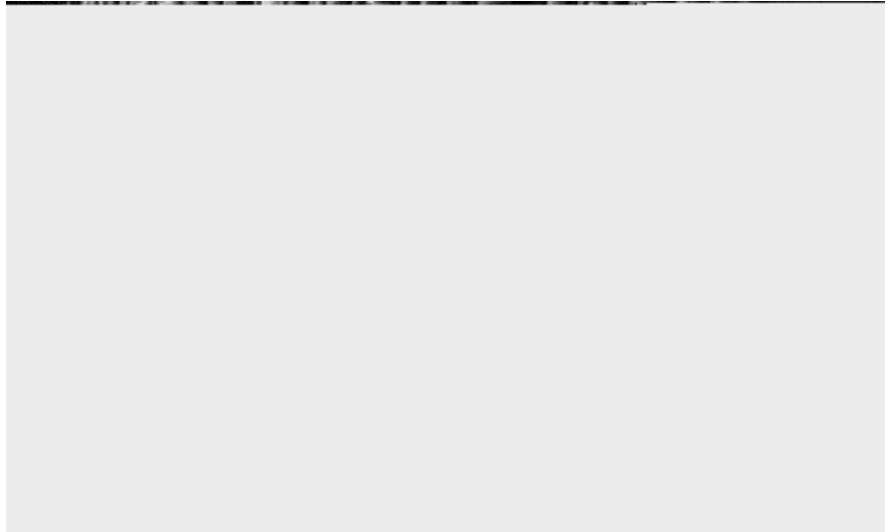


HIS 382-01: Modern Classics of Historical Writing

J. Pablo Silva

([silvajp@grinnell.edu](mailto:silvajp@grinnell.edu) Mears Cottage 216 office hrs M 9-11 and by appt.)



Class Meetings: TBD, but always in Mears 216

Course description

This class will provide an opportunity for dynamic, intellectually engaged students to read some of the greatest history books and articles written in the twentieth century. We will examine the lens of one or more of

opportunity to evaluate a work's significance by  
ing its critical reception. The class will adopt a  
p graduate programs to offer an advanced class in  
elling historical writing. It will be writing intensive.

undergraduates at the Universities of Oxford and  
n as the "tutorial" or "supervision" system. The  
gs between no more than three students and a  
te or his essay on a pre-assigned topic. The essay  
cussion of the set texts. The tutorial method has been  
al method for accelerated learning by advanced and

able students in the humanities and social sciences. In particular, it improves students' prose and their cogency and speed in composing analytical writings.

At the beginning of the semester you will be assigned a tutorial partner. Each week you will attend a one hour tutorial with your partner and the instructor. *Both* students will do the set reading. *One* of the two students will be assigned to write a 3-4 page essay in response to a set question. She or he will send her or his paper to the professor and tutorial partner *24 hours* before the scheduled class. The other student is required to provide written feedback on the content and style of the essay, and bring two copies to the tutorial. The next week the roles of writer and commentator will switch. At the

In addition, when calculating grades, I will drop your lowest essay mark. In practice this means that you may miss submitting one essay and the relevant class when you are the essay writer, as long as you are willing to have all your remaining grades count towards assessment. If you elect to activate this option, it is crucial that you notify both your professor and tutorial partner 24 hours or more before your scheduled meeting so that your partner is able to join another group that week.

Additional missed classes will adversely affect your grade unless you supply written evidence of significant illness or misadventure. If you know that regular sporting, cultural, military, familial, or religious obligations are likely to intrude on class time, you must come and see me with your schedule during the first week of semester.

More than one absence will result in the reduction of your attendance and participation grade. In addition, three or more unexplained absences will result in overall failure in the course.

You are expected to participate *actively* in class discussions and activities. Not only will this help you to digest course content and develop speaking skills, but it will make class more enjoyable. To participate actively you will need to prepare for each class by doing the set reading. Annotate it or make notes as you go. I have tried to contain it to a manageable amount for each class.

There are four questions that will shape discussion in each class meeting. When you are reading, it will be helpful to keep them in mind.

1. What is X? (Where X = the topic for the class e.g. "Race," "Gender," "Cultural history")
2. Who is the historian? (What was their life and/or career like? What historical method or school are they associated with?) Google them.
3. Who or what are they writing against?
4. What do the historians you are reading agree about? Even more importantly, what do they disagree about?

In addition to the set reading, you may find answers to these questions in book reviews in reputable historical journals (search the book title in JSTOR and Project Muse) and online (especially useful for biographical information about authors).

### Essays (6x10=60%):

You will be required to submit *six essays* (3 pages 12pt Times New Roman, double-spacing) and *one revised essay* (12pt Times New Roman, double-spacing) this semester in response to essay questions. Each essay must have footnotes and a bibliography. The bibliography is not included in the page count. This means that after the first week you will be writing an essay every second week. We will drop your lowest grade when determining your overall score for this section of assessment. You must submit your essay to your tutorial partner and the professor 24 hours before your tutorial.

As a successful tutorial will depend on timely submission of your essay, the penalties for a late essay will be higher than in other history classes. You will forfeit 1/3 of a grade point every

two hours after the deadline has passed (e.g. If the essay was a "B" and you submit it two hours late, you will receive a "B-"; if you submit the same essay four hours late, you will receive a "C+" and so on).

In addition, at the end of semester you should select *one* of your previous essays and revise it to implement the feedback you have received in class from your professor and tutorial partner. It will be due during the exam period.

Your essays will be evaluated by your professor (for your grades) using the following rubric:

Relevance  
of response  
to set

3. Write down two questions about the historical material of the class. At least one of them should be a direct question to your partner about their or his essay. The other(s) could be general questions about the historical writing we will be examining.

Your feedback will be evaluated according to the following Yes/No rubric. Each "Yes" will get you one point out of a possible five for the assignment.

- Did the feedback make accurate corrections with respect to spelling and grammar?
- Did the feedback describe the argument of the essay?
- Did the feedback offer at least one positive comment?
- Did the feedback offer at least one critical comment and helpful suggestion for implementation in future essays?
- Did the feedback include a pertinent question?

Extensions:

As successful tutorials will depend on both partners fulfilling their roles in a timely fashion,

Students with disabilities  
Any

his reader to observe “the underlying currents” of history instead (p. 21). What are these “currents”? How does Braudel emphasize their significance? What are the potential advantages and/or disadvantages to historians of adopting Braudel’s “philosophy of history”?

Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds (New York: Harper Collins, 1992 [1949]). There are 3 PDF files online. You are not required to read all the pages in all the files. Instead, in Braudel 1: read 17-24, 276-82, 352-54. Braudel 2, read: table of contents, 335, 380. Braudel 3, read: 459-3, 500-4, 526-29, 543-44. PWeb.

Peter Burke, “Fernand Braudel”, in *The Annales school: Critical Assessments*, ed. Stuart Clark, 6 vols (London: Routledge, 1999), vol. 3, pp. 111-23. PWeb

Week 3 (Begins 02/08): Race and Slavery

(Student Y submits, X reviews)

Essay question: Did the practice of Atlantic slavery create ideas of race, or was it the other way around? Justify your response.

Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American attitudes toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1968) (g)m

of Working-class Formation,” in *E.P. Thompson: Critical Perspectives* (Philadelphia: Temple, 1990), pp. 50-77. Reserve.

Week 5 (Begins 02/22): Historicizing Power

(Student Y submits reviews)

Essay question: What does the history of the transition from public punishment to individual imprisonment reveal about the history of power?

Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punishment*



Week 8 (Begins 03/14): Microhistory

(Student X submits, Y reviews)

Essay question: How much do the potential historical benefits of doing micro-history outweigh the potential disadvantages?

Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the worms: The Cosmos of a sixteenth-century town* (1989) (1993) (1997)

Robert Allen, *The British Industrial Revolution in Global Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2009) pp. 1-155. For Purchase.

Week 11 (Begins 04/18): Intellectual History

(Student Y submits, X reviews)

Essay question: Intellectual historians examine rhetorically and philosophically complex texts in order to interpret the way people *thought* in the past. Quentin Skinner argues that we may reconstruct the force of past speech acts by contextualising them discursively. In the process we may learn how the meaning of important ideas (such as liberty) changed over time. To what extent does Dominick LaCapra agree with his approach?

Dominick LaCapra, "Rethinking Intellectual History and Reading Texts," in *Modern European intellectual history: Reappraisals and new perspectives* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), pp. 47-85. Web and <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb.04883.0001.001>

Quentin Skinner, "Interpretation and the understanding of speech acts," in *Visions of politics: Volume 1, Regarding Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2002), pp. 103-27. P-Web.

Week 12 (Begins 04/25): The History of Reading

(Student X submits, Y reviews)

Essay question: Jonathan Rose seeks to "enter the minds of ordinary readers in history, to discover what they read and how they read it." How successful are his attempts to reconstruct the literary tastes and autodidact culture of British workers?

Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (New Haven: Yale, 2001), xi-xiii, 1-57, 116-145, 393-438.. Web.

Christophe Hillia (he)(t)-1 (o)-41 Tc d0 Tc0 Tw 2.13 0 Td [3.320 (of)-2 ( ) 10tM1 (t)-od

Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1994), 1-73. Three copies on reserve.

Daniel Martin Varisco, *Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid* (University of Washington, 2007), pp. 251-266, 290-305. Web.

Week 14 (05/09): History and Narrative

(No essay due)

Discussion question: TBA.

William Cronon, "A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative,"