

AMH 4930/4D90
From Headlines to Histories: 1968 to now
Fall 2019

Course Meets: Thursdays, periods 7-9 (2-5pm) in Keene Flint 113
Instructor: Dr. Louise Newman, newman@ufl.edu
Office hours: Tuesday, period 7 and by appointment

The Research Seminar

For most students, this course is the “capstone” of their undergraduate experience and is intended to give students an opportunity to do what professional historians do: make sense of the past (in our case the very recent past) by composing historical accounts based on primary sources, informed by historiographic and public discourse. You should expect this course to be intellectually challenging and demanding in terms of your time and effort: unlike other history offerings, you will not have to memorize facts and dates. Instead you will be asked to demonstrate that you understand how historical accounts are created by composing one yourself.

Description of the course topic

Our subject matter enables us to trace the continuities in political, economic and cultural events that have garnered headlines over the 50-year period from 1968 to 2019, beginning with Nixon’s presidency, and extending midway through Trump’s term in office. The course poses a series of questions for examination:

- 1) How can past events help us understand present-day events?
- 2) How do current actors (politicians, journalists, activists, and others) use or misuse historical information?
- 3) What role might historians play in analyzing current events?

Topics for investigation may include:

- the U.S.’s present role in global affairs (trade wars, tariff policies, Middle-eastern conflicts)
- immigration policies
- economic developments (deindustrialization, globalization) that have led to increasingly large disparities in wealth
- changes in electoral policies (gerrymandering; foreign influence in elections, increased role of corporate finance, *Citizens United*) that are impacting recent elections
- responses to sexual and racial forms of discrimination (Me Too Movement, Black Lives Matter, mass incarceration)
- ongoing changes in drug laws (permitting the medical and/or recreational use of marijuana)
- concerns about environmental disasters (past and future), etc.

Course objectives

- Become proficient with the basic steps in researching and writing an original research paper on an historical topic, including identifying a topic, formulating a historical question about that topic, identifying and analyzing relevant primary sources to help answer the question, coming up with a hypothesis (an answer to the question) and “proving” the hypothesis by supporting it with relevant information and persuasive argumentation
- Experiment with creative and effective ways to present historical information and analysis to a lay audience (use of powerpoint and other software, creating electronic archives/websites, etc.)
- Learn how to follow the protocols of the historical profession in order to present historical work in a professional manner

Seminar Meetings and Preparation

This seminar meets in a three-hour time block once per week. The structure of classes will vary from week to week, but there will always be a break of about 15 minutes at the midpoint of the seminar, at which point refreshments will be served. In the first half of the semester, the first half of class will be taken up with discussing the common (core) reading, and the second half of class will function as a workshop devoted to practicing an academic skill. In the second half of the semester, a portion of each seminar meeting will be devoted to student presentations.

Students should come to class having done all the assigned reading and with good notes on every chapter (or article or website) assigned. If you have done the reading but have no notes in front of you when the seminar begins, you will be counted as unprepared for class and penalties will be applied. I reserve the right to collect your notes and grade them. We will do a note-taking exercise early in the semester, but essentially good notes include 1) summaries of what the author has said and your thoughts about the major arguments 2) questions you wish to raise in class 3) and particular passages you want the class to discuss. There may be open-note quizzes on the readings, and I might call on anyone to start discussion in any week.

Seminars rely on students discussing the topic intelligently and student participation is very important. This does not mean talking for extended periods of time, but it does mean contributing to each week’s discussion. Most importantly, it means listening to your classmates and responding to what they have to say.

Core (common) readings

The core readings that are selected by the professor include historical monographs (secondary sources)-- i.e., academic books and scholarly articles published in anthologies or professional journals-- as well as journalistic and/or sociological accounts written for popular audiences that are published by trade presses or on websites. Every student will be responsible for selecting a common reading at least once during the semester. In addition, we will analyze primary sources in myriad forms (newspaper articles, speeches, websites, photographs, etc.)

The following books are required core readings. A few are available electronically from Course Reserves on the course website on Canvas but they can also be purchased in traditional book formats from Amazon and other online booksellers. If you decide to use electronic copies, you will need to print out a hard copy of the most important pages, as it is difficult to discuss material that you can only refer to on a screen. (Reading from phones is highly discouraged.) Other books will be added as students make their selections for the common/core readings. Texts are listed in the order in which they will be read.

- **Jacobson**, Matthew Frye. *The Historian's Eye: Photography, History and the American Present*. University of North Carolina Press, 2019. Electronic copy (PDF) available for free downloading through Course Reserves on Canvas's Course Website.
- **Gerber**, David A. *American Immigration: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2011. Electronic copy (PDF) available for free downloading through Course Reserves on Canvas's Course Website. ISBN 978-0-19-533178-3 (list price \$11.95)
- **Desmond**, Matthew. *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*. Broadway Books, 2016. ISBN 978-0-553-44745-3. (list price \$17.00) One hard copy is available from Course Reserves at the Circulation Desk in Library West.
- **Rampolla**, Mary. *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins. Any edition. The most recent edition (9th), published in 2018, costs \$31.29 on Amazon Prime but earlier editions are much less expensive. All page references contained in the syllabus are to the 9th edition, but students may use older editions. One hard copy of the 8th edition is available from Course Reserves at the Circulation Desk in Library West.

Articles and excerpts from books (PDFs) can be downloaded from Course Reserves (listed alphabetically)

- **Alexander**, Michelle. "The Rebirth of Caste," in *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. Revised Edition. New York: The New Press, 2012, pp. 20-58, 265-270.

- **Bailey**, Beth and Immerman, Richard H., eds. “Introduction” to *Understanding the U.S. Wars in Iraq & Afghanistan*. New York: New York University Press, 2015, 1-17.
- **Dyson**, Michael Eric. “Unnatural Disasters: Race and Poverty,” in *Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster* New York; Perseus Books, 2005, 1-14, 223-225.
- **Reich**, Robert. “Critical Lessons We Didn’t Learn from the Financial Crisis.” *Newsweek*. November 17, 2018. <https://www.newsweek.com/2018/10/05/robert-reich-critical-lessons-we-didnt-learn-financial-crisis-opinion-1123466.html>
- **Reynolds**, Michael A. “The Wars’ Entangled Roots: Regional Realities and Washington’s Vision,” in Beth Bailey and Richard H. Immerman, eds., *Understanding the U.S. Wars in Iraq & Afghanistan*. New York: New York University Press, 2015, 21-53.
- **Stiglitz**, Joseph. *Rewriting the Rules of the American Economy: An Agenda for Growth and Shared Prosperity*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2016, 10-23, 97-122.
- **More readings will be added at a future date.**

Material accessed from Websites and on-line Archives

Writing Guides

- <https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/reading/how-to-read-a-primary-source/>
- <https://pitt.libguides.com/citationhelp>
- https://college.lclark.edu/departments/history/student_resources/reading.php
- <https://hist.ucalgary.ca/atimm/writing-advice/useful-writing-links>

In addition, students will be working on research projects that will require that they identify, locate and read additional primary and secondary materials.

Documentaries (Students may choose one from this list or come up with one of their own.)

- *Inequality for All* (Robert Reich’s analysis of the 2008 recession)
 - *Inside Job* (2010; Charles Ferguson’s analysis of the 2008 recession)
 - *An Inconvenient Truth* (Al Gore’s discussion of global warming)
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Graded assignments

Graded assignments include a wide variety of assignments, including note-taking, short writing exercises, a research prospectus and a full-length research paper (10-15pp). Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments must be typed and presented formally. Points

will be deducted for not following exactly the verbal or written instructions concerning the presentation and submission of an assignment.

- Written instructions for major assignments (those worth more than 100 points) will be distributed at least one week before the assignment is due.
- Some assignments must be submitted on-line through the course website on Canvas, located at lss.at.ufl.edu, while other assignments must be typed, printed out and handed in (in hard copy) at the start of the class period. Often the instructions state that students are required to submit both electronic and hard copies, so students need to follow instructions carefully, as partial submissions will not be graded.
- Students should keep both hard and electronic copies of all their work in case there are any problems in the submission, grading, or the recording of the grading of assignments.

In-class Exercises and Short Assignments (50%)

- Restate thesis arguments from historical monographs of different lengths (articles and books)/Reading Notes
- Analyze the value/usefulness of a primary source
- Analyze a photograph
- Analyze how an historian uses a primary source to support/illustrate a point
- Locating relevant Primary and Secondary Sources for an historical topic and citing them in a bibliography using appropriate, consistent formatting (Chicago Manual of Style is the preferred format in the history discipline.)
- Peer Review—Commenting in a helpful way on a fellow student's writing

Final Assignments

- Final Assignment, Part 1. Prospectus (Research Question, Primary Source Analysis, Preliminary Bibliography (10%)
 - Final Assignment, Part 2. Final Project (Title Page, Abstract, 10-15-page paper, Annotated Bibliography (40%)
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Grading Scale

Letter grades for the course will be assigned according to the following point scale:

Letter Grade	Total Points	GPA Equivalent
A	950-1000	4.0
A-	900-949	3.67
B+	875-899	3.33
B	850-874	3.0
B-	800-849	2.67
C+	775-799	2.33
C	750-774	2.0
C-	700-749	1.67
D+	675-699	1.33
D	650-674	1.0
D-	600-649	0.67
E	<600	0

Policies regarding attendance, participation and assignments

- Unlike most other history courses offered by the University of Florida, this course has a significant “workshop” component, which requires students’ presence in class every day. Regular daily attendance is critical to the pedagogy of the course, so attendance will be taken at every class meeting, and there will be penalties in the form of point deductions for absences, lateness and dismissals.
- Students are expected to have completed all reading and writing assignments by the beginning of class on the date specified on the syllabus. Whenever possible, students should bring hard copies of the required readings to class. Students who come to class unprepared to discuss the readings, i.e. without notes, or without the assignments that are due that day, may be dismissed from class and counted as absent.
- In general, no late work will be accepted unless accompanied by documentation from the Dean of Students or Health Services of a serious illness. However, in the case of exceptional or unforeseen circumstances, students needing an extension of a deadline may request one from the instructor, preferably in advance of the deadline.

General course policies

- Students are expected to arrive on time, be attentive and respectful during class,

and remain until class is dismissed. Requirements for class attendance and assignments in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the Undergraduate Catalog

<<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>>.

- Computers (laptops, tablets, cell phones) are permitted, but students caught using them inappropriately-- e.g., texting, emailing or using social media-- will be asked to leave the classroom and will be counted as absent from the session.
- Students requesting accommodation must register with the Dean of Students Office (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/>) and obtain proper documentation to be submitted to the instructor during the first week of the semester. **Instructors are not obligated to grant accommodations after the first week of the semester.**
- Students in this class are participating in the pilot evaluation of the new course evaluation system called GatorEvals. The new evaluation system is designed to be more informative to instructors so that teaching effectiveness is enhanced and to be more seamlessly linked to UF's CANVAS learning management system. Students can complete their evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A_ufl.bluera.com_ufl_&d=DwIGaQ&c=sJ6xIWYx-zLMB3EPkvcnVg&r=1qtWVKU2uNohMAWR5pYYVu0F_ty9jxk4wI-DcSEfmKub76k8eaDIYyGQkZMpCQZ6&m=KCQMaruvDccGkQ95LBWWejChKpHpd3olzGps63zo0Ao&s=2ry1lk1Sd2MT9xMTXgaRslOLmzE7-Mky8W2E_HUO3wQ&e= . Please note your other classes this semester may be evaluated in the current GatorRater online evaluation system at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu><<https://evaluations.ufl.edu/>> . Thank you for serving as a partner in this important effort.
- All students must adhere to the University of Florida's standards of academic honesty. UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code." A copy of the student code of conduct may be found at <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

The student code of conduct also forbids plagiarism, which includes the following:

- Turning in a paper that was written by someone else (i.e., papers written by another student, a research service, or downloaded off the Internet); or written by you for another course.
- Copying a significant portion of work written by another author without using quotation marks and without acknowledging the source through a commonly accepted style of footnoting.

- Paraphrasing text written by another author without referencing that author within the text and by using a commonly accepted style of footnoting.
 - Using someone else's unique idea or concept without acknowledging the original author and source in the text and by using a commonly accepted style of footnoting.
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Schedule

Week 1. Aug 22 **Introduction: Trumpism and the Contemporary Moment**

Bring to class:

- 1) A hard copy of David Gerber's *American Immigration: A Very Short Introduction* if you decided to purchase one. Otherwise, we will work from the electronic copy available from course reserves.
- 2) Excerpts from **Jacobson**, *The Historian's Eye*, 2019 (visual monograph, approx. 30pp)
(available on Course Reserves)

Print out and read the Afterword first, pp. 153-157

Then print out the 13 photographs listed below, bring them to class, and think about these questions:

- What themes does Jacobson elucidate in the following photographs?
 - What historical details/facts does he mention to explain the meanings that the photographs have for him?
 - What is his philosophy of using photography to document the relationship of past to present?
1. New York, New York, 2010, pp. 8-9 (Do I look "Illegal"?)
 2. Berkeley, California, 2011, pp. 22-23 (Gotta have Everybody on the Field)
 3. Washington, D.C. 2010, p. 25 (Give the Brother More time)
 4. New York, New York, 2012, p. 31 (Made in the USA)
 5. Princeton, New Jersey, 2009, p. 40 (Hope's thin, despair is thick)
 6. New York, New York, 2011, pp. 60-61 (Greed is not good)
 7. Allentown, Pennsylvania, 2010, p. 92-93 (There is nothing to see here)
 8. Lexington, Kentucky, 2010, p. 101 (Photographs always lie....)
 9. San Antonio, Texas, 2009, pp. 108-109 (Somber beauty)
 10. Gainesville, Florida, 2009, p. 111 (Be Thankful...)
 11. Nogales, Arizona, 2010, p. 114-115 (Nice gear, Mr. Tourist)

12. Phoenix, Arizona, 2010, pp. 116-117 (Chinga la migra)
13. Boston, Massachusetts, 2011, 118-119 (Dog Tag Memorial)

And select one more to analyze for your classmates.

Second half of class:

Alpata, How to read Gerber's *American Immigration*

Week 2. Aug 29 Contemporary Concerns over "Illegal" Immigration

Gerber, *American Immigration*, 2011 (synthesis, 7 chapters, 135pp).

Electronic copy (PDF) available from Course Reserves.

Suggestions for how to read Gerber's synthesis:

Study the Table of Contents and List of Illustrations and think about the organization of the book—it is not strictly chronological. Why did Gerber divide the material up into a three-part structure—why these parts in particular? (see pp. 12-13, 15-16, 65-71, 101-104) Then read the Conclusion (134-135), followed by the Introduction (1-15) and think about Gerber's main premise: that since the founding of the U.S. in 1789, "immigrants have been understood primarily as an economic asset" (2) and that [voluntary] immigration was driven by a "demand for labor to sustain economic development...and the cheaper the labor, the more it has been valued." (134) Do you agree with these claims? Is it a helpful way to represent a complex set of events? Can you tell what Gerber's own views about immigration are? Even if the publication date of 2011 had not been included, it would still be evident that this book was written prior to 2016. Look for the places where the public discourse shaping this account is clearly evident and think about how you might rewrite those passages so that they reflect the realities of 2019.

1. Type up Reading Notes, to be submitted online by Wed, Aug 28 at 10pm and a hard copy brought to class

These notes should have the following elements.

- A timeline in which you present important factual information that appears in the book (with the page number on which the information appeared.) Think about periodization—how do historians establish beginning and end dates, turning points, trends, etc. and indicate this somehow on your timeline.
- Identify the key argument of each chapter; either copy it out verbatim or paraphrase it (indicate page number).

- Identify for discussion a passage that seems especially interesting or problematic to you (copy out the passage and include page number) and explain why you think it would be productive for the class to discuss it.

Rampolla, chapter 1, esp. 4-7

2. Photographic Assignment to be submitted online Wed, Aug 28 at 10pm and a hard copy brought to class: Take a photograph of something in Gainesville, then write a 300-word commentary that explores its larger historical/sociological meanings. You may want to explain what you intended or hoped the emotional/intellectual impact on a viewer would be and what you thought was significant about the image (100 pts)

Week 3 . Sept 5

Urban Poverty, Racial Segregation, and the Housing Crisis

Desmond, *Evicted*, 2016 (336 pp, ethnographic monograph)

Print out a map of Milwaukee and try to locate the neighborhoods that are referenced in *Evicted* (White Trailer park on the far south side; black inner city on the north side (where Sherrena has her property). The Menominee River Valley is the dividing line between the back inner city on the North Side and the poor Hispanic neighborhoods on the white side and the poor white neighborhoods on the far South Side. (pp. 33-34)

Suggestions for how to read this book.

- Begin with the section, About this Project, pp. 315-328 (you do not have to read to the end), which explains Desmond's research methods.
- Then read the Epilogue (293-313), which sets forth Desmond's fervent belief that the right to adequate housing is a basic human right and outlines his ideas concerning how the federal housing voucher program could be extended to ensure that every family has affordable housing, mandating participation by landlords (p. 310).
- Now read the prologue and continue all the way through Part One-- Rent (9-94). Take some notes so you can keep the characters straight. There are two basic groups of people: the poor black tenants living in the inner city (Milwaukee's North side), whose landlord is Sherrena Tarver and her husband Quentin, and the white tenants who live in the College Mobile Home Park, the trailer park owned by Tobin Charney, run by Office Susie, and located in the predominantly white far South Side of the city, on Sixth St off College Avenue. The first group includes Arleen and her two sons, Jori (age 13) and Jafaris (age 5)

and her eventual roommate, Crystal, who appears in chapter 12 and housemate Trisha; in a separate residence, there's Lamar, an older black man (age 48?) in a wheel chair and unrelated to him, a young woman Patrice Hinkston (age 24), her mother Doreen Hinkston and Patrice's three younger siblings. Later in the book, Kamala and her three young daughters moves into the upstairs apartment of Lamar's residence. In the Trailer park, living in separate trailers, are Lenny Lawson (who collects rents for Tobin, the owner), Lorraine Jenkins, Teddy and Scott, and Pam and her boyfriend Ned, with their five children , two of whom are mixed race—Pam's children via another man.

- Once you have the characters sorted in your mind, you have a choice to make: some of you will be hooked and want to read all of Parts 2 (Out) and 3 (After), all the way to the end so you can find out what happens to each of the characters. Others may want to be more judicious. Regardless, read the following pages carefully because they contain excellent analysis and insights.
- Part two (Out):
pp. 119-127: what it's like for the employees of moving companies hired to evict poor tenants
Chapter 11, The 'hood is good (144-157) which explains how much profit Sharrena makes off her tenants.
190-192; explanation of Nuisance property ordinances that hold landlords accountable for the behavior of their tenants
Chapter 16, Ashes on Snow, 197-203.
- Part three (After)
Chapter 18, Lobster on Food Stamps, 215-226 (Lorraine)
Chapter 19, Little, 237-241(Pam & Ned, Arleen)
pp. 249-252. Discussion of the emergence of ghettos/slums
Chapter 21, 255-258. Sharrena collects insurance money on the fire that killed Kamala's baby
Finally, if you want to know the end of Arleen's story, read chapter 24, "Can't Win for Losing."

- Week 4. Sept 12 **Prospectus Due**
Rampolla, ch 5a-c, Writing a Research Paper, 83-99, ch. 7b-2,
Bibliography, pp. 118ff
- Week 5. Sept 19 Readings to be determined
Student Presentations _____,

- Week 6. Sept 26 Readings to be determined
Student Presentations _____,

- Week 7. Oct 3. Readings to be determined
Student Presentations _____,

- Week 8. Oct 10 Readings to be determined
Student Presentations _____,

- Week 9. Oct 17 Readings to be determined
Student Presentations _____,

- Week 10. Oct 24 Readings to be determined
Student Presentations _____,

- Week 11. Oct 31 Readings to be determined
Student Presentations _____,

- Week 12. Nov 7 Readings to be determined
Student Presentations _____,

- Week 13. Nov 14 **Draft of Final Assignment Due**
- Week 14. Nov 21 **Last Day of Class.**
- Week 15. Nov 28. Thanksgiving Holiday. No Class Meeting
- Week 16. Dec 5 **Final Assignment Due**