Story Telling, Truth Telling, and History
HIST 180S.01 Gateway Seminar

Instructor: Yuridia Ramírez
Office: Carr 318
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:45-3:45
Class Meetings: Fall 2014, Tu/Th 1:25-2:40, Carr 242
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This is a “Gateway” course about how historians think about and do history. This class is intended to introduce students to the basics of historical research, the process of writing history, the theoretical perspectives used by historians today, and the implications of the digital turn in the researching and writing of history. Throughout the semester we will review and practice the methods historians use to illuminate the past, focusing especially on the relationship between history and fiction. We will read modern history, historical theory and historical fiction to assess the contested borders that modern scholarly standards and popular perception constantly negotiate between history and fiction. Most importantly, we will read various types of primary sources (in English translation), analyzing how historians have utilized them, and we also will do our own careful analyses of primary source texts. Each of you will choose a topic to research. Using modern historical methods you will write a history paper and present your findings in a conference.

Required Readings (All books are available at The Regulator Bookstore)

Azuela, Mariano. The Underdogs: A Novel of the Mexican Revolution. Modern Library paperback edition. New York: Modern Library, 2002 [1915]. Note: Please try to purchase the Modern Library version, so that we all have the same page numbers for class discussion.


Online Texts
In addition to the printed texts, students will be assigned articles which can be accessed online at our WordPress website. Print these texts and bring them to class.

Learning Objectives

By the conclusion of this course, you will be able to do the following:

1) Identify the primary sources available to historians, interpret them within their historical context, and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses.

2) Communicate an argument in writing with clarity and precision, supported by evidence.

3) Engage in focused oral discussion, using textual evidence to support claims.

4) Collaborate productively and respectfully with peers in working groups and in-class discussions.

Evaluation

Participation (15%)

I believe that each of you is intelligent, insightful, and has unique perspectives to offer on the material we are covering. As a result, there is no reason you should not be actively involved in the course, and active participation remains an integral part of your grade. Below is the grading rubric for in-class participation. Please note: If the class does not actively participate in class, I will assign 3-page written notes on the readings.

A: Participates daily in class discussions and activities. Engages with fellow classmates. Demonstrates excellent preparation for class discussions through comments and reactions to the questions the instructor and classmates have posed. Takes the initiative to participate in class. Shows critical insight and deep analysis in discussion and group activities.

B: Consistently participates in class discussions and activities. Demonstrates preparation for discussions, though does not take usually the initiative to actively participate. Exhibits a clear familiarity with readings.

C: Slight to moderate level of participation, with demonstration of some knowledge of readings.
D: Sometimes attends class but never voluntarily participates in class
discussion. Does not prove to be prepared for class discussions or to have
done the required readings.

F: Does not attend class.

Primary Source Analysis (20%)

You will select a primary source from the assigned reader or another
source, with my approval. A primary source consists of a document, image, or any
sort of other original source that gives us a window, however opaque, into life in a
specific time and place. You will write a 3-4 page paper (plus bibliography) on
your source (Times New Roman, 12-point, double-spaced). I will provide you with
a rubric on how to evaluate a primary source, but you should strive to answer
questions like: Where did the source come from? What are the author’s possible
biases and interests? Why was this source preserved? What can it really tell us
about everyday life? What are its silences? You should use other books on
(secondary sources) to provide a historical context for the source you have
chosen to analyze.

Book Review (20%)

You will select a book and write a 5-6-page (Times New Roman, 12-point,
double-spaced) review. I will post a list of books on the Sakai site, or you can
choose a book yourself, with my approval. The review should briefly summarize
the main argument of the book, identify and critique the author’s types of evidence
(court records, baptismal records, works of art, diaries, letters, secondary
sources, etc.), and discuss its strengths and weaknesses. Is the argument
convincing, and does the author prove his or her point? What kinds of methods
does the author use, and are they effective? How does this book relate to the
other readings in our class? What questions does the work raise? See:
https://apps.carleton.edu/curricular/history/resources/study/review/.

Final Research Paper (45%)

The purpose of this research paper is for you to critically engage with a
problem/issue involving the Latin@ community in North Carolina, the United
States, or in Latin America. These can be social issues (including labor issues,
family formations, gender and sexuality, racial formations, etc.), political and
economic issues (immigration, migrant labor, formation of political blocs and
alliances, etc.), and cultural production (art, music, film, literature, etc.). You will
develop a working hypothesis supported by primary and secondary sources.
Students will meet individually with me within the first three weeks of class to
discuss paper topics. You will work on your paper throughout the semester, and
your final grade will reflect the combination of all parts of the process.

➤ Abstract and bibliography (2%): You will write a brief (c. 150 words)
abstract including your research question, working hypotheses, and
sources. Your bibliography should include five primary and five secondary sources with a brief annotation about each item’s relevance to your project.

- **Rough drafts (5%)**: In addition to my feedback, I also will assign each student a writing partner who will provide direct and thorough critiques on the draft. The more complete your rough draft, the more useful the feedback will be.

- **In-class presentation (5%)**: Each student will present his or her paper topic, one primary source, and one secondary source. The presentation, no longer than ten minutes, should explain why that primary source is particularly compelling or perplexing and the way the student sees it working in the paper. I will divide the class into groups, and each group will be assigned to present their individual paper topics. The class will discuss the topic and sources and provide feedback in the hopes of strengthening the student’s argument.

- **Peer evaluation (3%)**: Each student will provide a more thorough review of his or her writing partner’s rough draft. The student is expected to give the author more extensive feedback (one or two pages) about both the strengths and weaknesses of the draft, commenting on the quality of the research, argumentation, and writing.

- **Final paper (20%)**: Turning in all of the previous elements in their draft and final form, as well as the peer evaluations written by both you and your writing partner, your final paper must be emailed to me by 11:59pm.

- **Conference presentation (10%)**: Students will be organized into panels with students from Prof. Milian and Prof. Mignolo’s classes. You are required to present your paper at the conference, answer any questions from the audience, and attend other students’ panels.

**Grading Chart:**

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**Course Policies, Procedures, and Resources**

**Technology**

Our class will use a WordPress site, where all assignment prompts, class readings, the syllabus, and other important information will be posted and available for downloading.

The use of laptops, cell phones, smart phones, iPads, etc. are prohibited in class, unless we are working on an assignment that requires their use.

**Attendance Policy**
Attendance and regular class participation are mandatory. Please arrive on time so as not to disrupt the class. You will be allowed three unexcused absences during the semester, but each absence above this number will result in the deduction of three points from your final grade. The only exception for this would be if you have an official Dean’s Excuse for long-term illness or family emergencies. Please communicate with me if such a situation arises.

**Citations**

For this class, please use footnotes and a complete bibliography, and follow the guidelines from the Chicago Manual of Style, available at [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html) or consult the library’s resource: [http://library.duke.edu/research/citing/](http://library.duke.edu/research/citing/). There is also an online version of The Chicago Manual of Style via the Duke Libraries website.

**Writing Help**

The Thompson Writing Program offers writing studio appointments from 9am - 10pm Monday - Thursday to work on any aspect of the writing process, from early outlines to substantive revisions. Students may schedule appointments at 112 Perkins Library, 2nd floor Lilly Library, and 106 Art Building (e-appointments are also available). Make appointments and find out more at [http://twp.duke.edu-writing-studio/appointments](http://twp.duke.edu-writing-studio/appointments).

**Assignment Submissions and Late Policies**

Assignments are due in hard copy **at the start of class on the due date.** Graded assignments received after the due date will be deducted one full letter grade (4 points) for each late day (i.e. A becomes A-). Assignments over three days late will not be accepted. In the case of illness or family emergency, you must contact me via email in advance or no extension will be granted.

**Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities at 684-5917 or disabilities@aas.duke.edu as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

**Plagiarism**

The Duke Community Standard (see [http://www.integrity.duke.edu/new.html](http://www.integrity.duke.edu/new.html)) forbids you to represent another’s work as your own. All work that you turn in for this course must be written by you. It may not be a paper you wrote for another class. It may not be paraphrased or directly quoted from another work without proper use of quotation marks and proper citations. On plagiarism, see [http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism](http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism). One incident of plagiarism or cheating will merit you a failing grade for the course.
Unit I: Introduction to Course Objectives and Requirements

Students must complete the module for non-medical research with human subjects (so that we can do oral histories) within the first two weeks of class—see http://ors.duke.edu/researcher/initial-certification

Week 1: The Basics

Aug. 26 – Introduction

Aug. 28 – What do historians do?

  Reading: “How to Read a Historical Document” handout

  Reading: “How to Read Fiction for History,” https://apps.carleton.edu/curricular/history/resources/study/fiction/

  Reading: Marius and Page, chapters 2 and 4


  Reading: With His Pistol, chapters 1-3

Week 2: Thinking and Writing History

Sep. 2 – Principles for Historians

  Reading: Marius and Page, chapters 1 and 5 and Appendix C


  Reading: With His Pistol, chapters 4-6

Sep 4 – Gathering Information

  In-class exercise: “Source Critique” handout

  Reading: Marius and Page, chapters 3 and 6

  Reading: With His Pistol, chapters 7-8

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Unit II: Writing a History Research Paper

Week 3: Research methods

Sep. 9 – Library research—meet in room 118 Perkins Library

Reading: Marius and Page, chapter 3 and Appendix A

Reading: The Underdogs and
http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/uthscsa/00034/hscsa-00034.html

Reading: Chris Harris, “Mariano Azuela’s Los de abajo: Patriarchal Masculinity and Mexican Gender Regimes under Fire,” The Bulletin of Hispanic Studies 87, no. 6 (2010): 645-666


Sep. 11 – Library Research day – Meet in Bostock 039

Week 4: Raw materials

Sep. 16 – Sources?


Reading: Jessica Horsley, “‘Eyewitnessing’: History and Visual Sources,” History Compass 7, no. 5 (2009): 1317-1337

Abstract and bibliography due

Sep. 18 – Oral Histories


Listening: Go to http://braceroarchive.org/resources and watch the video “Conducting an Oral History Interview”

Listening: Go to http://www2.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/s/Southern_Oral_History_Program_Collection.html#d1e77207 and listen to one oral history interview

Listening: Go to Voces Oral History Project at http://www.lib.utexas.edu/voces/ and listen to one oral history

Unit III: Historians’ Methodologies

Week 5: Good Writing, Good Questions

Sep. 23 – Critical Reading and Assessment

Reading: Brundage, Going to the Sources, chapter 4

Reading: Marius and Page, Appendix B


Reading: Doña María’s Story, 3-116

Primary Source analysis due

Sep. 25 – Stories and Historiography

Reading: Doña María’s Story, 117-212


Reading: Anthony Brundage, Going to the Sources, chapter 1

Week 6: Into the Archive
Sep. 30 – Meet in Rubenstein Library (in Perkins) – Human Rights and SAF archive

Reading: *Doña María’s Story*, 213-298


Primary Sources: Go to [http://braceroarchive.org/items/browse/?type=4](http://braceroarchive.org/items/browse/?type=4) and listen to one oral history

*Book review due*

Oct. 2 – Film: Harvest of Loneliness

**Unit IV: Theories**

**Week 7: Memory and US Exceptionalism**

Oct. 7 – Memory and Place

Reading: *The Little School*, 7-86


Reading: Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina’s Dirty War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), chapters 1 and 6


Oct. 9 – Challenging American Exceptionalism


Reading: The Little School, 87-122

*Rough draft due*

Week 8: Sources Presentations

Oct. 14 – No class; Fall break

Oct. 16 – Group 1 Presentations

**Unit V: Multicultural Moment in Historical Studies**

Week 9: Sources Presentations

Oct. 21 – Group 2 Presentations

Oct. 23 – *The Undocumented*

Week 10: Workshopping

Oct. 28 – No class; Individual student meetings

*Peer evaluation due*

Oct. 30 – No class; Individual student meetings

*Peer evaluation due*

Week 11: Race and the “Subaltern”

Nov. 4 – Category of analysis: Race

Kousser and James McPherson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 143-177


Nov. 6 – “Subalterns”?


Week 12: Gender and Labor

Nov. 11 – Category of analysis: Gender

Reading: Joan Wallach Scott, “Gender: Still a Useful Category of Analysis?” *Diogenes* 57, no. 7 (2010): 7-14

Reading: Cherríe L. Moraga and Gloria E. Anzaldúa, eds., *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (Berkeley, CA.: Third Woman Press, 2002), Selected Readings

Nov. 13 – Category of analysis: Labor

Reading: Alice Kessler-Harris, “Treating the Male as “Other”: Redefining the Parameters of Labor History,” *Labor History* 34 (Spring-Summer 1993): 190-204


**Unit VII: History and Popular Culture**

Week 13: Autobiography and History
Nov. 18 – “As Told By...”

Film: “Innocent Voices”

Reading: Martínez, *The Beast*, Foreword-chapter 5

Reading: María Cristina García “Introduction” and “The Wars in Central America and the Refugee Crisis,” in *Seeking Refuge: Central American Migration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 1-43


Nov. 20 – Visit from Marco Williams, the Lehman Brady Visiting Joint Chair Professor in Documentary Studies and American Studies at Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Week 14: Popular Cultures

Nov. 25 – Who Are We?


*Final paper due*

Nov. 27 – Thanksgiving; No Class

Week 15: Telling Stories

Dec. 2 – History Today

Reading: Martínez, *The Beast*, chapters 6-14

Reading: Roque Planas and Ryan Grim, “Here’s How the U.S. Sparked A Refugee Crisis On The Border, In 8 Simple Steps,” *The Huffington Post*, July 18, 2014,


Dec. 5 – Arrivals and Departures: An LSGS Undergraduate Research Symposium