

## HIS 394H: Introduction to Historical Inquiry

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and by appointment

History 394 is an introductory seminar for all doctoral students in history at UT. Its purpose is to deepen your understanding of the discipline of history by exploring some (and only some) of the conversations and debates among historians from different geographic and temporal fields. The seminar will require all of us (instructors included!) to stretch considerably beyond our own areas of expertise and interest. We will be concerned less with the specific findings of the works we read than with their frameworks, concepts, theoretical assumptions, and research methods.

We have chosen to focus on questions about *the scope and scale of historical study*. We begin with nations and nation-states as units of historical analysis and then move on to considering a range of alternative frameworks. We look at ‘bigger’ histories -- world, global, imperial, or transnational --and the various methodological issues they pose. We study some examples of ‘microhistory.’ Among these frameworks we have included households, a traditional choice, and also interiors (literal and metaphorical) and subjectivity, which are less traditional. We intend this list of topics to be suggestive and interesting, *not* comprehensive.

About course requirements and expectations: **Full participation in class discussion is a primary requirement of this and all graduate seminars.** You are expected to attend every class, to come prepared with ideas and questions about each week’s readings, to connect present readings with previous assignments, and to engage each other with respect, curiosity, and open minds.

### Assignments

1) Each week, two of you will be responsible for leading the seminar discussion. We will sort out who’s doing which week during our first class meeting. The co-seminar leaders will either send the two of us an outline before class meets, or bring two copies of the outline to class.

2 a-b) Each of you will write two short essays (5-6 pages each) on questions we will assign. The first will be due in class on **Wednesday September 28**; the second will be due → in the main history office ← by noon on **Monday November 14**.

3) Your final assignment involves attending a history-oriented lecture or academic paper being given on campus (your choice but we strongly recommend you check out the offerings from such

bodies as the IHS, South Asia Institute (SAI), British Studies, Long Institute of Latin American Studies (LLILAS), the John L. Warfield Center for African and African American Studies and so on. You will write 4-5 pages in which you reflect on the methodology and framing of the piece and on its reception. Due in class on **Wednesday November 30**.

Each assignment counts for 25% of your grade.

## **TEXTS**

Readings marked with an asterisk will be available to you through the class Blackboard website, accessible at <http://courses.utexas.edu>. Journal articles are accessible via the library catalogue. We will outline the procedure for accessing these on the first day of class.

Texts you will need to acquire are:

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991)

Carolyn Steedman, *Landscape for a Good Woman: A Story of Two Lives* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1987)

Jonathan D. Spence, *The Question of Hu* (New York: Vintage, 1989)

## **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

### August 24 **INTRODUCTION**

### August 31 **HISTORY AND THE HUMANITIES**

\*Essays by Eley; Gordon; and Scott in Terrence McDonald, *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1996)

\*Stanley Fish, 'Is There A Text In This Class?' in *Is There A Text In This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980)

### September 7 **NATIONS**

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991)

Antoinette Burton, 'Who Needs the Nation? Interrogating "British History",' *Journal of Historical Sociology* 10, no 3 (1997): 227-248

### September 14 **EMPIRES**

\*Ann Stoler and Fred Cooper, 'Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda,' in *Tensions of Empire, Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997)

\*Fred Cooper, 'States, Empires, and Political Imagination,' in *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005)

Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Holding the World in Balance: The Connected Histories of the Iberian Overseas Empires, 1500-1640,' *American Historical Review* 112, no. 5 (2007): 1359-1385

Jeremy Adelman, 'The Rites of Statehood: Violence and Sovereignty in Spanish America, 1789 - 1821,' *Hispanic American Historical Review* 90, no. 3 (2010): 391-422

### September 21 **GLOBAL/TRANSNATIONAL CURRENTS**

- \*Fred Cooper, 'Globalization,' in his *Colonialism in Question*  
 'Conversation: On Transnational History,' *American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (December 2006): 1441-1464
- Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Decentering History: Local Stories and Cultural Crossings in a Global World,' *History and Theory* 50, no. 2 (May 2011): 188–202
- David Abulafia, 'Mediterranean History as Global History,' *History and Theory* 50, no. 2 (May 2011): 220–228

### September 28 **NETWORKS & CROSSINGS**

- \*Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995; original pub. in French, 1949) Vol. 1, preface to the 1st edition and chapter 3, 'Boundaries' (168-230)
- Eric Hinderaker and Rebecca Horn, "Territorial Crossings: Histories and Historiographies of the Early Americas," *William and Mary Quarterly* 67, no. 3 (2010): 395-432
- Matthew Guterl and Christine Skwiot, 'Atlantic and Pacific Crossings: Race, Empire, and "the Labor Problem" in the Late Nineteenth Century,' *Radical History Review* 91 (Winter 2005): 40–61

### October 5 **SLAVERY AS DIASPORA**

- Vincent Brown, 'Social Death and Political Life in the Study of Slavery,' *American Historical Review* 114, no. 5 (2009): 1231-1249
- James Sweet, 'Mistaken Identities? Olaudah Equiano, Domingos Alvares, and the Methodological Challenges of Studying the African Diaspora,' *American Historical Review* 114, no. 2 (April 2009): 279-306
- Ben Schiller, 'US Slavery's Diaspora: Black Atlantic History at the Crossroads of 'Race', Enslavement, and Colonisation,' *Slavery & Abolition* 32, no. 2 (June 2011): 199–212
- Richard Benjamin et al, 'Focus: Slavery, The Slave Trade and Slavery, A Round Table Discussion,' *European Review* 17, nos. 3&4 (2009): 569–591

### October 12 **MICROHISTORY 1**

- Jonathan D. Spence, *The Question of Hu* (New York: Vintage, 1989)
- Carlo Ginzburg, 'Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I Know About It,' *Critical Inquiry* 20, no. 1 (1993): 10–35

### October 19 **MICROHISTORY 2**

- Nancy Rose Hunt, 'Rewriting The Soul In A Flemish Congo', *Past & Present* 198 (2008)
- Jill Lepore, 'Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography,' *Journal of American History* 88, no. 1 (June, 2001): 129-144

### October 26 **BODIES**

\*David M. Halperin, 'Introduction: In Defense of Historicism,' in his *How to Do the History of Homosexuality* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2002)

\*Valerie Traub, 'The Past is a Foreign Country? The Times and Spaces of Islamicate Sexuality Studies,' in *Islamicate Sexualities: Translations across Temporal Geographies of Desire*, eds. Kathryn Babayan and Asfaneh Najmabadi (Harvard University, MA: Harvard Middle Eastern Monographs, 2008)

Alexandra Minna Stern, 'Buildings, Boundaries, and Blood: Medicalization and Nation-Building on the U.S.-Mexico Border, 1910-1930,' *Hispanic American Historical Review* 79, no. 1 (1999): 41-81

November 2 **PRIVATE AND PUBLIC**

Mary P. Ryan, 'The Public and the Private Good: Across the Great Divide in Women's History,' *Journal of Women's History* 15, no. 2 (2003): 10-27

Amanda Vickery, 'An Englishman's Home is his Castle? Thresholds, Boundaries and Privacies in the Eighteenth-century London House,' *Past & Present* 199, no. 1 (2008): 147-173

Craig J. Calhoun, 'Introduction: Habermas and the Public Sphere,' in *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992)

November 9 **SUBJECTIVITY**

Carolyn Steedman, *Landscape for a Good Woman: A Story of Two Lives* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1987)

November 16 **NO CLASS SECOND PAPER DUE MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14**

November 23: **NO CLASS**

November 30: **EVALUATIONS AND FINAL WRAP-UP DISCUSSION**