Research Seminar on Wealth and Poverty in America since 1865  
26:510:600 and 26:050:502:01  
Spring 2020

Class Location: Conklin 447  
Class Meeting Times: Mon. 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Professor: Dr. Beryl Satter  
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Office Hours: Mondays, 4-5 p.m. and by appointment

This seminar is devoted to researching and writing a substantial, footnoted research paper (approximately thirty pages in length, typed and double spaced, approximately 250 words per page) that focuses on some aspect of the history of wealth and poverty in America since 1865. For our purposes, “wealth and poverty” is a shorthand for any aspect of inequality in the U.S. since 1865. Since wealth and poverty is intertwined in complex ways with other hierarchies in the U.S. (those of race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and disability, for example), topics incorporating those perspectives are welcome and encouraged.

We will spend the first few weeks reading articles that present a variety of approaches to the question of wealth, poverty, and inequality in America. Class meetings will lead you through the step-by-step process of writing a research paper, including primary source research and analysis, the presentation of polished project proposals, and the creation of outlines of your thesis. Since revision is a process that is crucial to effective historical research and writing, your research paper will be due in draft form well before the end of the seminar, so that it can go through several major revisions. Students will meet with the professor on an individual basis to discuss their projects and revisions and also work together on their papers, meeting in small groups with other students to discuss and critique each other’s work.

Course Materials
Our shared course readings are posted on Blackboard, under “Course Documents.”

Keep in mind that each of you will be expected to read many books and articles on your individual research topic – easily a dozen or more. You should expect to do more reading for this course than for a standard MA graduate course, but the reading will be tailored to your project.

Course requirements
1) Class Participation (will be taken into account and can raise or lower final grade)  
2) Source Analysis Paper (20% of grade)
Each of you will write a paper, five to seven pages long, that compares two of the articles we’ve read for one of the first four weeks of class. Your paper will focus on the sources that the author used for his or her study and how the author used them.
Include the following points in your paper. 1) State the thesis of the articles. What question or questions did the author set out to answer? (2) What obstacles – historical, methodological, or source-based – did the author have to overcome in order to answer their question? How did the author deal with those obstacles? What methods did they use to overcome them? 3) How does the author situate themselves against what other historians have said about the question? What is new or different about what this author is arguing? 4) What sources did the author use to answer the key question or questions? Try to be specific. What sources seemed most fruitful, and why? How did the author “read” their sources (including visual sources)? Did the author read “against the grain”? If so, how? 5) Conclude your paper with an imaginative exercise in which you list at least two short topics that one could explore related to each of the article’s topic. What would be a small, manageable piece of the research that would spin off of or contribute to the research agenda laid out in the articles you’ve just read? What sources (ideally) could one consult in order to answer that small piece of the puzzle? Append a list of potential primary sources that could be used to answer your imagined additional topics, and write a brief (one paragraph to one page) description of how you would use those sources (try to go beyond mainstream newspaper articles). If it’s possible (if you can find a source online or in the library), you can also append an actual primary source to your source analysis paper.

3) Paper Proposal (10%)
4) Footnote and Bibliography Form Assignment (5%)
5) Thesis Outline (5%)
6) Written Comments on other students’ drafts (10%)
7) Your Research Paper (50%)

Attendance
This class meets only once a week. Please try to attend every class. If you miss more than three classes over the course of the semester, regardless of the reason for your absences you will fail the course.

Additional Important Information

Students with Disabilities
Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University’s educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation. See https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the
accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS website at

https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form.

For more information, please visit the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, Suite 219 or contact odsnewark@rutgers.edu.

**Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance**

Rutgers faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. Rutgers has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The University strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the University. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to Policy 10.3.12) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the University. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the University’s Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak with a staff member who is confidential and does not have this reporting responsibility, you may contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance at (973)-353-1918, or at run.vpva@rutgers.edu. Learn more about the office here: http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/vpva

**Plagiarism and Cheating**

The university's policy on academic integrity is available at http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu.

Principles of academic integrity require that every Rutgers University student:

- properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others
- properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work
- make sure that all work submitted as his or her own in a course or other academic activity is produced without the aid of unsanctioned materials or unsanctioned collaboration
- obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with his or her interpretation or conclusions
- treat all other students in an ethical manner, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress
• uphold the canons of the ethical or professional code of the profession for which he or she is preparing. Adherence to these principles is necessary in order to insure that:
• everyone is given proper credit for his or her ideas, words, results, and other scholarly accomplishments
• all student work is fairly evaluated and no student has an inappropriate advantage over others
• the academic and ethical development of all students is fostered
• the reputation of the University for integrity in its teaching, research, and scholarship is maintained and enhanced.

Failure to uphold these principles of academic integrity threatens both the reputation of the University and the value of the degrees awarded to its students. Every member of the University community therefore bears a responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of academic integrity are upheld.

– The Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy

The History department requires that the following honor pledge is written and signed on examinations and major course assignments submitted for grading: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).”

Syllabus (subject to minor revisions)

Mon. 1/27: Introduction


Note: You will need to read the endnotes of all assigned readings for the first few weeks of the course simultaneously with the text in order to learn what source materials authors use to construct their narratives and analyses.

Note: You will need to retrieve many readings for your project from library databases such as Project Muse, JSTOR, and EBSCOhost. If you are unsure of how to use these databases, see Benjamin, 102-105 (included in posting of Benjamin, 94-108, 252, on Blackboard).

2/3: Articles on Wealth and Poverty, 1865-1930


2/10: Articles on Wealth and Poverty, 1930-1970


BRAINSTORM RESEARCH TOPICS: What, why, how! Please read the few pages on Blackboard about “How to Choose a Research Topic,” titled “Topic Choice Marius and Berkin.” You can also review Benjamin, 88-92 if necessary.


NOTE: brief assignment on proper footnote and bibliography form is due next week, in class. The assignment is posted on Blackboard under “Assignments.” See Benjamin, 166-172, for samples of endnotes and bibliography, or look up Chicago Manual of Style footnote and bibliography form online. Also due next week is a paragraph describing your paper topic.

Read Benjamin, 94-108, and p. 252 (on Blackboard), for explanations of how to do library searches for both secondary and primary sources.

2/24: Articles on Wealth, Poverty and Sex, Gender and Cultural Production


Assignment on Proper Footnote and Bibliography Form due.

TOPIC SELECTION (Preliminary) DUE (a paragraph describing what you would like to write about, and primary sources you’d ideally like to use; also summarize it in one sentence that I can pass on to Natalie Borisovets). See Benjamin, 88-92.

Start gathering your primary sources and your secondary reading. What questions would you like them to answer? What makes your particular primary sources useful? What interpretive problems might they pose (what can’t you learn from them?) What background reading will you need to do to supplement the primary sources and make them more fruitful? Begin a bibliography of secondary sources that you will use to situate your primary sources.
3/2: Class workshop with Natalie Borisovetz at Dana Library
- Start preparing your paper proposal (due on Blackboard by noon, Saturday March 7, to be discussed in class on March 9).

IMPORTANT: A paper proposal must include four paragraphs covering the following:

A) Your question.  B) What others have said about your question.  C) What you hope to say or discover that is different from or additional to what others have said.  D) What sources you will use to answer your question. (You can include an opening anecdote as well.)

-Your paper proposal must also include an annotated bibliography of both primary and secondary sources. This takes time, so please start right away even though the proposal is not due till March 9.

*Read “Sample Prospectus by Mia Bay,” on Blackboard.

3/9: PAPER PROPOSALS DISCUSSION.
You must post your proposals on Blackboard by noon on Saturday March 7, so that they can be available for the rest of the class to download and read by tonight’s meeting. We will spend tonight’s class reading and critiquing each other’s proposals.

3/16: SPRING BREAK

3/23: Individual meetings with professor. Each of you will sign up for a half-hour meeting with me (we can open additional evenings if you cannot all meet with me this evening).

After our meeting, please draft an outline of your thesis. The outline should include the argument you plan to make, and show how you will use your evidence to make that argument. You must post your outlines on Blackboard by 10:00 a.m. on Saturday March 28 so that they can be available for the rest of the class to download and read before we meet on March 30. On outlines, see Benjamin, 131-135, 145-146.

3/30: Critiques of Thesis Outlines
We will spend tonight’s class reading and critiquing each other’s outlines.

4/6: Individual Meetings with professor. Each of you will sign up for a half-hour meeting with me (we can open additional evenings if you cannot all meet with me the evening of 4/6).

On writing a first draft, read Benjamin, 135-142.
**Friday April 10:** You must post copies of your first draft to Blackboard by no later than 10:00 a.m. on Friday, April 10, so that your group will have a chance to read and write a typed response to your draft, which they will post on Blackboard by 9:00 a.m. on Mon. April 13.

**4/13:** FIRST DRAFT MEETINGS  
TYPED RESPONSES TO YOUR GROUP’S FIRST DRAFT DUE.

* Marius, "A Writer's Checklist: Revising an Essay"  
* Frakes, pp. 56-64 (on how to revise a research paper and on common writing mistakes to avoid)  
* Marius, pp. 105-108 and 161-173 (on same topics, with an emphasis on grammar)  
* "Student Evaluations of Other Student's Papers" (You should try to incorporate these basic questions in your typed response to your groups’ first drafts, but you don’t need to follow the form number by number.)

**4/20:** FIRST DRAFT MEETINGS  
UPDATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

On second drafts, read Benjamin, 142-144 (which can be found within Blackboarposting of Benjamin, 131-146).

**Friday April 24:** You must post copies of your second draft to Blackboard by no later than 10:00 a.m. today so that your group will have a chance to read and write a typed response to your draft, which they will post on Blackboard by 9:00 a.m. on Mon 4/27.

**4/27:** SECOND DRAFT MEETINGS

**5/4:** SECOND DRAFT MEETINGS

*Final research paper due date to-be-announced.*

*NOTE: If you are graduating this semester, I will need the paper sooner than the rest of the class’s, so that I can get your grade in in time for your graduation.*