

Graduate Center-History Program  
History and Theory  
History 78000  
Fall 2018

(Tentative)

**Course Description:**

The question of the relationship of theory to history is laden with problems. While it is obvious that historians carry their research in archives, it is not obvious what analytical frameworks historians utilize to make sense of the past, its relationship to the present and its relevance to the future if any. Nor, for that matter, is the question of what is *particularly* historical about the Archives in specific or History as a discipline in general. The objective of this seminar is to explore some of the concerns that have haunted historians since history established itself as a discipline, which would include the questions of temporality in history, conceptual history, memory and history, periodization, genealogy, sovereign and disciplinary power, historicism among other concerns that are philosophical rather than historical. The course is *de facto* thematically-organized as well as interdisciplinary, which by implication means that it will be drawing on different bodies of knowledge, including philosophy, political theory, anthropology, religious, gender and legal studies with possibly some written narratives and accounts drawn from the field of history itself.

**Learning Objectives:**

The main objective is to introduce students to theoretical and methodological approaches that inform the study of history in general. Another goal is to facilitate advanced Ph.D. students with frameworks of analysis that will aid them in their search and writing of their dissertation topics. A final paper in the form of either a historiography or research paper is an exercise in improving writing skills.

**Course Requirement:**

1) Weekly responses and presentations: 50%

Students will be divided into groups and each group will be expected to write a short paper explicating the weeks reading and raising questions relating to it. These papers should be sent out to all members of the seminar the evening before the seminar meets. Regardless of the group leading the discussion, all students must be fully prepared and participate in the weekly discussions.

2) Final Paper: 50%

Students are expected to write a final term paper of approximately 25 pages in length. This will be due at the end of term. Students should discuss the topic of their papers in advance with me.

Weekly Readings:

Week 1: Introduction to the class

Week 2: *Enlightenment, Reason and History*

Required:

-Immanuel Kant, "What is Enlightenment"?

-Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?"

-Deleuze, "Synthesis and Time" a lecture on Kant.

-Horkheimer & Adorno, "Elements of Anti-Semitism: Limits of Enlightenment" in *Dialectics of Enlightenment*, 137-173.

(<http://braungardt.trialectics.com/projects/political-theory/foucault/what-is-enlightenment/>)

(Look under the title of Immanuel Kant: What is Enlightenment? And the footnotes for the rest.)

Recommended:

Max Horkheimer, *The Critique of Instrumental Reason*.

Week 3: No Class

Week 4: No Class

Week 5: Historical Materialism

Required:

Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*.

(<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/preface.htm>)

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/labour.htm>

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/comm.htm>

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/power.htm>

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/>

Week 6: The Meaning of History

Required:

-Walter Benjamin, Theses on the Philosophy of History in *Illuminations*.

-Hannah Arendt, Introduction, *Illuminations*.

-Benjamin Aldes Wurgaft, "The Uses of Walter: Walter Benjamin and the Counterfactual Imagination", *History and Theory* 49 (Oct. 2010), 361-383.

-Karl Lowith, *Meaning in History: Theological Implication of the Philosophy of History*, Introduction, Chapters IV and XI.

Recommended:

-Horkheimer, *Critique of Instrumental Reason*, chapter 1 & 3.

Week 7: Nation-States & Violence

Required

-Hannah Arendt, "The Decline of the Nation-state and the End of Rights of Man," in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.

-----, "What is Authority" in *Between Past and Future*.

-----, *Eichmann In Jerusalem*, "Epilogue" and "Postscript".

-Foucault, "Right of Death and Power over Life" in *The Foucault Reader*.

Recommended:

Week 8: Critique of linear Temporality

Required

-Koselleck, Reinhardt, *The Practice of Conceptual History*, chapters 1, 6 & 13 (On the Need for Theory..Time & History.. Progress and Decline)

-Helge Jordheim, "Against Periodization: Koselleck's Theory of Multiple Temporalities", in *History and Theory* 51 (May 2012): 151-171.

-John Zammito, "Koselleck's Philosophy of Historical Time(s) and the Practice of History," *History and Theory*, 43 (Fe. 2004): 124-135.

Recommended:

Week 9: Past and Future: Space of Experience// Horizon of Expectation

-Koselleck, *Futures Past*, Part III, 2,3 & 4. ("On the Disposability of History" (198-213); "Neuzeit" (231-267); and "Space of Experience and "Horizon of Expectation" (267-299).

-Stephen-Ludwig Hoffman, "Koselleck, Arendt, and the Anthropology of Historical Experience," *History and Theory* 40 (May 2010): 212-2316.

Week 10: History: An Everyday Life

Required:

- Henri Lefebvre, *Production of Space or Critique of Everyday Life*. Chapters to be assigned.

-Veena Das, "Life and Words: Exploring Violence and the Descent into Ordinary Boundaries" or "Violence and the Work of Time."

Recommended: ??

Week 11:            *History and Genealogy*

Required:

-Michel Foucault, *The Essential Foucault: Selections from the Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-198*, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History"; "What is an Author", in *The Essential Foucault*, eds. Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose.

-Colin Koopman, *Genealogy as Critique: Foucault and the Problems of Modernity*, chapters 1 & 5 (1-58; 154-182)

Recommended:

-Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Random House, [1887]1967), pp. 15–96.

-Michel Foucault, "Spectacle of the Scaffold"; "Panopticism" in *Discipline and Punish*, translated by Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage [1975] 1977), pp. 32–69; 195–228.

Week12:            *Social Construction*

Required:

-Ian Hacking, *The Social Construction of What? "Why Ask What"?*

----- Hacking, *Historical Ontology*, "Making up People."

----- "The Looping Effect of Human Kind" in *Causal Cognition: A Multi Disciplinary Approach*, eds. Sperber, Premack, Premack.

Recommended:

- Kertzer and Arel, *Census and Identity: The Politics of Race, Ethnicity and Language in National Census*, Cambridge 2002. Chapters to be assigned.

-Samira Haj, "The People of Jerusalem Reordered" in Michael Sorkin ed., *The Next Jerusalem: Sharing the Divided City 2002*.

-Silvana Patriarca, *Numbers and Nationhood: Writing Statistics in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Italy*, Cambridge University Press, 1996

Week 13:            *Archives: Records and Power*

Required Reading:

-Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History*, preface, chs.1-4 (pp. 1-37).

-Jo Tollbeck, "Turn'd to Dust and Tears": Revisiting the Archive", in *History and Theory*, (April 2004)

-Schwartz and Cook, "Archives, Records and Power: The Making of Modern Memory," *Archival Science*, v. 1, issue 2: 1-19.

-Achille Mbembe, "The Power of the Archive and its Limits," in Carolyn Hamilton, et. al. eds., *Refiguring the Archive* (Dordrecht, 2002), 19-26.

Recommended:

Brian Connolly, "Against Accumulation," *The Journal of Nineteenth Century Americanists* 2, no.1 (2014): 172-179

-Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*.

-Anjali Arondekar, "Without a Trace: Sexuality and the Colonial Archive," *Journal of History and Sexuality*, v. 14, #1/2:

-Ann Stoler, "Colonial Archives and Acts of Governance," *Archival Science* vol. 2 issue 1-2: 87-109.

Week 14:            *The Darker Side of the Enlightenment: Colonialism*

Required:

-David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment*, Duke University Press, 2004, Prologue, chs. 3 & 5.

-Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, chapters 1 & 2.

Recommended:

-Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak"?

-Thomas Richards, *Imperial Archives: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire*, (Verso, 1993), chaps. 2 & 3.

Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," *Public Culture* 15 (1): 2003.

Week 15:            *Secular Historicity*

Required:

- Michel de Certeau, "Making History: Problems of Method and Problems of Meaning," in *The Writing of History*, trans. Tom Conley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 19-49.

-Jean-Luc Nancy, "Finite History" in *The Birth to Presence*, trans. by Brian Holmes and others (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), 143-166.

-Saba Mahmood, "Secularity, History, Literature" in *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 181-207.

-Ruth Mas, "On the Apocalyptic Tones of Islam in Secular Time," in *Secularism and Religion-Making*, ed. Markus Dressler and Arvind-Pal S. Mandair (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 87-103.

Recommended

-Ananda Abeysekara, "Active Forgetting of History, the 'Impossibility' of Justice," in *The Politics of Postsecular Religion: Mourning Secular Futures* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 194-226.

-Amy Hollywood, "Gender, Agency, and the Divine in Religious Historiography" in *Acute Melancholia and Other Essays: Mysticism, History, and the Study of Religion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 117-128.