



Clio, History's Muse.

**HISTORY 270:
HISTORICAL METHODS
AND INTERPRETATIONS
SPRING 2011**

Dr. Jamie Paxton

Office: Comenius 306

Phone: 610.625.7897

Email: jpaxton@moravian.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30-12:00

Wednesdays and Fridays 11:30-12:30

Welcome to History 270: Historical Methods and Interpretation!¹ 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 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 this course will assist you in 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.

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

According to the Moravian College Student Handbook, the following constitutes plagiarism: “the use, deliberate or not, of any outside source without proper acknowledgment. While the work of others often constitutes a necessary resource for academic research, such work must be properly used and credited to the original author. This principle applies to professional scholars as well as to students....All work that students submit or present as part of course assignments or requirements must be their own original work....When students use the specific thoughts, ideas, writings, or expressions of others, they must accompany each instance of use with some form of attribution to the source. Direct quotes from any source (including the Internet) must be placed in quotation marks...and be accompanied by an appropriate citation.” Plagiarism will result in the offender receiving zero in the course. Please consult the Student Handbook for fuller details.

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	20%
Topic, Bibliography, Draft	10% (2%, 4%, 7% respectively)
Abstracts	10%
Peer Review	3%
Historiographical Essay	20%
Assignments	15%
Presentation of an historian	7%
Participation	15%

Be advised that you must obtain a C in HIST270 to be eligible to take 300-level courses.

ASSIGNMENTS

READING RESPONSES

Throughout the semester, you will be writing 1.5-2 page, double-spaced 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 without reflecting upon them, are vague, or do not reflect a careful reading of the material. 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 between 12 and 15 pages double-spaced and be based on a minimum of six 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 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 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.

SCHEDULE

Wed Jan 19	Introduction
Fri Jan 21	What is History? What do historians do? Rampolla, <i>Writing in History</i> , pp. 1-5. Gilderhus, <i>History and Historians</i> , 1-11. John Tosh, <i>The Pursuit of History</i> , 1-25. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Due: Reading Response 1
Wed Jan 26	Methods: Finding a Topic; Oral Presentations Rampolla, <i>Writing in History</i> , pp. 66-70. Anthony Brundage, <i>Going to the Source: A Guide to Historical Research and Writing</i> , 48-53. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hampden-Sydney College Ferguson Center for Public Speaking Online: http://www.hsc.edu/academics/publicspeaking/students/ 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).• Due: Homework Assignment 1. 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?
Fri Jan 28	Historiography: To Ranke Gilderhus, <i>History and Historians</i> , 12-49. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Due: Reading Response 2 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?"
Wed Feb 2	Methods: Library of Congress Catalogue Anthony Brundage, <i>Going to the Sources</i> , 28-47. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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. http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsolcco/• Due: Topic for historiographical essay – ½-¾ page
Fri Feb 4	Historiography: Modern Approaches to History Gilderhus, <i>History and Historians</i> , 50-85. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Due: Reading Response 3• 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?

- Wed Feb 9** **Historiography: Marxists**
Review Gilderhus, *History and Historians*, 53-58.
John Tosh, *Pursuit of History*, 136-146.
Gary Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Northern Seaports and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), ix-39.
- Presentations: Christopher Hill, Eric Hobsbawn, E.P. Thompson, Paul Buhle, Marcus Rediker, Eugene Genovese, Gary Nash
 - **Due: Response 4** What are the strengths and limitations of the Marxist approach?
 - **Due: Homework Assignment 2.** Library of Congress Classification Assignment.
- Fri Feb 11** **Methods: Locating Secondary Sources Using Databases: Library Visit**
- No reading
- Wed Feb 16** **Methods: Anatomy of an Article: Reading and Evaluating Secondary Sources**
Rampolla, 6-19.
Due: Homework Assignment 3. Library scavenger hunt.
- Fri Feb 18** **Historiography: Annaliste Historians**
Review Gilderhus, *History and Historians*, 94-95.
Wilson, *History in Crisis*, 71-77.
Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), table of contents.
Timothy Breen, *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 40-83.
- Presentations: Marc Bloch; Lucien Febvre, Ferdinand Braudel, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie
 - **Due: Response 5** What are the major characteristics of Annals history and what are the strengths and limitations of this approach?
- Wed Feb 23** **Historiography: Historians and the Social Sciences**
Gilderhus, *History and Historians*, 86-110.
Wilson, *History in Crisis*, 47-53, 59-69.
Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (San Diego: Academic Press, 1974), 3-11, 67—69, 84-87, 100-103, 127-139.
- Presentations: Clifford Geertz, Robert Brenner, Peter Gay, Charles Tilly, Keith Hopkins, Gilberto Freyre, Immanuel Wallerstein
 - **Due: Response 6**
 - **Due: Bibliography. You should have all books and article ordered from ILL.**
- Fri Feb 25** **Methods: Writing Historiographical Essays**
Rampolla, 32-34.
Anthony Brundage, *Going to the Sources*, 53-67.
- Wed Mar 2** **Historiography: Economic and Social Historians**
Wilson, *History in Crisis*, 49-53, 70-71, 77-86.
Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 80-109.
- Presentations: Robert Fogel, Christopher Dyer, David Sabean, David Montgomery, John Demos, Staughton Lynd, Herbert Gutman, Geroge Lipsitz,

Michael Barry Katz, John Womack, Lawrence Stone

Due: Response 7

Fri Mar 4 **Methods: Note-taking; Writing a Thesis**

Rampolla, 43-49
Brundage, *Going to the Sources*, 72-75.

Wed Mar 9 **Spring Recess**

Fri Mar 11 **Spring Recess**

Wed Mar 16 **Historiography: Historians of Race/Ethnicity**

Milla Rosenberg, "Race, Ethnicity, and History," in Berger, Feldner & Passmore, 313-327.
Nancy Shoemaker, *A Strange Likeness: Becoming Red and White in Eighteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 125-140.

- Presentations: Edward Said, David Roediger, Eugene Genovese, Ira Berlin, David Brion Davis, John Hop Franklin, Ronald Takaki, C. Vann Woodward, Winthrop Jordan, George Frederickson

Due: Response 8

Fri Mar 18 **Due: Abstracts**

Wed Mar 23 **Historiography: Historians of Gender**

Wilson, *History in Crisis*, 114-119.
Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980) 35-67.

- Presentations: Joan Scott, Mary Beth Norton, Gerda Lerner, George Chauncey, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg

Due: Response 9

Fri Mar 25 **Meetings with Instructor**

Please schedule a meeting with me during the week of March 21.

Wed Mar 30 **Methods: Mechanics of Writing and Citations**

Rampolla, 49-65, 86-101.
American Historical Association, "Statement of Standards of Professional Conduct."
Available online at <http://historians.org/pubs/free/professionalstandards.cfm>

Fri Apr 1 **Historiography: Political History**

Jon Lawrence, "Political History," in Berger, Feldner & Passmore, 209-216.
Jack Greene, *The Quest for Power: The Lower Houses of Assembly in the Southern Royal Colonies, 1689-1776* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1963), 3-18.

- Presentations: William Appleman Williams, Thomas Sugrue, Elizabeth Cohen, Eric Foner, Michael Holt, Robert Dallek, David McCullugh, Sean Wilentz, Bernard Bailyn.

Due: Response 10

Wed Apr 6 **Historiography: Intellectual Historians**

Wilson, *History in Crisis*, 87-90.
Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 22-54.

- Presentation: Jacob Bruckhardt, Leslie Stephen, Bruce Kuklick, Jackson Lears

Due: Response 11

Fri Apr 8 **Due: Draft of historiographical paper. Bring four copies to class.**

Wed Apr 13 **Methods: Primary Sources**

Rampolla, 6-14.

Fri Apr 15 **Historiography: New Cultural Historians**

Peter Burke, "Overture: The New History, its Past and its Future," in Peter Burke, ed., *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, 1-23.

Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 75-101.

- **Due: Return drafts essays with comments.**
- **Due: Response 12**

Presentations: Natalie Zemon Davis; Robert Darnton; Carlo Ginzburg

Wed Apr 20 Meetings with Instructor

Please schedule a meeting with me during the week.

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 Apr 22 Easter Recess

Wed Apr 27 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 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.

Fri Apr 29 Historiography: Where to Now?

- Gilderhus, *History and Historians*, 117-132.

Due: Response 13

Final Papers are due on the day reserved for the final exam.