

## **HIST 306 History and the Public**

*Semester:* Fall 2009

*Instructor:* Elena Razlogova

*Lectures:* H 429

*Workshops:* LB 1042-1

*Time:* Tue-Thu 11:45 am-1 pm

*Office Hours:* Tue 2-4 pm and by appt.

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<http://digitalhistory.concordia.ca/courses/hist306/>

### **Course Overview**

This course will introduce students to the theoretical and practical issues confronting public historians today. Readings will address questions of audience and authority in collecting and presenting history; the relationship between history and national, communal, and personal memory; public controversies involving historical interpretations; and the production and dissemination of history in diverse formats and media. These critical, methodological, and theoretical readings will provide the basis for the hands-on section of the course in which students will develop pilot public history projects—a documentary film, museum exhibit, oral history, or website.

### **Required Texts**

Articles available online

### **Assignments and Grading**

Successful completion of the course depends, most basically, on regular attendance in class, evidence of preparation and application, active participation in class discussions based on close readings of the required texts, and completion of all exercises and assignments on time. You will submit all your written assignments on this blog.

1. Introductions (due Sept. 15) – 5%
2. Wikipedia Entry Edit (due Sept. 29) – 10%
3. Project Proposal (due Oct. 20) – 15%
4. Response to Another Student's Project Proposal (due Oct. 22)- 10%
5. Project Presentation (sign up beginning week 10) – 20%
6. Response to Another Student's Project Presentation (same day as presentation you are responding to) – 10%
7. Final Project (due 1-2 weeks after your presentation, depending on how early you present)- 30%

### **Pilot Project**

The main assignment for this class is a public history pilot project, to be presented to the class during the last 4 weeks of classes. You will have access to equipment and a computer lab at the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling in LB 1042-1 to help you complete your project. You will also submit 2-paragraph Introductory Statement with your project.

Examples of final projects:

- Film: at least 5-minutes of video and sound using at least 5 primary sources
- Oral history: a compilation of at least 3 interviews
- Exhibit: a floor plan with photographs at least 5 objects, with labels
- Website: at least 3 pages using at least 5 primary sources
- Short story: 5-10 pages of narrative based on historical events, with an appendix of at least 5 relevant primary sources
- Walking tour: a map and photographs of at least 5 objects

## Log-In Instructions

To log in:

1. Click on “Login” link in the menu.
2. Type in your email username as your blog username and password. (Use the email you have stored in MyConcordia. If the first email address doesn’t work, try a username from another email address. I recommend that you copy and paste your username into the password field because many people mistype.)
3. Click on “Write a Post” and paste or type your assignment.
4. Mark your assignment with the appropriate assignment category, i.e. “0. Introductions” for the “Introductions” assignment.

## Introductions Assignment

Log in to this blog and post a note about yourself, including:

1. why you are in this class
2. what project you’d like to do
3. who you’d like to collaborate with on a project
4. who you’d like to partner with as far as commenting on each other’s project proposal and presentation

Mark your post with the “0. Introductions” category.

Introductions Assignment is **due online on Sept. 15**.

## Wikipedia Entry Edit Assignment

Update a historical wikipedia entry of your choice. Choose an entry that needs refinement in terms of style and content, and concerns a topic you already learned about in another class. You need to add at least 3 historical details, with references, and edit the article for style if necessary. Grading will be based on historical significance of the information you added and the clarity of argument in your stylistic edits of the entry.

1. Go to Wikipedia Main Page and find an article on a historical topic of your choice.
2. Create an account (click on “create account” in the top right corner) and sign in.
3. Edit the article and save.
4. Post the link to your entry and your Wikipedia username on the blog, marking your post with “1. Wikipedia Entry Edit” category.

You can consult instructions on how to cite in Wikipedia, in particular the section on Footnotes, Embedded Links, and Images.

Wikipedia Entry Edit is **due online by 8 am Tue, Sept. 29.**

## **Project Proposal Assignments**

### **1. Project Proposal**

Write and post a 3-paragraph proposal for a public history project:

1. State the main subject and main historical question of the project, and why this question is important. Explain why you chose a particular medium and genre for the project (documentary film, art exhibit, etc.)
2. Outline parts of your project (oral history questionnaire, plan of the exhibit, chapters of your documentary film, or sections of your website)
3. Cite one or two concrete examples of your primary sources (oral histories, documents, artifacts, photographs, etc.) and explain how you plan to collect more. Explain how you're going to use your secondary sources: discuss at least two sources on your subject ("Canadian's view of history" or "the blues") and two sources on your medium (oral history, museums, film, digital history, etc.).

Your project Proposal is **due online by 8 am Tue, Oct. 20.**

### **2. Response to Another Student's Project Proposal**

Write and post a 2-paragraph response to a project proposal by another student, making suggestions for improvement.

1. Is the argument clear? If yes, summarize the main point of the project in one sentence. Is the project designed well? Is the chosen medium appropriate for this project? Is its structure clear?
2. Are there enough primary sources? Do they support the main argument? Does the project use secondary sources to make the argument stronger?

Your Response is **due online by 8 am Thu, Oct. 22.**

## **Project Presentation Assignments**

### **1. Project Presentation**

Your Project draft and Introductory Statement are due online **no later than 24 hours before your presentation.**

**Introductory Statement (2 paragraphs)**

1. Explain your main point and why it's important
2. Explain why you chose your primary and secondary sources and how you used them (cite the sources)

### **Presentation (no more than 10 minutes long)**

1. Your project – show film, walk us through website or exhibit (5 min)
2. Questions/discussion from the audience (5 min)

Use comments given during your presentation to revise your final project

### **2. Response to Another Student's Presentation**

Write a two-paragraph response to a presentation by another student, making suggestions for improvement.

1. Is the argument clear? If yes, summarize the main point of the project in one sentence. Is the project designed well? Is the chosen medium appropriate for this project? Is its structure clear?
2. Are there enough primary sources? Do they support the main argument? Does the project use secondary sources to make the argument stronger?

Your Response is **due online by 8 am two days after the presentation.**

### **Final Project Assignment**

Your Final Project and revised 2-page Introductory statement are due online. The due date depends on when you present – see course schedule.

### **Participation**

Success in this class depends upon attendance at lecture and workshops and participation in any discussion provoked by the lecture and/or readings in class. There is no need for a participation part of the grade because you will not be able to complete your assignments if you don't come.

### **Deadlines**

The penalty for late papers and projects will be 5% of the grade per day. No extensions will be granted except in cases of a DOCUMENTED emergency.

### **Policies and Procedures**

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is an affront to me and to your peers. Plagiarism is submitting work that is not your own as if it were yours. This includes copying material, even a few sentences, from published or unpublished sources, from the internet, or from another student without citing the source. It also includes presenting another person's ideas or paraphrasing the work of

another person without citing the source. Plagiarism also includes handing in bought papers, papers obtained from free essay websites, or having another person write your paper for you. Anyone suspected of copying other people's work without clear acknowledgement, or of any comparable act, will be reported to the Faculty of Arts and Science for plagiarism.

Syllabus: I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus during the year if/as necessary. Please check the online syllabus before every class.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

## Schedule

### 1. What Is Public History?

Sept. 8. Course Introduction

*Manifestoon*, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbTIJ9\\_bLP4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbTIJ9_bLP4)

Sept. 10. Defining Public History

Jürgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964)," trans. Sara Lennox and Frank Lennox, *New German Critique* 3 (Autumn 1974): 49-55.

Peter Novick, "Introduction: Nailing Jelly to the Wall," in *That Noble Dream: The Objectivity Question and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

Ludmilla Jordanova, "Public History," in *History in Practice* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2000), 141-171.

### 2. History and the Nation

Sept. 15. Film on reserve at the Media Center: *The Valour and the Horror* (Canada, 1992).

Graham Carr, "Rules of Engagement: Public History and the Drama of Legitimation," *Canadian Historical Review* 86 (June 2005), 317-354.

Introductions Assignment due.

Sept. 17. *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America*, <http://www.withoutsanctuary.org/>

Tony Horwitz, Chapter 1, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998).

### 3. Digital History and Public Participation

Sept. 22. John Udell, *Heavy Metal Umlaut: The Movie*,  
<http://weblog.infoworld.com/udell/gems/umlaut.html>

Roy Rosenzweig, "Can History Be Open Source?: Wikipedia and the Future of the Past,"  
*Journal of American History* 93 (June 2006), 117-146.

Sept. 24. Workshop. Intro to Digital History

#### **4. Oral History and Shared Authority**

Sept. 29. *Face to Face*, <http://www.itvs.org/facetoface/flash.html>

Portelli, Alessandro. "What Makes Oral History Different." *The Oral History Reader*.  
London: Routledge, 1998.

Michael Frisch, "Oral History and the Presentation of Class Consciousness: The *New York Times* vs. The Buffalo Unemployed," in *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990).

Wikipedia Entry Edit due **online by 8 am**.

Oct. 1. Workshop. Intro to Oral History

#### **5. Museums and the West**

Oct. 6. Exhibit catalogue on reserve: Jeanne Cannizzo, *Into the Heart of Africa* (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1989).

Mackey, Eva. "Postmodernism and Cultural Politics in a Multicultural Nation: Contests over Truth in the Into the Heart of Africa Controversy," *Public Culture* 7 (Winter 1995).

Oct. 8. Workshop. Intro to Exhibit Design

#### **6. Film and Memory**

Oct. 13. Film screening: *Waltz with Bashir* (2008)

Oct. 15. Discussion: *Waltz with Bashir*

Workshop. Intro to Film Editing.

#### **7. Games and the Interactive Past**

Oct. 20. Zach Whalen and Laurie N Taylor, eds., *Playing the Past: History and Nostalgia in Video Games* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2008), excerpts.

Project Proposals Due.

Oct. 22. Workshop: Game Design

Responses to Project Proposals Due.

## **8. History and Public Policy**

Oct. 27. Film: *Long Night's Journey into Day* (USA, 2000).

Oct. 29. Discussion: *Long Night's Journey into Day*

Antjie Krog, *Country of My Skull: Guilt, Sorrow, and the Limits of Forgiveness in the New South Africa* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2000), excerpt.

## **9. History and Public Space**

Nov. 3. Erica Lehrer, "Bearing False Witness?: 'Vicarious' Jewish Identity and the Politics of Affinity," in *Imaginary Neighbors*, edited by Dorota Glowacka and Joanna Zylinska (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006).

Nov. 5. Walking Tour of Montreal: TBA

## **10. Project Presentations (Nov. 10, Nov. 12)**

## **11. Project Presentations (Nov. 17, Nov. 19)**

## **12. Project Presentations (Nov. 24, Nov. 26)**

Projects Presented Week 10 are due Nov. 26

## **13. Project Presentations (Dec. 1, Dec. 3)**

Projects Presented Week 11 are due Dec. 3

**Projects Presented Weeks 12 and 13 are due Dec. 10**