History 4986
Varieties of History
2013-14

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McCain Essay Drop Box #73

This class provides an overview of contemporary historiography by surveying research interests among historians in the Department. Each week a faculty member presents a problem in theories or methods of historical analysis for seminar discussion. Assigned readings and the presentation provide the basis for each week’s discussion.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Readings will be available through the University Library’s subscription to electronic journals, or circulated via email ahead of time.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

All assignments must be typed - double-spaced and font-size twelve, paginated and with 1” margins. Any paper failing to meet all of these basic criteria will be automatically penalized 10%. Just as the content of your work is important, so is your ability to communicate ideas. Thus, spelling, grammar and clarity, along with strength of argument and analysis, will be considered in the grading of your assignments. Assignments are to be submitted as email attachments. Submissions after the in-class deadline will incur a late penalty of 5% per day, to a maximum of 2 weeks, after which they will not be accepted. Computer related difficulties are not acceptable excuses for late or unfinished assignments.

1) Participation – 25%
This is an advanced seminar class that requires intensive reading and informed discussion. You must come to class prepared to discuss all the assigned readings for the week. N.B. -- attendance does not equal participation. To earn marks you must take part in discussions, respond to questions etc., so come to class with your own questions and observations.

FALL TERM

2) Book report – 20%
A 10-page (c. 2500 wds) discussion of a book at the centre of a recent historical controversy (published in the last ten years) regarding methods and/or findings and/or conceptualization.
The controversy may not be related to your thesis topic. This discussion should consider critically at least three reviews of the book. It is not the point to criticise or demolish a particular book or viewpoint but to introduce and assess a historical or historiographical debate. The book serves as the central reference for this debate. Write it as if you are presenting one of the classes in this course. The book must be a work of history. In selecting what to read, consult with me and the respective faculty member(s) with expertise on the issues. Due 26 November.

3a) A two-page description of your Honours thesis topic – 5%
Clarity is essential; include a provisional bibliography of source materials.
Due 19 November.

3b) Presentation of Honours thesis topic to the class – 10%
In class, 3 December.

WINTER TERM

4) Report on Faculty Presentations – 25%
Choose two topics (and sets of readings) from this year’s syllabus and explain how and why these readings/presentations/discussions have influenced the way you think about the practice of history. Your chosen topics can be related — say, Atlantic and Global History — or seemingly unconnected. Your grade will be based on the elegance of your prose and the depth of your intellectual insights. The assessment does not have to be positive, but it should be thoughtful and show evidence of careful reading. Length: approximately 2000 words. May be submitted at any time during the year, but the final deadline is our last class, 1 April.

5) Thesis Presentation – 15%
Plan for a twenty minute presentation with the following elements: an explanation of how you arrived at your topic; a brief review of the literature relevant to your topic; an outline of your main argument(s); and an explanation of how your thesis contributes to the existing literature. Your presentation will be followed by questions, suggestions and general discussion. Hopefully, preparing the presentation and digesting the astute suggestions of your peers will help you to identify interpretive problems and sharpen your analysis as you enter the very final stages of producing your masterpiece.
To be scheduled in the last four seminars of the year in March 2014.

ACCOMMODATION

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit www.dal.ca/access for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation – Form A.
A note taker may be required as part of a student’s accommodation. There is an honorarium of $75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC at 494-2836 for more information.

Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom, untouched, so that students who require their usage will be able to participate in the class.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on academic integrity and plagiarism referenced in the Policies and Student Resources sections of the academicintegrity.dal.ca website. **Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations.** Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence that may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even to the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course, students should read the Policy on Intellectual Honesty contained in the Calendar or on the Online Dalhousie website. The Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and computer-readable format, and to submit any paper to be checked electronically for originality.

As a student in this class, you are to

- make electronic copies of different drafts as you write (“Save As” function - Draft1, Draft2, etc.)
- submit an electronic copy of your paper/assignment via email attachment
- keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit
- keep all your research notes until you have received a final grade for the course

You may be required to submit at any time one or all of your writing drafts, as well as your research notes.

If you have questions, **please ask**. Dalhousie offers extensive resources to help students understand and avoid plagiarism <http://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html>. 
Sept 10 – Preliminaries

Sept 17 – Nova Scotia Archives / Grad House social

Sept 24  Film and History

Resource faculty: John Bingham

- Reviews and essays relevant to your film(s) of choice

**Questions to consider:**

1. What should be the role of “historical” films? By what standard should they be judged?
2. In your opinion, is it really possible to get beyond the simple and obvious question of a film’s “historical accuracy?” How do we perceive and assess its historicity?
3. Following Rosenstone, try to imagine what a truly “historical” film would look like. Can you think of an example?
4. What was your favourite historical film before you read this material and why? Is it still a favourite, and if so, why?

Oct 1  Perspectives on Global History

Resource faculty: Phil Zachernuk


Oct 8  Cultural relations between Gaels and Europeans in Scotland, 1100-1350

Resource faculty: Cynthia Neville

- **ONLINE** Katie Stevenson, Review of ‘Native Lordship in Medieval Scotland: The Earldoms of Strathearn and Lennox, c. 1140-1365’, *Scottish Historical Review* 86:2 (2007), 329-31
Questions to consider:

Hammond and Neville stand on what are essentially two sides of an historical divide in their interpretations of the relations between Gaels and Anglo-Norman incomers to Scotland in the period 1100-1350. What evidence does each of these scholars use in support of his/her argument?

To what extent do place names (toponymics) and personal names (onomastics) serve as useful markers of cultural integration and/or assimilation to historians?

How does the study of the law and changing legal concepts inform the study of cultural relations between the incomers and the Gaels?

Which of the two arguments, Hammond’s or Neville’s, do you find more convincing? Why?

How useful is Stevenson’s review as a guide to the contents and arguments of Neville’s book?

Oct 15  Teaching a Post-Colonial Canon

Resource faculty: Mona Holmlund


Oct 22  The Practice of Oral History

Resource faculty: Gary Kynoch

Oct 29  [topic tba]

Resource faculty: Scott See

Nov 5  The Numbers Game: Slavery and Quantitative Methods

Resource faculty: Justin Roberts

Readings

Class Preparation
In advance of class, you will go online to explore www.slavevoyages.org. Answer the following sets of questions.
1. Click on the resources tab and explore the African Names database. What would this database be useful for? What will it help us learn? Develop three historical questions that you could ask of this database, query the evidence and bring in the answers to seminar.
2. Learn how to query the database by answering the following:
   a) What was the major region of embarkation in Africa between 1650 and 1800?
   b) Which Caribbean island received the most slaves in the 18th century?
   c) What percentage of all slaves disembarking in the slave trade went to Brazil?
   d) According to the database, how many slaves are estimated to have disembarked in Jamaica in the seventeenth century?
   e) Download the data from the database and determine what percentage of slaves disembarking in the Americas came after 1807.
   f) Which nation brought the most slaves to the Americas in the 17th century?
   g) Which nation brought the most slaves to the Americas in the 18th century?
   h) What percentage of slaves aboard slaving voyages to Brazil were women? Jamaica? North America?
   i) What was the mean length of an eighteenth century slaving voyage?
   j) Identify a captain who made more than five slaving voyages. How did his voyages compare with the average voyage in that period? In other words, how typical were his experiences?

3. How was the data gathered for the database? What is the history of this data? How many scholars were involved? What, according to the database, is an imputed variable? How explicit is the database about its methods

In-Class Workshop with the Quantitative Data in Plantation Records

Students will be given scanned sets of original eighteenth-century Jamaican and Barbadian sugar
plantation records from archives in the UK, including slave inventories from York plantation, increase and decrease of stock accounts from Phillipsfield and Pleasant Hill and financial records from Newton and Seawell. We will explore these documents and determine what kinds of questions we can ask of them and how to categorize the quantitative evidence we gather. We will also learn how to examine 18th century financial records to determine how plantations were managed. This will be an exercise in paleography as much as quantitative methods.

Questions for Plantation Records

York Plantation Inventory, 1782

1. What was the percentage of Africans at York plantation? (Note: “Creole” means born in the Americas)
2. How many children were there on the estate?
3. Precisely how much more likely was it that a skilled slave would be African than Creole?
4. Precisely how much more likely was it that a field hand would be African instead of Creole?
5. Employ a sampling technique to determine how important Ethnicity, Age, Occupation and Sex were in determining the value of slaves. What was the difference in value between men and women? Africans and Creoles? Older slaves and younger slaves? House slaves and field hands?
6. What else can we learn about the slave population at York plantation or about eighteenth-century plantation life based on this slave inventory? What could we learn from a larger sample of slave inventories?
7. What are the potential problems inherent in using this kind of evidence?

Newton and Seawell Plantation Accounts

1. Were these plantations profitable in the years in question?
2. What were the greatest expenditures on the estates?
3. Approximately how much of the total expenditure was spent on slave food, housing and medicine? What proportion of the total expenses?
4. What was the greatest revenue source? Was there any other significant revenue source?
5. What was the profit margin on these plantations? Profit Margin= Gross Profit / Total Revenue
6. Can we learn anything more about plantation management from these documents?
7. What can we say about the lived experience of slavery based on these documents?

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Nov 19

**Appeasement and the Origins of the Second World War**

Resource faculty: Chris Bell

• **E-MAIL PDF**  P.M.H. Bell, “History and Historians,” in *The Origins of the Second World War* (1986),


**THESIS PROPOSALS DUE**

Nov 26  |  [topic tba]

Resource faculty: Todd McCallum

**BOOK REPORT DUE**

Dec 3  |  First Semester postmorte(r)m

**PRESENTATION OF THESIS TOPICS**

**CHRISTMAS BREAK**

Jan 7  |  The Holocaust on Trial?
      |  Implications of the Irving-Lipstadt Controversy

Resource faculty: John Bingham


  After you've familiarized yourself with the site, read (at least): sections 1, 2, 3.3, 4.3 and 6.

• **ONLINE**  [David Irving’s website](http://www.fpp.co.uk/online/index.html) -- look around!

**Jan 14**  |  Behavioural Sciences and the Historian

Resource faculty: Greg Hanlon

Jan 21

[topic tba]

Resource faculty: Amal Ghazal

Jan 28

History, Memory and Politics in American Life

Resource faculty: Paddy Riley

**ONLINE:** *Journal of American History* 82, no.3 (December 1995):
- Richard H. Kohn, “History and the Culture Wars: The Case of the Smithsonian Institution’s Enola Gay Exhibition”
- John Dower, “Triumphal and Tragic Narratives of the War in Asia”
  AND


Recommended: Also in *Journal of American History* 82, no.3 (December 1995):
- Martin J. Sherwin, “Politics and History”
- Edward T. Linenthal, “Struggling with History and Memory”
  Film: Akira Kurosawa, *Rashomon* (1950)

Feb 4

The Great Terror in the Soviet Union, 1936-38

Resource faculty: Denis Kozlov

**Core readings for everyone:**


Sheila Fitzpatrick, “How the Mice Buried the Cat: Scenes from the Great Purges [Dal Electronic Resources](https://www.dal.ca/)

Recommended for further reading:

Oleg Khlevniuk, *Master of the House: Stalin and His Inner Circle*
Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939*
Paul Hagenloh, *Stalin's Police: Public Order and Mass Repression in the USSR, 1926-1941*
Paul R. Gregory, *Terror by Quota: State Security from Lenin to Stalin (An Archival Study)*
J. Arch Getty and Oleg V. Naumov, *The Road to Terror: Stalin and the Self-Destruction of the Bolsheviks, 1932-1939*
Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union*
Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *The GULAG Archipelago*
Orlando Figes, *The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin’s Russia*
Igal Halfin, *Terror in My Soul: Communist Autobiographies on Trial*
Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s*

Feb 11  [ topic tba]

Resource faulty: Jolanta Pekacz

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Feb 25  The New “History Wars” in Canada

Resource faculty: Jerry Bannister


Christopher Dummitt, "Do you really want to know about Canadian history?," Everyday history (February 2013). Available at: [http://www.christopherdummitt.com/2013/02/normal-0-false-false-false-en-us-ja-x.html](http://www.christopherdummitt.com/2013/02/normal-0-false-false-false-en-us-ja-x.html)

Mark Sholdice, "The History Wars in Canada," *Toronto Review of Books* (May 2013). Available at:
Ian McKay and Jamie Swift, "Alexandre Boulerice: Another casualty of the Great War," Toronto Star (May 2013). Available at: http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2013/05/05/alexandre_boulerice_another_casualty_of_the_great_war.html


March 4 – student presentations

March 11 – student presentations

March 18 – student presentations

March 25 – student presentations

April 1 REPORT ON FACULTY PRESENTATIONS DUE