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## University of Wisconsin Madison

HIST 227

American Indians in the City: 1890s - 1970s

Humanities 1101

Mondays, Wednesdays, 4:00-5:15

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Professor Sasha Maria Suarez

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Office hours: In-person Tuesdays 11-1;

[Remote](#) Thursday 10-12;

and by remote (Zoom) appointment (schedule via email)

In the early 1890s, the Western frontier closed, the Indian Wars ended, and hundreds of American Indians traveled to Chicago to take part in the World's Fair Columbian Exposition heralding 400 years of colonial encounters in the Americas. Indians in the city were anomalous, a peculiarity. Or so it was supposed by mainstream American society. But what if American Indians already lived in Chicago and other cities across the country? What if "the Indian" and the city were not, in fact, mutually exclusive?

This course takes on the histories of American Indian peoples in urban centers with particular focus on the years between the 1890s and the 1970s. Through an examination of federal policy and American Indian organizing and activism, we will explore the multiple ways American Indian peoples have been compelled to move to urban settler cities and how they have retained Indigenous identities despite forceful attempts at their assimilation into the American melting pot. Together we will seek to answer: what is the American city? What roles have American Indian peoples played in the creation of American cities? How have American Indian peoples navigated urban space and utilized urban institutions and governance to promote Indigenous agendas?

This 3 credit course fulfills the Ethnic Studies Requirement.

### *Core Concepts*

This class is loosely divided into three interrelated core concepts of the historical study of urban Indigenous experience. These concepts will guide us as we move through the semester as we engage with them in our course sections or modules described below. It is important not to think of these as "units" we will cover, but as frameworks that will guide us through several key intellectual questions about what it has meant (and means) to be Indigenous in urban spaces.

### Centering Indigenous Histories

In the steps of American Indian studies and Native American history, we must de-center the popular narrativization of American history we all have encountered at one time or another. The term

“Indigenous cities” might seem like a bit of an anomaly given how we are taught to think about cities and urban spaces. Yet Indigenous peoples across the Americas built and lived in urban centers for centuries, some of which rivaled the size and population of European cities. “Indigenous cities” asks us to challenge how we are taught to think about Indigenous peoples and societies as nomadic, small units made up of “hunters and gatherers.” By the end of the semester, you should aim to understand (1) the methods of American Indian historical study, (2) define sovereignty, (3) and explain how urban Indigeneity is not a new trend.

### Indigenous Homelands, American Cities

While the first concept (above) mentions de-centering U.S. historical narratives of expansion, “conquest,” and Indigenous primitivity, this concept asks us to really interrogate how American cities were constructed and how, through their development, the settler colonial nation that is the U.S. was able to write Indigenous peoples out of cities even if they still remained physically. This unit similarly seeks to prioritize Indigenous sovereignty and presence, but also tackles settler colonialism, discourse around expansion, manifest destiny, modernity, and civilization.

### Rise of Red Power and Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century Activism

This concept by and far makes up the most popular element of studying urban Indigenous experience. While earlier centuries provide clear (if not complex) evidence of Indigenous resistance, the 20<sup>th</sup> century – particularly the years after World War II – shows Indigenous activism in an era of tremendous social and political upheaval and change. Indigenous peoples in the 20<sup>th</sup> century were compelled more than ever before to move to cities and to “assimilate” into American society. Out of such pressures, urban Indigenous communities developed clear political goals in defiance of settler expectations. This unit focuses particularly on Red Power, the American Indian Movement, various occupation movements, artistic renaissances, and cultural revivals.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

This course is rooted in history and American Indian studies. We will approach all aspects of this course (readings, analyses, discussions, etc.) through a methodological approach that upholds Indigenous nations, perspectives, and historical experiences. Importantly, this course will ask you to challenge narratives of Indigeneity and Indigenous histories in North America. By the end of the semester you should be able to:

- Think about Indigenous history as both a topic of inquiry and a method that requires distinct approaches to questions about the past
- Articulate how and why American Indian peoples have so often been ideologically separated from urban American experiences
- Examine how American Indians have shaped their own experiences *and* American cities as they responded to foreign governments, US policies, and contemporaneous historical events
- Point to collaborative and coalitional community organizing urban American Indians have done with other racialized communities.

Since this course fulfills the Ethnic Studies Requirement, it will aim to fulfill the goals of ESR which are as follows:

- Articulate some of the effects the past has had on present day circumstances, perceptions of, and disparities in race in the U.S.
- Recognize and question cultural assumptions, rules, and biases, and knowledge claims as they relate to race and ethnicity
- Examine questions and make decisions with consideration for the cultural perspectives and worldviews of others

**Expectations:**

This course meets for 1 hour and 15 minutes (75 minutes) two times a week. As per university credit-hour policy, you should expect to spend approximately 6 hours per week outside of class reading, writing, completing assignments, and preparing for discussions.

**Office Hours:**

My office hours will be held in person once a week on Tuesdays from 11 am to 1 pm. Additional remote office hours will be held on Thursday from 10 to 12pm (noon). You may also ask to schedule a separate time to meet by emailing me (at least 36 hours in advance). By appointment meetings will be held via Zoom.

**Readings:**

Required Texts:

- Coll Thrush, *Native Seattle: Stories from the Crossing Over Place* second edition (Seattle: University of Washington Press 2017)
- Tommy Orange, *There There* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2018)

Optional Texts:

*We will read extensively from this text, but it is available as an ebook through the library. Please see the course Canvas for a link.*

- John N. Low, *Imprints: The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians and the City of Chicago* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2016)

Additional readings include excerpts from longer monographs, articles, essays, radio programs, videos, and websites. These readings are listed out in their entirety in the schedule section of this syllabus and are accessible on Canvas.

**Grading**

Assignment	Points (out of 200)	Percentage of Total Grade
Digital Journal	30	15%
Cultural Production Reviews	20	10%
Midterm	20	10%
American Indians in the City Blog Posts	60	30%
Storytelling and Mapping Indigenous Histories Project	30	15%

Participation	40	20%
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### *Grading Scale*

A	185-200	93-100%
AB	175-184	88-92%
B	165-174	83-87%
BC	155-164	78-82%
C	140-154	70-77%
D	120-139	60-69%
F	0-119	0-59%

### **Assignments**

*Digital Journal Assignments:* weekly or as assigned posts to Canvas that address prompts, readings, and/or personal research. There is no length requirement, but you should aim for at least 1 page single-spaced. Remember that journals are informal! I will not be grading these like essays. Instead I will be looking to see how you engage the question and/or content and that you are not merely summarizing readings. This assignment is meant to give you a space to get your thoughts together before class discussions.

*Cultural Production Reviews:* two 1-2 page reviews of non-academic material that has been created by an Indigenous person or peoples about urban Indigeneity. This can include artwork, podcasts, short stories, filmed theater, etc. You must be able to share the work in class so keep track of the url!

*Take-home Midterm:* this is not a multiple choice exam. You will be asked to write a brief (3-4 page double-spaced) essay on course content covered up to spring break. Since this is a take-home midterm, you will be asked to turn it in the first class period following spring break (March 21), though you will receive the prompt 1 week prior to spring break. For full details, please refer to the midterm handout which will be available on Canvas on March 7.

*Storytelling and Mapping Indigenous Histories Project:* following the midterm you will be assigned a two-part small project that asks you to consider how we tell stories about [urban] places through digital mapping and walking tours. You will be asked to examine and/or identify websites and apps and write in-depth personal assessments about how the creators have chosen to tell stories about place in a digital format. More information about this project will be forthcoming.

*American Indians in the City Blog Posts:* this is a semester-long research project that makes up 60% of your course grade. You will be asked to write two blog posts based upon original research you have conducted about a city and/or course-related topic, which will be pre-approved through a proposal process. Around the middle of the semester we will do check-ins and sign up for due dates (dates your post will be published on a course blog). You will be required to respond via comment to at least one blog post by two different class members. We will look more closely at this assignment later this semester.

### *Participation*

You are required and expected to participate in class. The easiest way to do this is to come prepared for class discussions by completing readings and journal assignments. If I suspect that readings are not being completed, I reserve the right to hold pop quizzes and these will go toward your participation grade.

- Please note that while I will regularly take attendance, it is not a part of your grade. Per class policy regarding COVID-19, the flu, etc. (see below), if you are feeling under the weather and cannot attend class, you are required to notify me within a reasonable period of time to discuss how to make up in-class participation points.

*Extra Credit: There may be extra credit opportunities throughout the semester. These will only be able to boost your grade if you are on the cusp of the next grading increment. You will receive announcements about extra credit opportunities and information throughout the semester will be available on Canvas.*

### **Honors:**

Honors Program students may take this course for Honors Optional credit. Students should [add or drop the Honors Option](#) by following the steps outlined on the Honors Program website. To earn Honors credit in this course, students will be required to meet with me to discuss potential projects and/or assignments in addition to course material listed in this syllabus.

### **COVID-19:**

You can find the most up to date University COVID-19 policies [here](#). At this website you can schedule an appointment to get vaccinated, and upload your vaccine record.

<https://covidresponse.wisc.edu>

University policy mandates **that masks are required indoors at all times and masks must cover your nose and mouth**. Mask wearing is not negotiable and are absolutely required unless accommodations are needed and sent to me through the McBurney Center.

If you are feeling sick, even if you are vaccinated, **please stay home and consider taking a COVID-19 test**. When you are practicably able, please notify me and we will figure out an alternative route for participation grades—it is of absolute importance that you do not come to class if you are feeling ill.

### **Classroom Policies**

This is an in-person class that meets for 75 minutes every Monday and Wednesday. Lectures will not be recorded. You are responsible for asking your classmates for notes if you need to miss class. Please remember that, while I will upload PowerPoints, I will not be providing my personal lecture notes and slides may contain little textual information. To access slides, go to the “PowerPoints” section of Canvas.

Canvas: Our course site will contain all of our external readings, assignment drop boxes, the digital journal, etc. Feedback will provided through Canvas’s assignments function. You will be able to monitor your grade here as well. Please check Canvas before emailing about your grade.

*Late assignments:* each day an assignment is late, it will be reduced a third of a letter grade (for example: an A to an A-). If the assignment has not been turned in within a week, you will receive a 0. If you need an extension, please speak with me as soon as possible. Assignments that are late due to illness or other extenuating circumstances will be counted as submitted on time so long as we have discussed a possible timeline to completion.

*Course Content:* This course examines history from American Indian and Indigenous perspectives. It is important to remember that this history has real meaning and consequences to others in our classroom. As such, while we will have serious and analytical conversations throughout the course of the semester, it is important that each of us strive towards thoughtful language when discussing Indigenous peoples.

*Academic Honesty and Integrity:* All students are expected to abide by UW-Madison's policy for academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of student misconduct can result in disciplinary action including but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. For more information, refer to [conduct.students.wisc.edu/misconduct/academic-integrity/](https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/misconduct/academic-integrity/) and [conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-misconduct/student-resources/](https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-misconduct/student-resources/).

*Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence:* UW-Madison's policies prohibit sexual harassment and sexual violence (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/102/2020/08/policy-8.17.20.pdf>). Any incidents within the classroom will be taken seriously. Please note that under Title IX, I am required to report disclosure of sexual assault. Any such disclosure will remain private, but reports made to the Title IX office are not confidential. For more information on reporting policies, please refer to <https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/reporting-response-options/>.

*Harassment and Discrimination:* Absolutely no discrimination or harassment will be tolerated in the classroom. We will be addressing very difficult and sensitive topics and while some disagreement may happen, any personal attacks are strictly prohibited. As per policy at UW-Madison in compliance with that set by the Board of Regents for the University of Wisconsin system, any allegations may be submitted to the Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/eo-complaint/>).

*Diversity and Inclusion Statement:*

[Diversity](#) is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

**Resources:**

*University Health Services (UHS):* As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning. These might include strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. University Health Services can help with these or other issues you may experience. Help is always available. The no-cost mental health services at UHS include individual, couple/partner, group counseling, campus-based programming, stress management, and psychiatry services. UHS offers crisis services, which are available 24/7. To use UHS crisis service's 24 hour line, you can call 608-265-5600 (option 9). To learn more or to schedule an appointment visit <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/> or call 608-265-5600 (option 2).

*Accommodations for Students with Disabilities McBurney Disability Resource Center syllabus statement:* "The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA." [mcburney.wisc.edu/instructor/](http://mcburney.wisc.edu/instructor/)

*Writing Center:* <https://writing.wisc.edu/>

*History Lab:* <https://history.wisc.edu/undergraduate-program/the-history-lab/>

The History Lab is a resource center for undergraduate students studying, researching, and writing about the past. It is staffed by experienced graduate students from the Department of History. Through individual tutoring, the Lab focuses on honing students' abilities to form topics, conduct research, develop arguments and thesis statements, cite evidence, and write effectively. The lab is equipped to support challenges faced by English-language learners.

## Course Schedule

This schedule includes readings, assignment due dates, exam dates, and approximations of weekly lecture topics and/or themes. Please be aware that this schedule is subject to change and I reserve the right to alter any content below with advance notice.

### Centering Indigenous Histories

Week 1

<p>January 26 (01/26): <i>First day of class</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Syllabus review</li> <li>• Informal discussion: who's land are we on?</li> </ul>	<p>Readings due: None</p>	<p>Assignment due: None</p>
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Week 2: American Indian Studies Methods and Frameworks

<p>January 31 (01/31):</p>	<p>Readings due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evelyn Peters and Chris Andersen, "Introduction," in <i>Indigenous in the City</i> pp. 1-9 (PDF)</li> <li>• Kent Blansett, et. al, "Introduction," <i>Indian Cities: Histories of Indigenous Urbanism</i> pp. 1-14 (PDF) (read to the end of the first paragraph)</li> </ul>	
<p>February 02 (02/02)</p>	<p>Readings due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kendra Greendeer, "<a href="#">The Land Remembers Native Histories</a>," <i>Edge Effects</i>, Nov. 21 2019</li> <li>• Katrina Phillips, "<a href="#">Why Indigenous Place Names Matter</a>," <i>BELT Magazine</i></li> <li>• Alyssa Mt. Pleasant and Stephen Kantrowitz, "Campuses, Colonialism, and Land Grabs before Morrill,"</li> </ul>	<p>Assignment due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• first journal assignment</li> </ul>

	NAIS 8:1 (Spring 2021), pp. 151-156.	
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Week 3: Sovereignty and De-Centering Settler Colonialism

February 07 (02/07)	<p>Readings due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>John N. Low, "Chapter 1: The Potawatomi as Chicago's Early Urban Indians," in <i>Imprints: The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians and the City of Chicago</i>, pp. 1-36</li> </ul>	
February 09 (02/09)	<p>Readings due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>John N. Low, "Chapter 3: Claims Making to the Chicago Lakefront," in <i>Imprints: The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians and the City of Chicago</i>, pp. 67-94</li> </ul>	

**Indigenous homelands, American Cities**

Week 4: "Settling" the American City: Urban Space as Colonial Tool

February 14 (02/14)	<p>Readings due (recommended in italics):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coll Thrush, Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place</i>, pp. VII-XXXV</li> <li>Coll Thrush, Chapters 1 and 2, <i>Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place</i>, pp. 3-39</li> </ul>	
February 16 (02/16)	<p>Readings due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coll Thrush, Chapters 3 and 4, <i>Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place</i>, pp. 40-78</li> </ul>	<p>Assignment due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>American Indians in the City blog post proposal</li> </ul>

Week 5: Urban Indians and the Progressive Era

February 21 (02/21):	Readings due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coll Thrush, Chapter 5, <i>Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place</i>, pp. 79-104</li> </ul>	
February 23 (02/23)	Readings due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coll Thrush, Chapter 6, <i>Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place</i>, pp. 105-125</li> </ul>	

Week 6: Living in Another's Homeland + Relocation Part 1

February 28 (02/28)	Readings due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coll Thrush, Chapters 7 and 8, <i>Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place</i>, pp. 126-161</li> </ul>	
March 02 (03/02)	Readings due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coll Thrush, Chapters 9 and 10, <i>Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place</i>, pp. 162-207</li> </ul>	

Week 7: Relocation Part 2 + In-class viewing of *The Exiles*

March 07 (03/07)	Readings due: you will be randomly assigned to read one of the following chapters from Nicholas Rosenthal's <i>Reimagining Indian Country: Native American Migration and Identity in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Chapter 1. Settling into the City: American Indian Migration and Urbanization, 1900-1945," pp. 11-30</li> <li>• "Chapter 2. Settling into the City: American</li> </ul>	Assignment due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural Productions #1</li> </ul>
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	<p>Indian Migration and Urbanization, 1900-1945,” pp. 31-74</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Chapter 3: From Americanization to Self-Determination: The Federal Urban Relocation Program,” pp. 75-102</li> </ul>	
March 02 (03/09):	<p>Readings due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No required readings</li> <li>• <i>Recommended:</i> <a href="#">Max Nesterak, “Uprooted: The 1950s Plan to Erase Indian Country,” MPR News</a></li> </ul>	<p>Assignment due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid-semester evaluation</li> <li>• Sign-ups for American Indians in the City blog post due dates and check-ins</li> </ul>

Week 8

03/14-17: Spring Break (NO CLASS)

## Rise of Red Power and Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century Activism

Week 9: Activism in California + In-Class Viewing of *Beyond Recognition*

March 21 (03/21)	<p>Readings due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kurt M. Peters, “Continuing Identity: Laguna Pueblo Railroaders in Richmond, California,” <i>American Indian Culture and Research Journal</i> No. 4 (1998), pp. 187-198</li> </ul>	<p>Assignment due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take-home midterm</li> </ul>
March 23 (03/23)	<p>Readings due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vine Deloria Jr., “A Redefinition of Indian Affairs,” <i>Custer Died For Your Sins</i>, pp. 243-267</li> </ul>	

Week 10: The Occupation of Alcatraz

March 28 (03/28)	<p>Readings due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">“Richard Oakes delivering the Alcatraz Proclamation,”</a> The</li> </ul>	
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	Education Archive (7 mn) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radio Free Alcatraz, "<a href="#">December 30 1969</a>"</li> <li>• Additional primary source readings TBD</li> </ul>	
March 30 (03/30)	Readings due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tommy Orange, <i>There There</i>, pp. 1-61</li> </ul>	

#### Week 11: Pacific Northwest Fish-Ins and Other Occupations

April 04 (04/04)	Readings due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tommy Orange, <i>There There</i>, pp. 62-117</li> </ul>	
April 06 (04/06)	Readings due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tommy Orange, <i>There There</i>, pp. 118-170</li> </ul>	

#### Week 12: Minneapolis and the American Indian Movement

April 11 (04/11)	Readings due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tommy Orange, <i>There There</i>, pp. 171-225</li> </ul>	
April 13 (04/13)	Readings due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tommy Orange, <i>There There</i>, pp. 226-298</li> </ul>	Assignment due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural Production #2</li> </ul>

#### Week 13: Urban Indigenous Education

April 18 (04/18)	Readings due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Susan Applegate Krouse, "What Came of the Takeovers: Women's Activism and the Indian Community School of Milwaukee," <i>AIQ</i> 27:3/4, pp. 533-547</li> </ul>	
April 20 (04/20)	Readings due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: "Heart of the Earth Survival School," <i>Wyl'd Ryce</i>, TPT, April 1980, 20 mns (PLEASE NOTE: this video includes</li> </ul>	

	ableist slurs and depicts a recently passed community elder) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional reading TBD</li> </ul>	
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Week 14: Digital Mapping + UW-Madison Cultural Landscape Tour

April 25 (04/25)	Readings due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD</li> </ul>	Assignment due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storytelling and Mapping Indigenous Histories Project Part 1</li> </ul>
April 27 (04/27)	Readings due: None	

Week 15: Beyond Acknowledgement + Reflections and Farewells

May 02 (05/02) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student evaluations</li> </ul>	Readings due: None	
May 04 (05/04): <i>Last day of class</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflections and farewells</li> </ul>	Readings due: None	

Final Due Dates:

May 08 (05/08): Storytelling and Mapping Indigenous Histories Project Part 2