In order to accomplish this throughout the semester you will be forced to read some of the most liberating texts you have ever encountered. You will also be tasked with coming to terms with a new vocabulary that is designed to change the way you think and write about the world. Finally you will be forced to rethink everything you have been taught about how to write history. In this way you will be participating in a creative act of intellectual “disobedience.” For as Keith Jenkins reminds us, “postmodernism, is the chance to iconoclastically go beyond, existing rules—and rulers—in hopefully emancipatory and democratizing ways.”

I believe that if you are able to accomplish these goals you will exit the class in a different world: A world where anything is possible.

My goal, throughout the semester, is to encourage you along your path to becoming an “intellectual,” which is defined by Keith Jenkins as; one who has “the capacity for presenting an uncompromising emancipatory message; a person whose works have a radical, sustained, cutting edge, [is] happy to raise embarrassing questions, not willing to take no for an answer, to relentlessly confront dogma and orthodoxy, and to keep in focus ‘those issues and people that are continually forgotten or swept under the rug.’” … [And that through it all, he concludes, that you must remain] immune to accommodation and [accept your role as an] uncooptable (sic), disobedient person… [The type of] person who accepts [their own] awkwardness, eccentric angles of vision and unwillingness to follow established paths [with] a freedom and integrity that makes [you] beholden to no
one, and ready to accept the consequences of that position.” 2

The class itself consists of two parts. In the first part we will concentrate on some of the key ideas and concepts that scholars have employed in their discussions of “postmodern” “history”. This will help familiarize you with some of the new and exciting language that has become an integral part of how we write about the world. We will also look at some of the key writings modern and postmodern historians so that you can begin to familiarize yourself with the differences between these different intellectual approaches. In the second part of the course you will have the opportunity to write and present your own papers on “the before now”.

READINGS


CHALLENGES

Week One

Course Introduction

Week Two

(L/D) What is History/history?


Week Three


Terms and scholars to be discussed in class and tested on: Author; Causation and Class; Constructivist History; Continental Philosophy; Deconstructionist History; Jacques Derrida; and Discourse.

Week Four


Terms and scholars to be discussed in class and tested on: Emplotment; The Enlightenment; Episteme; Epistemology; Form and Content; Michel Foucault; G.W.F Hegel; Hermeneutics; and Historicism.

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Week Five

Terms and scholars to be discussed in class and tested on:
Immanuel Kant;
Liberal Humanism;
Linguistic Turn;
Metanarrative;
Metaphysics;
Modernism; Narrative;
Friedrich Nietzsche;
and Ontology.

Week Six
☐ Keith Jenkins, “Why Bother With History,” *At the limits of history: Essays on Theory and Practice*, p.p. 54-64

Week Seven:
☐ Test: You will only be tested on the definitions presented by other students.

Week Eight:
☐ Keith Jenkins, “Against the historical ‘middle ground’: A reply to Michael Coleman,” in *At the limits of history: Essays on Theory and Practice*, p.p. 133-149
☐ Keith Jenkins, “Modernist Disavowals and postmodern reminders of the condition of history today; On Jean-Francois Lyotard, in *At the Limits of History: Essays on Theory and Practice*, p.p. 169-187

Week Nine:
☐ Keith Jenkins, “Ethical responsibility and the historian: On the possible end of history, ‘of a certain kind,” in *At the Limits of History: Essays on Theory and Practice*, p.p. 188-208
☐ Keith Jenkins, “Once upon a time ‘: On history,” in *At the Limits of History: Essays on Theory and Practice*, p.p. 209-220


**Week Ten:**
- Keith Jenkins, “Postmodernity, the end of history and Frank Ankersmit,” in *At the Limits of History: Essays on Theory and Practice*, p.p. 230-244
- Keith Jenkins, “The end of the affair: On the irretrievable breakdown of history and ethics,” in *At the Limits of History: Essays on Theory and Practice*, p.p. 245-254
- Keith Jenkins, “‘Nobody does it better’: Radical history and Hayden White,” in *At the Limits of History: Essays on Theory and Practice*, p.p. 255-269
- Alun Munslow, “Afterword,” in *At the Limits of History: Essays on Theory and Practice* p.p. 315-322

**Part Three**

**Week Twelve**
- Essay Presentations

**Week Thirteen**
- Essay Presentations

**REWARDS**

**Participation 25%**
The readings for this class are deceptive. In most fourth year classes you are called upon to read a book a week. In this class the most you will read in a week is 150 pages. And on average you will only be reading 75 pages a week. But don’t start celebrating now. Grasping these concepts and understanding the ideas behind the arguments employed by the various scholars will not be easy. You should make sure that you set aside the necessary time to understand all of the readings. If you come to class unprepared you will be asked to leave the room and complete the readings in another location.

**Presentation 5% X 2 = 10%**
In Part One of the course we will spend our time familiarizing ourselves with some of the key scholars and their ideas. We will look at ten subjects per class. In each class at least two students will be responsible for doing a presentation on a particular subject taken from the *The Routledge Companion to Historical Studies*. Each student must do at least two presentations over the semester. However, if you are not happy with your grade on the first or second presentation you are encouraged to do a third presentation. Only your top two marks will be considered for your final grade. The presentations are fairly straightforward. You are simply required to summarize the topic you have been assigned to the class. You are also required to answer questions from the class and Dr. Corke. When doing these assignments it is beneficial to familiarize yourself with all of the ideas highlighted in Alan Munslow’s discussion of your topic. This means that you will need to flip to other definitions in your book. You may
also need to go beyond the textbook in order to explain the ideas clearly to the class.

**Test 25%**
During the 7th week of classes you will be tested on the topics discussed in class. You will be given ten words and you will have to define five. At least one word will be taken from each student’s presentation. So everyone will go into the test familiar with at least one concept and if they attend all the classes will be aware of each topic discussed by their classmates. Each answer will be worth five marks. You will need five relevant and substantial points to receive full marks.

**Essay 30%/10%**
Relying on some of the techniques adopted by postmodern scholars and those discussed in the class, you will be asked to write a paper on some aspect of “the before now.” You may write the paper on any topic you wish, within the field of American history, as long as the primary event occurred before September 11, 2001: An arbitrary date, but then again all historical dates are arbitrary in that we select them in order to intervene in the past at a place and time of our choosing. In other words the past does not decide where the story begins or ends, you do or in this case I do. In this paper it is expected—for no other reason than “history” generally relies on “traces” of the past—that you will employ both primary and secondary sources. You will be graded on the use of these traces, your creativity, the paper’s aesthetic value, the extent to which you employ postmodern interpretive strategies and the ways in which your paper helps us come to terms with the before now.

All papers must be proof read for unintentional spelling and grammatical mistakes, lest your peers make fun of you. You will present the paper to the class and be prepared to receive comments, criticisms and suggestions. You must be able to defend the various interpretive strategies you made in the paper to the class.

Papers are to be E-mailed to Dr. Corke one week before the date they are due to presented. Dr. Corke will then E-mail the paper to the class. Due dates will be offered on a first come, first serve basis and will depend on the number of students in the class. The first draft of the essay is worth 20% of your final grade. 10% of this grade will come from your peers. Based on the class discussions, and Dr. Corke’s comments, you are then expected to rework the essay and hand it in two weeks later. This second draft is worth 10% of your final grade.

**Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:**
All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on academic integrity and plagiarism referenced in the Policies and Student Resources sections of the academicintegrity.dal.ca website. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations.

Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked
for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence, which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even to the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course, students should read the Policy on Intellectual Honesty contained in the Calendar or on the Online Dalhousie website. The Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and computer-readable format, and to submit any paper to be checked electronically for originality. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand.

What does academic integrity mean?
Academic integrity means being honest in the fulfillment of your academic responsibilities thus establishing mutual trust. Fairness is essential to the interactions of the academic community and is achieved through respect for the opinions and ideas of others. “Violations of intellectual honesty are offensive to the entire academic community, not just to the individual faculty member and students in whose class an offence occurs.”

[Intellectual Honesty section of University Calendar]

OSAA Syllabus Statement on Accommodation:
Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation or any characteristic under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests, quizzes and exams should make their request to the Office of Student Accessibility & Accommodation (OSAA) prior to or at the outset of each academic term (with the exception of X/Y courses). Please see www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca for more information and to obtain Form A, Request for Accommodation.

A note taker may be required to assist a classmate. There is an honourarium of $75/course/term. If you are interested, please contact OSAA at 494-2836 for more information.

The Writing Centre:
The Dalhousie Writing Centre
Killam Library Learning Commons G40C.
For more information or to make an appointment visit our website at http://writingcentre.dal.ca
Call 494-1963 E-mail writingcentre@dal.ca

Our Hours are: Mon, Tue, Thurs 10am - 6pm, Wed 10am - 7pm, Fri 10am - 4pm, Sun 1pm - 5pm.

University life can often be challenging. However, with help from the Studying for Success program, you too can become a more effective learner. Attend our workshops or drop in for individual study skills sessions, where we can help you with Time Management, Critical Reading, Note taking, Preparing for Exams, and much more. We at SFS would like to make your university experience a more rewarding one. Don’t wait until it’s too late! Let Studying for Success help you find smarter ways to study.

For more information or to make appointments, please:
- visit our website: www.dal.ca/sfs
- visit our main office in the Killam Library, Room G28 (main floor)
- call 494-3077 or
- email the Coordinator

The Writing Centre: The Dalhousie Writing Centre Killam Library Learning Commons G40C. For more information or to make an appointment visit our website at http://writingcentre.dal.ca Call 494-1963 E-mail writingcentre@dal.ca Our Hours are: Mon, Tue, Thurs 10am - 6pm, Wed 10am - 7pm, Fri 10am - 4pm, Sun 1pm - 5pm.

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