

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
SPRING 1990

History 902
Mr. Schultz

RESEARCH SEMINAR IN AMERICAN URBAN AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Purpose of the Seminar:

The instructor assumes that participants will not be fully familiar with some of the techniques of research and writing necessary for a professional historian. This seminar will acquaint members with some of the basic methods and techniques of research in the general field of United States history and especially in the areas of urban and social history. There will be several library exercises devoted to basic research techniques.

Each participant will prepare and present to the others members a paper based principally on primary research materials dealing with some aspect of urban and/or social history. Each member of the seminar is responsible for reading and critically commenting on the work of their fellow participants. The papers will be on a topic of interest to more than one or two professional "experts" and will be of publishable quality.

Texts:

The instructor requires all members of the seminar to purchase:
David A. Goldfield and Blaine Brownell, Urban America: From Downtown to

No Town.

The instructor suggests that participants purchase:
Jacques Barzun & Henry F. Graff, The Modern Researcher
William Strunk & E.B. White, The Elements of Style

I. Introduction to the Seminar

Jan. 24

- A. Autobiographical statements
 - 1. academic background
 - 2. preparation in American history
 - 3. previous research projects and experience
 - 4. goals of graduate careers
 - 5. proposed topic of research for M.A. and/or Ph.D.
- B. Discussion of the procedures and purposes of the seminar

II. Urban and Social History

Jan. 31

- A. Discussion of themes in urban history--read assigned text
- B. Discussion of themes in social history
- C. Tentative discussion of individual research topics

III. Finding Aids for U.S. History

Feb. 7

A. Suggested Reading:

1. Barzun & Graff, Modern Researcher, chs. 1-4
2. Homer C. Hockett, The Critical Method in Historical Research and Writing, pp. 85-129.
3. Frank Friedel, et. al. (eds.), Harvard Guide to American History, pp. 37-274 (read text, ignore lengthy book listings).

B. Assignment (due Feb. 5 to instructor)

1. Prepare a typed list for presentation to the seminar dealing with one of the topics below. The instructor will duplicate these and make them available the day of the seminar to other members. In class be prepared to give an oral presentation on the materials, informing other members about the most useful of these items and about the most expedient means of using the various items.
2. TOPICS:
 - a. general bibliographical guides in history (not solely devoted to U.S. history) and early national bibliographies for America, including Evans, Sabin, etc.
 - b. bibliographical guides and bibliographies for American urban and social history.
 - c. periodical indexes and guides
 - d. biographies and autobiographies, including the DAB and others.
 - e. atlases and gazeteers
 - f. indexes and bibliographies for American newspapers.
 - g. theses and dissertations on American history and other disciplines relevant to urban and social history.
 - h. bibliographical guides to public documents (federal, state, and local).
 - i. microfilm and microfiche sets for American history.
 - j. guides to travel accounts.
 - k. guides to and compilations of pictorial records.
 - l. guides to statistical sources.
 - m. guides to legal records.

IV. Manuscripts and Documents

Feb. 14

A. Suggested Readings:

1. Ray Allen Billington, "Guides to American History Manuscripts Collections in the Libraries of the United States," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXXVIII (Dec. 1951), 467-96.
2. Harvard Guide to American History (rev. ed.), I, 67-108.
3. Barzun & Graff, Modern Researcher, ch. 5.

B. Assignment (due Feb. 14)

1. locate in the library each of the items listed below and prepare a proper footnote citation for each; at the conclusion of the class each student will hand in the list to the instructor.
2. Items:
 - a. present the various titles given to debates in the United States Congress since 1789. Then, select a subject discussed in 1816, one in 1836, another in 1870, and another in 1896, giving the proper citation for each.
 - b. The Sherman Anti-Trust Act.
 - c. United States Supreme Court cases:
 - (1) Hotchkiss v. Greenwood
 - (2) Yick Wo v. Hopkins
 - d. Census Reports:
 - (1) give the figures for and proper citation of source for "illiteracy in the U.S. population, 1870."

- (2) give the figures for and proper citation of source for "occupied dwelling units, 1890--total number of all units and total number and percentage of owner-occupied units."
- e. In 1891 a Select Committee submitted a report on Chinese immigration to the House of Representatives.

V. Discussion of Progress on Seminar Paper

Feb. 21

Assignment (due Feb. 19 to instructor)

1. Prepare a bibliography of the materials you have consulted and plan to consult in the preparation of your paper. Use an approved and consistent form of citation for each item. On or before 10 A.M., Feb. 19, place two copies of the bibliography on reserve in the State Historical Society and submit one copy to the instructor.
2. Each member of the seminar will read the bibliographies of the other members and be prepared to discuss them at the Feb. 21 meeting. Preparers of the bibliographies will be ready to discuss the importance of each item to their research.

VI. Census and Mapping Techniques

Feb. 28

Assignment (due in class, Feb. 28)

1. Use the "Vital Statistics" volumes of the Eleventh Census of the U.S. (1890) which includes information on various cities.
2. Xerox the base map (ward map) for whichever city you chose to work with.
3. Map on a ward basis the foreign population. Indicate which wards have the highest concentration of foreign-born (use columns in census volumes that list foreign-born and persons who have at least one parent who is foreign-born).
4. To do this you will have to: (a) figure the percentage of foreign-born in the total city population (b) figure the percentage of foreign-born in each ward, and (c) determine which wards are over-represented and which are under-represented in foreign population relative to the citywide percentage of foreign population.
5. For the intrepid, who wish to undertake this informative additional and optional part of the exercise, compute a citywide index of residential segregation and indicate which wards contributed most heavily to that index. For an explanation of this simple technique, see: Karl and Alma Tauber, Negroes in Cities, p. 237; or, Charles Dollar and Richard Jensen, Historian's Guide to Statistics, p. 125.

VII. Reviewing Books in American History

Mar. 7

A. Suggested Readings:

1. "Book Reviewing" in Harvard Guide, pp. 19-20.
2. George Sarton, "Notes on the Reviewing of Learned Books," Isis, XLI (July, 1950), 149-58.
3. Barzun & Graff, Modern Researcher, pp. 271-74.
4. Look at reviews in such journals as the American Historical Review, the Journal of American History, the Journal of Social History, or Reviews in American History.

B. Assignment (due Mar. 7)

1. read a significant work in American urban or social history published since 1960 and write a no more than 500 word review to be handed in to the instructor at the end of class.
2. be prepared to give a brief oral report on the book to the other members of the seminar in class.

VIII. MAR. 14 -- NO CLASS MEETING

Mar. 17-25 Spring Break

IX. Discussion of Progress on Seminar Papers

Mar. 28

Assignment (due Mar. 26 by 10 A.M.)

1. Prepare a detailed topic sentence outline of your research paper, presenting clearly your organization, the questions that you are focusing on, the answers (even if tentative now) you are providing, the thesis you are testing. This is to be, in essence, a short rough draft of your paper.
2. On or before Mar. 26 (10 A.M.) place two copies of your draft at the Reference Desk of the State Historical Society and submit one copy to the instructor.
3. Each member of the seminar will read the outline drafts of the others and be prepared to comment on them in seminar.
4. Half the members of the seminar will have their outline drafts discussed this week, the rest the following week.

X. Discussion of Progress on Seminar Papers, II

April 4

XI. The Nature of History

April 11

Recommended Readings:

1. Barzun & Graff, Modern Researcher, chs. 6-10.
2. Charles A. Beard, "Written History as an Act of Faith," American Historical Review, XXXIX (Jan. 1934), 219-29.
3. James C. Malin, On the Nature of History, pp. 1-44.
4. Robin G. Collingwood, "The Limits of Historical Knowledge," in William Debbins (ed.) Essays in the Philosophy of History, pp. 92-103.

XII. The Historian's Problems of Presentation

April 18

Recommended Readings:

1. Barzun & Graff, Modern Researcher, chs. 11-14.
2. Samuel Eliot Morison, "History as a Literary Art," in his By Land and by Sea, pp. 289-98.
3. John Higham, History: Professional Scholarship in the America, "The Historian and His Audience," pp. 68-86.

XIII. Presentation of Seminar Papers

April 25, May 2, May 9

Assignment (due April 23, April 30, May 7)

Preferably, participants will provide a copy of their papers to each member of the seminar. If this is not possible, members will place two copies of the paper in the State Historical Society and give one copy to the instructor, no later than 10 A.M. of the dates specified above.