 %
Draft of paper	10 %
Peer review	5 %
Final paper (improvements from draft)	10 %
Total for paper and related	30 %
Attendance and participation in lecture	15 %
Note-taking in lecture or section	5 %
Library exercises, each 5 %	15 %
Brief oral presentations, each 5 %	10 %
Attendance and participation in section (incl. weekly posts)	25 %

Grading scale

A	93-100	C	70-77
AB	88-92	D	60-69
B	83-87	F	59>
BC	78-82		

Classroom conduct

Please respect your fellow students' right to a quiet non-distracting learning environment. LAPTOPS ARE NOT ALLOWED. If I had a device that would allow me to turn off the wi-fi in the room, then I would do that. Since I do not, the next best solution is to ban laptops. That way you do not have to wonder if you should buy shoes, play solitaire, read the paper, send an email to your student counselor, or pay attention to what goes on in the room. Cell phones are to be turned off during class – neither texting nor phoning is allowed during class!

Statement on accessibility

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

Academic misconduct (plagiarism and cheating)

This class will strictly follow and enforce the rules defined in UWS 14.03, which defines academic misconduct as acts in which a student:

- * seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
- * uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- * forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- * intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- * engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance;
- * assists other students in any of these acts.

Academic misconduct is NOT WORTH IT. It will create a lot of unnecessary work for both you and me and may cause you to be expelled from this class or college in general!