

HIST 651: History and Public Engagement in Modern America

Spring 2019

Tuesday: 3:30PM-6:20PM

UNIV319

Dr. Brownell

Email: brownell@purdue.edu

Office: UNIV 22

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1-3 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

During the post-WWII era, historians advised presidential administrations on public policy. By the 1970s, historians were at the front lines of grassroots movements with their scholarship that exposed the historical roots of racial and gender inequality. Today, historians host radio shows and serve as political pundits on television and on the front pages of the mainstream press while partisans frequently pose as historians for political gain. This class will examine how historians have intersected with the public in modern America. We will discuss how ideas of public engagement have changed and the impact this has had on historical scholarship, the historical profession, and public understanding of history.

COURSE MATERIALS

Students in the class are responsible for obtaining copies of all the books below, whether via online vendors, bookstores, Purdue/local libraries, or Interlibrary loan. Materials with a ** will be made available on Blackboard. You may use paper or electronic versions of the assigned readings, but you are expected to bring to class your copies of the week's assigned readings, whether in digital or paper form. These assigned works are to be read in their entirety unless otherwise noted. As a member of this seminar, you are expected to attend every class, ready to engage this assigned material. Each week, you should be ready to speak about the author and his/her work and raise relevant questions and comments for further examination by the class.

REQUIRED BOOKS

- Margaret MacMillan, *Dangerous Games: The Uses and Abuses of History*. Holt Paperbacks, 1996.
- Arthur Schlesinger Jr. *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom*. Transaction Publishers, 1997.
- Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s*. Harvard University Press, 1981.
- Linda Gordon *Woman's Body, Woman's Right: the History of Birth Control in America*. Viking/Penguin Books, 1976.
- Thomas McCraw *Prophets of Regulation: Charles Francis Adams; Louis D. Brandeis; James M. Landis; Alfred E. Kahn*. Harvard University Press, 1986.
- Randy Roberts, *Joe Louis: Hard Times Man*. Yale University Press, 2012.

- Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943*. University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Margaret O'Mara, *Cities of Knowledge: Cold War Science and the Search for the Next Silicon Valley*, Princeton University Press, 2004.
- *Charleston Syllabus: Readings on Race, Racism, and Racial Violence*. Eds. Chad Williams, Kidada Williams, Keisha Blain. University of Georgia Press, 2016.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assessments will be based on the following assignments:

- Presentations/Pitches
 - Worth 30% of final course grade
- Participation
 - Worth 40% of final course grade
 - Ongoing throughout semester, beginning with our first class meeting and ending with our last session on April.
- Public Engagement Project
 - 30% of final course grade

General notes re: grades:

- Final grades in the course **will** be assessed according to the plus/minus scale.
- Neither exam grades nor final grades in the course will be provided or discussed via email. If you would like to discuss your grades and/or your coursework in general, please do not hesitate to see me during office hours. I will be happy to go over your grades with you at any point in the semester.
- **You must complete all assignments to pass the course. This includes participation.**

PROCEDURES AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

- All written work in the class should be double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, and Times New Roman 12 pt. font. These are not recommended guidelines but mandatory formatting requirements.
- Any footnoted citations should follow Chicago Manual of Style guidelines, as detailed in Chapter 7 of Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 8th Ed.
- All deadlines, as listed on the syllabus, are to be considered hard and fast due dates. Please do not ask for extensions in this course, as they will not be granted. Late work of any sort will not be accepted, nor will I grant “incompletes” as final course grades.
- Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in class or via email, as circumstances allow.

- This class is intended to encourage open, informed discussions and I hope to protect and foster a classroom atmosphere that will encourage an open and enlightened discourse in the class. Ultimately I would hope that you take those ideas and informed discussions with you beyond the classroom. **Respect, open-mindedness and tolerance will be the standard for all classroom discussions.**
- Email will be the preferred mode of contact outside of regular classroom hours and office hours. Please feel free to contact me directly at any point. I will also create a class email list which I will use to send course-related announcements as needed. **For this reason, I expect you to check your Purdue email account at least once a day.**
- In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to changes as necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Any necessary changes will be announced via email and/or the class Blackboard page.
- During the last two weeks of the semester, you will be provided an opportunity to evaluate this course and my teaching. You will receive an official email from evaluation administrators with a link to the online evaluation site, and you will have two weeks to complete this evaluation. I consider your feedback vital, as does Purdue University. Your professors have access to these online evaluations only after grades are due.
- As a student in this class and at Purdue, you are expected to uphold the standards of academic integrity. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses and will be treated as such in this class. You are expected to produce your own work and to accurately cite all necessary materials. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: the use of papers or books not authorized by the instructor during examinations, quizzes, and other written assignments; giving or receiving answers during or in preparation for examinations and quizzes; and failing to cite sources employed for writing assignments. Those who engage in such practices should expect to fail the course and have their behavior referred to the Dean of Students. This is non-negotiable: if I find that you have plagiarized, you will fail the assignment and potentially will fail the entire course—period. Please do not put yourself in this situation.
- If you need any special accommodations to participate fully in class, please see me as soon as possible. I will keep all discussions confidential as long as the situation permits. Please note that, in order for Purdue University to accommodate your needs, you will need to provide appropriate written documentation and have it on file with Student Services. Students should be aware that Services for Student Disabilities are available at 494-1247 if you need further assistance.

READING AND DISCUSSION SCHEDULE

Week 1: January 8: Course Introduction

Week 2: January 15: Historians in Public: Debates over Ethics, Activism, and Professional Responsibilities

- Margaret MacMillan, *Dangerous Games: The Uses and Abuses of History*
- Presentation #1: History in Public: What you love and hate
 - Thinking about the ideas that MacMillan introduces in her work, prepare a 6-8 minute presentation on a public history project/platform/production you think is incredibly effective and one you find problematic. You should prepare handouts or a PowerPoint presentation for the class that highlights specific aspects of the project and how it fits into the ethical discussions about the uses and abuses of history.

Week 3: January 22: Historians as Public Intellectuals in Postwar America

- Arthur Schlesinger Jr., *The Vital Center*
- Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition: And the Men Who Made It*, excerpts. **

Week 4: January 29: Historians in the Civil Rights Movement

- Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle*
- Aldon Morris, “W. E. B. Du Bois at the center: from science, civil rights movement, to Black Lives Matter,” *The British Journal of Sociology*, 2017, Vol. 68, No.1. **
- Valeria Sinclair-Chapman and Harry Targ, “Fusion Politics from the Poor People’s Campaign to the Rainbow Coalition to the New Poor People’s Campaign.” *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, 2018, Vol. 18. **
- Invited Guest: Dr. Valeria Sinclair-Chapman

Week 5: February 5: Historians in Second Wave Feminism

- Linda Gordon, *Woman's Body, Woman's Right*
- Wendy Kline, “Learning from the Uterus Out: Abortion and Women’s Health Activism in Chicago,” in *Bodies of Knowledge, Sexuality, Reproduction, and Women’s Health in the Second Wave*. 2010. **
- Invited guest: Dr. Wendy Kline

Week 6: February 12: The Origins of Public History

- Robert Kelley, “Public History: Its Origins, Nature, and Prospects.” *Public Historian*. Vol. 1, No. 1, 1978.
- Richard Hewlett, “The Practice of History in the Federal Government.” *Public Historian*. Vol. 1, No. 1, 1978.
- Public History Today
 - Read through at 4-6 blog posts on the National Council of Public History blog, History@Work, and prepare to discuss the following questions:
 - What idea/project is new to you?
 - What is something you read that you want to learn more about?
 - What is something you read that you find unsettling or unsatisfying?
 - What is something you read that connects to topics/discussions you already know?
- Presentation #2: Public History in Practice
 - Public history takes shape today through local, state, and federal government organizations, museums, parks, non-profits, businesses, and in a variety of online settings as well. Explore one particular public history exhibit, whether online (a digital exhibit or oral history collection), in the local Lafayette area (local museums or parks), in Indianapolis, or anywhere else you may want to visit. In a 10 minute presentation, discuss how the exhibit is set up, by whom it is funded, what strategies does it use to engage the audience, how it follows or departs from the ideas of public history first launched in the 1970s.

Week 6: February 19: Historians and Public Policy Debates

- Thomas McCraw, *Prophets of Regulation*
- Jason Stahl, “Think Tanks in the Age of Reagan,” in his *Right Moves: The Conservative Think Tank in American Political Culture Since 1945*. **
- Presentation #3:
 - In his book, *Right Moves*, Jason Stahl discusses the wealth of scholarly publications on deregulation that emerged out of conservative think tanks during the Reagan era in an effort to bolster the administration’s policy agenda. Find one example of this writing, and be prepared to discuss your finding with the broader class. Who is the scholar? How does the scholar craft a political argument? What types of sources are used? How does this compare to the approach that Thomas McCraw takes in *Prophets of Regulation*?

Week 7: February 26: Politics and Scholarly Choices

- Margaret O'Mara, *Cold War Cities*
- Julian Zelizer, "The Arguments Policy Historians Make" in his *Governing America: The Revival of Political History*. **
- Presentation #4:
 - Julian Zelizer outlines five different types of arguments that policy historians make: 1) Institutional and Cultural Persistence; 2) Lost Alternatives, 3) Historical Correctives, 4) Political Culture, and 5) Process Evolution.
 - Select a book in your field that fits into one of these categories (or perhaps make an argument about the need for a new category!) and prepare a 6-8 minute presentation for the class about the significance of this book and what light it sheds on a particular political topic or policy issue.

March 1 @ 1:30: Q&A with Andrew Maner, chairman of Sentinel Strategy and Policy Consulting.

Week 8: March 5: Writing for Popular Audiences

- Randy Roberts, *Joe Louis*.
- Required Film: *Joe Louis: American Hero... Betrayed*. HBO Films (2008). Available through Purdue Library (see link on Blackboard).
- Invited Guest: Dr. Randy Roberts
- Documentary Pitch Presentation:
 - Prepare a brief pitch on how you would turn your research into a documentary.

Week 9- March 12: NO CLASS: Spring Break

Week 10- March 19: The Backstory Treatment

- Erika Lee, *At America's Gate*
- Required Listening: Backstory Episode "Border Patrols: Policing Immigration in America." <https://www.backstoryradio.org/shows/border-patrols/>
- Backstory research preparation on Border Patrols **
- Invited Guest: Dr. Brian Balogh

Week 11- March 26: The Podcast as a Journal Article

- Required Listening: *A 12: The Story of Charlottesville*. Available on iTunes and <http://www.pastpundit.com/a12/>
- Invited Guest: Dr. Nicole Hemmer
- Podcast Pitch Presentation:
 - Prepare a brief pitch on how you would turn your research into a podcast series.

Week 12- April 2: Should Historians be Pundits?

- Moshik Temkin, “Historians Shouldn’t Be Pundits,” *New York Times*, June 26, 2017. **
- “Welcome to Made By History,” *Washington Post*, June 26, 2017. **
- Kathryn Cramer Brownell, “Gerald Ford, *Saturday Night Live*, and the Development of the Entertainer in Chief.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 46, No. 4, 2016. **
- Kathryn Cramer Brownell, “How Saturday Night Live brought down the presidency (to our level).” *Reuters*, February 13, 2015. **
- Op-ed Pitch:
 - Prepare a pitch and outline for an op-ed piece linked to your current research.

Week 13- April 9: History and Political Activism Today:

- *Charleston Syllabus: Readings on Race, Racism, and Racial Violence*. Eds. Chad Williams, Kidada Williams, Keisha Blain.
- “Trump 101,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 19, 2016.
- N.D.B. Connolly and Keisha N. Blaine, “Trump Syllabus 2.0,” *Public Books*, June 28, 2016.
- Syllabus Pitch:
 - Prepare a brief pitch on a current issue in your area of interest that needs a “syllabus” to foster better understanding of it.

Week 14- April 16: Individual Meetings with Dr. Brownell to Discuss Public Engagement Projects

Week 15- April 23: Presentations of Public Engagement Projects

Week 16- April 30: Presentations of Public Engagement Projects