Proseminar in History

Histories Old and New

The Proseminar in History is the first part of a required six hour sequence. Consisting of a detailed investigation of a major historical topic or problem, it is also preparation for the Research Seminar in History. With attention to current research and major interpretations in a specific area, the sequence focuses attention on interrelationships tying historical research materials, methodologies to interpret them, and theoretical perspectives to guide those inquiries. The sequence culminates with the preparation of a major research paper based on primary source materials.

This semester we focus on the topic and themes of Histories Old and New. In other words, history itself—in theory and practice—constitutes our main interest: the historical processes involved in the ongoing creation and recreation, development, transformations, and reestablishment of major goals and ideals, forms, practices, ideological and institutional expressions, and their challenges during the last two centuries with special attention to the last 100 years. This framing encourages comparative perspectives over chronological time and geographical places among historians themselves, the subjects of their study, and the conduct of those studies. On one level, we will review critically the formation of the modern historical profession and its canons. On another level, we will seek to understand how the formation and then establishment of a succession of "new histories" in time leads to conflict with subsequent, proclaimed "new[er] histories."

Among the many crucial problems this subject and our approach to it open for historical study and interpretation are questions of theory and practice with respect to knowledge--definitions, constructions, conflicts, organization, production, distribution; academic disciplines and popular subjects; professions and professionalization; institutions and institutionalization—private and public; ideologies and ideals such as objectivity; audiences and readerships; historical change and changes in history; and the complex relationships among history, intellectual change, culture, society, economy, politics, class, gender, race, ethnicity, and other differences and hierarchies.
Requirements

1. reading, preparation., participation, and informal oral reports
2. a brief essay (no more than 3 pages) comparing the historical approaches and interpretive practice of John Higham’s *History: Professional Scholarship in America* with either Georg Iggers’ *New Directions in European History* or Peter Novick’s *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession*
3. a brief essay (no more than 3 pages) describing and exploring one field or subfield deemed a "new history," drawn from readings and anthologies listed in weeks 7-10 of the syllabus
4. formal research proposal (10-12 pages) to guide work in the next semester’s Research Seminar

Further information on all assigned will be provided in class.

Books

For purchase:
Joan Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (Columbia UP, 1988)
Terrence McDonald, ed., *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences* (Michigan, 1996)

Optional:
Alun Munslow, *Deconstructing History* (Routledge, 1997)
Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (Norton, 1994)
Peter Burke, ed., *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (Penn State, 1991)
Proseminar in History

Histories Old and New

Syllabus

1. **Introduction: History and Histories; Old, New, Newer . . . .**
   
   Background reading:
   
   Alun Munslow, *Deconstructing History* (Routledge, 1997)

   Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (Norton, 1994)


   Frances FitzGerald, *America Revisited* (Vintage, 1980)

2. **Overviewing History’s History: Terms, Tones, Trajectories, Troubles/Waves of Change: New Histories and "Newer" Histories**


   _____, "Grand Narrative in American Historical Writing: From Romance to Uncertainty," *American Historical Review* [AHR], 100, 3 (June, 1995) 651-677

Recommended:


________, *Tropics of Discourse* (Johns Hopkins, 1978)

________, *The Content of the Form* (Johns Hopkins, 1987)


________, *The Clothing of Clio* (Cambridge, 1985)


Thomas Haskell, *The Emergence of Professional Social Science* (Illinois, 1977)


Thomas Bender, *Intellect and Public Life* (Johns Hopkins, 1993)

David Hollinger, *In the American Province* (Indiana, 1985)


3. Modern Times Aborning


Dorothy Ross, "Historical Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century America,"

909-928

David D. Van Tassel, "From Learned Society to Professional Organization: The American Historical Association, 1884-1900," 929-956
Morey D. Rothberg, "'To Set a Standard of Workmanship and Compel Men to Conform to it': John Franklin Jameson as Editor of the American Historical Review," 957-975
Bruce Kuklick, "The Emergence of the Humanities," South Atlantic Quarterly, 89 (1990), 195-206

Recommended:
Thomas Haskell, The Emergence of Professional Social Science (Illinois, 1977)
_____ , ed., The Authority of Experts (Indiana, 1984)
Thomas Bender, Intellect and Public Life (Johns Hopkins, 1993)
David Hollinger, In the American Province (Indiana, 1985)
Dorothy Ross, Origins of American Social Science (Cambridge, 1991)

4. That Noble Dream?: The "Objectivity Question" and Other Pressing Matters

Selected critiques:
  Thomas Haskell, "Objectivity Is Not Neutrality: Rhetoric Vs. Practice in Peter
  Novick's That Noble Dream," History and Theory, 29 (1990), 129-157
  James T Kloppenberg, "Objectivity and Historicism: A Century of
  1011-1030
  AHR Forum: Peter Novick’s That Noble Dream: The Objectivity
  Question and the Future of the Historical Profession," AHR, 96, 3 (June
  1991), 675-708
  "Roundtable: ‘The Ideal of Objectivity’ and the Profession of
  History," Public Historian, 13 (1991), 9-24

5. 1910s-1950s: Continuities and Changes

  Novick, That Noble Dream, Parts II & III (111-414) & critics

  Recommended:
  Richard Hofstadter, The Progressive Historians: Turner, Beard,
  Parrington (Knopf, 1968)
  James Harvey Robinson, Charles Beard, and other major figures: works
  and criticism
  Caroline Ware, ed., The Cultural Approach to History (1940)
  Thomas Bender, "The New History—Then and Now," Reviews in
  American History, 2 (1984) 612-622,
  and other retrospective review essays in Reviews in American
  History, History and Theory, etc.
  Stanley Kutler, ed., American Retrospectives: Historians on
  Historians (Johns Hopkins, 1995)

6. The Annales: New History in Europe

  Peter Burke, The French Historical Revolution: The Annales School,
  1929-89 (Stanford, 1990)
  Fernand Braudel, On History (Chicago, 1980 1969)), esp. pp. 3-22, 25-
  54, and choice of selections
  For sampling: major works of Marc Bloch, Lucien Febvre, Fernand
  Braudel
Recommended:


Emmanuel LeRoy Ladurie, "Motionless History," *Social Science History*, 1 (1977), 115-136


Review [of the Fernand Braudel Center], 1, ¾ (Winter/Spring, 1978)

7. New Histories of the 1960s and After

Novick, *That Noble Dream*, Part IV (415-629)

Select chapters to sample in:


See also: Michael Kammen, ed., *The Past Before Us* (Cornell, 1980)

Recommended:


Peter Burke, ed., *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (Penn State, 1991)

Terrence McDonald, ed., *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences* (Michigan, 1996)


For chuckles: *AHR Forum: "The Old History and the New," AHR* 94, 3 (June, 1989), 654-698

8. Changing History: 1960s and 1970s
David Thelen, ed., "A Round Table: What Has Changed and Not Changed in American Historical Practice?"

OR
_____, "The ‘New’ Social History in the Context of American Historical Writing," RAH, 7, 1 (1979), 1-12
James Henretta, "Social History as Lived and Written," American Historical Review, 84 (1979), 1293-1322

Sample in:
Henry Abelove et al., eds., Visions of History: Interviews (Pantheon, 1983) and interviews in more recent issues of Radical History Review
Recommended:
John Higham and Paul Conkin, eds., New Directions in American Intellectual History (Johns Hopkins UP, 1979)
Dominick LaCapra and Steven L. Kaplan, eds., Modern European Intellectual History (Cornell, 1982)
Lynn Hunt, ed., The New Cultural History (California, 1989)
Peter Burke, ed., New Perspectives on Historical Writing (Penn State, 1991)
Felix Gilbert and Stephen Graubard, eds., Historical Studies Today (Norton, 1972)
Michael Kammen, ed., The Past Before Us (Cornell, 1980)
Alan Bogue, ed. Emerging Theoretical Models in Social and Political History (Sage, 1973)
Weeks 9-10. We select from a large range of possibilities; note ancillary fields and readings (above and below). Follow your own interests and curiosity in exploring.

9. Women’s History and Gender History

Joan Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (Columbia, 1988)

For critiques, see:

See also:

10. New Cultural History and Turns Linguistic and Other

Lynn Hunt, ed., *The New Cultural History* (California, 1989), esp. Introduction, chs.1,2,3,4


McDonald, Eley, Scott (Sewell, Calhoun chs. if possible)

Key examples include the work of Carlo Ginsberg, Roger Chartier, Natalie Z. Davis, Robert Darnton, among others

Recommended:
- Dominick LaCapra, *History and Criticism* (Cornell, 1985)
On the "linguistic turn" see:
  *AHR* Forum: David Harlan, "Intellectual History and the Return of Literature," 94, 3 (June, 1989) 581-609,
  David Hollinger, "The Return of the Prodigal: The Persistence of Historical Knowing," 610-621 Harlan, "Reply,"
  622-627
  Harlan exchange with Joyce Appleby in subsequent issue
  Allan Megill, "Recounting the Past: 'Description,' Explanation, and Narrative in Historiography," 627-653
  John S. Nelson et al (Wisconsin, 1987), 221-238
  Bryan D. Palmer, Descent into Discourse: The Reification of Language and the Writing of Social History
  (Temple, 1990)

For Race:

For Labor
  Eric Arnesen, Julie Greene, and Bruce Laurie, eds., *Labor Histories* (Illinois, 1998)

For Ethnicity
  Jose’ David Saldivar, *Border Matters: Remapping Cultural Studies* (California, 1997)

For Families:

For PostColonial


Gyan Prakash, "Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism," 1475-1490

Florecia M. Mallon, "The Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies: Perspectives from Latin American History," 1491-1515

Frederick Cooper, "Conflict and Connection: Rethinking Colonial African History," 1516-1545

11. Research & Consultation

12. Narratives Old and New/Syntheses Lost and Found/Histories and their Publics

Thomas Bender, "Wholes and Parts: The Need for Synthesis in American History," *JAH*, 73, 1 (June, 1986), 120-136


See also:


Phillip Abrams, "History, Sociology, Historical Sociology," no. 87 (1980), 3-16


Responses by Patrick Joyce, no. 133 (1991), 204-209; Catriona Kelly, no. 133 (1991), 209-213; Reply by Stone, no. 135 (1992) 189-194; Gabrielle M. Spiegel, 195-208

See also:

Gabrielle Spiegel, "History, Historicism, and the Social Logic of the Text
in the Middle Ages," Speculum, 65 (1990), 59-86

On narrative, see also the work of Hayden White, noted earlier, and the lively debates in literary criticism and theory. Closer to hand, see: "Narratives and Social Identities," Social Science History, 16, 3&4 (Fall & Winter, 1992-93)
For chuckles: see AHR Forum: "The Old History and the New," AHR, 94, 3 (June, 1989), 654-698: T. Hamerow, G.
Himmelfarb, L. Levine, J.W. Scott, J.Toews

13. Drafting time

14. Histories Present/Future


Casey Blake and Christopher Phelps, "History as Social Criticism: Conversations with Christopher Lasch," JAH, 80 (1994) 1310-1332

Recommended:
Editorials to nos. 1& 2 of Rethinking History, Summer & Autumn, 1997
Susan Porter Benson, Stephen Brier, and Roy Rosenzweig, eds., Presenting the Past (Temple UP, 1986)
Radical History Review issues on public histories
Peter Stearns, Meaning Over Memory: Recasting the Teaching of Culture and History (North Carolina, 1993)


David Thelen, ed.,"The Practice of American History: A Special Issue," JAH, 81, 3 (Dec, 1994)
David L. Ransel, ed., "Volume 100, No. 3," *AHR*, 100, 3 (June 1995)