

Historical Methods

Professor Tom Ewing

CRN: 12772

Office hours: Tuesday 2:00-3:00, Thursday 11:00-12:00 and by appointment

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This course is an introduction to the challenges, opportunities, and requirements of studying history at the university level. Students will explore how meanings are pursued through historical inquiry, examine the debates and dilemmas of historical scholarship, and consider the ways in which historical knowledge informs everyday life. Historical Methods meets the writing intensive graduation requirement for the university, as well as the requirements of the History Major (with a grade of C or higher). Students enrolled in this course must be prepared to participate actively in each class, complete all assignments on time, and sustain this work over the course of the semester. Enrolling in this course is an affirmation of willingness to make these efforts. All work completed for this course must conform to the Virginia Tech Honor Code.

Texts:

Peter N. Stearns, Peter Seixas, and Sam Wineburg, eds., *Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History. National and International Perspectives* New York University Press, 2000 (081478142)

John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History. Aims, Methods, and New Directions*

Revised third edition. Longman, 2002 (0582772540)

Requirements:

Exercises (ungraded)	All semester (approximately 20 total)	40%
Analytical papers (3 @ 5 pages)	Due February 6, March 18, and April 8	30%
Final presentation (10 minutes) and paper (10 pages)	April 15, 17, 22, and 24 May 2	30%

Date:**Readings:****Assignments:**

January 14

January 16

Stearns, "Why Study History?"(online)

January 21

Lowenthal, "Dilemmas and Delights"

Rosenzweig, "How Americans Use and Think about the Past"
Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History pp. 63-82, 262-283

January 23

Tosh, *Pursuit of History*, pp. 1-53

January 28

Tosh, *Pursuit of History*, pp. 54-82

January 30

Tosh, *Pursuit of History*, pp. 83-107

Library skills session

February 4

Levstik, "Articulating the Silences"

Wineburg, "Making Historical Sense" in
Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History pp. 284-326

Library skills session

Date:	Readings:	Assignments:
February 6		Historical inquiry paper due
February 11	Tosh, <i>Pursuit of History</i> , pp. 108-137 Dunn, "Constructing World History" <i>Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History</i> pp. 121-140	
February 13	Tosh, <i>Pursuit of History</i> , pp. 138-163	
February 18	Tosh, <i>Pursuit of History</i> , pp. 164-243	
February 20	Tosh, <i>Pursuit of History</i> , pp. 244-270 Seixas, "Schweigen! Die Kinder!" Wertsch, "Is it Possible to Teach Beliefs" <i>Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History</i> pp. 19-50	
February 25	Shemilt, "The Caliph's Coin" Nash, "The Convergence Paradigm" <i>Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History</i> pp. 83-120	
February 27	Tosh, <i>Pursuit of History</i> , pp. 295-322 <i>Virginia Schools in the Great Depression</i> (online) Dougherty, "From Anecdote to Analysis" (online) Shopes, "What is Oral History?" (online) "Oral History Evaluation Guidelines" (online)	
Spring break		
March 11	Tosh, <i>Pursuit of History</i> , pp. 270-294	
March 13	Bain, "Into the Breach" Gutierrez, "Making Connections" <i>Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History</i> pp. 331-374	
March 18		Historical approaches paper due
March 20	<i>Virginia Schools in the Great Depression</i> (online)	
March 25	<i>Virtual Christiansburg Institute</i> (online) Shircliffe, "'We Got the Best of That World'" (online) Holmes, "Part of History" (online)	
March 27	Allen, "Story in Oral History" (online) Jenning, "'My Mama Told Me'" (online)	
April 1	Boz-Mansilla, "Historical Understanding" Stearns, "Getting Specific about Training" <i>Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History</i> pp. 390-436	
April 3		

Date:	Readings:	Assignments:
April 8		Oral history paper due
April 10	“Liberal Learning and the History Major” (online) “Why Become a Historian?” (online)	
April 15		Presentations
April 17		Presentations
April 22		Presentations
April 24		Presentations
April 29	Tosh, <i>Pursuit of History</i> , pp. 323-328	
May 2		Final paper due

Online reading assignments:

1. Peter Stearns, “Why Study History?” American Historical Association
<http://www.theaha.org/pubs/stearns.htm>
2. *Virginia Schools in the Great Depression* Accessed from
<http://www.majbill.vt.edu/history/ewing/index.htm>
3. Linda Shopes, “What is Oral History?” *History Matters. The U.S. Survey on the Web*
<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/mse/oral/oral.pdf>
4. Jack Dougherty, “From Anecdote to Analysis: Oral Interviews and the New Scholarship in Educational History,” *Journal of American History* Vol. 88, No. 2 (September 1999) pp. 712-723.
<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/jah/86.2/dougherty.html>
5. “Oral History Evaluation Guidelines,” Oral History Association Revised September 2000 (online)
<http://www.dickinson.edu/oha/EvaluationGuidelines.html>
6. *Virtual Christiansburg Institute* <http://www.christiansburginstitute.org/>
7. Barbara Shircliffe, “‘We Got the Best of the That World’: A Case for the Study of Nostalgia in the Oral History of School Segregation,” *Oral History Review* Vol. 28, No. 2 (Fall 2001) pp. 59-84.
<http://rudolfo.ingentaselect.com/vl=41122107/cl=85/nw=1/fm=docpdf/rpsv/catchword/ucp/00940798/v28n2/s3/p59>
8. Larry E. Holmes, “Part of History: The Oral Record and Moscow’s Model School No. 25, 1931-1937,” *Slavic Review* Vol. 56, No. 2 (Summer 1997) pp. 279-306. <http://www.jstor.org/>
9. Barbara Allen, “Story in Oral History: Clues to Historical Consciousness,” *Journal of American History* vol. 79, No. 2 (September 1992) pp. 606-611. <http://www.jstor.org/>
10. Judi Jennings, “‘My Mama Told Me’: Reclaiming the Story in Oral History,” *The History Teacher* Vol. 30, No. 1 (November 1996) pp. 89-95. <http://www.jstor.org/>
11. “Why Become a Historian?” American Historical Association
<http://www.theaha.org/pubs/why/blackeyintro.htm>
12. “Liberal Learning and the History Major” American Historical Association
<http://www.theaha.org/pubs/tf.htm>