



**SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**HISTORY PROGRAMME
2008 TRIMESTER 1**

**HIST 425: A TOPIC IN EUROPEAN HISTORY 3
CRN 7709**

Course Coordinator: Dr. Simone Gigliotti
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Seminars: Seminars begin in Week 1, beginning 27 February.
Times and Locations: Wednesday, 10am-12pm, OK 406
Office Hours: Tuesday 12-1pm or by appointment Tues-Thursday.

The **History Disability Liaison Person** is Glyn Parry and he can be contacted on 463 6776 or email glyn.parry@vuw.ac.nz. His office is located in OK414.

Additional Information

In terms of communication, HIST 425 has been added to Blackboard. I will make this available in the week beginning March 3. Readings for Seminars will be available one week in advance and left at the history office, and will also be uploaded into Blackboard. I will email students with precise instructions about the folder locations of these articles in Blackboard.

Seminar Themes:

In seminars I will discuss with you the themes of the following fortnight and issue readings accordingly. The course is designed to reflect students' interests and also permit for the alteration of fortnightly focus themes. I will encourage you to develop "focus groups" around specific themes, genres or historical events.

Course content

Is this the "era of the witness"? This thematic research seminar considers the historical and social utility of the witness in modern European history from the mid 19th century to the present. It focuses on how the witness has developed as a philosophical, evidentiary and truth-telling subject, and examines various contributions that documented tumultuous historical events, traumas and revolutions in the making and destabilizing of Europe. The seminar considers a range of witness positions from individual perpetrators of historical injustices to victims as "bearers of history" and "professional testifiers", and "secondary" witnessing occupations including war correspondents and photographers. It also examines how witness reports are mediated by temporal, spatial and technological interventions that reflect the fragmented history of Europe in the modern period. These witness reports include

autobiography, life narratives, testimony in war crimes trials, survivor memoirs, photography, and virtual outputs. Finally, the seminar addresses the critical yet contested role of witnessing in social memory practices, and the representational limitations in interpreting and writing a “witnessing history” of Europe from intimate and corporeal experiences.

Course objectives

Students passing the course should be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical aptitude in relation to the sources and impacts of witnesses in history;
- Be able to conduct independent research on topics of relevance to a witnessing history of Europe;
- Be familiar with the methodological debates about the social and epistemological utility of the witness in European history and more generally;
- Develop a sophisticated level of oral articulation of historical concepts, and be able to engage in intelligent, informed discussion of them;
- Demonstrate their written interpretive skills through the completion of set assessment tasks.

Expected workload

In accordance with Faculty Guidelines, students are expected to devote 20 hours per fortnight to HIST 425. This includes attendance at one two-hour seminar per fortnight. You must attend at least 75% of seminars in order to meet attendance requirements.

Group work

There is no “group work” for this course, although I will encourage students to form reading groups in thematic areas related to their interests in witness genres, for example, visual media, oral history, legal and restorative justice forums, and memoir and life writing, for example.

Recommended Reading: (I have requested the following books be placed on 3-day loan in the VUW library)

Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981).

Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (London: Fontana, 1973)

Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992)

David Howes (ed), *The Varieties of sensory experience: a sourcebook in the anthropology of the senses* (Toronto: Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1991)

Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: the making and unmaking of the world* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985)

Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003)

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995)

Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: essays in cultural criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978)

Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor, Jewish history and Jewish memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982)

In addition to the readings issued for weekly seminars, a thematic reading list/bibliography will be uploaded into blackboard each fortnight as relevant to that week’s theme.

Materials and equipment

There are no additional materials and equipment which students should obtain.

Assessment requirements

There are 3 pieces of assessment for HIST 425. They are:

- a) **The Witness in Historical Writing (Historiographical Review)**
 - **2000 words (20%); due date: 30 April, 5pm**
- b) **Genre as Witness History (Research Essay)**
 - **4500 words (45%); 30 July, 5pm**
- c) **Witnessing Event (Focus Essay)**
 - **3500 words (35%); 3 October, 5pm**

Further information about each assessment piece and assessment objectives will be discussed in Week One (February 27). Written assessment criteria and expectations will be issued with each assessment item.

Statement on penalties

Students will be penalised for late submission of essays—a deduction of 5% for the first day late, and 3% per day thereafter, up to a maximum of 5 working days. Work that is more than 14 days late can be accepted for mandatory course requirements but will not be marked. Penalties will be applied unless arrangement has been made with the Course Co-ordinator for an extension. Penalties may be waived if there are valid grounds, e.g., illness (presentation of a medical certificate will be necessary) or similar other contingencies. In such cases prior information will be necessary. (percentages and days will vary from Programme to Programme)

Mandatory course requirements

To gain a pass in this course each student must:

- a) Submit the written work specified for this course, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work)
- b) The Final Date for submission of all written work is **Friday 31 October 2008**.

Aegrotats

Please note that under the Assessment Statute (Sections 4.5) students may now apply for an aegrotat pass in respect of any item of assessment falling within the last three weeks before the day on which lectures cease. In the case of **Honours** courses in 2008 the starting point for this period is **Monday 15 September 2008**.

The following rules apply:

- where a student is not able to sit a test falling within these last three weeks because of illness or injury etc., an alternative test will be arranged where possible. If the student has completed in the view of the course supervisor, sufficient marked assessment relevant to the objectives of the course, an average mark may be offered. Where a student has an essay or other piece of assessment due in the last three weeks, and has a medical certificate or other appropriate documentation, the student will be given an extension.

- if none of the above is available to the student, e.g., if she/he has an ongoing illness, than an aegrotat will be considered. See Assessment Statute (Sections 4.5) for a full explanation of the rules governing the provision of aegrotats in these circumstances.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were ones own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct. All cases will be recorded on a central database and severe penalties may be imposed. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University’s website:

www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx

GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

The University requires that certain information be communicated to students, either in the course outline or electronically (ref. Assessment Handbook 3.3). The current version of this information (adapted for FHSS courses) is below, and has also been saved as a separate document in the Common Folder (M:\Common\Course Administration\Course Outlines). This may be appended to your course outline without alteration.

Students should familiarise themselves with the University’s policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under “about Victoria” on the Victoria homepage at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html

Information on the following topics is available electronically under “Course Outline General Information” at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

HIST 425: Schedule of Meetings: February 27 – September 17, 2008

Topic 1: February 27: Discussion of thematic interests and seminar presentation options

Topic 2: March 12

Easter Break: 20 – 25 March

Topic 3: March 26

Topic 4: April 9

Mid trimester break: 14 – 27 April

Topic 5: April 30

Topic 6: May 14

Topic 7: May 28

Mid Year Break: 2 June – 6 July

Topic 8: July 9

Topic 9: July 23

Topic 10: July 30

Topic 11: August 6

Mid Trimester break: 18-31 August

Topic 12: September 3

Topic 13: September 17: Discussion and Review