This course examines the theoretical or analytical frameworks, paradigms, and resources of historical research and writing. We pay particular attention to the ways that historians draw on the methods and analytical paradigms of other disciplines such as sociology, political science, economics, anthropology, literary theory, feminist theory and cultural studies. It is not intended as a review of historiography, although some discussion of the literatures of a field inevitably enters into our consideration of methodology. Everyone will be responsible for analyzing the core readings of the course in each class meeting and for several writing assignments (outlined below).

The following texts are REQUIRED and available for purchase in the bookstore:


REQUIRED E-books available through CUP or Snell Library:


Laura L. Downs, *Manufacturing Inequality* (Cornell, 1995)
Karl Marx and Frederich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*.

Additional REQUIRED readings will be posted on Blackboard and/or will be available in journals through J-STOR.

Writing Assignments:

(1) Weekly Critical Essays: each week all students will submit a one-page single-spaced analysis of the readings for each week. Critical essays should focus on the following:
What is the principal argument of the book or article? What are the principal sources used? What is the methodology (or methodologies) the author uses to analyze and make sense of the sources?

(2) A literature review on a topic relevant to your current interests.

PRESENTATIONS: Each week one of you will present the readings for the week, using your one-page critical essays as a guide, and raising questions for discussion from the readings.

Week I: September 12 Culture and Politics/Politics and Culture


Please make notes on the following questions and be prepared to discuss in class: What question or questions is Hunt trying to answer? What sources does she use and on what theoretical foundations does she rely? How would you describe the two methodological approaches she takes to answer this question? How are the two parts of the book linked? Are there any problems with her assumptions in either part of the book? Critique?

Week II: September 19 Marxism and the Study of Class

Reading: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*. E-Book at Snell. Please use the 2012 Yale University Press edition; read pp. 73-102 (obviously can read other material in this edition, but this is the core of the Manifesto).

Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon* (access on http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1852/18th-brumaire/index.htm)


How would you describe Marx’s use of dialectical materialism as a methodology in the *Eighteenth Brumaire*? How is Marx analyzing history? What is the relationship between theory and evidence? How is Genovese applying Marxist theory to the study of slavery in the US? How does Genovese analyze the plantation economy of the antebellum South?

Critical essay due on Marx and Genovese.

Week III: September 26 Gender as an Analytical Lens and as Subject of Analysis


How is the use of gender as a category of historical analysis and as a subject of historical analysis different from the study of women? What are the most important elements of Scott’s theory? How does Scott herself deploy her theory in studying the history of French workers? What kinds of sources does she use? What is the relationship between theory and evidence? What does Tosh add to the study of gender? What is hegemonic masculinity and how does Tosh critique it? How does Roper use the concept of masculinity to analyze the experience of soldiers during World War I?

Critical essay due on Scott, Tosh, and Roper.

**Week IV October 3 Race as an Analytical Category**


Stoler, “Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power,” BLACKBOARD


In what sense is race a “meta-language?” What is Brooks Higginbotham’s argument about the power of racial thinking? What kinds of evidence does she use? How does she see the relationship between theory and evidence? How does Lake use race? What is the relationship between race and masculinity in the cases she discusses? What is here evidence?

Critical essay due on Brooks Higginbotham, Stoler, and Lake.

**Week V October 10 Columbus Day. No Class.**
Week VI October 17 Post-Marxist Social History


What did Thompson add to the Marxist analysis of class and class formation? What is the relationship between materiality and culture, between culture and politics? What is the place of Marxist analysis in Rose’s work? How does she analyze the intersection of gender and class in the process of industrialization?

Critical essay due on Thompson and Rose.

Week VII October 24 Post-Structuralism and Sexuality


What conceptual framework does Foucault use to analyze the history of sexuality? What kinds of historical examples does he use to demonstrate his points? What does he mean by biopower? What are the advantages and or shortcomings of Foucault’s approach? How does Stoler critique Foucault? What does she add to his analysis? What kinds of evidence does she reply on and what is the relationship between theory and evidence in Stoler’s work?

Critical essay due on Foucault and Stoler.

Week VIII October 31 Using Theory in Environmental History


What kind of theoretical perspective informs Worster’s work; how does he use it to analyze environmental history? What is the relationship between culture and politics in his work?

Critical essay due on Worster.
**Week IX November 7 Micro-history**

Reading: Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*.

What kind conceptual framework does Ginzburg use? What assumptions are built into the study? What are the positive aspects and/or limitations of micro-history as a genre of historical analysis?

Critical essay due on Ginzburg

**Week X November 14 Digital Humanities: a Round Table Discussion.** Students who are currently taking the required DH class will lead a discussion on the use of DH methodologies in historical analysis.

Readings: TBA

No critical essay due this week.

This would be a good time to begin compiling texts and writing your literature review due on December 14!!

**Week XI November 21 Big History and its Critics**


Deborah Cohen and Peter Mandler, “Critique of *The History Manifesto,*” *American Historical Review* 120:2 (April 2015). Available through the link above or through J-STOR or Project Muse.

Critical essay due on Guldi and Armitage and their critics. Which view of history makes sense? What critiques or questions do you have about each?

**Week XII November 28 The Uses of Anthropology**

Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward and Interpretive Theory of Culture,” in Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures.* BLACKBOARD.

Geertz, “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight.” BLACKBOARD.

What is “thick description?” How does Geertz use it to analyze Balinese cultural practices? Might it be useful as a historical methodology? How does Darnton use cultural history to understand a social movement? Is his analysis a sort of “thick description?”

Critical essay due on Darnton and Geertz

**Week XIII December 5 Comparative History**


The main point of reading this work is to use it as a way to understand comparative history. What makes comparative history possible?

No critical essay due this week.

**December 14 Literature Review Due. No extensions granted!**