

HISTORY 379 The Study of History
Wednesday 7:00 – 10:00 p.m., Old Main 002
Macalester College, Fall 2011
Professor ADR Cremer (cremer@macalester.edu)
Office Hours: OLD MAIN 300
T, Th 1 – 3 p.m. or by appointment

Required Texts:

Michel Trouillot	<i>Silencing the Past</i>
Mark T. Gilderhus	<i>History and Historians</i>
Linenthal and Engelhardt	<i>History Wars</i>
Timothy O'Brien	<i>In the Lake of the Woods</i>
Evan S. Connell	<i>Son of the Morning Star</i>

Overview:

“History is the present. That's why every generation writes it anew. But what most people think of as history is its end product, myth.” E.L. Doctorow

“History is merely a list of surprises. It can only prepare us to be surprised yet again.”
Kurt Vonnegut

“History is Philosophy teaching by examples.” Thucydides

“History, real solemn history, I cannot be interested in.... I read it a little as a duty; but it tells me nothing that does not either vex or weary me. The quarrels of popes and kings, with wars and pestilences in every page; the men all so good for nothing, and hardly any women at all - it is very tiresome.” Jane Austen

“History will be kind to me for I intend to write it.” Winston Churchill

Course Objectives:

This course asks students to consider history, its definition and practice. History remains a contested site in academia because of its intense relevance and emotional ties to the entire human population. Throughout our meetings we will interrogate history's practice and its meaning both to academia and to the public. The course will be divided into two major sections. The first half of the semester will focus on the history of history. Our discussions and readings will examine the channels by which history became a form of writing, how it evolved into a professional discipline, and how it continues to change in the present. The second half the course will explore the meaning of history itself. Our readings will explore the ways in which history can be challenged, take new forms, and question the relationship of history to time, place, and society.

Grading and Attendance:

The quality of your grade in this course will be a direct reflection of the effort you have put forward throughout the semester. This course will not be graded on a curve and each grade is a reflection of the student's own performance on individual assignments and

participation in the discussion section. Grades based on quality of work relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements may be understood as follows:

A – outstanding

B - significantly above requirements

C – meets requirements

D – does not meet requirements, but is worthy of credit

F – signifies that work was either 1) completed but not at a level of achievement that is worthy of credit or 2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an Incomplete

Your final grade derives from your performance in five areas: four written assignments and participation in our class meetings. The percentage of your grade allotted to each assignment is as follows:

History “Lessons” Assignments (5 X 20 points each)	20%
Methods and Application	20%
The Next Turn	20%
The Historian’s Path	20%
Attendance and participation	20%

Essays:

I'm all in favor of keeping dangerous weapons out of the hands of fools. Let's start with typewriters - Frank Lloyd Wright (1868-1959)

Writing is a powerful tool of communication and persuasion. It is the means by which historians share ideas with each other and with the public. Learning to write well is a challenging but imperative part of your liberal arts education. In this class we will discuss paths to becoming a good writer. In light of this goal, several writing assignments contribute to your overall grade in the course. Details of each assignment will be handed out in class two weeks prior to the due date. A brief explanation of the writing assignments follows:

History “Lessons” (Bi-weekly, 2 pages, double spaced, 5 responses total) – History is produced all around us, every day, everywhere. This assignment asks you to observe the world around you in order to interrogate the ways in which history is used or claimed in places you might not expect, or simply take for granted. On a bi-weekly basis you will turn in a two-page (double spaced) critical response essay that details your observations about the history “lessons” you’ve seen in your day-to-day environs. In

addition you will be asked to present your observations to the class in one meeting over the course of the semester.

Methods and Applications (7 – 10 pages, double spaced) – The first formal essay for this course requires that you apply the methods we've studied in the evolution of the historical profession to a current event. Once you've selected an event, this essay asks you to write a history of the event in the method of three distinct schools of history. Finally, your conclusion should synthesize the various methods to reveal the strengths and weaknesses that each approach offers.

The Next Turn (7 – 10 pages, double spaced) – Building on the foundations of the first essay, this assignment asks you to consider new direction in the discipline of history. Using the format of a literature review essay, make an argument regarding what you see as an emergent field in the study of history. You will need to analyze two monographs (or four articles) that represent the new field. In the course of your essay, be certain to explain the methods and aims that are highlighted in this new field as well as the pitfalls that might accompany its foci.

The Historian's Path (7 – 10 pages, double spaced) – A central objective of this course remains the discovery of your own relationship with the historical discipline and your identity as an historian. **At the beginning of the semester** you will submit a narrative of your own life history as it relates to the study of history. Where did you first encounter history? What was your first history course? What was your first college history course? Why did you continue to take history? Why are you a major? How does being a history major effect your participation in other classes? How will being a history major shape your future beyond Macalester?

The final paper requires that you revise this personal narrative to reflect how your path as a historian has changed given what you've learned in this course. What is history to you? How will it direct your interaction with your peers and the wider world? This paper will serve as a template for the many times you'll be asked to provide personal statements for job letters, internship and grant applications, and graduate school applications.

All written assignments must be turned in at the beginning of section on the due date. Papers turned in late are automatically docked one-half grade and a further half grade for each additional day late. All written assignments must be turned in in hard-copy format – I will not accept e-mailed papers, however I will offer comment on e-mailed drafts. In-class writing assignments, which will appear periodically through the semester, cannot be made up if you are absent on the class day they occur.

Class preparation and timely work:

The success of our class meetings revolves around the cooperation of all participants. Attendance is mandatory and will be taken at each meeting. To receive full credit for course attendance you must participate actively in class, and for this to occur everyone must come to class having read the assigned course materials. Please bring any notes you take while reading, the assigned course readings for the day's discussion, and talking points and/or questions that you have regarding lecture topics. Inability to participate in class due to lack of preparation will be reflected in your course grade. Out of courtesy to your classmates, please arrive on time and do not pack up before the class period ends. Cell phones, pagers, iPods, etc. should be off and stowed for the duration of discussion

section. Discussions require a courteous and respectful atmosphere at all times. While a history course may and should generate lively debates, any interruptions, personal attacks, inappropriate remarks, or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Every person's voice is of value in this class.

Contacting me:

I am delighted to be teaching your course this semester and I look forward to getting to know each of you better. Please visit me during office hours with questions or concerns about the course. If your schedule conflicts with my posted office hours, please e-mail me or speak to me following class to set up an alternate meeting time. I am happy to discuss your assignments or review papers with you; out of fairness to the class I can provide comments on only one draft per essay assignment. However, I will not review any assignment within 24 hours of the due date. Plan ahead. If you have a question about your grade you must set an appointment with me at least one day after receiving your graded paper. At the appointment I expect you to have read all the comments on your paper and to have specific questions that you wish to discuss. If you are seeking additional assistance with writing, I encourage you to visit the The MAX Center, which is open for tutoring M-F, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Sun-Th, 7 -10 p.m. at Kagin Commons 1st floor.

Important academic policies:

Academic dishonesty: Please do not cheat. Per college policy, plagiarism and other forms of cheating may be reported to the appropriate disciplinary body and subject to sanction. Academic dishonesty is defined as “any act that violates the right of another student with respect to academic work or that involves misrepresentation of the student’s own work.” This includes “cheating on assignments or examinations, plagiarizing, inventing or falsifying research or other findings with an intent to deceive, submitting the same or substantially similar papers (or creative work) without consent of all instructors concerned, depriving another of necessary course materials, and sabotaging another’s work.” **Disruptive conduct and sexual harassment:** Students who engage in behavior that disrupts the learning environment for others may be subject to disciplinary action, including having their registration cancelled. Sexual harassment, defined as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature,” by or towards a member of the college community is strictly prohibited.

Special needs: Students with documented disability conditions that affect their ability to participate fully in class or to meet all course requirements should contact the instructor and Disability Services, Student Disability Services is the designated office at Macalester College that maintains disability-related documents, certifies eligibility for services, and determines and provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. The Disability Student Services Coordinator is located in 119 Weyerhaeuser Administration Building. The academic year hours are 8:00 am-4:30 pm. The phone number is 651.696.6220.

ADR Cremer
HIST 379: The Study of History
Fall 2011

Writing Assignment: History Lessons

Twenty percent (20%) of your overall course grade is based upon your cumulative performance throughout five individual writing assignments, which I have described on the syllabus as “history lessons,” which should be conceived of as critical reflection essays. While the term reflection may invoke sentimental images about journaling or memoirs, this writing assignment is formal and should not be considered simply a means to vent your feelings or observations about the ways in which history is created, invoked or claimed in the world around you and then relate your observations to our class readings and discussion. By reflection, am I asking you to draw upon your own insight and self-reflexivity to produce a brief critical sketch of what you have internalized over two weeks of observing “history” in the world and synthesizing these observations with the content of class meetings.

In an essay of one to two (1-2 pages, double spaced) reflect on key themes, critical issues, or questions that have arisen in the past two weeks of class. The citation of specific passages or quotations from our readings is not required, though you may at times want to use such material to assist your writing. If you do use paraphrasing or quotations from readings, make sure to cite the source appropriately; for the reflections you may use the parenthetical citation style – i.e. (White, 1996, pp. 65.)

The brevity of these writing assignments may appear overly easy or intimidating – depending your own writing personality. However, keep in mind that developing the ability to write with clarity and precision is an incredible challenge, while at the same time an immensely important skill to develop.

In addition to the writing assignment, you will be required to give one brief (no more than 10 minutes) presentation of the “history lesson” you’ve undertaken. Sign up for the presentations will take place on the first day of class.

Each reflection carries a value of 20 points, so that at the end of the semester possible total points for the writing will be 100 points. Grading for the cumulative writing assignment will follow a normal scale of (93-100, 90-92 A-, 87-89 B+, etc.)

There are no extensions for the writing reflections; each assignment must be turned in at the beginning of the class meeting as specified on your syllabus. Note the due dates of these reflections on your calendars immediately.

HIST 379: The Study of History

Professor ADR Cremer

Essay 1: Methods and Applications (7 – 10 pages, double spaced)

Due Wednesday, November 9

The first formal essay for this course requires that you apply the methods we've studied in the evolution of the historical profession to a current event. Once you've selected an event, this essay asks you to write a history of the event in the method of three distinct schools of history. Finally, your conclusion should synthesize the various methods to reveal the strengths and weaknesses that each approach offers.

The first half of this course interrogates the ways in which the practice and profession of history developed from the classical era through the postmodern age (that we current inhabit). Select three distinct historians, whose work we've studied in class, and use the style, methodology and intent of each to analyze a current event. For example, if I wanted to examine the Obama's first term as president, I might write a short history of the event using the templates of Christine de Pisan, Marx, and Braudel, each template would produce a very different interpretation of said event.

The conclusion of your essay should offer a synthesis, that is, the amalgamation of the three styles of histories you've selected and a critique of the strengths and weaknesses that using a singular approach to historical study would yield.

Keep in mind that this essay asks you to write three *brief* narratives of a current event. Obviously you would not be able to write a full-blown history of the political and social evolutions of Serbia and Kosovo. Focus upon the construction of a tight narrative that highlights the purpose and production of each style of historian that you've selected to employ in this essay. Any event from national politics to tabloid press to campus events is fair game for this essay.

Your essay should be double spaced, use 12 point Times New Roman font and one-inch margins. Citations should be made using the Chicago-Turabian style and appear as either footnotes or endnotes. If you are unfamiliar with CMS citations visit http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

HIST 379: THE STUDY OF HISTORY

Professor ADR Cremer

Essay #2: The Next Turn

Due in class, Wednesday December 7

Building on the foundations of the first essay, this assignment asks you to consider new direction in the discipline of history. Using the format of a literature review essay, make an argument regarding what you see as an emergent field in the study of history. You will need to analyze two monographs (or four articles) that represent the new field. In the course of your essay, be certain to explain the methods and aims that are highlighted in this new field as well as the pitfalls that might accompany its foci.

Keep in mind that when brainstorming a topic for “The Next Turn,” you do NOT need to invent a new type of history or create a complete original field of study. Most history practices emerge as new directions within current fields; thus, an essay that analyzes new approaches to a long-standing area of historical inquiry works equally well as a review of a completely new type of history.

You may find it helpful to examine review essays from history journals that demonstrate the ways historians have discussed new directions in the field as they have emerged in the past. Keep in mind that these essays are much longer than the one you will write for our class. However, these examples model both format and content required for this assignment. Please visit the following links for model literature reviews:

“Brave New Worlds: Women's and Gender History”

Kathleen M. Brown

The William and Mary Quarterly > 3rd Ser., Vol. 50, No. 2, Early American History: Its Past and Future (Apr., 1993), pp. 311-328

Stable URL: [http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0043-5972\(199304\)29:3A:50:3A2%3C311%3ABNWWAG%3E2.0.CO%3B2-D](http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0043-5972(199304)29:3A:50:3A2%3C311%3ABNWWAG%3E2.0.CO%3B2-D)

“Wizards, Bureaucrats, Warriors, and Hackers: Writing the History of the Internet”

Roy Rosenzweig

The American Historical Review > Vol. 103, No. 5 (Dec., 1998), pp. 1530-1552

Stable URL: [http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-8762\(199812\)103:5:3A:5%3C1530%3AWBWAHW%3E2.0.CO%3B2-N](http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-8762(199812)103:5:3A:5%3C1530%3AWBWAHW%3E2.0.CO%3B2-N)

“Introduction: Environmental History: Nature at Work”

Brian Fay

History and Theory > Vol. 42, No. 4, Theme Issue 42: Environment and History (Dec., 2003), pp. 1-4

Stable URL: [http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0018-2656\(200312\)42:4:3A:4%3C1%3AIEHNAW%3E2.0.CO%3B2-F](http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0018-2656(200312)42:4:3A:4%3C1%3AIEHNAW%3E2.0.CO%3B2-F)

The essay should be 7-10 pages (double spaced) with one-inch margins in 12-point Times New Roman font. Cite all sources using footnotes or endnotes in the Chicago-Turabian format.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS, Fall 2011:

September 7: Introduction: Syllabus and Expectations for Course
History Lessons Assignments, History and Popular Culture, Bad Movies Make History
Reading: *Harper's*, *Time* articles (sent as PDF)

September 14: The Birth of History: Classics
Readings: Gilderhus, Introduction – pp. 29, Handouts: Thucydides, Augustine, Christine de Pisan, Cherokee, Veyne
HISTORY “LESSONS” # 1 DUE

September 21: The Birth of History: Modern Historian and the Challenge of “Modernity”
Readings: Gilderhus, pp. 30-51, Handouts: Hegel, Kant
DRAFT OF THE HISTORIAN’S PATH DUE

October 5: Making the Profession: Modernism, Empiricism and Historical “Fact”
Readings: Gilderhus, pp. 52-73, Handout: Marx, Freud

October 12: Making the Profession: Contours of Professional History
Readings: Gilderhus, pp. 74-91, Carl Becker, “What are Historical Facts?” *The Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Sep., 1955), pp. 327-340 (J-Stor)
HISTORY “LESSONS” #2 DUE

October 19: Making the Profession: Emerging Branches
Readings: Gilderhus, pp. 92-116, Handouts: Braudel, Veyne and de Certeau

October 26: Establishment: Challenging Practice and Product
Readings: Ginzburg, pp. 156-164, Handouts: Appiah, Smith, Nabokov, Halperin
HISTORY “LESSONS” #3 DUE (MOVIE OPTION: *THE THREE MUSKETEERS* – opens October 21)

November 2: NO CLASS MEETING

November 9: What is History?: Hidden Voices, Altered Meanings
Reading: Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*
METHODS AND APPLICATIONS ESSAY DUE

November 16: What is History?: Angles
Reading: Connell, pp. 1 – 253
HISTORY “LESSONS” #4 DUE (MOVIE OPTION: *IMMORTALS* – opens NOVEMBER 11)

November 23: What is History?: Imagination and Creation
Reading: Connell, pp. 254 – Conclusion

November 30: What is History?: Society, Psychology and the Problem of Time
Reading: O'Brien, *In the Lake of the Woods*

HISTORY "LESSONS" #5 DUE

December 7: Final Class Meeting, History Wars: Linenthal and Englehardt, **THE NEXT
TURN ESSAY DUE**

**REVISED "THE HISTORIAN'S PATH" ESSAY DUE IN PROFESSOR
CREMER'S MAILBOX AT THE TIME OF SCHEDULED FINAL EXAM:
Thursday, December 15 by 5 p.m.**