

US SOCIAL HISTORY

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Stories

Course Information

Meets **MWF 10:30 am**

Location **Sullivan 326**

Website

wsu.tonahangen.com/hi217

Welcome!

Welcome to Honors HI 217, US Social History. I'm delighted to work with you this term as we encounter people and their stories through the tools and methods of social history. The goals of this course are to increase your historical thinking and research skills, as well as your appreciation for those likely to have been "forgotten" or marginalized in our collective past. History major or not? No matter: this course will guide you in becoming a historical detective of lost worlds.

Instructor

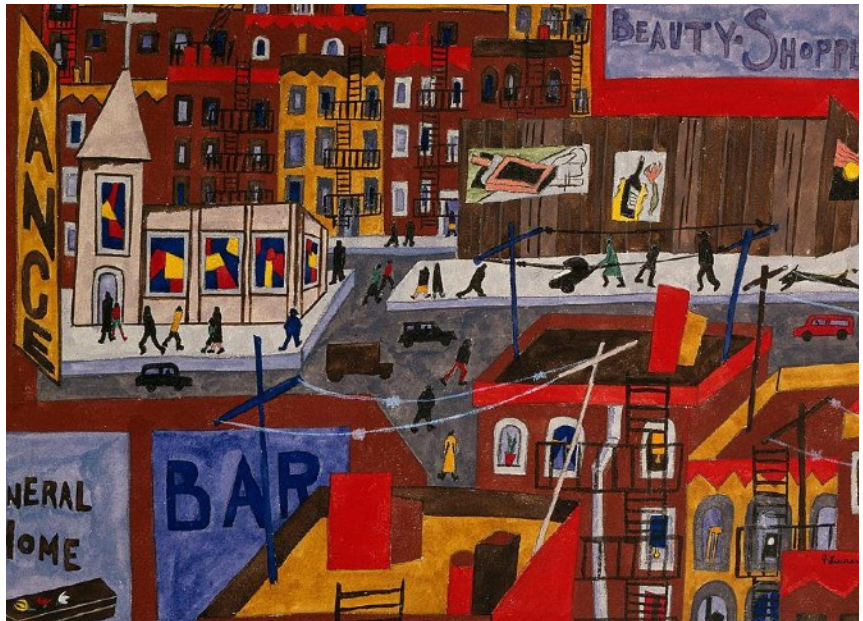
Dr. Tona Hangen

thangen@worchester.edu

Sullivan 327D x8688

Voice / Text 617-506-9440

Office hours: W 3-4:30 and
F 1-2:30



What is Social History?

Social history explores the worlds of "non-famous" people, who often left little record of their own.

This course considers the historiographical field and methodology of social history of the United States through three thematic lenses: labor and social class, women's history, and immigration / racial identity.

As an all-honors course (in which all students are welcome), HI 217 involves extensive reading (50-100 pages per week, sometimes more), writing, class discussion, and expectation of high-quality independent research.





Your Outcomes

By this end of this course, you should be able to ...

- Extend and broaden your own historical knowledge of the American past and its "ordinary" people, through the scholarly approach of social history
- Consistently contribute to the community of seminar-style learning (active preparation, productive and respectful discussion, and depth of engagement with course materials) to advance your own and others' understanding
- Conduct small-scale primary research in local archives, demonstrating high standards of scholarly integrity and care for the historical record
- Adhere to the disciplinary conventions of historical scholarship while crafting evidence-based research and writing that exhibits originality

LASC Approvals

USW, TLC, and WAC + Honors. See your advisor for how best to fit this course into your academic programs.

Course Requirements

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION 30%

I take attendance in each class session. You should be prompt, present, prepared, and ready to get to work in class. Discussion should be lively, substantive, respectful, and inclusive of everyone's views. Prepare for every day, because regardless whether you're leading or contributing to the discussion, your involvement and engagement is essential to the success of our learning community.

PROF FOR A DAY 10%

Most Fridays you run the show, usually with a team of your peers. Being the "Prof for a Day" means actively teaching and leading the class discussion related to the week's learning materials. It's also the day you submit one of your three Response Papers.



The paintings throughout this syllabus feature the work of African-American "social realist" painter Jacob Lawrence (1917-2000), whose vibrant compositions captured the mood and energy of 20th-century Black life in Harlem, the South, and beyond.

RESPONSE AND ANALYSIS PAPERS 15%

Throughout the term you'll write three brief (2-3 page) papers that represent your thoughtful response to and/or analysis of the assigned readings. The first is due, for everyone, on September 13. The second is due on your assigned "Prof for a Day" day, and the third is due on any other "Prof for a Day" day of your choosing.

ARCHIVE STORY PROJECT 20%

As a class, we will explore an archival collection of primary documents — early twentieth century social assistance casefiles — in the holdings of the Worcester Historical Museum. Each student will craft a digital project based on one casefile of a Worcester family in the early 20th century. The project involves a class visit for archival research and scanning, followed by processing and transcribing documentary materials, and using them to tell the story of the family whose story is documented therein. See course website for details, needed materials, and due dates.

FINAL PROJECT 25%

Develop and conduct a social history research project, which could take any of several possible formats: research paper, video mini-documentary, podcast, exhibit, or another appropriate format of your choice. Detailed guidelines and rubric will be available on the course website. The project is conducted in stages, from topic development, peer review session, drafts, and final version with a brief oral presentation to the class.

GRADING SCALE	
Attendance and Participation	30
Response and Analysis Papers	15
Prof for a Day	10
Archive Story Project	20
Final Project	25
TOTAL	100

Required Books

Roy Rosenzweig. *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers & Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920* (Cambridge UP, 1985). ISBN 978-0521313971

Serena Zabin. *The Boston Massacre: A Family History* (Mariner Books, 2020). ISBN 978-0063275898

Pam Muñoz Ryan. *Esperanza Rising* (Scholastic, 2002). ISBN 978-0439120425

Accessibility

Accommodations are arranged through Student Accessibility Services (SAS, Admin Building 131). If you need a course accommodation, provide your SAS documentation and consult with me so we can design a solution to help you be successful in the class.

Devices in Class

We will be busy in every class session and don't need any technological distractions. Silence cell phones before entering the classroom.

That said, devices are often necessary and important for our collaborative learning. Laptops and tablets and other devices are welcome as long as they are used to stay on task, take notes, access assigned course materials, and conduct research when such time is allotted.

Do not use your devices in class to surf the internet, check email, listen to music, or use social media. These activities jeopardize your class participation grade and pull others away from the work at hand.

FINE PRINT / COURSE POLICIES*Absences*

Regular attendance increases the likelihood of success in the course. Frequent or unexplained absences will definitely impact your attendance and participation grade. That said, if you are under doctor's order, quarantined, or experiencing symptoms that would make you contagious to others, please stay home out of respect for yourself and others, and communicate with me if you need an extended or unusual absence.

Plagiarism and Citation

On papers, projects, and exams, doing your own work and documenting the published work of others is essential. Sources used in all your papers need to be cited using Chicago Style footnotes. If you need help with citation, consult the Footnotes Module on Blackboard. If you're still stuck, helpful resources include my office hours, our library reference staff and the Writing Center. Plagiarized or AI-generated work will result in an automatic zero on the assignment and may cause you to fail the course. I take such violations of academic integrity very seriously. Please familiarize yourself with and follow the university's policy on Academic Honesty in the student handbook.

EXTRA CREDIT

The topics and themes of this course can be explored beyond our classroom and I highly recommend this! As an incentive, I will grant up to 5 points extra credit each time you do one of the following.

Visit (in person) a **museum** that contains images or objects relating to everyday peoples' lives, and either write a review of the exhibit or provide a description and close reading of one or more items/objects you viewed that relate to our class topics. For example: Worcester Art Museum, Worcester Historical Museum, or beyond Worcester: zillions of options. (3-5 pages)

Conduct an **interview or oral history** with a person whose life experience touches on our course themes: working class labor, women's lives and work, immigration, race and identity (provide either video or audio + full transcript of interview). Extra credit for interviewing the same person cannot be combined with the oral history final project option.

Write a **book review** of a monograph or biography that relates to our course themes. *Book must be approved in advance* (3-5 pages).

MOST WEEKS FOLLOW THIS PATTERN**MONDAY**

Historical context, introduction and overview of the week's readings. Assigned readings provide essential background for studying the historical evidence. Mondays often include some lecture, so strong note-taking skills are recommended.

WEDNESDAY

We probe the week's documents and readings in a deep-dive workshop / discussion format. Your task is to understand what we can learn about ordinary people from these sources, and how the sources' creators got (and interpreted) their information. Discussion questions are provided ahead of time; please come with the readings in hand along with your notes addressing the discussion questions and raising new ones we can consider together.

FRIDAY

"Prof for a Day." Students take turns teaching and leading discussion based on the week's material and topics, often as a shared responsibility. This is a chance to engage and involve your peers, not designed as a stiff or formal "presentation" to show off your own knowledge. And it means everyone prepares!

SYLLABUS

Subject to change; check the website for updates!

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	NOTES / DUE DATES
1	W 9/6	Course Intro		
	F 9/8	Define Social History	Google search; Intro packet	
2	M 9/11	Social History as Labor History	Gutman, (2 parts)	
	W 9/13	<i>Muller v. Oregon</i>	Brandeis Brief	
	F 9/15	PROF FOR A DAY #1		Response Paper 1 (ALL)
3	M 9/18	Images of Workers and Labor	Shirtwaist Strike film	
	W 9/20	Connected by a Thread	Like a Family PDF	
	F 9/22	PROF FOR A DAY #2		RP for the day's Profs, optional otherwise
4	M 9/25	Work and Culture in Worcester	Rosenzweig, Parts I - II	
	W 9/27		Rosenzweig, Parts III - IV	
	F 9/29	PROF FOR A DAY #3		RP for the day's Profs, optional otherwise
5	M 10/2	Archive Story Project Week 1	Project guidelines	
	W 10/4	Worcester Historical Museum		Class Trip
	F 10/6	Worcester Historical Museum		Class Trip
6	M 10/9	<i>University Holiday, No Class</i>		
	W 10/11	Archive Story Project Workshop		bring laptop to class
	F 10/13	Archive Story Project Workshop		Archive Story Project
7	M 10/16	Gender: the "real" Pocahontas	Rountree PDF	
	W 10/18	Meeting Pocahontas	Pocahontas Doc Packet	
	F 10/20	PROF FOR A DAY #4		RP for the day's Profs, optional otherwise
8	M 10/23	Boston Massacre: Family History	Zabin, <i>Boston Massacre</i> Prologue- Ch 6	
	W 10/25	Boston Massacre: Family History	Zabin, <i>Boston Massacre</i> Ch 7-Epilogue	
	F 10/27	PROF FOR A DAY #5		RP for the day's Profs, optional otherwise

SYLLABUS

Subject to change; check the website for updates!

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	NOTES / DUE DATES
9	M 10/30	Mothers "at home"	Abbott, "Mother at Home" Beecher PDF	
	W 11/1	19th cen Women & Gender	Smith-Rosenberg PDF and Wilkie PDF	bring laptop to class
	F 11/3	PROF FOR A DAY #6		RP for the day's Profs, optional otherwise
10	M 11/6	Women, Magazines and Messages	Walker PDF	
	W 11/8	Women, Gender, and Social History Methodology	Jones PDF, Popular magazines online	bring laptop to class
	F 11/10	<i>University Holiday, No Class</i>		Final Project Proposal
11	M 11/13	Immigration, Americanization	Barrett PDF	
	W 11/15	Multicultural America	PDFs: Tang, Green, Abdi	
	F 11/17	PROF FOR A DAY #7		RP for the day's Profs, optional otherwise
12	M 11/20	Borderlands Folklife	Esperanza Rising	
	W 11/22 - F 11/24 <i>University Holiday, No Class</i>			
13	M 11/27	US / Mexico Border Today	TAL, "Out Crowd" audio	
	W 11/29	Faces of "the Caravan"	Online materials	bring laptop to class
	F 12/1	PROF FOR A DAY #8		RP for the day's Profs, optional otherwise
14	M 12/4	Project Workshop		bring laptop to class
	W 12/6	Project Workshop		bring laptop to class
	TH 12/7	Optional: Present @ Honors Showcase	11:30 am Location TBA	
	F 12/8	PRESENTATION DAY		Final Project + Oral Presentation

Note *Final Project due Dec 8 but can be submitted until midnight, Dec 12 with no late penalty*