

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of History
Semester I, 2007-08

Laird Boswell
lboswell@wisc.edu
Office hours: Tuesday 1-2, Thursday 3:30 to 4:30, 5127 Humanities

History 600: European Borderlands

This research seminar examines the history of contested borderlands in Europe since the 17th Century. Historians have increasingly turned to borderlands in order to analyze the development of national and cultural identities in Europe. Some argue that borderlands are unique sites to study national sentiment, linguistic and cultural conflicts, and the complex links between local, regional, and national identities. But is this really the case? Do borderlands have broader relevance or are they exceptional cases? The seminar will investigate these and other questions by focusing on the Franco-Spanish border, Trieste and Italian-Yugoslav-Slovenian borderlands, and the dismantling of the border between East and West Germany in the late twentieth century.

We will meet for the first 8 weeks of the semester to discuss common readings. Students are responsible for leading (in collaboration with another seminar member) one class discussion. Prior to our meetings, all students are required to email me two questions for discussion based on the readings. The questions should be sent to me and to the discussion leaders by 9 p.m. the day before the seminar meets. During the second half of the semester students will research and write a 20-25 page research paper based on primary and secondary sources.

Requirements: Two short (2 pages) response papers due early in the semester, a 1-2 page research statement of purpose, a detailed bibliography, and a paper outline. The central requirement of the course is a 20-25 page research paper on some aspect of the history of borderlands in Europe. You will also be required to discuss and critique each others' first drafts and to make a formal oral presentation to the seminar during the last week of classes. Attendance is required. Please warn me in advance if you will be unable to attend a particular class session. Class participation will be a component of your final grade. Required books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore and are also on 3 hour reserve in College Library. In addition a course reader will be available for purchase at the Humanities Copy Center.

The response papers (weeks 3 and 5) are due in class and are designed to facilitate our discussions. These papers should not be summaries of the readings; rather, you should pick 2 or 3 themes from the readings and "respond" to them in some detail. [Questions you may want to think about: Was the author convincing? If not, why not? Were you struck by the way he/she formulated an argument? Were the arguments original? Surprising? Based on evidence? What kinds of questions are left unanswered?]

Grading:

Final paper: 60%
 Class participation: 25%
 Short response papers: 15%

The following books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore and are also available on 3 hour reserve at College Library:

Richard Marius and Melvin Page, A Short Guide to Writing about History (Pearson, 2005)
 Daphne Berdahl, Where the World Ended: Re-Unification and Identity in the German Borderland (University of California Press, 1999)
 Peter Sahlins, Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees (University of California Press, 1989)
 Glenda Sluga, The Problem of Trieste and the Italo-Yugoslav Border (State University of New York Press, 2001)

Week 1 (September 6) Introduction**Week 2 (September 13). Borderlands in Historical Perspective**

Peter Sahlins, Boundaries, Preface, Introduction, 1-132.

John Agnew, "The 'Civilizational' Roots of European National Boundaries," in David H. Kaplan and Jouni Häkli eds., Boundaries and Place: European Borderlands in Geographical Context (Lanham, Md., Rowman and Littlefield, 2002), 18-33.

Thomas M. Wilson and Hastings Donnan, "Nation, State and Identity at International Borders," in Thomas M. Wilson and Hastings Donnan, Border Identities: Nation and State at International Frontiers (Cambridge University Press, 1998),. 1-30

Week 3 (September 20). Forging a Border in the Pyrenees*****First Response Paper due in Class*****

Sahlins, Boundaries, 133-197; 238-298.

William Douglass, "A Western Perspective on an Eastern interpretation of where North meets South: Pyrenean Border Cultures," in Border Identities, 62-95,

Week 4 (September 27). Trieste and the Making of the Italian-Yugoslav Frontier

Glenda Sluga, The Problem of Trieste, 1-109,

Pamela Ballinger, History in Exile. Memory and Identity at the Borders of the Balkans (Princeton University Press, 2003), 1-14, 50-74

Week 5 (October 4). Memory and Hybridity on Italy's Balkan Frontier

*****Second Response Paper due in Class*****

Sluga, The Problem of Trieste, 133-178

Warwick Armstrong, "Culture, Continuity and Identity in the Slovene-Italian Border Region," in James Anderson et al., Culture and Cooperation in Europe's Borderlands (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003), 145-169

Mateja Sedmak et al., "Evolution and perspectives on intercultural coexistence at the Slovene-Italian Border," in Warwick Armstrong and James Anderson, Geopolitics of European Union Enlargement: The Fortress Empire (London: Routledge, 2007), 192-205.

Ballinger, History in Exile, 245-73.

Week 6 (October 11). Library Session with Barbara Walden (European History Bibliographer). Meet in Room 436 Memorial Library at 1:20.

***** By Monday, October 8 at noon: email the class a three sentence description of your research project along with a title *****

Reading: Marius and Page, A Short Guide to Writing about History, 29-54, 79-105

Don't take a vacation this week! Work on your research project.

Week 7 (October 18). The German-German border

Daphne Berdahl, Where the World Ended, 1-105

John Breuilly, "Sovereignty, Citizenship and Nationality: Reflections on the Case of Germany," in Malcom Anderson and Eberhard Bort, The Frontiers of Europe (London: Pinter, 1998), 36-67.

*****Paper proposal due***** (1-2 pages). You should describe your research project and outline the central questions you are addressing. I will pair you with another member of the class and you will be required to provide a written critique your respective proposals.

Week 8 (October 25) . What Borders Remain after the Wall is Dismantled?

Berdahl, Where the World Ended, 105-183, 206-233.

John Borneman, "Grenzregime (border regime): The Wall and its Aftermath," in **Border Identities**, 162-190.

*****Bibliography of primary and secondary sources due***** Critique of your partner's research proposal due (send one copy to your partner and one copy to me)

Week 9 (November 1). Individual Meetings with Instructor during Class Time.

*****Paper outline due*****

Week 10 (November 8). The Research Process

Discussion of sample research papers.

Reading: Marius and Page, A Short Guide to Writing about History, 1-28, 55-79, 106-173

You should also be prepared to give a short (5 minute) presentation on your research project.

Week 11 (November 15). Individual Meetings with Instructor during Class Time**Week 12 (November 22). Thanksgiving**

*****Rough draft due Monday November 19 at 4 pm*****. Rough drafts should be as complete as possible (including footnotes, a bibliography, an introduction and a conclusion). The more you present, the more you will profit from the comments of your fellow students.

Week 13 (November 29). Discussion of rough drafts in small groups of 3 or 4.**Week 14 (December 6). In class oral presentations****Week 15 (December 13). In class oral presentations**

*****Final paper due Monday December 17 at noon*****