

History 4300
Telling Lives: Oral History, Testimonio, and Memoir in Latin American
History
Fall 2009

Wednesday, 9:35-12:25
McCain Arts and Social Sciences, 1198

Dr. Jaymie Patricia Heilman
3180 McCain Arts & Social Science Building
Office Hours: Friday, 1:00-3:00 and by appointment
Email: j.p.heilman@dal.ca
Telephone: 902-494-3628
McCain Lobby Mail Box: 80

Course Description

This seminar explores the place of oral history and first-person narratives in the writing of Latin American history. Through our readings, discussions, and presentations, we will consider the unique strengths and potential weaknesses of oral histories, testimonios and memoirs. Each student will prepare a research paper that situates a particular oral history, testimonio or memoir in its larger historical context.

Course Requirements

Active Participation in Discussions: 30 points

Active participation in weekly discussion sections is central to this course. Active participation means much more than just regular attendance in class; it means asking questions, offering thoughtful responses to readings, and reflecting on weekly discussion questions provided in advance.

Preliminary Topic Statement and Bibliography: 5 points

Students must submit a statement of their research topic and a preliminary bibliography on September 30. This preliminary bibliography should include, *at the very least*, 5 books and 8 articles listed in JSTOR, Project Muse, and/or Historical Abstracts.

A list of potential research projects will be provided in class.

Outline of Research Project: 10 points

Students must submit a *detailed* outline of their papers by Monday, October 26th at NOON. These outlines must include the paper's thesis statement and a comprehensive sketch of the paper's layout. The outline should be approximately 3 pages in length. The professor will meet with students individually on October 30th to discuss the outlines and provide suggestions.

Research Presentation: 20 points

Students are to make a 20 minute presentation on their research projects. These are formal presentations to the class and will be evaluated in terms of content and style of delivery.

Final Research Project: 35 points

The final research paper should be approximately 20-25 double-spaced pages in length, *with endnotes rather than footnotes*. These papers are due December 4th by 4:00 p.m. Papers are to be submitted to box #80 in the McCain lobby.

Students must employ formal citation methods throughout their essays. For guidance on citation methods, see the History Department Website Resources for Students.

Required Texts

There are three required monographs for this course, all available at Outside the Lines Bookstore on Quinpool Road

Belli, Gioconda. *The Country Under My Skin: A Memoir of Love and War* (New York: Knopf, 2002)

James, Daniel. *Doña María's Story: Life History, Memory and Political Identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000)

Reuque Paillalef, Rosa Isolde. *When a Flower is Reborn: The Life and Times of A Mapuche Feminist* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002)

There is also a (small) reader available for purchase at Julia's Copy, 1525 Lemarchant Street.

Grading and Evaluation

Grading for this course adheres to the Dalhousie Grade Scale. That grade scale is as follows:

GRADE SCALE	
A+	90-100
A	85-89
A-	80-84
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
C+	67-69
C	61-66
C-	55-60
D	50-54
F	Below 50

Late Policies

Late papers will be penalized by 2.5% per day late, including weekends. Final research papers submitted late will not receive comments. Papers submitted more than one week late will not be accepted. *No extensions will be provided, save in cases of **documented** medical or family emergencies.*

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities should register as quickly as possible at Student Accessibility Services if they want to receive academic accommodations. To do so please phone 494-2836, e-mail disabilities@dal.ca, or drop in at the Killam, G28.

Statement on Plagiarism

All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on plagiarism and academic honesty referenced in the Policies and Student Resources sections of the plagiarism.dal.ca website. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations. Dalhousie University subscribes to Turnitin.com, a computer-based service which checks for originality in submitted papers. Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarised from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even to the revocation of

a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course, students should read the Policy on Intellectual Honesty contained in the Calendar or on the Online Dalhousie website. The Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and computer-readable format, and to submit any paper to a check such as that performed by Turnitin.com. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand. Copies of student papers checked by this process will be retained by Turnitin.com.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

September 16: Introduction to Course

September 23: Oral History as a Method

Readings: Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*, 1-44. In Course Reader.

Alessandro Portelli, "The Peculiarities of Oral History," in *History Workshop Journal* 1981 (12): 96-107. (Available through Historical Abstracts and Oxford University Press Journals.)

September 30: Doña María's Story

Reading: Daniel James, *Doña María's Story*, 1-118.

TOPIC STATEMENT AND PRELIMINARY BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE IN CLASS.

October 7: Reading Doña María's Story

Readings: Daniel James, *Doña María's Story*, 119-299.

October 14: Chile, Obstinate Memory

Readings: Thomas Miller Klubock, "History and Memory in Neoliberal Chile: Patricio Guzmán's 'Obstinate Memory' and 'The Battle of Chile'." *Radical History Review* 2003 (85): 272-281. (Available through Historical Abstracts)

October 21: Testimonio as Method

Readings: Isolde Reuque, *When a Flower is Reborn*

October 28: Individual meetings with Professor

OUTLINES DUE Monday, October 26 by NOON

November 4: Memoir as Method

Readings: Gioconda Belli, *The Country Under My Skin*

November 11: Remembrance Day. No Class

November 18: Student Presentations

November 25: Student Presentations

December 2: Student Presentations

Pandemic H1N1 Influenza Advisory in relation to Academic Continuity

In the event of an escalation of the pandemic H1N1 influenza virus, the University may need to authorize Academic Units to change elements of class schedules and/or evaluation plans as outlined in course syllabi. Any change is intended to support the primary goal of reducing the risk of spreading a pandemic influenza among students, faculty and staff.

Although it is difficult to predict the severity of the pandemic, the University is committed to minimizing the impact on student's academic progress. Therefore, every effort will be made to provide students with options for continued learning and for continued fair evaluations.

Changes may include but are not limited to:

- . Adjustments to course assignments;
- . Changes to the dates of exams;
- . Arrangements for alternative evaluations for students affected by H1N1 influenza virus;
- . Adjustments to work terms;
- . Modification of marks awarded for participation;
- . Adjustments to attendance policies.

Any alternative plan made in individual courses may be superseded by University-wide or Government measures to reduce the spread of the pandemic H1N1 influenza virus.