

History 900  
Fall Semester 2013  
Thurs. 1:20-3:20  
5257 Humanities

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### **An Introduction to History for U.S. Historians**

This graduate seminar is designed for incoming U.S. history graduate students in the Department of History. Its primary purpose is to introduce the study of history, in general, and of U.S. history, in particular, to future professional historians who anticipate careers in colleges and universities or in institutions such as historical societies or research libraries or museums. Participants in the seminar also include graduate students from other departments who plan to work in the field of U.S. history broadly defined. Historically and historiographically, we will consider the United States as an entity newly created out of the many places people have called home in North America, as well as the ways in which these North American places and peoples have been connected to other places and peoples around the globe. Among our concerns will be:

- the ingredients of a satisfying and successful graduate career in history at UW-Madison
- the peculiar relationship each of us have to this thing called “history”
- the evolution of the field of U.S. history since the late nineteenth century
- the day-to-day life of working historians
- the relationship between history and memory
- the history of history as an academic discipline
- the practice of history both inside and outside the academy
- the means by which professional historians produce and distribute historical knowledge
- the art of historical writing
- the craft of historical research
- the practice of history in a digital age
- the challenge of talking about history to non-specialists
- the teaching of U.S. history at the college level
- the major periods, topics, and approaches in the field of U.S. history
- the organizations and meetings that bring historians together
- the pleasures and pitfalls of working collectively with other historians
- the ethics and etiquette of being a historian

Toward these multiple ends, we will spend approximately half of most class periods in animated discussion among ourselves, mulling over readings, considering writing assignments, and learning from group and individual projects. Most weeks we will spend the other half of the class listening to and then conversing with very special guests who come to impart their particular wisdom about working in the field of U.S. history. These guests will be professors and advanced graduate students in the History Department. Please understand that our guests have agreed to visit class as a sort of “unpaid overtime” activity. Their presentations take time, energy, thought, and preparation, and they deserve our most intense and active engagement; these folks also deserve a “thank you” at the end of class or a kind word of appreciation the next time you see them around campus.

### **Course requirements**

**1. In the classroom:** Faithful attendance, careful completion of weekly readings before class meets (both those assigned on this syllabus and those assigned by our guests), interactive and respectful participation in discussion. (Active engagement with guest speakers is especially important.) Class is a place for collective learning, and collective learning requires both active listening and thoughtful speaking, skills we’ll work to develop over the course of the semester. If you must miss a class meeting, please inform me well in advance (unless you face an emergency, of course), and we’ll work out an alternative assignment for you to complete for that day (which will probably take you longer to complete than it would take you to prepare for and attend the scheduled class). Please don’t miss any class meetings.

**2. Collective work/presentations:** You will undertake several collective projects and presentations for this class.

*First*, before the Sept. 12 class meeting, you'll participate in an electronic discussion with your classmates on Learn@UW, in which you'll reflect on the issues raised by Richard White's *Remembering Ahanagan*.

*Second*, for the class meeting on Sept. 19, Sept. 26, or Oct. 3, you will work with one or two of your classmates to help cofacilitate our discussion of assigned books by Des Jardins (9-19), Fitzpatrick (9-26), or Tyrell (10-3).

*Third*, for the Oct. 17 class meeting, in addition to reading Appleby, Hunt, and Jacob, *Telling the Truth About History*, you'll join with half of your classmates in perusing either Smith, *The Gender of History*, or Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*. Before class, you'll meet with your subgroup to discuss how the insights of Smith or Trouillot square with or relate to the arguments made Appleby, Hunt, and Jacob, and you'll come to class prepared to enlighten your classmates with what you've learned collectively in your subgroup.

*Fourth*, between Mon. Dec. 2 and Mon. Dec. 9, you'll read a polished draft by one of your classmates of her/his final project, a research prospectus and bibliography for an article that could be written based on primary sources identified previously (see Nov. 7 Assignment #1). You will return your classmate's draft with constructive comments and suggestions for revision on Mon. Dec. 9.

*Fifth*, on Dec. 12—based on what you've read, watched, heard, and explored in preparation for class—you'll explain your final project, in two brief presentations, to the other seminar participants: You'll spend 2-3 minutes describing the project to the rest of us as historians, and 2 minutes describing it to us as you would if we were *not* historians.

**3. Individual written work:** You will do several kinds of individual writing assignments for this class. Your written assignments, if they're designated as "formal," should be double-spaced, with standard one-inch margins. They should have *no* grammatical or typographical errors or misspellings, and they should follow standard Humanities style in all matters of format. When in doubt, please consult: Strunk et al., *The Elements of Style Illustrated*; Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*; and Merriam-Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.

*First*, on Oct. 14 (*this is a Monday*), you'll turn in *two* formal reviews: 1) a 2-page review (500 words) of one of the three books assigned for the 9-19, 9-26, and 10-3 class meetings (by Des Jardins, Fitzpatrick, and Tyrell); and 2) a 4-6 page review essay (1000-1500 words) of two of the three books assigned for the 9-19, 9-26, and 10-3 class meetings (by Des Jardins, Fitzpatrick, and Tyrell). Please note that there is also a less formal "pre-assignment" to complete before you write your reviews. Due by 4 p.m. in Prof. Johnson's mailbox.

*Second*, on Nov. 7, you'll prepare a formal bibliography of all readings assigned in class to-date, and compose a corresponding set of footnotes. See Assignment #2 for Nov. 7 below.

*Third*, on Nov. 21, you'll prepare a 2-page summary of teaching strategies for addressing a major issue in the U.S. history survey. Bring copies of your discussion to share with classmates. See Nov. 21 below for details.

*Fourth*, you'll write a formal 5-page research prospectus and bibliography for a scholarly article that could be written based on primary sources of your choice. This assignment begins with your research for our Nov. 7 class meeting and continues for the rest of the semester. On Mon. Dec. 2, by 4 p.m., you'll produce two copies of a complete, polished draft of your research prospectus/bibliography, exchanging one with a classmate and submitting the other to my mailbox. By 4 p.m. Mon. Dec. 9, you'll return your classmate's draft to her/him with comments for revision, and pick up your draft with my comments from my mailbox. Your final paper is due in my mailbox Mon. Dec. 16 by 4 p.m.

*A note about scholarly writing:* In the interests of full disclosure, I must make two confessions. First, in a former life, I worked as an editor in scholarly publishing. Second, and more important, I simply love writing: the sound and feel of words, the rhythm and texture of a sentence. As a result, I'm a stickler for clear, evocative prose that invites readers in rather than shuts them out. So I pay close attention to the form, as well as the content, of scholarly writing. Sometimes graduate students experience this attention as oppressive, and assume mistakenly that I'm *more* interested in form than content. Nothing could be further from the truth. What I want to encourage is writing that

illuminates rather than obscures the intellectual content of your work. Still, it can be daunting to receive a paper back with ample editorial as well as substantive suggestions. I hope that you'll consider my suggestions in the spirit in which they are given—as evidence of my deep engagement in your intellectual project and in your ongoing attempt to communicate that project effectively to your readers.

## Readings

The books listed below can be purchased at the University Book Store and are on reserve at College Library in Helen C. White Hall. Additional assigned readings can be accessed on the Learn@UW site for our course. When faculty members visit class, they may assign readings for you to complete in preparation for their presentations. I'll solicit a reading assignment from each faculty member two weeks before s/he visits class. So below, you'll see "TBA" under "Readings" associated with faculty presentations. Just because they don't yet appear on the syllabus doesn't mean that they're optional or unimportant. Indeed, these readings are crucial, and you're expected to have read them carefully enough that you can engage in discussion of them with our guests.

### *Required scholarly books:*

Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994).

James Banner, Jr., *Being a Historian: An Introduction to the Professional World of Historians* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2012).

Julie Des Jardins, *Women and the Historical Enterprise in America: Gender, Race, and the Politics of Memory, 1880-1945* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2003).

Ellen Fitzpatrick, *History's Memory: Writing America's Past, 1880-1980* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 2002).

Organization of American Historians, *America on the World Stage: A Global Approach to U.S. History*, eds. Gary Riechard and Ted Dickson (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2005).

Ian Tyrell, *Historians in Public: The Practice of American History, 1890-1970* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2005).

Richard White, *Remembering Ahanagran: A History of Stories* (1998; Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2003).

### *Required reference books:*

William Strunk Jr., E.B. White, and Maira Kalman, *The Elements of Style Illustrated* (New York: Penguin, 2007).

Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed., Revised by Wayne Booth, Gregory Colomb, Joseph Williams, and the University of Chicago Press Staff (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2007).

### *Recommended scholarly books:*

Bonnie Smith, *The Gender of History: Men, Women, and Historical Practice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1998).

Michel-Ralph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon, 1995).

### *Recommended reference book:*

*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11<sup>th</sup> ed. (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, 2003).

## Calendar and Assignments

<b>Sept. 5</b>	<p><b>Class discussion,</b> 1:20-2:20</p> <p><b>Presentation,</b> 2:20-3:20</p>	<p>Introductions</p> <p>Advanced Graduate Students Provide the Key to a Successful Graduate Career at UW-Madison with Simon Balto, Megan Falater, Rachel Gross, Chris Hommerding, Jillian Jacklin, and Chong Moua</p>
<b>Sept. 12</b>	<p><b>Class discussion,</b> 1:20-2:20</p> <p><b>Read</b></p> <p><b>Assignment</b></p> <p><b>Presentation,</b> 2:20-3:20</p> <p><b>Read</b></p>	<p>Your History, Your Memory</p> <p>White, <i>Remembering Ahanagran</i> “Round Table: Self and Subject,” <i>Journal of American History</i> 89, no. 1 (June 2002): 17-53 William Cronon, “Getting Ready to do History,” Carnegie Essays on the Doctorate, 2004</p> <p>Participate twice in a Learn@UW discussion prompted by your reading of <i>Remembering Ahanagran</i>. Rather than commenting on the book itself, comment on how reading it has made you think about your own relationship to the categories “history” &amp; “memory.” Complete your participation by noon on Wed. 9-11, and make sure you’ve read the entire discussion before class on Thurs.</p> <p>History of the North American West with Susan Johnson</p> <p>TBA</p>
<b>Sept. 19</b>	<p><b>Presentation,</b> 12:20-1:20 <i>note early start time</i></p> <p><b>Read</b></p> <p><b>Class discussion,</b> 1:20-2:20</p> <p><b>Read</b></p> <p><b>Presentation,</b> 2:20-3:20</p> <p><b>Read</b></p>	<p>History of Sexuality and Gender with Finn Enke</p> <p>TBA</p> <p>The History of U.S. History, Part 1</p> <p>Des Jardins, <i>Women and the Historical Enterprise in America</i></p> <p>U.S. Military and American Indian History with John Hall</p> <p>TBA</p>

<b>Sept. 26</b>	<b>Class discussion, 1:20-2:20</b>	The History of U.S. History, Part 2
	<b>Read</b>	Fitzpatrick, <i>History's Memory</i>
	<b>Presentation, 2:20-3:20</b>	North American Colonial History with Chuck Cohen
	<b>Read</b>	TBA
<b>Oct. 3</b>	<b>Class discussion, 1:20-2:20</b>	The History of U.S. History, Part 3
	<b>Read</b>	Tyrrell, <i>Historians in Public</i> Bruce Mazlish, "The Art of Reviewing," <i>AHR Perspectives</i> (February 2001)
	<b>Presentation, 2:20-3:20</b>	Civil War Era History with Steve Kantrowitz
	<b>Read</b>	TBA
<b>Oct. 10</b>	<b><i>no seminar meeting; work on assignment due Mon. Oct. 14</i></b>	
<b>Oct. 14 Monday</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<p>This is a three-part assignment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Survey the book reviews in a recent issue of the <i>Journal of American History</i>, as well as some longer review essays covering more than one book in recent issues of <i>Reviews in American History</i> or <i>American Quarterly</i>. Choose the best single-book review you found in <i>Journal of American History</i> and the best multiple-book review essay you found in <i>Reviews in American History</i> or <i>American Quarterly</i>, and then write an informal two-paragraph explanation for why you found these two reviews effective (one paragraph for each).</li> <li>2) Write a formal 500-word (2-page) review of one of the three most recent books we've read together as a class (Des Jardins, Fitzpatrick, or Tyrell).</li> <li>3) Write a formal review essay, 4-6 pages in length (1000-1500 words), of two of the three most recent books we've read together as a class (Des Jardins, Fitzpatrick, and Tyrell).</li> </ol> <p>All three parts of this assignment are due Mon. Oct. 14 by 4 p.m. in Professor Johnson's mailbox, 5018, 5<sup>th</sup> floor Humanities. In writing the two formal papers for this assignment, please consult Turabian, <i>A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations</i>, Part III, "Style," and Strunk et al., <i>Elements of Style Illustrated</i>.</p>

<b>Oct. 17</b>	<b>Class discussion, 1:20-2:20</b>	The History of History
	<b>Read</b>	Appleby, Hunt, and Jacobs, <i>Telling the Truth about History</i>
	<b>Assignment</b>	With half of your classmates, please also peruse either Trouillot, <i>Silencing the Past</i> , or Smith, <i>The Gender of History</i> . Meet with one another in your small group at least once before class, and come prepared to bring that book into productive dialogue with Appleby et al., <i>Telling the Truth about History</i> .
	<b>Presentation, 2:20-3:20</b>	African American History and the History of Race & Ethnicity with Brenda Gayle Plummer
	<b>Read</b>	TBA
<b>Oct. 24</b>	<b>Class discussion, 1:20-2:20</b>	Globalizing U.S. History
	<b>Read</b>	Organization of American Historians, <i>America on the World Stage</i>
	<b>Assignment</b>	Come prepared to comment on how at least three of the chapters in <i>America on the World Stage</i> help you rethink basic periods, topics, and approaches to U.S. history and how those rethought periods, topics, and approaches might be taught to undergraduates.
	<b>Presentation, 2:20-3:20</b>	Asian American History and the History of the Cold War Era with Cindy Cheng
	<b>Read</b>	TBA
<b>Oct. 31</b>	<b>Class discussion, 1:20-2:20</b>	Etiquette, Ethics, and Standards with Bill Cronon and Susan Johnson
	<b>Read</b>	Banner, <i>Being a Historian</i> William Cronon, "Storytelling," <i>American Historical Review</i> 118, no. 1 (February 2013): 1-19 American Historical Association, <i>Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct</i> , 2011
	<b>Presentation, 2:20-3:20</b>	Jewish History with Tony Michels
	<b>Read</b>	TBA

<b>Nov. 7</b>	<b>Presentation, 1:20-2:20</b>	Intellectual and Cultural History with Jennifer Ratner-Rosenhagen
	<b>Read</b>	TBA
	<b>Class discussion, 2:20-3:20</b>	<b>Researching History</b>
	<b>Read</b>	Turabian, <i>A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations</i> , Part I, "Research and Writing," and Part II, "Source Citation," pp. 1-280 "Learning to Do Historical Research," <a href="http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/index.htm">http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/index.htm</a>
	<b>Assignments</b>	<p>1) Using what you've learned from Turabian, Part I, "Research and Writing," identify significant collection(s) of primary sources available in or through UW-Madison libraries and relevant to your interests. Come prepared to talk about these sources in class. Bring with you copies of collection description(s), sample documents if possible (or descriptions if you're using an archival collection from which documents can't be photocopied), and examples of note-taking strategies for your collection(s).</p> <p>2) Prepare a formal humanities-style bibliography of all readings assigned in this class so far. Then, choose ten of these readings and write formal sample footnotes for them, making sure your choices include both books and articles as well as sample citations to both hard copies and electronic sources (since your footnotes won't correspond to a written text as they would in real scholarly practice, you can organize them randomly and number them 1-10).</p>
<b>Nov. 13 Wednesday</b>	<b>Special Activity</b>	<i>If possible, please attend Professor Bill Cronon's lecture, on Wed. Nov. 13, for his American Environmental History course, 2:30-3:45 p.m., 3650 Humanities. Take notes on the lecture and think about what makes Bill's teaching so effective. If you cannot attend this lecture, please see me and we will find another lecture by a history professor that you can attend.</i>
<b>Nov. 14</b>	<b>Presentation, 1:20-2:20</b>	History of Capitalism with Colleen Dunlavy
	<b>Read</b>	TBA
	<b>Presentation, 2:20-3:20</b>	Environmental History with Bill Cronon and Gregg Mitman
	<b>Read</b>	TBA

<b>Nov. 21</b>	<b>Class discussion, 1:20-2:20</b>	Teaching History
	<b>Read</b>	Wilbert James McKeachie and Marilla Svinicki, <i>McKeachie's Teaching Tips</i> , chaps. 3-7, pp. 22-86 Ken Bain, <i>What the Best College Teachers Do</i> (2004), pp. 98-134
	<b>Assignment</b>	Using your observation of Prof. Bill Cronon's Nov. 13 lecture, today's assigned reading, and relevant works listed on the document called "Historiographical Resources" (on Learn@UW), identify a major issue that you think ought to be examined in a U.S. history survey course. Prepare a 2-page summary of teaching strategies for addressing that issue. Bring enough copies of your summary to share with classmates.
	<b>Presentation, 2:20-3:20</b>	Post-1945 History with Will Jones
	<b>Read</b>	TBA
<b>Nov. 28</b>	<i>Thanksgiving, no seminar meeting</i>	
<b>Dec. 2 Monday</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	Turn in two copies of a complete, polished draft of your final project, a research prospectus and bibliography for an article that could be written based on the primary sources you've chosen. I'll read one copy and you'll exchange the other with a classmate. Turn in one copy to my mailbox by 4 p.m. on Mon. Dec. 2, and make individual arrangements with your classmate for the other copy. By 4 p.m. Mon. Dec. 9, return your classmate's draft to her/him with comments for revision, and pick up your draft with my comments from my mailbox. Your final paper is due in my mailbox by 4 p.m. Mon. Dec. 16.
<b>Dec. 5</b>	<b>Class discussion 1:20-2:20</b>	How Historians Organize, Communicate, and Digitize
	<b>Read</b>	William Cronon, "From the President" columns for <i>AHR Perspectives</i> , 2012, which address the theme "The Public Practice of History in and for a Digital Age" (nine columns; see <a href="http://www.williamcronon.net/aha-writings.htm">http://www.williamcronon.net/aha-writings.htm</a> ) Daniel J. Cohen, et al., "Interchange: The Promise of Digital History," <i>Journal of American History</i> 95, no. 2 (September 2008): 452-491
	<b>Explore</b>	Organization of American Historians, <a href="http://www.oah.org">http://www.oah.org</a> American Historical Association, <a href="http://www.historians.org">http://www.historians.org</a> Website of a professional organization in your subfield Digital History Reader, <a href="http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu">http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu</a> History Matters, <a href="http://historymatters.gmu.edu">http://historymatters.gmu.edu</a> Railroads and the Making of Modern America, <a href="http://railroads.unl.edu">http://railroads.unl.edu</a>



Spatial History Project,  
<http://www.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/index.php>  
 American Memory (Library of Congress),  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem>  
 Valley of the Shadow (early digital project),  
<http://valley.lib.virginia.edu>  
 Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project,  
<http://depts.washington.edu/civilr>

**Assignment**

This assignment has multiple parts:

- 1) Explore the websites of the American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, and one other professional organization in your field. Include in your explorations perusal of programs from recent or upcoming history conferences. Talk to at least one advanced graduate student in the History Department about her/his experience attending academic history conferences. Come to class with an informal list of benefits you might derive from belonging to these three organizations and attending their annual conferences.
- 2) Visit the website for H-Net, the organization devoted to electronic communications in the Humanities and Social Sciences (<http://www.h-net.org/>). But note as well that H-Net is migrating to a new web home and rebuilt platform (<http://networks.h-net.org/h-net>). Explore whatever is available on either site, and pay special attention to the "Discussion Networks," looking for one or more that are relevant to your historical interests. Subscribe if you feel so moved, and come to class with an informal list of benefits you might derive from your subscription. (This aspect of your assignment is necessarily vague, since it isn't clear what the new H-Net Commons will look like by December.)
- 3) Explore the digital history sites listed above, as well as others that interest you, and come prepared to discuss current and future uses of digital history.

**Presentation,  
2:20-3:20**

Sport and Urban History  
with Sean Dinces

**Read**

TBA

**Dec. 12**

**Presentation,  
1:20-2:20**

Progressive Era History and History of Education  
with Bill Reese

**Read**

TBA

**Class discussion,  
2:20-3:30**

Doing History in Public

**Explore**

History News Network, <http://hnn.us>

**Read**

Jennifer Ratner-Rosenhagen, "Data Comes to the Culture Wars," *The American Prospect* (March-April 2013), <http://prospect.org/article/data-comes-culture-wars>

- Watch** Will Jones, 8-14-13 interview on PBS Newshour,  
[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/nation/july-dec14/march\\_08-14.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/nation/july-dec14/march_08-14.html)
- Watch one film from the PBS series “American Experience,” choosing one in which professional historians appear on camera to reflect on the historical event, person, or phenomenon in question. Although the following website at first glance seems to list all American Experience films, in fact, it lists only more recent installments (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/>). A better way to see the range of films this series has produced—since some of the older films are among the best—is to do an “Advanced Search” on the UW-Madison Libraries site. In the “Keywords” box, type in “American Experience,” and then, on the right under “Limits,” click “Format,” check “Videos, Slides, Films,” and click “Search.”
- Listen** Listen to one installment of the Wisconsin Public Radio program “University of the Air” that features a UW-Madison historian being interviewed about a historical event, person, or phenomenon. Go to the program webpage (<http://wpr.org.uoa/>) and survey the past few years to find program titles and interviewed guests (see, e.g., interviews with John Hall, John Cooper, Gerda Lerner, Chuck Cohen, Steve Kantrowitz, Gregg Mitman, Cindy Cheng, and Susan Johnson). When you find a program that interests you, go to the WPR Audio Archives, and see if that program is still available ([http://wpr.org/webcasting/audioarchives\\_display.cfm?Code=uoa](http://wpr.org/webcasting/audioarchives_display.cfm?Code=uoa)). Listen to an available program.
- Assignment** This last assignment has several parts:
- 1) Explore, watch, listen to, and read material listed above.
  - 2) Return to the Organization of American Historians website (see URL under Dec. 5 above), click on “Awards,” and then click on “Binkley-Stephenson Award.” Once on the page, click on “List of Past Winners.” Survey the titles of prize-winning articles published since 2000, and choose one that interests you. Find that article and read it. Then, with an eye toward the article prospectus you are now revising, fill out an “Anatomy of a History Article” sheet (print from Learn@UW), which will help you identify what makes that article effective and how it might serve as a model for your proposed article. Bring that sheet with you to class.
  - 3) Based on everything you’ve learned doing today’s assignment—from reading a prize-winning scholarly article to listening while historians talk about the past to audiences of non-historians—come to class ready to give a short, two-part presentation on your final project: First, provide a 2-3 minute explanation of it directed to seminar participants as the historians they actually are, and, second, provide a 2-minute explanation of it directed to the group as if an audience of nonspecialists.