

AMH 3942

**Practicum in History
Writing the Southern Past**

Spring 2017

**William A. Link
MWF Period 7 (1:55-2:45)**

Contact information:

William A. Link
231 Keene Flint Hall 352-273-3394
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Class meets in Flint 111

Spring 2017
Office hours:
MW, 3-4, or by appointment

Reading:

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (Bedford Books, 8th Edition)
Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (on Canvas)
Solomon Northrup, *Twelve Years a Slave* (on Canvas)
Anne Sarah Rubin, *Through the Heart of Dixie: Sherman's March and American*
Kristen Green, *Something Must Be Done about Prince Edward County*

Course description

This course examines the particular history of the US South by examining, through various perspectives, how people have constructed and/or reconstructed the past through literature, film, history, and visual representations. We will examine the subjects central to the American South—slavery and race, Civil War, and the civil rights movement—and how various representations have competed to dominate the understanding of southern traditions. We will spend a portion of class engaged in readings for background and perspective.

The course, as a practicum, has a second important objective: to expose students to learning history by doing history, and an introduction to the methods of historical inquiry. We seek to introduce students to the discipline of history, to the basic skills—among other things, critical reading, analytical thinking, historical research, and argumentative writing—that are required to excel as a major.

Minimal expectations

1. Attend all classes regularly: I will take attendance and expect all students to come to class. ***An erratic record of attendance will result in a grade penalty, reflected in the discussion grade.***
2. Students should complete the readings, as identified in the course schedule below, no later than the Monday class of each week.
3. Participate regularly in class discussions.
4. Complete all writing assignments by the deadline. These are submitted on elearning, with a deadline/closing date.
5. Treat the class, your fellow students, and the instructor respectfully. This includes:
 - Use computers responsibly—stay off shopping websites, facebook, and so forth. If appears that computer use is being abused, I will institute a no-computer policy.
 - Turning off cell phones prior to class;
 - Arrive at class on time;
 - Remain in class until class is over;
 - Engage in discussion properly: good listening is as important as good talking.

The penalty for cheating is a grade of zero (0), and I reserve the right to pursue other penalties. All students must abide by UF's honor code regarding cheating, plagiarism, and the use of copyrighted materials. This is available at <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

Papers

I require regular writing in this class, of two types. ***Please note that all assignments are to be uploaded to Canvas, and must be in Microsoft Word.***

- **Weekly exercises.** These will engage with the reading, identifying 1) issues raised; 2) conflicts or problems associated with the readings; 3) any connections that you can draw between the readings. I will expect a submission of about 300 words each week on elearning. These will be graded by a ✓+, ✓, ✓-, or 0.
- **Methodological assessments**, at least 300 words each. These are graded by a letter grade, and involve your assessment of the following:
 1. Documentary or newspaper sources;
 2. Films as history sources;
 3. digital history sources;
 4. oral history source.

Methodological assessments should deal with the pros and cons, and advantages and disadvantages, of using various sources.

- **Final project**, at least 1500 words, which includes 1) a title page; 2) introduction that has a research question; 3) a statement of the significance of the topic and how it fits into existing historical literature; 3) an annotated bibliography of primary and secondary sources.

Evaluation

- Discussion and weekly assignments: 20 percent
- Methodological exercises: 40 percent (10 percent each)
- Final project draft: 10 percent
- Final project final draft: 20 percent

Course Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Disabled students

Disabled students will be provided with appropriate accommodations, but only within the structure of the Disability Resource Center. Please consult <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>. ***The appropriate DRC paperwork should be given to me as early as possible in the semester.***

Course Schedule

WEEK 1 January 4 Introduction to class

No class January 6th

I A Slave Society

WEEK 2 January 9 **How do we do history**

Background to American Slavery

Reading: Rampolla, Chapter 1; Penningroth, "Writing Slavery's History"

WEEK 3 January 16 **Evidence**

Slavery as a Social System

Reading: Rampolla, Chapter 2

Reading: Harriet Jacobs, pp. 1-104

Due by Friday, January 20

Methodological assessment # 1: primary sources.

(no class Monday; MLK holiday)

WEEK 4 January 23 **Secondary Sources**

Resistance

Reading: Rampolla, Chapter 3; Loren Schweninger, "Freedom Suits, African American Women, and the Genealogy of Slavery"; Walter Johnson, "On Agency."

II The Civil War and Reconstruction

WEEK 5 January 30 Conventions of Writing History

Reading: Rampolla, chapter 4; Wickberg, "What is the History of Sensibility?"

WEEK 6 February 6 History and Film

Reading/viewing: Censer, "Ken Burns' 'The Civil War'"; Ken Burns, *The Civil War*, episode 3 (on Canvas)

Due by Friday, February 10

Methodological assessment # 2: Film and history

WEEK 7 February 13 Sherman's March

Reading: Rubin, *Through the Heart of Dixie*, 1st half

WEEK 8 February 20 Debating Reconstruction

Reading: William Dunning, *Reconstruction*, Chapter XVIII; Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, chapter XVII

Due by Friday, February 24

Methodological assessment # 3: Secondary Sources

WEEK 9 February 27 Memory

Reading: Rubin, *Through the Heart of Dixie*, 2nd half;

Week of March 6 SPRING BREAK

III The New South and the Civil Rights Revolution

WEEK 10 March 13 Autobiography

Reading: Kathy Nasstrom, "Between Memory and History"; Green, 1st half

WEEK 11 March 20 Writing a Research Paper

Reading: Rampolla, chapters 5-7

No class March 24th; work on papers

WEEK 12 March 27 Oral History and Digital History

Reading: Green, 2nd half

Due by Friday, March 17

Methodological assessment # 4: Oral History

WEEK 13 April 3 ***no class this week; work on papers***

Drafts of final papers are due

WEEK 14 April 10 Final Paper presentations

WEEK 15 April 17 Final paper presentations

Last class Wednesday, April 19