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ARTS3270

Reflecting on Histories and Historians: Capstone

Term Three // 2019

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
James Keating	j.keating@unsw.edu.au	By appointment	MB 280	

School Contact Information

School of Humanities and Languages

Location: School Office, Morven Brown Building, Level 2, 258

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Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

Subject Area: History

In this capstone course you will join all the other students majoring in History in a weekly seminar designed to perfect and reflect on the skills you have learned in your history degree. In particular, you will conduct your own major research project: framing a question about the past that can be addressed by reconstructing past events from primary sources, while engaging with recent scholarship in your interpretation of these events. Here you will reflect on the fundamental principles of the discipline, together with the social and ethical implications of particular approaches to the practice of History. Readings, discussion and fieldwork are focused on developing appreciation of the role of historical knowledge in understanding and influencing our contemporary world. You will explore the origins, agendas, and methodologies behind a number of key contemporary historical approaches, and the controversies they have sparked within the discipline. You will consider the ways historians adapt their professional practices to public engagement through museums, the entertainment industry, and the courts. You will also experience the fundamental task of the historian through your own research project: framing a question about the past that can be addressed by reconstructing past events from primary sources, while engaging with recent scholarship in your interpretation of these events.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. employ and evaluate major principles and methodologies within the discipline of history
2. demonstrate a critical understanding of the social and ethical implications of particular professional practices among historians
3. identify multiple forms of history in the public domain, and evaluate them in light of professional standards of scholarship and ethical behaviour
4. design and conduct an independent research project
5. reflect upon and integrate your own experiences as students of history at UNSW

Teaching Strategies

Rationale: There are no lectures in ARTS3270. The role of the instructor is to synthesise a large body of diverse material for students, leading discussions of historical methodology and its political and social implications, and assist students in discerning linkages between the course materials and their previous studies in historical subject matter. The seminar format obliges ALL students to take on an active intellectual role in analysing and critiquing the course readings, which are mainly historiographic, collaboratively in small groups. ARTS3270 has two components: (1) An on-campus meeting in a two-hour seminar each week across the teaching session; (2) The equivalent of about 7 hours of individual or collaborative work each week. This includes a museum visit and preparation of an essay about it, and independent research in preparation to write a research essay on a question or problem of the student's own design.

Teaching and Learning Strategies: As this is a seminar course, our core teaching strategy is to work with you individually and in small groups to discuss approaches to history, to reflect on what you have

learned in the history major, and to plan and execute your research project. This course is designed to make History majors aware of a range of important approaches to writing history, and also to their role both in shaping our understanding the past and in motivating present action. In each week you will discuss a particular, current style of history or activity of historians, together with its social implications. In the seminar sessions, questions about the readings will be discussed in small groups, and then your answers shared among the whole class; at the end a few of these same questions will be given as a P/F quiz in order to motivate reading and engagement in the discussion. To impart insight into history's social role, there will be an exercise requiring you to attend one of a few designated museum exhibits and to analyse its representation of the past both in terms of the historical scholarship on which it is based, and of the demands placed on history by its publics and institutions. This museum essay assignment may be completed in collaboration with another student, enabling you to share insights and to employ teamwork in exploring and documenting museum space. Finally, in a research essay project, you will experience the basic task of the historical craft, creating a question and constructing an account of past events based on evidence you must discover for yourself – including the use of primary source documents -- thus learning first hand the processes and constraints shaping our pictures of the past.

Assessment

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
In class group work	20%	Not Applicable	1,2,5
Museum visit and essay	30%	18/10/2019 11:00 PM	1,2,3,5
Research Essay	50%	29/11/2019 11:00 PM	1,2,4,5

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: In class group work

Start date: Not Applicable

Details: Small group discussion each week of about 10 questions related to assigned readings, followed by a quiz requiring brief answers to two of them. Marked P/F of each question (2 points possible for week, best 10 weeks counted). Marks available on Moodle.

Additional details:

Due to the structure of the course in relation to the new trimester system, this assessment (in class group work @ 20%) will be adjusted in relation to the scheduled teaching weeks.

This will be discussed in the first face-to-face seminar in Week 1.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 2: Museum visit and essay

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 1000 words

Details: Field trip to historical exhibit at a local museum and analysis thereof, with marks and comments on resulting essay of 1000 words min. Can be carried out collaboratively in pairs (with co-authored essay, mark shared).

Additional details:

Details on the this assessment will be discussed in the first face-to-face seminar (i.e., in Week 1) and a comprehensive assignment brief can be found on the course moodle page.

It is recommended that students use the following Museums and Exhibitions. If you have found another exhibition that you would like to write about, please get in contact with me first.

Sydney Jewish Museum:

- Jukebox Jewkbox! A Jewish Century on Shellac and Vinyl

Justice and Police Museum (weekends only):

- City of Shadows: Inner City Crime & Mayhem 1912-1948

National Maritime Museum:

- Passengers: The Long Sea Voyage to a New Land
- The Daring Ship: The story of HMAS Voyager

Australian Museum:

- Garrigarrang: Sea Country (NB: this exhibit is partly historical and partly 'anthropological,' so focus on the historical elements)

Powerhouse Museum:

- Apollo 11 Exhibition

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 3: Research Essay

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 2500 words

Details: 2500 words min, must employ primary sources. Numerical mark and comments as feedback on their essays. 50% includes 5 points for a preliminary Outline/Proposal worth 5%. This is the final assessment for attendance purposes.

Additional details:

Requirements for the research essay will be discussed in the Week 1 Seminar, with additional information posted on Moodle.

Please note that this assignment has two parts:

1. Your Research Essay Proposal (5%) is due at the end of week 7. This short document should outline an original question about the past and outline the existence of suitable primary sources that, alongside existing historians' work, will help you to address the question that you are posing. Be sure to read the Research Essay Guide, posted on Moodle, carefully before beginning. Your proposal will be submitted via Turnitin, and you will receive rapid feedback (in the order of submission) consisting of a mark out of 5 and some constructive suggestions. If you receive a passing mark on your outline/prospectus, you may proceed with your proposed topic. If you do not, you will have to write your Research Essay on the Standard Essay Topic, which will be released once everyone who has submitted an Outline on time has received their feedback.

2. Research Essay (45%): due 29 November.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 16 September - 20 September	Seminar	Introduction: What is historiography? The first meeting will involve housekeeping matters, including an explanation of the major assessments and the dates due. We will also have a discussion about professional standards, what professional historians actually do for a living and, mostly importantly, come to be a practical and theoretical understanding of what historiography 'is' and what we might do with it. There will be the usual quiz at the end regarding the readings and questions arising therefrom, all of which will be discussed beforehand in the session itself.
Week 2: 23 September - 27 September	Seminar	Professional History and Public 'Remembering' Professional historians are often treated by the public as ivory tower intellectuals who labour away on trivial topics in the deserved obscurity of dusty archives. Yet the public -- even these same critics -- harbour historical beliefs that are important to them and which they expect to be supported by historians and historical evidence. Frequently these cherished historical narratives conflict with what professional historians take (sometimes uncontroversially) as established fact. These conflicting understandings of the past occasionally come into the open, especially when stories foundational to cultural or national identity are updated according to professional standards in public fora, such as school curricula or museum exhibits. They raise questions about the historian's social role and duties. We will discuss the roles historians play in public in this seminar, focusing on the controversy over the Enola Gay exhibition at the Smithsonian Museum in 1995. This discussion will lead into the museum assignment, which we will discuss in detail this week.
Week 3: 30 September - 4 October	Seminar	Historical Scholarship and Advocacy

		<p>Are historians subject to ethical standards beyond what is required for the publication of their work in peer-reviewed journals (e.g. truthful and complete reporting of primary evidence sources, logical argumentation, citation of influential or otherwise important secondary sources)? For example, should they publicly discuss issues only within their domain of scholarly expertise? Must they consider the social impact of their scholarly work in publishing on certain questions and/or using certain sources? Once it is published, do they bear any other responsibilities in describing it in public venues such as the courtroom?</p> <p>The pointy end of such questions has been experienced by medical historians working on tobacco. In this class we will consider historians' roles in the tobacco litigation cases of the 1990s and 2000s and debate historians' ethical responsibilities to their subjects, audiences, and professional communities.</p>
Week 4: 7 October - 11 October	Seminar	<p>History from Below</p> <p>It is often said that "history is written by the winners". So, how do we approach history from the perspective of those who were disempowered and disenfranchised? Is it possible to understand the lives of the subalterns of the past, even though they typically leave no written records of their own? Yet can we fully understand past societies without knowing their lives? It was only in the later twentieth century that historians began to focus on "history from below". We will begin by reading a selection from E. P. Thompson's influential work on the English working class, then move on to think about what it might be to write histories from below in the present.</p> <p>Apart from the usual discussion and related quiz, the Research Essay Outline assessment (due on 1 November) will be discussed, together with primary and secondary sources and how to use online primary source databases such as Trove.</p>
Week 5: 14 October - 18 October	Reading	<p>Reading week:</p> <p>There is no seminar this week - please use the time to complete your museum assignment, due on 18 October.</p>
	Assessment	Museum assignment due at the end of this week.
Week 6: 21 October - 25 October	Seminar	Gender and 'Herstory'

October		This week we consider the ways in which historians have used gender and sex as a means of examining the assumptions that marginalise, subordinate or render invisible the experiences of individuals or groups in historiography. Beginning with the American historian Joan Scott's suggestion that historians must not merely add women to history and 'stir', but use gendered experiences to stir up history as a discipline, we will consider the evolution of gender history and its implications for us as historians.
Week 7: 28 October - 1 November	Seminar	<p>Big History and Little History: Scale and the study of the past</p> <p>Is there any value in studying history at the local level? Is there any value in the history of everyday life, or which focuses on a single regular person, or on the life of a small and isolated community? When can such studies be deemed to be trivial, and when significant? And how might they be used to tell global stories? In this class we will contrast two different approaches to scale in history. Moving from intricate microhistories to the 'big' history of the universe, we will also discuss whether historians have any business looking at history before humanity existed. Should they be considering the Big Bang and the origin of Homo sapiens, as David Christian and Fred Spier have done? What do these historians claim is the value of such an approach? Is there a problem with the uncritical assimilation of representations of the past from the harder sciences that, ever since philosopher Thomas Kuhn, cannot be regarded as purveyors of unchanging and apolitical truths any more than history itself?</p>
	Assessment	Research essay proposal due 1 November.
Week 8: 4 November - 8 November	Seminar	<p>Environmental History</p> <p>Can we narrate a history that is not centred on human action, or not even about people at all? When does this simply become the domain of biology, geology, or another natural science with entirely different methods and aims from history? Although doubtful as to disciplinary identity at its edges, a thriving field of environmental history has recently emerged within the discipline of history to do just that, in order to grapple with increasingly important questions about the relationship between nature and human affairs.</p>
Week 9: 11 November -	Seminar	Counterfactual Histories

15 November		<p>R.G. Collingwood said that the “historian’s business is to know the past, not to know the future, and whenever historians claim to be able to determine the future in advance of its happening, we may know with certainty that something has gone wrong with their fundamental conception of history” (1994, 54). In fact, historians do sometimes pose ‘What if?’ questions and sometimes do speculate about the future. This week we consider the value of such endeavours, and whether such matters should indeed be the historian’s business.</p> <p>Some time will be also allotted to discussion of problems and questions that have arisen among students concerning the Research Essay (due 29 November)</p>
Week 10: 18 November - 22 November	Reading	No seminar this week, please use this time to work on your Research Essay/ schedule a consultation to discuss your progress.

Resources

Prescribed Resources

ARTS3270 Course Reader to be compiled by students. Required and recommended readings for each seminar will be posted to Leganto, accessible via the course moodle page. Students can access them through UNSW Library databases.

Recommended Resources

Database/s (esp. for the Research Essay) will be introduced and discussed in seminar.

Course Evaluation and Development

Courses are periodically reviewed, and students' feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered from students using myExperience. It is encouraged students complete their surveys by accessing the personalized web link via the Moodle course site.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/>). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.

<http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise>

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

<https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

Image Credit

Vanessa Winship, 'Untitled' from the series *Black Sea. Between Chronicle and Fiction*, (2002-10), https://oeildelaphotographie.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/original_win13375-2007nb110-jpg.jpg.

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