

History 307
Professor Chad Black

Historical Method Assignment

3-4 pages maximum, double spaced

The purpose of this assignment is to enable you to continue to develop your repertoire of critical skills in preparation for the research proposal and the research paper you'll be writing next year.

Choose a secondary source (articles required) related to your general topic, identify the historical method(s) it grapples with and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the piece with respect to how it links the sources it uses to the arguments it's making. What is the article's object of research, what is the subject of its argument, and how – by what means, by what methods -- does it make a case for its claims? The task at hand is to turn the questions about method we've been dealing with on a piece of scholarship that bears directly on your own research interests.

Once again, this is a *critical review*, *not a descriptive recap*. You need to characterize the work that the article does, assess its methods for using evidence to make its case, and offer an *analytical argument* about its accomplishments. Your essay should end with a paragraph on how the book is useful to you as you think about shaping your own research topic.

You have to whom you will give a first draft of the paper, from whom you will get feedback, and for whom you will do the same. Please consult with your writing partner and plan your schedules accordingly.