

**Syllabus  
Hist 194  
Public History Research Seminar**

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Office Hours: Mon. Wed. 9:00-11:00 and by appointment

**Course Purpose:** This course is an introduction to the field of public history and public history research techniques. Students will be reading literature on the profession in addition to working on a public history project. Students will complete a number of short research based assignments, and all students will work on a large group project. For this course, the class will be creating a detailed database of New Deal projects conducted in the Sacramento area. This is a research intensive course and students should be prepared to work independently at libraries, archives and other historical sites around the city and county of Sacramento.

**Required Texts:**

David E. Kyvig and Myron A. Marty, *Nearby History: Exploring the Past Around You*, (2000)  
Anthony Badger, *The New Deal* (1985)

**Grades:** Grading will be based on one historic site critique (25%), class participation (20%), and completion of the group project (65%).

**General Information:** Readings should be done before the class on the date assigned. All assignments should be completed and turned in by the due date, and students should be prepared to discuss their assignments in class. Students should arrive on time and not leave class early. While in class, please do not read books or materials for other classes or other purposes. Attendance is important for doing well in this class, and excessive absences will result in a 1/2-1 grade level decline in your final grade. Due to the nature of this course, the syllabus is subject to change. These changes will only be announced in class.

**Class Meetings:**

- January 25: Course Introduction: Project Planning
- January 27: What is Public History Research?  
Readings: Kyvig, ch. 1-2
- February 1: Library Reference Day with Ben Amata  
In Library 2023
- February 3: Historic Sites Research: Storytelling  
Readings: Kyvig, ch.3 and 10
- February 8: The New Deal  
Readings: Badger, Begin
- February 10: The New Deal  
Readings: Badger, finish
- February 15: Using Written Records

- Readings: Kyvig, ch. 4-5
- February 17: Using Oral Sources  
Readings: Kyvig, ch. 6
- February 22: Library Research Day
- February 24: The New Deal in Local Perspective  
Readings: Assigned articles  
**Book Reviews Due**
- March 1: Using Visual Documents and Arifacts  
Readings: Kyvig, ch. 7-8
- March 3: Landscapes and Buildings  
Readings: Kyvig, ch. 9
- March 8: The Art of Interpretation:  
Readings: Kyvig, 11-12  
**Historic Site Critique Due**
- March 10: Research
- March 15: Data entry
- March 17: Research
- March 22-24 **No Class – Spring Break**
- March 29: Data entry
- March 31: Research
- April 5: Data entry
- Apr. 7: Research
- April 12: Data entry
- April 14: Research
- April 19: Data entry
- April 21: Research
- Apr. 26: Data entry
- Apr. 28: Research
- May 3: **Rough Draft Due**
- May 5: Research
- May 10: **Draft's returned**

May 12: Writing

May 20: **Final Report Due**

### **Assignments:**

**Historic Site Critique:** For this assignment you will visit a local historic site and critique it as a public history site in a 3-5 page essay. You may choose any site that you wish, but it should be open to the public. Your critique should include the following:

- 1) Name and location of site
- 2) Hours and days of operation (is this sufficient?)
- 3) Target audience and ability to serve this audience
- 4) Mission statement and ability to meet the mission statement
- 5) Narrative description of the site and any significant exhibits (keep this brief)
- 6) Assessment of the quality and quantity of the presentation and whether the site meets its stated goals

I suggest the following sites:

Sutter's Fort  
Governor's Mansion  
Folsom Power House  
Fountain-Tallman Museum (Placerville)  
Old Sacramento  
Golden State Museum  
California Indian Museum  
California State Railroad Museum

**Book Review / Article Review:** A book review should include the following elements:

- Title (your own – not the book's)
  - Full citation of the book reviewed on the first page (including total pages, and cost)
  - introductory paragraph that states the theme of the review and the importance of the review
  - body should address the book's thesis, methodology, sources and audience
  - conclusion which addresses the book's overall effectiveness
- 3-5 pages, typed, double spaced.

Potential books for review include:

Michael A. Bernstein, *The Great Depression: Delayed Recovery and Economic Change in America, 1929-1939* (1988)  
Peter Temin, *Lessons from the Great Depression* (1989)  
William E. Leuchtenburg, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940* (1963)  
Paul Conkin, *The New Deal* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (1992)  
Theodore Rosenof, *Dogma, Depression, and the New Deal: The Debate of Political Leaders Over Economic Recovery* (1975)  
Donald Worster, *Dust Bowl: The Southern Plains in the 1930s* (1980)  
Harvard Sitkoff, *Fifty Years Later: The New Deal Evaluated* (1985)  
Roger Biles, *A New Deal for the American People* (1991)  
Douglas L. Smith, *The New Deal in the Urban South* (1988)  
JoAnn E. Argersinger, *Toward a New Deal in Blatimore: People and Government in the Great Depression* (1988)  
Mark I. Gelfand, *A Nation of Cities: The Federal Government and Urban America, 1933-1965* (1975)

William N. Mullins, *The Depression and the Urban West Coast, 1929-1933: Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle* (1991)  
Charles H. Trout, *Boston, The Great Depression, and the New Deal* (1977)

Potential articles for review include:

Udo Sautter, "Government and Unemployment: The Use of Public Works Before the New Deal" *Journal of American History*, vol. 73, no.1 (June 1986), 59-86.  
Roger Biles, "The Urban South in the Great Depression" *Journal of Southern History*, vol. 56, no. 1 (Feb. 1990) 71-100.  
Roger Biles, "The New Deal in Dallas" in Raymond Mohl's *The Making of Urban America* (1997)

**Final Project:** Your grade for this portion of the class will be based on your ability to work with your other group members and to integrate your research into the class database. In addition to your raw data and photographs, you will write a 15-20 page essay summarizing your research findings and conclusions about the role of the New Deal in Sacramento history.

I suggest the following sources on local history:

Joseph McGowan's History of the Sacramento Valley  
Steven Avella's Indomitable City  
Sacramento Bee  
Sacramento Union  
Oak Park Ledger  
Private papers of local residents  
School Board Records  
Sacramento Northern Records  
Southern Pacific Records  
Livermore family records