

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
Departments of Educational Policy Studies and History  
Fall 2006

EPS/History 906  
Proseminar on the History of Education  
Topic: What is History?  
Tuesdays, 2:25-5:25  
Education 242

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Tuesdays, 11-12:30 and Thursdays, 11-12 & by appointment

Course Description

This class examines a broad set of issues related to the nature and purposes of history. What is history? How do historians make sense of the past? How do they frame questions, conduct research, shape a thesis, and reach conclusions? Is history both art and science? Is there such a thing as “objectivity” in history? On what basis do historians judge each other’s scholarship? Whether one studies the history of education--as in this course--or the history of the presidency, war, or families, scholars face the same questions about what constitutes the essence of historical inquiry.

The required readings in this course intentionally cover a vast territory: we begin with a broad overview by Beverley Southgate on the nature and purposes of history, then turn to Herodotus’s Histories and various theoretical and philosophical readings, and then examine a wide range of histories extending from the ancient to the medieval to the modern world, including consideration of the value of history in shaping contemporary educational policy. The various books on the history of education were chosen because they illuminate special problems of method or analysis that often confront historians.

Throughout the course, we will try to understand how historians interpret documents and sources (of enormous variety), draw inferences and conclusions, frame generalizations, and distinguish between trustworthy and questionable evidence. We will also try to understand how some of the most accomplished historians practice their craft, from how they select evidence to how they use language and logic. What constitutes persuasive and sound historical analysis? What are the strengths and limitations of particular theories and methods?

The core of our class will be discussions of assigned readings. Thus, the quality of the course will depend heavily upon the quality of everyone's weekly preparation. The course does not presume any background in historical research. Because of time constraints and the availability of other suitable courses, some important approaches to the past (quantitative history and comparative history, e.g.) are not represented in this class.

Student Responsibilities and Course Requirements

The formal course requirements include class attendance, weekly engagement with assigned readings, and the completion of three essays. There are no examinations.

Three written assignments, explained in detail below, are together worth 75% of your final grade. Each paper will be limited to 7 double-spaced, typed pages, exclusive of end notes. Please feel free to chat with me as you are working on an assignment. Before each paper is due, you must hand in a one page description of your project for approval.

Deadlines:

	Prospectus Due (at class)	Paper Due [Fridays, noon]
Paper No. 1	Sept. 26	Oct. 6
Paper No. 2	Oct. 31	Nov. 10
Paper No. 3	Nov. 28	Dec. 8

Each one-page prospectus (which will not be graded) should be typed and include your name, campus and email address, a tentative title, a one paragraph rationale, and a bibliography. Guidelines for the papers appear at the end of the syllabus. You can send me a copy of your prospectus within an *email* message (please do not send as an attachment), or hand in a copy by the due date. Feel free to submit the prospectus earlier than the due date. Please provide a hard copy only of your actual paper, in either my EPS or History department (4<sup>th</sup> floor, Mosse Bldg.) mailbox, whichever is most convenient.

Except for reasons of illness or others recognized by the UW, extensions will not be granted either for the prospectus or paper. In fairness to everyone, late essays will lose one-half grade for every day late.

Each paper is worth 25% of the total grade. The remaining 25% will be based on the quality of your class participation. This will include a 10 minute, small group presentation on how a particular assigned book in our class has been evaluated by peers in professional and popular journals. More information on this assignment will be given on the first day of class. Look for citations on book reviews in JSTOR, History Cooperative, Book Review Index (Vol. 1, 1965-), and H-Net reviews.

Required Books

Most of the following books are available in paperback at the UW Bookstore and Underground Textbook Exchange; some are also available more cheaply on the internet or at local used bookstores. In some cases additional copies of assigned readings are available in the UW library system.

1. Beverley Southgate, History: What and Why?
2. John Boswell, The Kindness of Strangers
3. Carlo Ginsburg, The Cheese and the Worms
4. Robert Darnton, The Great Cat Massacre
5. Karl Marx and Engels, The Communist Manifesto
6. Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish
7. Laura Ulrich, A Mid-Wife's Tale
8. Linda Gordon, The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction
9. Louis Harlan, Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader
10. William J. Reese, The Origins of the American High School
11. Ravitch, Diane and Maris Vinovskis, eds., Learning from the Past
12. Richard White, Remembering Ahanagan

Course Outline and Assignments:

Most of the assigned articles can be downloaded electronically. Log onto the UW library system, then "E-Resource Gateway." Then connect to JSTOR, History Cooperative, Proquest Research Library, Project Muse, or Academic Search.

The Encyclopedia of American Social History is on reserve (hard copy) at the Wisconsin Historical Society. Ask for it at the circulation desk. Herodotus is on reserve (two hard copies) at College Library (Helen C. White.)

Week # 1                      Introduction to the Course  
September 5

Week #2                      What is History?  
September 12

Reading: Southgate, History: What & Why?; Charles Beard, "Written History as an Act of Faith," American Historical Review 39 (Jan. 1934): 219-29 [JSTOR]; Carl Becker, "What Are Historical Facts?" The Western Political Quarterly 8 (Sept. 1955): 327-340 [JSTOR]; Carl Kaestle, "Standards of Evidence in Historical Research: How Do We Know When We Know?" History of Education Quarterly 32 (Fall 1992): 361-66 [JSTOR]; and Oliver J. Daddow, "The Ideology of Apathy: Historians and Postmodernism," Rethinking History 8 (September 2004): 417-34. [Academic Search Elite].

Week #3                      Myths, Oral Sources, and the Legacy of Herodotus

September 19

Reading: Herodotus, The Histories, Book 1 (this is about 90 pages of text in the Penguin edition) [two hard copies on reserve, College Library, Helen C. White; multiple copies of The Historians are also in the UW library system]; M.I. Finley, "Myth, Memory, and History," History and Theory 4, No. 3 (1965): 281-302 [JSTOR]; William H. McNeill, "Mythistory, or Truth, Myth, History, and Historians," The American Historical Review 91 (February 1986): 1-10 [JSTOR]; and Mark Feldstein, "Kissing Cousins: Journalism and Oral History," Oral History Review 31 (Winter/Spring 2004): 1-22 [History Cooperative].

Week #4                      Myths, Facts, Ideologies: Exposing Children and Historians  
September 26

Reading: Boswell, The Kindness of Strangers; and Hugh Cunningham, "Histories of Childhood," The American Historical Review 103 (October 1998): 1195-1208 [JSTOR].

*\*\*Prospectus for paper #1 due\*\**

Week #5                      Popular History: The Mental World of a Miller  
October 3

Reading: Ginsburg, The Cheese and the Worms; Jill Lapore, "Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography," The Journal of American History 88 (June 2001): 129-44 [History Cooperative]; and Gerald Strauss, "The Dilemma of Popular History," Past & Present 132 (August 1991): 130-149 [JSTOR].

***\*\*Paper No. 1 Due on Friday, October 6, noon\*\****

Week #6                      French History and Mentalité  
October 10

Reading: Darnton, The Great Cat Massacre; and Christopher Clark, "Mentalité and the Nature of Consciousness," in Mary Kupiec Cayton, Elliot Gorn, and Peter W. Williams, eds., Encyclopedia of American Social History, volume 1, 387-95. [Historical Society, circulation desk]

Week #7                      Ideology and Class War: Marx and Engels  
October 17

Reading: Marx and Engels, Communist Manifesto; Jonathan M. Weiner, “Radical Historians and the Crisis of American History, 1959-1980,” Journal of American History 76 (September 1989): 399-434 [JSTOR]; Michael W. Apple, “Standing on the Shoulders of Bowles and Gintis: Class Formation and Capitalist Schools,” History of Education Quarterly 28 (Summer 1988): 231-241 [JSTOR]; and Grant Farred, “Endgame Identity? Mapping the New Left Roots of Identity Politics,” New Literary History 31 (2000): 627-648 [JSTOR].

Week #8                      Foucault and History  
October 24

Reading: Foucault, Discipline and Punish; Kenneth Cmiel, “Poststructural Theory,” in Cayton, Gorn, and Williams, Encyclopedia of American Social History, volume 1, 425-433 [Historical Society, circulation desk]; and David Hogan, “The Market Revolution and Disciplinary Power: Joseph Lancaster and the Psychology of the Early Classroom System,” History of Education Quarterly 29 (Fall 1989): 381-417 [JSTOR].

Week #9                      How Do We Read a Diary?  
October 31

Reading: Laura Ulrich, Mid-Wife’s Tale; Laura Ulrich, “Of Pens and Needles: Sources in Early American Women’s History,” Journal of American History 77 (June 1990): 200-07 [JSTOR]; Molly McCarthy, “A Pocketful of Days: Pocket Diaries and Daily Record Keeping Among Nineteenth-Century New England Women,” The New England Quarterly 73 (June 2000): 274-296 [JSTOR]; and Jane H. Hunter, “Inscribing the Self in the Heart of the Family: Diaries and Girlhood in Late-Victorian America,” American Quarterly 44 (March 1992): 51-81 [JSTOR].

*\*\*Prospectus #2 Due\*\**

Week #10                     Social History  
November 7

Reading: Reese, Origins of the American High School; and Peter N. Stearns, “The Old Social History and the New,” in Mary Kupiec Cayton, Elliot Gorn, and Peter W. Williams, eds., Encyclopedia of American Social History, volume 1, 237-50. [Historical Society, circulation desk]

**\*\*Paper No. 2 Due on Friday, November 10, noon\*\***

Week #11                     Feminist History  
November 14

Reading: Gordon, Great Arizona Orphan Abduction; and Mari Jo Buhle, "Feminist Approaches to Social History," in Mary Kupiec Cayton, Elliot Gorn, and Peter W. Williams, eds., Encyclopedia of American Social History, volume 1, 319-333. [Historical Society, circulation desk]

Week #12                      Biography and History  
November 21

Reading: Harlan, Booker T. Washington; Edmund Morris, "When's Your Book Coming Out?" Forbes 162 (Fall 1998): 122-26 [Proquest Research Library]; and Nell Irvin Painter, "Review Essays: Writing Biographies of Women," Journal of Women's History 9 (Summer 1997): 154-63 [Proquest Research Library]

Week #13                      Visual Sources and History  
November 28

Reading: David Jaffee, "'Scholars Will Soon Be Instructed Through the Eye,' Supplements and the Teaching of U.S. History," The Journal of American History 89 (March 2003): 1463-1483 [History Cooperative]; Paul B. Weinstein, "Movies as the Gateway to History: The History and Film Project," The History Teacher 35 (November 2001): 27-48 [History Cooperative]; and Jeroen J.H. Dekker, "A Republic of Educators: Educational Messages in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting," History of Education Quarterly 36 (Summer 1996): 155-182 [JSTOR].

*\*\*Prospectus for Paper # 3 Due\*\**

Week #14                      History and Policy Making  
December 5

Reading: Ravitch and Vinovskis, eds., Learning from the Past, Introduction and Chapters 2, 4, 7, 10-14; Patrick McGuinn, "Swing Issues and Policy Regimes: Federal Education Policy and the Politics of Policy Change," Journal of Policy History 18 No. 2 (2006): 205-240 [Project Muse]; and Judith Sealander, "The History of Childhood Policy: A Philippic's Wish List," Journal of Policy History 16 No. 2 (2004): 175-187 [Project Muse].

**\*\*Paper No. 3 Due on Friday, December 8, noon\*\***

Week #15                      Family Life, Myths, and History  
December 12

Reading: Richard White, Remembering Ahanagan; and Sam Wineburg, “Crazy for History,” The Journal of American History 90 (March 2004): 1401-14 [History Cooperative].

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### **Guidelines for Papers**

Each paper will be evaluated on its scholarly merits: the clarity of the thesis, the persuasiveness of the evidence, and the strength of the conclusions. The quality of one’s prose

enhances clarity and persuasiveness.

Every paper must have endnotes and a bibliography. There are many different style guides; historians tend to use the University of Chicago's A Manual of Style. A shortened version of the Chicago Manual can be found at the back of most issues of the History of Education Quarterly.

### The Prospectus:

For Paper No. 1 provide a one paragraph description of the mode of historical analysis you would like to study. Also include a bibliography of the articles or books you plan to explore.

For Paper No. 2, provide a one paragraph description of a mode of historical analysis—different from your first paper—that you would like to study. Also include a bibliography of relevant articles or books.

For Paper No. 3, you have two choices. 1) You can write about “non-print” historical sources. 2) You can write a master’s thesis or dissertation proposal. If you select this option, the topic explored does NOT have to focus on the history of education.

Whatever your choice, you will need to provide a one page prospectus, following the format for your first two papers.

### **Paper No. 1 & 2                      Modes of Historical Analysis**

These two papers will allow you to explore a particular mode of historical inquiry in education. Historians draw upon many different academic disciplines, ideological frameworks, and the like to study the past. Select one of the approaches listed below, read some general works on the approach, and then select what you would regard as the *best* article length example you can find of this approach in the history of education.

What is the main strength and weakness of this mode of analysis and approach to history? What practical or particular problems (sources, ideological concerns, e.g.) confront historians attracted to this approach to the past? Why does the essay you’ve selected provide an exceptionally good example of this genre of history?

To locate an article, you might begin by browsing through the last ten years (or so) of the History of Education Quarterly to get a flavor of the different sorts of essays published there. (You need not select an essay from this journal as the focal point of your paper. Articles on the history of education appear in a variety of historical journals). In addition, below I have listed some approaches to the past and some of the leading journals you may want to consult. This is



not an exhaustive list of modes of history or of relevant journals.

Popular history (Journal of Popular Culture)  
Social History (Journal of Social History; Past and Present)  
intellectual history (Journal of the History of Ideas)  
psychohistory (Journal of Psychohistory)  
quantitative history (Historical Methods; Social Science History)  
radical history (History Workshop; Radical History Review)  
women's history (Signs; Feminist Studies, Journal of Women's History)  
oral history (Oral History Review)  
public history (The Public Historian)  
policy history (Journal of Policy History)  
postmodern history (Rethinking History)  
comparative history (Comparative Studies in History and Society, Comparative  
Education Review)

The two most important historical journals in America are, arguably, the Journal of American History and the American Historical Review. They are available on-line via JSTOR and History Cooperative, accessible through MADCAT.

### **Paper No. 3**

#### **Select either (A) The “Non-Print” World of History; or (B) Write a Master’s or Dissertation Proposal**

A) Since so much of our course is oriented around printed words and documents, this paper provides an opportunity to explore the “non-print” sources sometimes used by historians. Scholars often study these sources together with printed material, but your paper should focus as much as possible on trying to interpret non-print materials.

Examples would include, for example:

children's clothes, toys, or other artifacts  
photographic collections of children (family albums, collections by child labor reformers such as Lewis Hine, or the wonderful, growing collection of materials that can be viewed on line at the Library of Congress website)  
portraits, paintings, sketches of children or teenagers  
cartoons and caricatures of education (as, for example, in educational journals, such as the covers of the American School Board Journal in the early twentieth century)  
rock and roll music that deals with education, youth, growing up, etc.  
depictions of children, youth, schools, etc. on television or in movies  
school architecture

First read generally about how historians have written about material culture, photography, architecture, etc. and then analyze specific non-print sources suitable for your paper.

B) Thesis or dissertation proposal.

(1) Explain and defend the significance of the research topic and its originality; (2) Succinctly analyze the relevant secondary literature in the field; (3) present a clear hypothesis or research question; and (4) indicate the extant primary sources that would form the basis for your research.