Introduction to Themes in History – CRN82300
M, 11:00 – 12: 15, SO 3032

Instructor: Dr. Elsa A. Nyström
Office: Social Science Building - 4122
Office Hours: MW – 9:00 – 10:00, 1:30 – 4:30, or by appointment.
Office Phone: 770 - 423-6149 (voice mail number)
History Dept.: 770 -423-6294
E-mail- enystrom@kennesaw.edu

A NOTE ABOUT VISTA
Vista is an important part of our course structure, Please expect emails about upcoming classes as well as uploaded documents for you to read. If I can’t make a class, I will contact you through VISTA so please check your messages regularly.

Text:
Hoffer, Peter Charles. Past Imperfect; Facts Fictions Fraud—American History from Bancroft and Parkman to Ambrose, Bellisles, Ellis and Goodwin.

A Note about the textbooks: The Hoffer book deals with historiography and current trends in writing American history. It will give you some insights regarding the subjectivity of history and show that often historians have more than one reason for writing about a particular period of history. We will use the web for input on proper grammar, punctuation, footnotes and bibliography.

The overall theme in this class is history and mystery in 19th and 20th century North America extending outwards to the British Empire because of its influence on America at this time. We will look at fiction and non-fiction written during this period. Some assigned material deals with a mystery as deduction and problem solving is a part of the historian’s craft. The class will be divided between discussion about method and analysis, discussion of historiography and historians, and discussion of the results of your assignments as well as presentations to the class.

Course Objectives
1. To understand the meaning of history and how historians research and interpret historical topics.
2. To learn about the variety of sources that can be used in the study of local history.
3. To learn the proper techniques of documenting historical sources.
4. To evaluate primary sources and analyze secondary source
5. To gain a working knowledge of the use of different types of primary and secondary source materials in a problem solving situation.
6. To learn how to write a variety of papers with the style and methodology used by historians including analysis, critique, evaluation and essay.

Course Description
The purpose of History 2270 is to teach you to think research and write history as a professional historian does. The skills and insights you learn will be useful for all history majors, history teachers at all levels and in the real world as well. Considerable class time will be devoted to a discussion of the methods of historical interpretation and the different ways in which historians have viewed the past. Class time will also be spent on discussion of the proper ways to footnote a paper and prepare a bibliography using the format detailed in the Chicago Manual of Style (available in the library) We will use two online resources the Historian’s Toolbox http://guides.library.fullerton.edu/historians_toolbox/index.html
and Son of Citation Machine [http://citationmachine.net/leftpanel.php?reqstyleid=10&more] to provide assistance in learning the fundamentals of formatting and research.

Written assignments include an analysis of newspaper accounts and an evaluation of textbook chapters on the reconstruction era in the United States.

You will also get to choose from a variety of case studies based on primary sources dealing with mysterious events during the time frame of the class to develop a Power Point argument providing your interpretation of what actually happened using the skills you have learned in the class.

These case studies are found on the following website:
http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/mysteries/indexen.html

If you have any questions don’t hesitate to email me or stop by my office. Please don’t wait until the last minute if there is a problem. I am in my office all day Monday and Wednesday unless I have a meeting.

You must adhere to the time table set out in the syllabus unless you have major problems.

Assignments are due on the date listed in the syllabus. If your assignment is not turned in on time, you will either lose points or get a zero for the assignment.

Academic Honesty and student Conduct:
The high quality of education at Kennesaw State University is reflected in the credits and degrees its students earn. The protection of these high standards is crucial since the validity and equity of the University’s grades and degrees depend upon it. Any student found guilty of an infraction or a regulation for academic honesty shall be suspended for at least one semester unless evidence is provided to convince the court that substantial mitigating circumstances existed in that student’s offense.
The following regulations are designed to assist students in developing appropriate standards and attitudes with respect to academic honesty. To this end, the regulations protect students against infractions that may compromise the validity of their degree or place them at an undue disadvantage with respect to the equity of their grades.
A. Plagiarism and Cheating
NO student shall receive, attempt to receive knowingly give or attempt to give unauthorized assistance in the preparation of any work required to be submitted for credit as part of a course (including examinations, laboratory reports, essays, themes, term papers, etc.) When direct quotations are used, they should be indicated; when the languages, ideas, theories, data, figures, graphs, programs, electronic based information or illustrations of someone other than the student are incorporated into a paper or used in a project, they should be duly acknowledged.
B. Unauthorized Access to Official University Materials
NO student shall take or attempt to take, steal, or in an unauthorized manner otherwise procure, gain access to, alter or destroy any material pertaining to the conduct of a class. For further information on Academic Honesty, see the current KSU Catalog.
Any infractions of the above rules will be dealt with according to KSU policy.

Turnitin
All students are required to submit their written assignments to Turnitin.com, a website that checks for plagiarized work. It also can help you identify your sources and provide feedback regarding correct citing of material. The registration process for Turnitin.com will be explained in the first week of class.

Grading System

Grades will be based on the following scale: A 90-100, B 80-89, C 70-79, D 60-69 and F 0-60.
The final grade will be an average of the following parts:

1. Classroom. Participation in Weekly Lecture/Discussions – 10 %
2. Newspaper article comparison paper – 20 %
3. Textbook comparison / review – 20%
4. Power Point Presentation and bibliography – 40%
5. Minor 50 word writing assignments – 10%
* Assignments are due on date listed on syllabus. Late papers will decline in value rapidly. No papers will be accepted after the last day of class unless you have a very serious reason for not completing your work.
There is no final exam in this class.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend class. We will take attendance every class. Your grade will reflect missed classes. NO cell phones on in class please and computers only for notes if needed NOT web surfing or face booking.

Incomplete Grade

At semester's end an incomplete will be considered only if you have completed 75% of the class requirements, only if you have a grade of C or better and only if you can prove that some emergency prevents you from completing all the course requirements on time.

Class Calendar

1 Wednesday, August 17
   Introduction to the course.

2 Monday August 22
   Select topic for newspaper article assignment from list that follows. Discuss directions for assignment.
   Wreck of the Steamship Arctic, 1854
   The Great Chicago Fire, 1871
   The Eruption of the Krakatoa Volcano, 1883
   President James Garfield Assassination and Death, 1881
   Sitting Bull surrenders, July 20, 1881
   The Johnstown Flood, 1889
   Jesse James Shot, 1882
   The Galveston TX Hurricane, 1900
   The Peshtigo WS Fire, 1871
   The Boxer Rebellion in China, 1900
   Italy's King assassinated, 1900
   Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, March 25, 1911
   San Francisco Fire and Earthquake, 1906
   Marconi transmits radio signal across the Atlantic, 1900
   Wilbur and Orville Wright first powered flight, 1903
   Lindberg Flight across the Atlantic, 1927
   Tomb of King Tut Found, 1922
   Okeechobee Hurricane, Sept 16, 1928
   Sinking of the Lusitania, May 7, 1915.

Newspaper Article Review Assignment Directions

After you get your topic, you must locate an article on your event in four different newspapers of the time. Before you read your articles, look up the event in Wikipedia to see what current thinking is on what happened. Then read your articles and write a brief account of your findings. Was the information similar or the same? Did it vary by region or type of newspaper? What was stressed in the articles? Was anything omitted or
perhaps misleading? How did these newspaper accounts compare with the modern account of the event? Please include printouts of your articles with your paper.

Monday August 24

Virtual Tour of Sturgis Library resources related to this class, 11:00 AM. Meet in Library 209.

Monday, August 29

Read and discuss Past Imperfect, pg 1 – 16. Write a 50 word sentence that summarizes what Hoffer says about the study of history. Be prepared to read yours before you hand it in next Tuesday, the 25th. I am not kidding about the 50 word limit; you will find this is not as easy to do as you might think. Scoring Rubric is posted on Vista

Wednesday August 31

Read and discuss the Sherlock Holmes adventure, The Speckled Band by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in its Victorian context (story on my web page.). Turn it a 50 word summary of the story. Be prepared to read yours to the class. Again the idea here is brevity; anything over 50 words will be penalized.

Wednesday September 7; no class on 5th, Labor Day.

Introduction to Historian’s Toolbox and Citation Machine. Discussion of annotation of an article.

Monday September 12

Read and discuss Past Imperfect, Chapter 1; Discussion of formatting and writing styles.

Read and discuss Past Imperfect, Professions of History.

Wednesday September 14

Tour of Rare Book Room; meet in library lower level at Rare Book Room. Write 50 word sentence detailing the importance of the Rare Book Room for KSU students and Faculty. Due September 19

Monday September 19

Newspaper article assignment due; discuss findings.

Wednesday September 21

Discussion of textbook review assignment; Textbook chapters are on Vista. Read and discuss Past Imperfect, Chapter 3.

Textbook Review Assignment Directions

I have selected chapters from four different textbooks for you to review and analyze. One chapter dates from 1898 although it was revised in 1910. One is from 1920 and the other two are popular current survey texts. The chapters I have chosen deal with Reconstruction although the earlier texts, written fairly close to the event, do not have a chapter strictly dedicated to Reconstruction although they have some relation to the modern texts. The chapters come from books written by Julian Hawthorne, 1898, Emerson Davis Fite, 1923, Alan Brinkley and Howard Zinn, both current texts.

One might expect to find similarities between the two earlier books and between the two later ones and a few startling differences between the earlier and later books but this may not be the case. As you read try to answer the following questions. Before you begin, you will find it very helpful to learn something about each author, to place him in the proper school of historical interpretation. What is the thesis of each chapter and is the thesis different in each? Is there a parallel in coverage
and analysis in any of the four? Do any have a consensus regarding the issues of Reconstruction? What kind of events does each stress? What important historical figures are mentioned? Who and what do they omit? Obviously the first two will leave out some of the issues considered important in the later ones given the changing perspectives that time brings to historical events. Where does each author fit in regard to historiographical interpretation of his work. Finally which text do you like the best? Why? Do any of these chapters provide an unbiased view of the past? Why or why not? Finally, often books tell us more about the culture, values and beliefs of the time in which they were written. Do you see any evidence of this in your four chapters? Be specific. Your assignment should be double spaced and approximately 5 to 8 pages in length. You will be graded on organization, content and grammar.

11   Monday September 26
Instructions for this assignment are posted on Vista.

12   Monday September 28
Read and discuss Past Imperfect, Chapter 4.

13   Wednesday September 30
Discuss 50 word assignment, more on the mechanics of writing and research.

14   Monday October 3 no class October 5
Catch –up if needed.

15   Monday October 10
Read and discuss Past Imperfect, Chapter 5.

16   Wednesday October 12
Discuss research progress for PPT, textbook and textbook chapter assignment.

17   Monday October 17
Creation of bibliography, annotation and other elements of formatting in Turabian or Chicago style. Put together a brief bibliography for your research topic including a variety of sources; books, articles, web pages etc.

18   Wednesday October 19
Discuss your bibliography in class, bring copy to put on screen.

19   Monday October 24
Textbook chapter review assignment due; discuss findings.

20   Wednesday October 26
Discussion overflow if needed. Read and discuss Past Imperfect Chapter 7.

21   Monday October 31
Read and discuss Past Imperfect Chapter 8.

22   Wednesday November 2
Footnoting, Footnoting, Footnoting and solving the mysteries of an annotated bibliography.

23   Monday November 7
Read and discuss *Past Imperfect*, the future of the past.

24 Wednesday November 9  
Catch up if needed.

25 Monday November 14  
Power Point presentations begin.

26 Wednesday November 16  
Power Point presentations continue

27 Monday November 21, no class on Wednesday, Thanksgiving break  
Presentations continue

28 Monday November 28  
Presentations continue

29 Wednesday November 30  
Presentations continue

30 Monday December 5  
Presentations conclude.

*** No final exam

Students must hand in a print out of their Power Point presentation and an annotated bibliography listing sources used.