Humans are obsessed with the past. We study it in schools, reference it in speeches, trace family genealogies, and make movies about pivotal events and heroic people. Courts of law rigorously deconstruct past events to find “truth” as a means of determining guilt or innocence. Slogans demand that we “never forget” and people routinely dress up in period outfits to reenact battles or to show us how people lived “back then.” This course examines the various ways that we think about the past by exploring documentary and blockbuster film, scholarly and popular history, heritage tourism, memory, and more. Over the course of the semester we will focus on the many ways that people tell tales about important historical moments, events, and personalities.
REQUIRED TEXTS


Additional readings are available for download, either directly from websites listed in the course schedule or on the course Blackboard site.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

The following text offers extensive advice about how to succeed in history courses—including information about how to write papers, how to take notes, how best to study, and how to properly cite sources. Although there will be no formal reading assignments drawn from this book, I will likely refer to it from time to time. I strongly advise you to purchase a copy and to keep it on hand throughout your tenure in history courses here at UNE.


COURSE GOALS

This course has three primary goals:

1. Improve critical thinking skills;

2. Improve writing skills;

3. Begin to think seriously about the nature of historical thought and about the many ways people express their ideas concerning the past.

With these goals in mind, you will be required to keep up on reading, to engage earnestly in class discussion/activities, complete a series of short quizzes/in-class writing activities, and to undertake a substantial semester-long project (see below).
DISCUSSIONS

*Telling Tales* is NOT a lecture course; I will lecture rarely if ever. Instead, this class demands that you keep up with assigned readings and that you are ready to *actively* engage in class activities and discussions.

Discussions should be a great deal of fun but they are also of major importance to your success in the course. These sessions are vital because they give you an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the subject material, to try out your ideas by discussing them with the group in a non-stressful setting, and to develop your critical thinking skills. In short, you will not get everything you can out of this class unless you are ready to take a few intellectual risks. DO NOT BE SHY!

LE GRAND PAPIER

Above all else, this course is about doing history—whatever “doing history” means. As a result, your task this semester is to complete a major two-part history project. As you can see from the course description and the rest of this syllabus, “history” means different things to different people and people deal with the past in widely disparate ways: some make movies, some do academic history, some create monuments, others write historical fiction.

PART I

First, you need to decide what type of project that you would like to do. Write a short (1-2 page) explanation of your plan. Then schedule a meeting with Professor Zuelow, bringing 2 copies your paper with you—it will function as a contract. These meetings should take place no later than September 30, 2009. Note that Zuelow’s schedule will fill quickly, so schedule early!

Possible projects and requirements (which vary slightly according to the nature of individual undertakings) might include:

a. Conduct a historical research project, using both primary and secondary sources, about a theme of your choice. Be sure to consult carefully with Professor Zuelow about your topic; it must be both feasible (given available sources) and acceptably narrow. *Specifications*: 8-12 pages; 12 pt. Times; footnotes should be in Chicago Manual of Style (failure to adequately cite sources using the correct citation format will result in a substantial grade reduction); margins should not exceed 1 inch).

b. Write a piece of historical fiction (a short story). Your paper must be based on real people and/or events and should include historically accurate detail. In other words, you will need to conduct significant research in order to complete this assignment. *Specifications*: 8-12 pages; 12 pt. Times; include an annotated
c. Develop a film treatment. You may decide to “make” either a documentary or a feature film. Write an 8-12 page film “treatment” in which you describe (in as much detail as possible) the narrative trajectory of your movie, the type of images you will use, how you will use music to supplement your story, and so forth. Once again, you cannot do this assignment without also doing a fair amount of research. You may want to explore available images and examine likely interview subjects (if you are doing a documentary), and you will definitely need to know a great deal about the subject of your film! If you plan to outline a feature film, think about costumes, likely shots, etc. Specifications: 8-12 pages; 12 pt. Times; include an annotated bibliography that briefly summarizes the information you garnered from each source; margins should not exceed 1 inch.

d. Create a monument. If you are artistically inclined, you may either draw/paint or build a model; those without any artistic ability (a.k.a.: me) should write a 4-6 page essay describing your monument in as much detail as possible. You must also write a 4 to 5 page essay explaining the history addressed by your monument. Paper Specifications: 12 pt. Times; include an annotated bibliography that briefly summarizes the information you garnered from each source; margins should not exceed 1 inch.

e. Other. Working in consultation with the professor, you may undertake another mode of historical expression. We will collectively work out specific requirements.

This paper is worth 25% of your overall grade.

PART II

You also need to write a 7-10 page paper explaining why you made all of the various choices that you made in your first paper. If writing a scholarly research paper, why did you choose specific sources and why did you interpret them as you did? Might you have read things differently? If you write a movie treatment, what prompted you to opt for the shots that you did? The characters? The sets? The interviews, etc? If you do a monument, why did you use specific materials or designs? And so on.

This paper will likely be fairly challenging; the paper will be judged largely on the amount of thought you put into it. We will set aside some time in class to talk about it and you should also plan to speak with Professor Zuelow regularly during his office hours.

Papers should be 7-10 pages long, use 12-point Times, and include citations as necessary. Do not use margins greater than 1 inch.
This paper is worth 25% of your overall grade.

Both papers are DUE December 17, 2009. (*If you would like to hand-in a rough draft of your work prior to the due date, it must be supplied to Professor Zuelow no later than November 30, 2009.*)

### Quizzes/In-class Writing

Although the grade for this course will not be substantially based on formal exams, you will be required to complete short in-class writing assignments and quizzes about the readings and films. These are designed to encourage you to think deeply about material, to complete course readings in a timely manner, and to gain as much from the guest-lectures as possible. If you listen carefully in class, take notes, think carefully about material, and keep up on the reading (taking notes on the reading is HIGHLY recommended as it will dramatically increase your mastery of material), you will do just fine on these assignments.

Each assignment will be worth a maximum of five points. I will determine your score for this portion of the course grade based on the total number of points possible. Thus, if you score 23 and there were 30 points available, you will have a 77% average for this portion of your grade. **In class writing assignments will be worth 25% of your overall grade.**

Finally, please note that I will drop your two lowest scores from my grade calculations—meaning that if there are ten in-class assignments, I will calculate the grade based on your eight highest scores.

### Participation/Attendance

Your attendance and participation are vital for success in this class. You cannot learn, nor can you contribute to the group’s progress, if you are absent. I will keep track of both who attends regularly and of who participates in discussion.

At the end of the semester, we will hold at least two round-table discussions (arranged more or less thematically) to talk about your individual projects. [The precise nature and scheduling of these discussions is yet to be determined because I am waiting to hear from a filmmaker who may come to UNE to speak with us about his historical projects (his schedule is quite busy, so we’ll need to be flexible with scheduling).] Participation in these round tables will be *required* and will be included in your participation grade.

**Participation is worth 25% of your overall grade.**

### In the Event of Pandemic or Other Disaster

As you are probably aware, there is a very real chance that our semester will be thrown into disarray by a pandemic outbreak of flu. In Britain and Ireland, academic
years are starting late and around the world school administrators are weighing potential responses to the H1N1 or “Swine” Flu. Should school be interrupted for any length of time, this class will, to the extent possible, move online and I will provide you with a revised set of course requirements that are tailored to the situation. In broad terms, you will be required to provide short written responses to readings and to participate in online “chats.” The precise grading scheme will depend on the timing of any disruptions.

Individual cases of flu that do not result in school cancellations will be dealt with in the same manner as any such personal matters—on an individual and case-by-case basis. Should you become ill, face personal hardship, or have any other problem that keeps you away from class, let me know immediately via email and we will discuss alternatives.

**OTHER POLICIES**

*LATE ASSIGNMENTS*

- All papers must be handed in on the day that they are due. This must be done **IN CLASS. No late papers will be accepted.**
- Papers will not be accepted electronically unless otherwise specified.

Having said this, if an unforeseen and serious problem arises, please contact me and we will work something out. Please be prepared to provide a doctor’s note, obituary, or other paperwork as needed.

*CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONICS*

Cellular phones, MP3 players, and other electronic devices (excluding laptops) are distracting to others and are therefore not acceptable in the classroom. **TURN OFF YOUR PHONES WHEN YOU ENTER THE CLASSROOM.** If it becomes a problem—use of these devices can be extremely distracting to other students and to the professor—I will confiscate offending devices until the end of the class period.

If you would like to take notes on a laptop, please feel free to do so.

*PLAGIARISM*

Plagiarism represents serious academic misconduct. **As per UNE guidelines, students who steal the words or ideas of another party will be referred to the Dean for disciplinary action.**

The University of New England defines plagiarism as:

a. The use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement; or
b. The unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

―Student Handbook, pp. 33-34

You can learn much more by consulting the following:

http://www.une.edu/library/resguide/default.asp

If you have any questions about how to properly cite sources, please contact me.

**OVERALL COURSE GRADE**

It is very important to understand how your grade will be assessed in this class, as well as what the various grades actually mean. In essence, letter grades are used as shorthand for the level of proficiency achieved in the classroom. Grades reflect results, not effort per se (which a professor has no way to assess). The following criteria are in effect:

**A:** Student demonstrated a level of knowledge (writing, content, etc.) relevant to the course that *goes considerably beyond* what is expected.

**B:** Student demonstrated a level of knowledge of material relevant to the course that is *beyond basic expectations*.

**C:** Student demonstrated an acceptable level of knowledge that is *in-line with course expectations*.

**D:** Student knowledge *barely meets expectations* and the student will likely face significant difficulty in more advanced history courses.

**F:** Student has not learned or demonstrated enough mastery of material to receive a passing grade.

These criteria are not intended to be off-putting, but merely to make clear that simply showing up for class, doing assignments, and talking occasionally generally earns a “C” or a “D”—not an “A” or “B,” both of which denote a student who exceeded the basic expectations outlined in this syllabus.

The basic grade breakdown is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Writing/Quiz</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Assessment Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following grading scale is in effect:
A+ = 97-100
A  = 93-96
A- = 90-92
B+ = 87-89
B  = 83-86
B- = 80-82
C+ = 77-79
C  = 73-76
C- = 70-72
D  = 60-69
F  = 59 and below

C O U R S E  S C H E D U L E

Please note that the following schedule is provisional. Changes may be made as demanded by the weather, class progress, etc. Please watch your email for alterations/revisions.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 10, 2009: INTRODUCTIONS

Today we will get to know one-another, go over the syllabus and requirements, and talk a little bit about the nature of history and about our approach to it.

Required Reading:

No required reading, however you should begin reading for next week.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 15, 2009: DATABASES AND RESEARCH STRATEGIES

Today we will visit the library for some instruction in basic research strategies and database use. Cadence Atchinson will be our guide.

Regardless of the project that you undertake this term, you will need to do extensive research. Today is your chance to gain an understanding of the tools available to you. DO NOT MISS THIS CLASS, EVEN IF YOU THINK YOU KNOW HOW TO USE THESE RESOURCES! I assure you, as one who has been doing this for years: there is ALWAYS more to learn.

Reading:

No required reading.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 17, 2009: JUST THE FACTS, MA’AM

Historians are deeply concerned with facts—just one of the reasons that proper citations are so very important in scholarly work. Yet for all of this concern, what are
facts? How do we know that something is a “fact?” Is it right to be so worried about details? Today we will talk about E.H. Carr’s thoughts on the matter and we will start trying to figure out what we think.

Required Reading:


**TUESDAY, SEPT. 22, 2009: JUST AS IMPORTANT AS EVERYBODY ELSE**

“Great men” have long been of interest to historians. But just how important are individuals in the course of human civilization? Do any of us function entirely on our own? Even the historians who write about “great men” do so within an historical context that is created not by one or two people but by society as a whole. Today we will consider the role of individuals in society. Just how special are we?

Required Reading:

Carr, *What is History?,* pp. 36-69.


**THURSDAY, SEPT. 24, 2009: HISTORY, SCIENCE, AND THE GUY ON YOUR SHOULDER**

The specific approach adopted by historians changes over time. During the 1970s, for example, historical inquiry took a decidedly quantitative turn—renewing a much older debate about whether history ought to be classified as a “science” or as part of the “humanities.” Today we will debate whether history is a science. At the same time, we will also ask serious questions about what ethical considerations are inherent in historical study. What obligations do we have when discussing history?

Reading:

Carr, *What is History?,* pp. 70-112.

Suggested Reading:

**TUESDAY, SEPT. 29, 2009: THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT**

What “causes” events to take place? As historians, how do we tell whether “x” caused “y” or whether some other factor was involved? Today we’ll talk about causality in history.

**Reading:**

Carr, *What is History?*, pp. 113-143.


**THURSDAY, OCT. 1, 2009: POPULAR HISTORY**

Having spent two weeks thinking about academic history, we will now spread our wings to explore how non-academics deal with the past. On the surface, popular history represents a small step away from academic history. Indeed, popular histories often look little different from their academic counterparts, yet there are differences. Today we will talk about perhaps the most popular biography of Robert the Bruce, one of the most important kings in Scottish history. How does this book differ from more scholarly accounts of thirteenth and fourteenth century Scottish history?

**Reading:**


**Suggested Reading**


**TUESDAY, OCT. 6, 2009: WRITING HISTORICAL FICTION**

Dr. David Kuchta is a greatly respected historian of European material and consumer culture; he is also in the midst of writing a major work of historical fiction. Today Dr. Kuchta will tell us about his work as a fiction writer and will discuss both the similarities and differences in approach that he takes when working on his fiction relative to as scholarship. Make sure to come with questions!

**Reading:**

To be announced.
THURSDAY, OCT. 8, 2009: BRAVEHEART, PT. 1

Feature films probably expose more people to historical personalities and events than any other genre, yet scholarly historians find real problems with them. Above all, feature films seldom get their facts right! The question is, does it matter? For the next three classes we will watch Braveheart, a hugely successful blockbuster that had a profound impact on recent Scottish political history. Historians agree that the movie is anything but historically accurate, but does it nevertheless serve some purpose? If so, what?

As you watch the movie, think carefully about what strategies Mel Gibson employed when making the picture. What works? What doesn’t? What seems to be accurate and what isn’t?

Reading:


TUESDAY, OCT. 13, 2009: BRAVEHEART, PT. 2

The movie continues…

Reading:


Rosenstone, History on Film, 32-69.

THURSDAY, OCT. 15, 2009: BRAVEHEART, PT. 3 AND THE QUESTION OF FEATURE FILM

Today we will finish viewing Braveheart. We should be able to spend about 50-minutes talking critically about the movie.

Reading:

Rosenstone, History on Film, 111-164.
**TUESDAY, OCT. 20, 2009: THE QUESTION OF FEATURE FILM, PT. 2**

With Braveheart behind us, we will now think deeply about Robert A. Rosenstone’s argument concerning feature films and the past. Does his thesis hold water? Does it meet the ethical standards of history? Can we stomach the lack of good facts in feature films? We may also watch short selections from Glory (1989), Gandhi (1982), A Man for All Seasons (1966), Becket (1964) and Das Boot (1981).

**Reading:**


**THURSDAY, OCT. 22, 2009: DOCUMENTARY FILM, PT. 1**

Most of us “trust” documentary films more than we do feature film. Documentaries claim to “document” the world, telling us something about the past that is accurate and truthful. But just how accurate and truthful are documentaries? What narrative strategies do documentary filmmakers use? What are the strengths and weaknesses of differing approaches? Today we will launch our exploration of documentary film by watching The History of Warfare: William Wallace, The True Story (Allegro, 2009) as well as the first few minutes of Wilderness and Spirit: A Mountain Called Katahdin (Film by Huey).

**Reading:**

Rosenstone, *History on Film*, 70-110.

**TUESDAY, OCT. 27, 2009: DOCUMENTARY FILM, PT. 2**

In preparation for Thursday’s guest speaker, today we will finish watching Wilderness and Spirit: A Mountain Called Katahdin.

**Reading:**

Rosenstone, *History on Film*, 70-110.

**THURSDAY, OCT. 29, 2009: DOCUMENTARY FILM, PT. 3**

Today we will meet with Huey, the filmmaker behind the Katahdin film, to talk about the challenges involved in documentary filmmaking. Be sure to arrive with some questions in mind!
Reading:


**TUESDAY, NOV. 3: DOCUMENTARY FILM, PT. 4**

Continuing with the Wallace theme, today we will watch and discuss *The True Story of Braveheart* (History Channel, 2000).

Reading:


**THURSDAY, NOV. 5, 2009: DOCUMENTARY FILM, PT. 5**

This week we will continue our discussion of documentary film by watching and discussing clips from a number of documentary films including: Sergei Eisenstein’s classic *October: Ten Days That Shook the World* (Triad, 1928), Alain Resnais’ *Night and Fog* (Janus Films, 1956), and Noel Buckner’s, Mary Dore’s, and Sam Sills’ *The Good Fight: The Abraham Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War* (Kino International, 1984), and selections from the work of Ken Burns, among others.

Reading:


**TUESDAY, NOV. 10, 2009: MUSEUMS AND HERITAGE TOURISM, PT. 1**

Virtually all of us visit museums from time to time. In doing so, we expect to learn something about the subject at hand, whether that be history, science, or art. By now it should not surprise you that all historical museum curators must make decisions about technology, about narrative, and about the story they wish to tell. Today we will consider the case of four museums located in the Pacific Northwest and we will talk about some of the various museums that we have each visited. How do curators tell stories and what are the strengths and weaknesses of various approaches?

Reading:

Elizabeth De Wolfe is UNE History Department Chairperson, a decorated teacher, an award-winning author, and she also has an extensive background in museum work. This extraordinary body of experience led her to offer a course in Spring 2008 that involved turning her book, *The Murder of Mary Bean and Other Stories*, into a museum exhibit at the Saco Museum. Today she will talk about the challenges she encountered writing *Mary Bean* and the difficulties inherent in turning a book, which uses a specific case to make larger points about gender, class, consumption, industrial development and more, into a museum exhibit. Be sure to come with questions!

**Reading:**


**TUESDAY, NOV. 17, 2009: MUSEUMS AND HERITAGE TOURISM, PT. 3**

Today we will finish our discussion of physical museum spaces and heritage tourism. We’ll broaden our discussion to talk about Holocaust tourism and to debate the acceptability of using reproductions in museum exhibits.

**Reading:**


**THURSDAY, NOV. 19, 2009: PRESENTING THE PAST ONLINE**

Over the past 15-20 years, the World Wide Web emerged as a fact of life for most Americans. Many museums now offer online exhibits and various organizations use the Web as a means of offering primary sources, articles, and more to interested “surfers.” Today we will meet with Candice Kanes, the primary force behind the Maine Memory Network (http://www.mainememory.net)—a digital museum dedicated to Maine state history. We’ll talk about the unique challenge of creating two-dimensional exhibits. Bring your questions!

**Reading:**

To be announced.
Historical monuments are one of the most common ways that we encounter the past. Perhaps because of their very omnipresence, monuments are also endlessly controversial. Consider perhaps the most famous monument in America, the Vietnam Memorial. When proposed, there was a loud outcry of opposition. A wall with names?! A compromise was reached: build a traditional monument and the wall. The traditional memorial, a statue of a soldier, is still there. Few tourists notice it. The wall is etched into our collective consciousness. In Scotland, a recent Wallace memorial looks very much like Mel Gibson, an American-born Australian actor. Many see this as absurd. The Holocaust stands as one of the most horrific chapters in modern history, but as survivors die off, memory of the event is fleeting. Monuments are one way to arrest the slide, but will the monuments maintain their meaning when the survivors are dead?

Reading:


THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
NO CLASSES: NOV. 25-27

I am hopeful that we will have one additional guest speaker, however the speaker’s complicated schedule means that we will need to be flexible if he is to be able to join us. Thus, I am leaving four days open for “student presentations.” In all likelihood, only two days will actually be taken up with “presentations.”

This said, presentations will not be formal talks. Instead, I will divide the class into groups whose term projects are related in some way. Each student will give a very short summary of his/her work and we will then move on to have a group discussion of these projects.

Reading:

No assigned reading.
**THURSDAY, DEC. 3, 2009: STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

Round table discussion.

**Reading:**

No assigned reading.

**TUESDAY, DEC. 8, 2009: STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

Round table discussion.

**Reading:**

No assigned reading.

**THURSDAY, DEC. 10, 2009: STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

Round table discussion.

**Reading:**

No assigned reading.