



Clio, History's Muse.

## HISTORY 270: HISTORICAL METHODS AND INTERPRETATIONS SPRING 2010

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Welcome to History 270: Historical Methods and Interpretation!<sup>1</sup> One of the questions this course will answer is “If the past does not change, why do historians write so many books about a single topic?” Answering this question reveals some of the difference between professional history and journalistic or antiquarian history. Historians not only hold different assumptions

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<sup>1</sup> I wish to thank my colleagues in the History Department, particularly Sandy Bardsley and Heikki Lempa, who have generously shared their ideas and assignments.

about the forces that drive historical change but each generation of historians approaches the past with different concerns and questions. Consequently, two historians using the same sources may come to quite different conclusions about the past. This course will focus on historiography (the history of history) and how the writing of history has changed over time and how historians actually work (the nuts and bolts of history). You will find this class challenging and sometimes confusing, but by the end of the semester you will be familiar with how professional historians work and the major “schools” of historical thought. I hope also that you will be on your way to developing your own philosophy about the nature of history and historical change.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, you should have improved your ability to:

1. appreciate the ways interpretations of history change across time and place.
2. articulate your own view of why history matters and what historians ought to be doing.
3. identify and explain the main ‘schools’ of historiographical thought.
4. locate and use the chief tools of historical research (books, journal articles, and electronic resources).
5. design and deliver effective oral presentations.
6. write effectively using the conventions of history.

## READINGS

The following books and readings are required for this course. Books are available for purchase in the college bookstore.

Mark T. Gilderhus, *History and Historians: A Historiographical Introduction* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2010).

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing History* (Boston: Bedford-St. Martin’s, 2010).  
A coursepack of readings.

I also expect that you have retained the *Bedford Handbook* from your Writing 100 class. If not, you will want to borrow or purchase a copy.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

I expect that you will complete all reading responses, papers, and homework assignments individually and independently, and I will refer any cases of suspected cheating or plagiarism to the Academic Affairs Office. I strongly encourage you to consult Moravian’s Academic Honesty Policy found in the Student Handbook at <http://www.moravian.edu/studentLife/handbook/academic/academic2.html>

That said history is a collaborative effort. The best way to sort out issues and test ideas is in conversation with your peers both within class and outside of it. If you incorporate a suggestion from a friend in a reading response or paper, then indicate either in the text or in a footnote that the idea being expressed is your friend’s and not your own.

## EVALUATION

Reading Responses	22%
Topic, Bibliography, Draft	9% (2%, 4%, 6% respectively)
Abstracts	8%
Peer Review	3%
Historiographical Essay	20%
Assignments	15% (5@3%)
Presentation on an historian	5%
Historiographic Presentation	5%
Participation	10%

## ASSIGNMENTS

### READING RESPONSES

Throughout the semester, you will be writing 1.5-2 page critical responses to each set of historiographic readings. The responses are designed to ensure that you have carefully read and reflected upon the readings before coming to class and, where possible, to relate the readings to each other and to your historiographical essay. Each response will receive a grade between 0-2. Responses that do not meet the 1.5 page limit will be marked down, as will responses that simply reiterate the reading, are vague, or do not reflect a careful reading. Please note that I do not accept responses via email. Late responses (those received after the beginning of the class on which they are due) will lose .5 grade per day beginning on the day they are due.

### HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

This paper must be written in formal, carefully proofread, academic prose, with complete footnotes and bibliography. You will be writing this paper in stages (topic, bibliography, abstracts, rough draft, final paper) throughout the semester, so there will receive lots of feedback and will be expected to make significant revisions. The final paper should be at least 12 pages double-spaced and be based on a minimum five books in any area of American history (with approval from the instructor) before 1877. It must have three components 1) a thesis; 2) a cogent and well-organized discussion of the historiography; 3) what you see as the most interesting aspects of the topic already covered and what you would like to see historians work on in the future. The paper is due at the beginning of the last class.

#### 1. TOPIC

For the first stage of the essay, you will submit a tentative topic and brief explanation of why you want to study this subject. What do you expect to find? The more specific and precise you can be the better. Also provide a list of three or four books and articles that pertain to your topic.

## 2. BIBLIOGRAPHY

The bibliography will consist of the fifteen **most important** books and articles on your topic. You can identify the most important works by reading book reviews, historiographical essays, and by seeing which works are most often cited and discussed by other historians.

## 3. ABSTRACTS FOR HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

To make writing the historiographical essay more manageable, you will first write eight abstracts, each a half page in length and single spaced. Abstracts should identify the work's scope, thesis, and main arguments. Start planning early as you will need to get books and articles through interlibrary loan.

## 4. ROUGH DRAFT

Bring three or four complete copies of your paper to class. You will exchange papers with classmates

## HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

These five short assignments must be completed and turned in at the beginning of class as indicated in the syllabus.

## LATE POLICY

Late assignments will be penalized 10% for the first day late and 5% each day thereafter. Computer problems, printing problems, and zero printer balance are not valid reasons for lateness.

## PRESENTATIONS

During the semester you will make two presentations. In one of the historiographical classes you will make a 10-minute presentation examining the career and contributions of an individual historian. Provide a brief academic biography, an assessment of their approach to history, and an analysis of how their major work(s) have influenced the field. Consider also the major criticisms of their work. You may use PowerPoint, overheads, or handouts. During the exam period, we will hold a conference in which you will give a 10 minute presentation based on the historiographical paper you wrote during the semester.

## SCHEDULE

<b>Wed Sept 1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
<b>Fri Sept 3</b>	<b>What is History? What do historians do?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rampolla, <i>Writing in History</i>, pp. 1-5.</li><li>• Gilderhus, <i>History and Historians</i>, 1-11.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Tosh, <i>The Pursuit of History</i>, 1-25.</li> <li>• <b>Due: Reading Response 1</b></li> </ul>
<b>Wed Sept 8</b>	<b>Methods: Finding a Topic; Oral Presentations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rampolla, <i>Writing in History</i>, pp. 66-70.</li> <li>• Anthony Brundage, <i>Going to the Source: A Guide to Historical Research and Writing</i>, 48-53.</li> <li>• Hampden-Sydney College Ferguson Center for Public Speaking Online: <a href="http://www.hsc.edu/academics/publicspeaking/students/">http://www.hsc.edu/academics/publicspeaking/students/</a> Click on and read the following links: Speaking Anxiety, Ethical Speaking, Preparation and Delivery (Narrowing Your Topic, Researching Your Topic, Organizing Your Presentation, and Rehearsing and Delivering Your Presentation).</li> <li>• <b>Due: Assignment 1.</b> Write a 1.5-2 page single spaced paper on the best lecture you can remember. The speaker might be a professor at Moravian College or elsewhere. What made this lecture effective?</li> </ul>
<b>Fri Sept 10</b>	<b>Historiography: To Ranke</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gilderhus, <i>History and Historians</i>, 12-49.</li> <li>• <b>Due: Reading Response 2</b></li> </ul> <p>What distinguishes professional history as practiced by Ranke from earlier forms of history? Do you agree with Ranke about the possibility or desirability of describing the past "as it really was?"</p>
<b>Wed Sept 15</b>	<b>Methods: Library of Congress Catalogue</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarize yourself with the Library of Congress classification system and locate the sections of the library most likely to contain sources relevant to your topic. As much of the classification system is organized thematically as opposed to geographically or chronologically, you will have to infer which sections will be most useful. <a href="http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsolcco/">http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsolcco/</a></li> <li>• Anthony Brundage, <i>Going to the Sources</i>, 28-47.</li> <li>• <b>Due: Topic for historiographical essay – ½-¾ page + 3-4 sources</b></li> </ul>
<b>Fri Sept 17</b>	<b>Historiography: Modern Approaches to History</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gilderhus, <i>History and Historians</i>, 50-85.</li> <li>• <b>Due: Reading Response 3</b></li> <li>• Compare and contrast Speculative and Analytical approaches to history. To what extent is the past a reliable guide to the future? Is objectivity a desirable and obtainable goal for the historian?</li> </ul>
<b>Wed Sept 22</b>	<b>Methods: Anatomy of an Article: Reading and Evaluating Secondary Sources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rampolla, 6-19.</li> <li>• <b>Due: Assignment 2.</b> Library of Congress Classification Assignment.</li> </ul>
<b>Fri Sept 24</b>	<b>Methods: Locating Secondary Sources Using Databases: Library Visit</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No reading</li> </ul>
<b>Wed Sept 29</b>	<b>Historiography: Marxists</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Gilderhus, <i>History and Historians</i>, 53-58.</li> <li>• Norman J. Wilson, <i>History in Crisis: Recent Directions in Historiography</i> (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2005), 53-59.</li> <li>• Gary Nash, <i>The Urban Crucible: Northern Seaports and the Origins of the</i></li> </ul>

	<p><i>American Revolution</i> (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), ix-39.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations: Christopher Hill, Eric Hobsbawn, E.P. Thompson, Paul Buhle, Marcus Rediker, Eugene Genovese, Gary Nash</li> <li>• <b>Due: Response 4</b></li> <li>• <b>Due: Assignment 3.</b> Library scavenger hunt.</li> </ul>
<b>Fri Oct 1</b>	<p><b>Historiography: Historians and the Social Sciences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gilderhus, <i>History and Historians</i>, 86-110.</li> <li>• Wilson, <i>History in Crisis</i>, 47-53, 59-69.</li> <li>• Presentations: Clifford Geertz, Robert Brenner, Peter Gay, Charles Tilly, Keith Hopkins, Gilberto Freyre</li> <li>• <b>Due: Response 5</b></li> </ul>
<b>Wed Oct 6</b>	<p><b>Historiography: Annaliste Historians</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gilderhus, <i>History and Historians</i>, 86-110.</li> <li>• Matthias Middell, "The Annales," in Berger, Feldner, and Passmore, <i>Writing History: Theory and Practice</i>, 108-122.</li> <li>• Presentations: Marc Bloch; Lucien Febvre, Ferdinand Braudel, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie</li> <li>• <b>Due: Response 6</b></li> <li>• <b>Due: Bibliography.</b> You should have all books and article ordered from ILL.</li> </ul>
<b>Fri Oct 8</b>	<p><b>Historiography: The Annals in Europe and America</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fernand Braudel, <i>The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II</i> (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), table of contents.</li> <li>• Timothy Breen, <i>Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution</i> (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 40-83.</li> </ul>
<b>Wed Oct 13</b>	<p><b>Historiography: Social and Economic Historians</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thomas Welskopp, "Social History," in Berger, Feldner, and Passmore, <i>Writing History: Theory and Practice</i>, 229-237.</li> <li>• Wilson, <i>History in Crisis</i>, 70-71, 77-86.</li> <li>• Presentations: Christopher Dyer, David Sabeen, David Montgomery, John Demos, Robert Fogel, Staughton Lynd, Herbert Gutman, Geroge Lipsitz, Michael Barry Katz, John Womack</li> <li>• <b>Due: Response 7</b></li> </ul>
<b>Fri Oct 15</b>	<b>Moravian Conference</b>
<b>Wed Oct 20</b>	<p><b>Historiography: Social and Economic Historians</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, <i>Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft</i> (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974)80-109.</li> <li>• Marc Egnal and Joseph Ernst, "An Economic Interpretation of the American Revolution," <i>William and Mary Quarterly</i> (Jan. 1972). Available through JSTOR</li> </ul>
<b>Fri Oct 22</b>	<p><b>Methods: Writing Historiographical Essays</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rampolla, 32-34.</li> <li>• Anthony Brundage, <i>Going to the Sources</i>, 53-67.</li> </ul>
<b>Wed Oct 27</b>	<p><b>Historiography: Historians of Race/Ethnicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milla Rosenberg, "Race, Ethnicity, and History," in Berger, Feldner &amp; Passmore, 313, 316-318, 320-327.</li> <li>• Reading TBA</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations: Edward Said, David Roediger, Eugene Genovese, Ira Berlin, David Brion Davis, John Hope Franklin, Ronald Takaki, C. Vann Woodward, Winthrop Jordan, George Frederickson</li> </ul> <p><b>Due: Response 8</b></p>
<b>Fri Oct 29</b>	<p><b>Methods: Note-taking; Writing a Thesis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rampolla, 43-49</li> <li>• Brundage, <i>Going to the Sources</i>, 72-75.</li> <li>• <b>Due: Abstracts</b></li> </ul>
<b>Wed Nov 3</b>	<p><b>Historiography: Historians of Gender</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilson, <i>History in Crisis</i>, 114-119.</li> <li>• Linda K. Kerber, <i>Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America</i> (Chapel hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980) 35-67.</li> <li>• Presentations: Joan Scott, Mary Beth Norton, Gerda Lerner, George Chauncey, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg</li> </ul> <p><b>Due: Response 9</b></p>
<b>Fri Nov 5</b>	<p><b>Methods: Mechanics of Writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rampolla, 49-85.</li> </ul>
<b>Wed Nov 10</b>	<p><b>Historiography: Political History</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jon Lawrence, "Political History," in Berger, Feldner &amp; Passmore, 209-216.</li> <li>• Jack Greene, <i>The Quest for Power: The Lower Houses of Assembly in the Southern Royal Colonies, 1689-1776</i> (New York: W.W. Norton, 1963), 3-18.</li> <li>• Presentations: William Appleman Williams, Thomas Sugrue, Lizabeth Cohen, Eric Foner, Michael Holt, Robert Dallek, David McCullugh, Sean Wilentz, Bernard Bailyn.</li> <li>• <b>Due: Response 10</b></li> </ul>
<b>Fri Nov 12</b>	<p><b>Historiography: Intellectual Historians</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilson, <i>History in Crisis</i>, 87-90.</li> <li>• Bernard Bailyn, <i>The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution</i> (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 22-54</li> <li>• Presentation: Jacob Bruckhardt, Leslie Stephen, Bruce Kuklick, Jackson Lears</li> <li>• <b>Due: Response 11</b></li> </ul>
<b>Wed Nov 17</b>	<p><b>Methods: Locating and Evaluating Primary Sources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rampolla, 6-14.</li> <li>• <b>Due: Draft of historiographical paper. Bring four copies.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Fri Nov 19</b>	<p><b>Historiography: New Cultural Historians</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peter Burke, "Overture: The New History, its Past and its Future," in Peter Burke, ed., <i>New Perspectives on Historical Writing</i>, 1-23.</li> <li>• Laurier Turgeon, "The Tale of the Kettle: Odyssey of an Intercultural Object," <i>Ethnohistory</i> 44 (winter 1997): 1-29. Available through JSTOR.</li> <li>• <b>Due: Response 12</b></li> </ul> <p>Presentations: Natalie Zemon Davis; Robert Darnton; Carlo Ginzburg</p>
<b>Wed Nov 24</b>	<b>Thanksgiving - No Class</b>
<b>Fri Nov 26</b>	<b>Thanksgiving – No Class</b>
<b>Wed Dec 1</b>	<p><b>Methods: Citations; Professional Ethics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• American Historical Association, "Statement of Standards of Professional Conduct." Available online at <a href="http://historians.org/pubs/free/professionalstandards.cfm">http://historians.org/pubs/free/professionalstandards.cfm</a></li> </ul>

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- Rampolla, 86-101.
  - Return draft papers with comments.

**Due: Assignment 4.** Locate and familiarize yourself with the publications of any Moravian history faculty member. Then interview him or her and write a 2 page critical assessment that places the individual within a historiographical tradition. Please, request an interview several days in advance.

**Fri Dec 3      Historiography: Where to Now?**

- Gilderhus, *History and Historians*, 117-132.
- **Due: Response 13**

**Wed Dec 8      Professional Issues: What can you do with a history degree?**

- Peter Stearns, "Why Study History," available at <http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/WhyStudyHistory.htm>

**Due: Assignment 5.** Search Monster.com or [www.mcall.com/classified/jobs](http://www.mcall.com/classified/jobs) or Moravian's Career center site for jobs you might apply for as a history graduate. Print out the description and details of a job that interests you. Then write a letter of application (1-2 pages) in which you explain how your history degree has given you the skills appropriate to the job.

**Due: Final Essay**

**Tues. Dec. 14      Conference**  
**8:30-noon**

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