SYLLABUS: The Craft of History (History 512:550)
Prof. Kate Epstein
Spring 2014

Class Times: W 5:00 – 7:20 p.m.
Class Location: 429 Cooper St. Room 207
Email: kce17@camden.rutgers.edu
Office Location: 429 Cooper St. Room 204
Office Hours: M/W 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Course Description: The Craft of History (aka Craft) is unique in the master’s program. Rather than a readings or research course in a particular sub-field of history, Craft is designed to familiarize students with major problems, questions, and methods that touch the field of history as a whole.

In the late nineteenth century, the study of history was conceived of as a science—and science was conceived of as being ahistorical. That is, history was a phenomenon that the historian-scientist could observe objectively, without affecting or being affected by the process of observation; and scientific knowledge built progressively upon itself, existing outside any particular historical context. Understandings of history and science changed dramatically over the course of the twentieth century. Historians were recast not as objective observers of history but as subjective participants in history, who interpreted the past through their own biases and who were limited by their own historical context. Scientists were recast as historical actors who proceeded according to not only an abstract scientific logic but also to their concrete time and place. The very concept of “knowledge”—historical and/or scientific—was destabilized, and claims to knowledge were suspected of being claims to power. New understandings of how to study the past came to challenge traditional approaches, leading to an expansion of historical study but also to a collapse of consensus.

The course is divided into three parts. In Part I (weeks 1-3), we will read two books that historicize the study of history. In Part II (weeks 4-12), we will read a mixture of books and shorter excerpts to cover a variety of major historiographical approaches. In Part III (weeks 13-15), we will examine three cases of historiographical debate and consider the boundaries between scholarship and fraud.

Office Hours: You are very welcome to come see me with questions and comments. My office hours will be Monday and Wednesday from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. at 429 Cooper St. You are not required to make an appointment in advance, but I would appreciate it if you would do so. If you wish to see me outside my office hours, please feel free to make an appointment.

Readings: There are seven required books for this course:
3. Dennis Dworkin, Class Struggles (Routledge, 2006)


All other required readings will be posted on Sakai.

**Assignments and Grading:** This class is a seminar, not a lecture, so my job is to guide discussion, not to dominate it. Your job is to complete all reading assignments on time (that is, before the class for which they are listed on the schedule below) and to participate actively in discussion.

The course has three writing assignments, each of which will be 8–10 pages. For the first paper, you will come up with and answer a question which treats one week’s readings from weeks 1 through 5; you may turn it in at any time on or before February 26. For the second paper, you will do the same for the readings for weeks 6 through 12; you may turn it in at any time on or before April 9. For the third paper, you will consider the ways in which people have sought to distinguish valid from invalid claims about the past as covered in the readings from weeks 13 through 15; it will be due on May 7.

Your final grade will be distributed as follows:
--30% for class participation
--20% for the first paper
--25% for the second paper
--25% for the term paper.

**Note on Attendance:** If you miss class, you will be required to write a 5-7 page paper on that week’s readings.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

**WHEN THERE ARE MULTIPLE READINGS, PLEASE READ THEM IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY APPEAR BELOW.**

**Part I: The History of History**

**Week 1 (January 22)**
- Novick, *That Noble Dream*

**Week 2 (January 29)**
- Novick, *That Noble Dream*

**Week 3 (February 5)** ➔ **NO CLASS, PROF. EPSTEIN AWAY**

**Part II: Major Approaches**

**Week 4 (February 12)** ➔ **Marxism (NB: Class will run to 8:00 instead of 7:40)**
- Grafton, *The Footnote*
• Excerpts from Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1
• Dworkin, Chapters 1-2
• E. P. Thompson, “Eighteenth-Century English Society: Class Struggle without Class?” *Social History* 3, no. 2 (May 1978): 133–65

**Week 5 (February 19)** → Imperialism

• Vladimir I. Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Chapters 7 and 10

**Week 6 (February 26)** → Hegemony / FIRST PAPER DUE


**Week 7 (March 5)** → Science as History
• Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*
• Re-read Novick, *That Noble Dream*, 298–301 and 524–35

**Week 8 (March 12) ➔ Postmodernism**
• Dworkin, Chapters 3–5
• Michel Foucault, “Excerpts from *The History of Sexuality*,” in *A Postmodern Reader*, 333–41
• Geoff Danaher et al., *Understanding Foucault*, Chapter 2
• Jean Baudrillard, “The Precession of Simulacra,” in *A Postmodern Reader*, 342–75
• Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob, “Postmodernism and the Crisis of Modernity,” in *Telling the Truth About History* (New York: Norton, 1995), 198–237

**Week 9 ➔ NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK**

**Week 10 (March 26) ➔ Gender and Sexuality**
• Dworkin, Chapters 6–8
• Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, “Gender, Class, and Power: Some Theoretical Considerations,” *The History Teacher* 15, no. 2 (February 1982): 255–76
• Kathleen Brown, “Brave New Worlds: Women’s and Gender History,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (April 1993): 311–28
• Nancy Isenberg, “Second Thoughts on Gender and Women’s History,” *American Studies* 36, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 93–103
• Jane Sherron De Hart and Linda Kerber, “Introduction: Gender and the New Women’s History,” in Woman’s America: Refocusing the Past, ed. Linda Kerber et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010)

Week 11 (April 2) ➔ Nationalism
• Anderson, Imagined Communities
• Eric Hobsbawm, “The Nation as Invented Tradition,” in Nationalism, 76–82
• Excerpts from Anthony Smith, The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2000)

Week 12 (April 9) ➔ Postcolonialism / SECOND PAPER DUE
• Said, Orientalism
• Frederick Cooper, “Postcolonial Studies and the Study of History,” in Postcolonial Studies and Beyond, ed. Ania Loomba et al. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 401–422

Part III: Case Studies
Week 13 (April 16) ➔ The Bellesiles Incident
• Michael Bellesiles, review of To Keep and Bear Arms: The Origins of an Anglo-American Right, by Joyce Lee Malcolm, Law and History Review 14, no. 2 (Autumn 1996): 382–84
• Michael Bellesiles, “Reply to Malcolm,” ibid., 343–45
• “Historians and Guns,” forum in William and Mary Quarterly 59, no. 1 (January 2002)
  o Robert Gross, “Introduction,” 203–4
  o Gloria Main, “Many Things Forgotten: The Use of Probate Records in ‘Arming America,’” 211–16
Randolph Roth, “Guns, Gun Culture, and Homicide: The Relationship Between Firearms, the Uses of Firearms, and Interpersonal Violence,” 223–40
Michael Bellesiles, “Exploring America’s Gun Culture,” 241–68
- Jerome Sternstein, “‘Pulped’ Fiction: Michael Bellesiles and His Yellow Note Pads,” History News Network
- Peter Charles Hoffer, Past Imperfect: Facts, Fictions, and Fraud—American History from Bancroft to Ambrose, Bellesiles, Ellis, and Goodwin (New York: PublicAffairs, 2007), Chapter 5

**Week 14 (April 23)** ➔ The “Dreadnought Revolution”
- Excerpts from ADM 178/207, The National Archives, Kew, England
- Nicholas Lambert, Sir John Fisher’s Naval Revolution (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), 127–54
- Reginald Bacon, From 1900 Onwards (London: Hutchinson, 1940), 100
- “Précis of War Game played at Portsmouth Naval War College, lasting from November 1906 to January 1907,” ADM 116/1043B1, The National Archives, Kew, England

**Week 15 (April 30)** ➔ Holocaust Denial
• Shermer and Grobman, *Denying History*
• Excerpts from Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002)

**Week 16 (May 7) ➔ NO CLASS, CLASSES OVER / THIRD PAPER DUE**