Introduction to Themes in History
MTWTH – 5:00 – 7:45, SO 3032

Instructor: Dr. Elsa A. Nystrom
Office: Social Science Building - 4122
Office Hours: TTH – 12:30 – 2:00, 3:30 – 5:00, or by appointment.
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Texts:
Hoffer, Peter Charles. Past Imperfect; Facts Fictions Fraud—American History from Bancroft and
Parkman to Ambrose, Bellisles, Ellis and Goodwin.
*Note: I didn’t assign Turabian or any other style manual. There are many available used.

The overall theme in this class is the Victorian world in America and Great Britain with some
emphasis on solving mysteries. We will look at fiction and non-fiction written during and about this
period as well as modern works about the period. Some assigned material contains an element of
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.

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 sources.
5. To gain a working knowledge of the use of different types of primary and secondary source materials
   in a problem solving situation.

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 a case study from a website dealing with mysterious events during the
Victorian era to develop a Power Point argument providing your interpretation of what actually happened
with the skills you have learned.
See: [http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/indexen.html](http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/indexen.html)
Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History

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 Monday through Thursday. **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.**

This class will move VERY FAST, so you MUST keep up with your reading and assignments.

**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.

**Turnitin**
All students are required to submit their written assignments to **Turnitin**, 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 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 and pop quizzes on the readings** – 15%
2. **Newspaper article comparison paper** – 15%
3. **Textbook comparison /review** – 30%
4. **Power Point Presentation and bibliography** – 40%

* 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. Your grade will reflect missed classes. NO cell phones on in class please.

**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 Schedule  Day by Day**

1. **Thursday, May 28**
   - Introduction to the course. – Sign up for Turnitin

2. **Monday June 1**
   - Select topic for article assignment. Read and discuss *Past Imperfect*, pg 1 – 16, Chapter 1 and Kelleher 1 – 19.

3. **Tuesday June 2**
   - Read and discuss the Sherlock Holmes adventure, The *Speckled Band* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in Victorian context.

4. **Wednesday June 3**
   - **Virtual Tour of Sturgis Library** 5:00 pm, in Library 309. This is an excellent workshop that will acquaint you with KSU library resources and how to find them. We will meet at the library.

5. **Thursday June 4**
   - Introduction to *Historians Toolbox* and *Citation Machine*, read Kelleher, Chapter 2 on source materials.

6. **Monday June 8**
   - Rare book room tour; meet at Rare Book Room, library basement at 5 pm.

7. **Tuesday June 9**
   - **Newspaper article assignment due**: discuss findings. Selection of website for final Power point assignment and discussion of assignment.

8. **Wednesday June 10**
   - Read and discuss *Past Imperfect*, Chapter 3, 4, 5.

9. **Thursday June 11**
   - Creation of bibliography, annotation and other elements of formatting in Turabian and Chicago style.

10. **Monday June 15**
    - **Textbook review assignment due**. Discuss your findings.

11. **Tuesday June 16**
    - Read and discuss Past Imperfect, Chapter 6 and Kelleher, Chapter 4 & 5.
Wednesday June 17
Read and discuss Kelleher, Chapter 6 and Past Imperfect, Chapter 7 & 8

Thursday June 18
Read and discuss Past Imperfect, Professions of History. More on formatting if needed.

Monday, June 22
Discuss Past Imperfect, the future of the past and Kelleher, Chapters 7 & 8.

Tuesday June 23
**PPT Presentations are due.** Presentations begin.

Wednesday June 24
Presentations continue.

Thursday June 25
Presentations conclude.

*** No final exam BUT Students must hand in a print out of their Power Point presentation and annotated bibliography no later than the 23rd for full credit.

Newspaper Article Review Assignment

You must select an event that occurred during the Victorian era like the sinking of the Titanic that would be sensational enough to be found in a variety of newspapers, and locate articles on your topic in four different newspapers of the time. You will then write a brief account of what you found in the articles. Did they all carry the same information? Did the information vary by region or the type of newspaper? What was stressed in the articles? Was any information left out or added by any of the papers? Include a bibliographic listing for each of the newspapers you accessed.

Textbook Review Assignment

I have selected chapters from four different textbooks for you to review and analyze. One dates from 1898, though it was revised in 1910, one from 1923 and the others are current popular survey texts. The chapters I have chosen deal with reconstruction although the earlier texts which were written fairly close to the event obviously will not have a chapter strictly dedicated to reconstruction although the information they contain has some relevance to the modern texts.

The texts are:
Chapter 25 Past and Future

Fite, Emerson Davis. *A History of the United States, 1923*
Part VII Economic and Political Reconstruction

Brinkley, Alan. *American History, a survey*,
Chapter 15 Reconstruction and the New South

Zinn, Howard. *The People’s History of the United States*, Chapter 9 Slavery without submission; emancipation without freedom
You might expect to find similarities between the two earlier books and the two later ones and some startling differences between the earlier and later books, but that may or may not be the case. At any rate, these are the questions you must ask yourself as you read these chapters…

What are the main ideas that each author wants to convey and how do they differ from each other? Where is there a parallel in both coverage and analysis in all four books? Do some of them have a sort of consensus regarding the issues?

What kinds of events and people does each author stress? Who and what do they leave out? Obviously the first two books will leave out some of the issues stressed in the later ones, but you must take that into consideration.

Finally which text do you like the best and why? Would students reading the earlier texts have come away with a somewhat biased view of American History?

Your assignment should be double spaced and approximately 5 to 8 pages in length. You will be graded on content, organization and grammar.

**Web Based Mystery Power Point Project from Great Mysteries in Canadian History**

Whatever mystery you get, you must solve the puzzle to the best of your ability based on the sources on the website and outside sources if you chose to use them and present a reasoned argument for your conclusion.

You will present your arguments and conclusions in a Power Point that will be presented to the class at the end of the semester. In addition, you will include a paper copy of an annotated bibliography of the sources used to create the presentation.