

HIST 615: Consuming History, Mediating the Past  
Arlington campus, Founders Hall 317  
M 7:20-10:00pm  
Office Hours: Thursdays, 10-12pm and by appointment

Description:

This course will explore the epistemological and practical concerns raised by representing the historical past in nontraditional formats: through reenactments and museum exhibits, film and television. It will begin by interrogating the privileging of written history, and will then explore the kinds of knowledges produced by these alternative and popular modes of representing the historical past. By considering the specificity of a range of media, we will attempt to assess their different modes of address, and the ramifications of those modes of address for the acquisition of historical knowledge. We will consider, for instance, the role of affect in these representations, what some historians now call the “affective turn” in historical representation. We will all the while be considering the ways in which historical depictions of the past are appropriated, consumed, and mobilized by their audiences/participants.

Required Texts (available at the Arlington Campus bookstore and elsewhere):

Alun Munslow, *Narrative and History* Palgrave Macmillan (September 18, 2007) ISBN-10: 1403987289

Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, *The Presence of the Past* Columbia University Press ISBN-10: 0231111495

Jerome de Groot, *Consuming History: Historians and Heritage in Contemporary Popular Culture* Routledge; (December 9, 2008) ISBN-10: 0415399459

Robert Rosenstone, *History on Film/Film on History* Longman (March 17, 2006) ISBN-10: 0582505844

Barbie Zelizer, *About to Die: How News Images Move the Public* Oxford University Press, USA (December 1, 2010) ISBN-10: 0199752141

Marita Sturken, *Tourists of History: Memory, Kitsch, and Consumerism from Oklahoma City to Ground Zero* Duke University Press Books ISBN-10: 0822341220

Richard Grusin: *Premediation: Affect and Mediality after 9/11* Palgrave Macmillan (May 11, 2010) ISBN-10: 0230242529

Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* Duke University Press Books (August 30, 2007) ISBN-10: 0822341077

\*\*\*There will be many reading available as pdfs on the class wiki.

\*\*\*There will be some required viewing.

Required Screening:

Deadwood seasons (1 and) 2

Frontier House

Schindler's List (Spielberg, 1993)

1940s House

General Requirements:

I expect that you will come to class prepared for discussion, which means that you have read the material carefully and have attempted to identify the author's argument, investments, and intervention.

Each of you will begin class discussion once during the semester. You should device questions designed to unpack the argument of the assigned essay or book, and to tease out the implications or ramifications of that argument. You might also locate difficult passages to unpack, or controversial passages to debate. I will expect you to have a strategy for getting the class to engage with what you take to be the key issues in the text, a sustained line of inquiry that leads the class into the complexity of the text.

In addition to the presentation and regular class participation, you will write nine weekly response essays due over the course of the semester (this means you're allowed to miss three). In these brief essays (1-2 pages) you will explain the author's overarching argument, connect the text to others (when possible) and pick a concept or issue the author develops to flesh out. On weeks when you are reading several essays, try to articulate the thesis of each essay and the relationship between the readings. How do the texts speak to (and agree or disagree) with one another? You will also write a final paper on topic of your own devising. The only requirement is that it draw heavily on the theoretical paradigms explored this semester. The idea is to use the theory from the course to engage with or explore a cultural object (broadly defined) of your choice. Your paper will of course need to make an original argument (~15 pages).

The percentage breakdown is as follows:

--Participation and Discussion Leading: 20%

--Weekly Response Essays: 35%

--Final Paper, 45%, to be handed in at class. Extensions must be requested at least a week in advance of the due date.

Readings:

8/29 Introduction: History and Historical Fiction

Richard Slotkin, "Fiction for the Purposes of History," *Rethinking History* 9:2, 221-236.

White, Hayden 'Introduction: Historical Fiction, Fictional History, and Historical Reality', *Rethinking History*, 9:2, 147 – 157

PhD students read: Lukacs, *The Historical Novel*, chap 1

9/5 NO CLASS-Labor Day

9/12 Consuming the Past

Jerome de Groot, *Consuming History: Historians and Heritage in Contemporary Popular Culture*

Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen *The Presence of the Past* [Paperback]

9/19 Narrative, Novels

Alun Munslow *Narrative and History* (Theory and History) [Paperback]

Sara Pinto (2010), "Emotional Histories and Historical Emotions," *Rethinking History*, 14:2, 189-207.

9/26 What is Affect?

Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007)

Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, "Introduction," *The Affect Theory Reader* Durham and London: Duke UP, 2010 pgs 1-25.

Sara Ahmed, "Happy Objects," *The Affect Theory Reader* Durham and London: Duke UP, 2010 pgs 29-51.

10/3 History, Affect and Politics

Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History"

, *Prosthetic Memory*, Chapters 1 and 4

"Empathy and the Politics of Identification"

Lawrence Grossberg, "Mapping Popular Culture"

Gould, "Moving Politics"

PhD Students: Melissa Gregg, "A Neglected History" *Rethinking History* Volume 7, Issue 3 (October 2003) 285-306

—Visit Holocaust Museum

10/11 - Tuesday class: Games and Reenactments—(Optional: Visit Mt. Vernon)

Peter Burke, "Performing History"

Vanessa Agnew, "History's Affective Turn"

Rejack, "Toward a Virtual Reenactment of History"

Stephen Gapps, "Mobile Monuments"

Claudio Fogu, "Digitalizing Historical Consciousness" *History and Theory, Theme Issue* 47 (May 2009), 103-121

Cook, Alexander, "The Use and Abuse of Historical Reenactment: Thoughts on Recent Trends in Public History" *Criticism*, Volume 46, Number 3, Summer 2004, pp. 487-496

10/17 History on Film

Robert Rosenstone, *History on Film/Film on History*

Jeremy Maron, *Affective Historiography* *Schindler's List*, Melodrama and Historical Representation, *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, Volume 27, Number 4, Summer 2009, pp. 66-94 (Article)

Christoph Classen, "Balanced Truth: Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* among History, Memory, and Popular Culture" *History and Theory, Theme Issue* 47 (May 2009), 77-102  
Watch *Schindler's List* (Steven Spielberg, 1993)

#### 10/24 TV Historical Drama

Watch Deadwood, season 2 for class

, “Waking the Deadwood of history: Listening, language, and the 'aural visceral” *Rethinking History*, Vol. 14, No. 4, December 2010, 531–549.

Jerome de Groot, “‘Perpetually dividing and suturing the past and present’: *Mad Men* and the illusions of history,” *Rethinking History* Vol. 15, No. 2, June 2011, 269–285.

Christopher Lockett, “Accidental History: Mass Culture and HBOs Rome” *Journal of Popular Film & Television* Fall 2010, Vol. 38 Issue 3, p102-112

#### 10/31 Reality History TV, Pt. I

Watch Frontier House and 1940s House (BBC),

Discuss shows

Frontier House: link to episode 1 part 1 (follow links to the rest of episode 1, and the following episodes)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfUgTWJ4ngE>

1940s House

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4x5drU9mAk>

Tristram Hunt, “Reality, Identity and Empathy: The Changing Face of Social History Television,” *Journal of Social History*,” Spring 2006, Vol. 39 Issue 3, p843-858;

Roy Rosenzweig, "Historians and Audiences: Comment on Tristram Hunt and Geoffrey Timmins"

#### 11/7 Reality History TV, Pt. II

Rymza-Pawlowska, Malgorzata, “Frontier House: Reality Television and the Historical Experience” *Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies* - Volume 37.1 (Spring 2007), pp. 35-42

Ruth McElroy; Rebecca Williams, “The Appeal Of The Past In Historical Reality Television,” *Media History* (2011) 17: 1, 79 — 96

Laurie Ouellette, "Reality TV Gives Back: On the Civic Functions of Reality Entertainment," *Journal of Popular Film and Television* (2010) 66-71.

Taddeo, Julie Anne. And Dvorak, Ken. “The PBS Historical House Series: Where Historical Reality Succumbs to Reel,” *Reality Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies*, Volume 37.1 (Spring 2007), pp. 18-28

Edwards, Leigh H., “The Endless End of Frontier Mythology: PBS’s Frontier House 2002” *Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies*, Volume 37.1 (Spring 2007), pp. 29-34

Michelle Liu Carriger, “Historionics: Neither Here Nor There with Historical Reality TV,” *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* (Spring 2010) 135-149.

Diffrient, David Scott. “History as Mystery and Beauty as Duty in The 1940s House “(1999) *Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies*, Volume 37.1 (Spring 2007), pp. 43-53

Iain McCalman, “The Little Ship of Horrors: Reenacting Extreme History,” *Criticism* Volume 46, Number 3 (Summer 2004), pp. 477-86.

#### 11/14 Affect, Mediality and History for the Future

Richard Grusin: *Premediation: Affect and Mediality after 9/11*

Palgrave Macmillan (May 11, 2010)

D. L. LeMahieu, "Digital Memory, Moving Images, and the Absorption of Historical Experience," *Film & History* 41.1 Spring 2011 pps 82-106.

11/21 Affect: Sensitization/Desensitization

Marita Sturken, *Tourists of History: Memory, Kitsch, and Consumerism from Oklahoma City to Ground Zero* Duke University Press Books (October 11, 2007)

11/28

Barbie Zelizer, *About to Die: How News Images Move the Public*

Oxford University Press, USA (December 1, 2010)

12/5 Discussion of Papers

Final Papers due in class.