



# HIST 615 (2007)

## History & Cartography

**Robinson A 352**  
**T 7:20-10:00**  
[ppetrik@gmu.edu](mailto:ppetrik@gmu.edu)  
<http://www.archiva.net>

**Office: 335 Robinson B**  
**Office Telephone: 3-3194**  
**Office Hours: MT 2:00-3:30**  
**and by appointment**

### SCHEDULE

- Tuesday,  
August 28 — Housekeeping & Introductions  
Discussion: Cartography for Historians
- Friday,  
August 31 — **BLOG URL DUE**
- Tuesday,  
September 4 — Reading:  
John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History*  
Internet Visits: Collections  
[David Rumsey Collections](#)  
[Map History](#)  
[American Memory: Maps](#)  
Practicum: Illustrator & Cartography (Pen Tool Project)  
**BLOG POST #1 DUE**
- Tuesday,  
September 11 — Reading: Historical Atlases  
Derek Hayes, *Historical Atlas of the United States*  
Library & Website Visits: Atlases  
Derek Hayes, *America Discovered*  
David Bateman, *Historical Atlas of New Zealand*  
Fletcher Hewes, *Statistical Atlas, United States, 1880*  
R. Cole Harris, ed., *Historical Atlas of Canada*  
Stephen Hornsby, ed, *Historical Atlas of Maine*  
David Rumsey, *Cartographica Extraordinaire*  
Discussion: Historical Atlases & Final Projects  
**BLOG POST #2 DUE**  
**HISTORICAL ATLAS EVALUATION DUE**  
**LAST DAY TO ADD CLASSES**

Tuesday, September 18	—	<p>Reading: Maps as History Jeremy Black, <i>Maps and History</i></p> <p>Website Visits: <a href="#">Relief Shading</a> <a href="#">USGS: Tutorial</a> (Free) <a href="#">GIS Community</a> (\$) <a href="#">TypeBrewer</a> <a href="#">ColorBrewer</a></p> <p>Practicum: Illustrator &amp; Cartography (Island Project) <b>BLOG POST #3 DUE</b></p>
Tuesday, September 25	—	<p>Reading: GIS for History Anne Kelly Knowles, ed., <i>Past Time, Past Place: GIS for History</i> John Krygier, <i>Making Maps</i> (recommended)</p> <p>Website Visits: <a href="#">Relief Shading: Try It</a> <a href="#">Shaded Relief: Guide to Making Bird's-eye Views</a></p> <p>Practicum: Natural Scene Designer (DEMs &amp; "Rubber Sheeting") <b>BLOG POST #4 DUE</b></p>
Friday, September 28	—	<b>LAST DAY TO DROP CLASSES</b>
Saturday September 29– Wednesday, October 26	—	<b>ELECTIVE WITHDRAWAL PERIOD</b> (Full-Semester Course)
Tuesday, October 2	—	<p>Practicum: Natural Scene Designer (DEMs &amp; "Rubber Sheeting") <b>FREEHAND MAPS DUE</b> <b>BLOG POST #5 DUE</b></p>
Tuesday, October 9	—	<b>NO CLASS (COLUMBUS DAY)</b>
Tuesday, October 16	—	<p>Reading: Mapping Concepts Mark Monmonier, <i>How to Lie With Maps</i>, 2nd ed</p> <p>Website Visits: <a href="#">Mapping in Our Lives</a> <a href="#">SketchUp Video Tutorials</a> <a href="#">Fantasy Cartography: Parts 1–8</a> (Also iTunes)</p> <p>Practicum: SketchUp <b>BLOG POST #6 DUE</b></p>
Tuesday, October 23	—	<p>Video: Warping Waldseemuller Practicum: By Request <b>"RUBBER SHEETING" PROJECT DUE</b> <b>BLOG POST #7 DUE</b></p>

Tuesday, October 30	—	<b>TENTATIVE FIELD TRIP 12:00–5:00 (LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)</b> <b>BLOG POST #8 DUE</b>
Tuesday, November 6	—	Reading: Geographical Imagination Katherine Harmon, ed., <i>You Are Here</i> Website Visits: Sanborn Maps <a href="#">Sanborn Maps: LOC</a> <a href="#">Sanborn Maps: Utah</a> <a href="#">Sanborn Maps: Florida</a> <a href="#">Amiens Cathedral II: Revelations</a> ( <i>QuickTime required</i> ) Practicum: SketchUp & Sanborn Maps <b>BLOG POST #9 DUE</b>
Tuesday, November 13	—	Reading: Digital Maps Schuyler Erle et al., <i>Mapping Hacks</i> Website Visits: Online Mapping <a href="#">Google Maps</a> <a href="#">Google Earth</a> Practicum: Google Maps Stuff <b>BLOG POST #10 DUE</b>
Tuesday, November 20	—	Discussion: Final Projects <b>ARCHITECTURAL RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT DUE</b> <b>BLOG POST #11 DUE</b>
Tuesday, November 27	—	Discussion: Trouble Shooting/Other <b>BLOG POST #12 DUE</b>
Tuesday, December 4	—	Discussion: Final Projects <b>FINAL PROJECT DUE (Preliminary)</b> <b>BLOG POST #13 DUE</b>
Tuesday, December 11	—	<b>FINAL PROJECT DUE</b> <b>SELF-EVALUATION DUE</b>

## **COURSE**

Historians are most accustomed to dealing with maps as basic topographical or political descriptions, but maps can be read as evidence in their own right. This course sets out to accomplish three goals: to introduce students to the idea of spatial relationships as historical evidence, to impart the skills to make a reasonably sophisticated map, and to experiment with the application of 3-D to historical visualization and reconstruction. The course, therefore, is both a traditional history and applied digital history course. While ArcView is the standard GIS software application and very useful to historians, those interested in learning ArcView are encouraged to consult the Geography Department's offerings.

The course will begin by rethinking maps (loosely defined as any spatial arrangement), proceed to examining maps as evidence, and extend its inquiry to analyzing how maps can be used by historians. It will carry on by ferreting out maps suitable for digital adaptation and, thence, to creating a well-designed map in a vector-based application (Illustrator). The course will then turn to a terrain generator (Natural Scenery Designer) and work on a "rubber-sheeting" project. Finally, participants will engage in a historical reconstruction using a combination of one or more of the following: an architectural program (SketchUp), Sanborn Insurance maps, Google Earth, or bird's-eye view maps, among others. The course will also include a field trip to the Maps Reading Room at the Library of Congress.

This course is designed for students in either traditional or applied tracks (New Media) in the history graduate program, graduate students in allied disciplines, or advanced undergraduates. Graduate students, for example, who contemplate using maps in their dissertation work, will find the course extremely helpful. Although the course has a heavy computer component, it is intended for those with intermediate computer skills and assumes no prior knowledge of any of the software applications required for the course. Students who have completed Clio 2 (HIST 697-History & New Media), a graduate GIS or cartography course, or who possess a solid computer background will find their skills equal to the demands of the course.

## **BOOKS**

The following books are required for the course. They are available in the Campus Bookstore or from other vendors far and wide. These texts, essentially, demonstrate the use of the various documents that we will be looking at in class. Read them quickly as examples of what can be done.

Derek Hayes, *Historical Atlas of the United States*  
Jeremy Black, *Maps and History: Constructing Images of the Past*  
Anne Kelly Knowles, ed., *Past Time, Past Place: GIS for History*  
Mark Monmonier, *How to Lie With Maps*, 2nd ed.  
Katherine Harmon, ed., *You Are Here*  
Schuyler Erle et al., *Mapping Hacks: Tips & Tools for Electronic Cartography*  
John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History*

## **BLOG**

You are required to obtain a Plus-level subscription to Typepad, a blog. TypePad is available at: <<http://www.typepad.com>>. All of your writing assignments will be posted to your Typepad blog. The cost is \$8.95 per month or roughly \$27.00 for the semester (the cost of a modest textbook). The best thing to do is sign up for a free trial; this will furnish you with a month's free service. At the end of the semester, you can cancel your subscription. Or, you may discover that you like blogging so much that you retain your subscription. Alternatively, you may know someone who can mount a blogging application (WordPress, for example) at your ISP. That's fine. We will not

use Blogger (or any other free service, for that matter) because of the ads, server unreliability, and spam problems.

A word about design. Good design helps your blog visitors find what they are looking for and read it once found. Certain design elements contribute to readability and legibility. For your TypePad blog, you can choose any design in Classic, Bold Colors, Cool Colors, Pale Palettes categories **except** Folio, Beckett, Sunburned, and Porpoise. These are just plain difficult to read, and I do not want to go blind. You should **not** choose anything from the Special Interest group. When you choose a layout, choose a two or three column layout. **Avoid** the mixed media layout; they are not appropriate for history.

## SOFTWARE

History & Cartography has some special software requirements. Some of you are able to get your employer to buy the software, given enough time. Yes, I know more dollars, but no one ever said that digital history was cheap. I've tried to make the course as inexpensive as possible. Here is what you will need for software with their educational prices (thereabouts): Adobe Illustrator CS3 (Required \$199.00 or consistent access); Adobe Photoshop CS3 Extended (\$299.00 Includes Zoomify) OR Adobe Photoshop Elements 5.0 (Win-\$69.00) or Adobe Photoshop Elements 4.0 (Mac-\$69.00; required or consistent access); Natural Scene Designer (Required \$111.20; Mapping Hacks discusses free tools that perform the same functions as NSD, but you can also pull out your hair in tufts); Google SketchUp (FREE) or Google SketchUp Pro (\$49.00-Mac/Win-Student License; the Pro version, of course, does more things, but the free version will do most things); and Google Earth (FREE) <<http://earth.google.com/>>. If you are going to use need print resolution images from Google Earth in your final project, you will need Google Earth Plus (\$20)

Colored Pencil Set (Required \$12-\$20) A small set on the order of Faber-Castell Polychromos Pencils would be fine. If you go with another set, be sure that it includes colors that are commonly found on maps. Some of you might also find Bryce (\$99.00) and Vue d'Esprit (FREE) useful and fun, but these are not required.

Consistent access means that you can use the software when you need to. This may mean working at your office or some other location. For those thinking about doing more work in digital history, you might want to think about getting one of the Adobe Packages. Last but not least, the books are in the bookstore; the web page will be available shortly—let's say the first week in August.

## POLICIES

All of what follows is probably familiar to you, but I am explaining and stating these policies now, in the clearest possible terms, so there can be no dispute over what I expect. If you have questions about my expectations, please raise them. But whenever you ask me to modify my expectations because you failed to plan and use your time efficiently, you put me as well as the rest of the class in the ethically difficult position of applying different standards to different people.

### *Attendance*

Participants in a graduate seminar are expected to attend class unless some dire emergency arises—something on the order of a cosmic intervention. Because the class depends on class discussion of materials that are relatively unfamiliar to many, it is even more important that students come to class prepared to enter into lively debate. A word to the wise, in short, should be sufficient.

### *Students with Disabilities*

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

### *Email*

Please check your GMU mailbox periodically or arrange for your GMU mailbox material to be forwarded to your preferred email address. In addition, be sure that your mailbox has not exceeded its capacity so that your mail bounces back to me. If I send out announcements, I use the GMU mailing class mailing lists per university regulations. If you need to email me, please put HIST 615 in the subject line and sign your full name. This will help my spam detector route you to the proper folder, guarantee that I read your email, and ensure that I know who you are.

### *A Note on Computer Use*

Computers are a great boon to the graduate student. But, as with any technology, you must take steps to minimize the problems that computers inevitably cause. Do not expect to get through the semester without having at least one computer crisis. Prepare for this well in advance. Back up your work constantly and have alternative plans for obtaining computer use, if your primary options fail you. I will never accept computer problems as excuses for missed assignments. You must also keep backup copies of submitted assignments—either in electronic form or hard copy.

Similarly, computers and email permit around-the-clock communication. If you have questions or need to apprise me of an emergency situation, contact me via email.

[ppetrik@gmu.edu](mailto:ppetrik@gmu.edu)

Should you need to discuss an issue with the instructor, contact me via email or by phone to make an appointment. Do not, however, expect an immediate response. Many of your questions can be answered by consulting the web site at:

<http://www.archiva.net>

Your best chance of reaching me immediately by email is during my office hours. Even then I cannot make a guarantee because I may well be with another student.

### *Grades*

Grades, including +s and -s, will be assigned in the following manner. REMEMBER THEY REPRESENT AN EVALUATION, NOT A REWARD. To rephrase Smith-Barney (now Salomon Smith Barney), the investment folk, we do grades the old-fashioned way—earn them.

A—Outstanding work, complete mastery of the material presented, combined with some originality.

B—A solid command of the material with some gaps or mistakes in a basically sound essay or discussion.

C—Some knowledge of the material; mistakes and confusion are acceptable if mixed with some understanding. Not a reward for attendance or effort.

D—An incomplete and minimal knowledge of the material, major confusions and errors.

F—A failure to present the material in a reasonably accurate and comprehensible manner.

I—There are no “incompletes” given in this course except in cases of bona fide and documented instances in accordance with the regulations of the university.

P—For a “pass” a “C” average is required.

If you receive a grade or criticism that seems unfair or if you desire further explanation, please feel free to discuss the matter with me by making an appointment. My policy is not to discuss grades via email.

## REQUIREMENTS

There are four preliminary assignments, one major assignment, and a blog required for the course. All of the assignments should either be part of a website (a web portfolio) that includes a home page and navigation to the various assignments or be included in your blog. (The instructor's preference is for a website but understands that not all members of the class may have the necessary skills.) At the conclusion of each assignment, a link to the assignment should be forwarded to the instructor for inclusion on the instructor's course page. In addition, you are required to make one post to your blog each week as well as one comment on another's post each week. Those who make more than one comment will have their names writ in heaven, e.g. the gradebook. Reference your comment by furnishing a text link (Comment on Steve's Post, #2: Great Comments on the Atlas) in your own blog to the permalink of the post.

The course assignments will be weighted as follows: (1) Historical Atlas Evaluation (15%); (2) Freehand Maps (15%); 3) "Rubber Sheeting" Project (15%); 4) Architectural Reconstruction (15%); (5) Blog—including posts and comments (15%); (6) Historical Atlas Project (25%); and (7) a self-evaluation (1 page, typed, single-spaced) assessing your performance in the course (not graded but required).

### 1) Historical Atlas Evaluation (preliminary)

The goal of this assignment is initial preparation for the final project, a two- or four-page layout on a topic for print version of a historical atlas. To that end, examine several online and print historical atlases and evaluate their effectiveness. Make some general comments about what seems to work in atlases. From one of the texts, choose a favorite topic and analyze why it was especially interesting. How do the maps contribute to the topic's text? What do the visuals other than the maps add to the presentation? How about the captions? Finally, assess the presentation: fonts, color, layout, and so forth. What is the word count of an average topical discussion? How many visuals and maps does an average layout use? Do the visual bleed to the edge of a page? Does the layout use a grid system? How does a focus on maps and other visuals illuminate history? Be sure to scan visuals to illustrate your discussion.

### 2) Freehand Maps (preliminary)

This is a two-part assignment. First, select a map that has some relationship to a historical debate, event, or question. Using your colored pencils or other drawing materials, draw a freehand map that enlarges or reduces the original. (Drawing for this assignment does **not** include tracing.) Once you have finished the project, scan the result and include it in your project with all the necessary cartographic information. Use pencils, paper, rulers and so on the first part of the assignment—not a computer.

Second, select a map that you think might be successfully adapted to a history project. (A map that would not scan well (or a poorly scanned example), a large map from which you only need a detail, or map that needs clarification or reconstruction are good candidates.) Using Illustrator, draw the map and add it to your portfolio. Again, be aware of cartographic conventions. Briefly reflect on your experience with the assignment in the text accompanying the maps.

### 3) "Rubber Sheeting" Project (preliminary)

This project involves a technique variously called "rubber sheeting" or draping. First, go to one of the DEM purveyors and acquire a DEM of an area of historical interest. (A small area is usually preferable to an overly large one.) Import the DEM into Natural Scene Designer and produce a

scene. (Be sure to add trees and so forth if they are warranted.) Next, acquire an overlay (topo, ground cover, or one of the other options) and drape the layer over the DEM. Rotate the scene to a new perspective and repeat. Natural Scenery Designer does nice “flybys,” so you might consider trying one. Once you have your minimum three images, include them in your portfolio and comment on your experience with the assignment, especially its applicability to history. What does recreating a historical topography suggest?

#### 4) Architectural Reconstruction (preliminary)

In preparation for the historical reconstruction, select a Sanborn Insurance map and several photographs of the area represented in the Sanborn map that suggests a place of historical interest or interpretation. (Although a b/w Sanborn map from GMU’s electronic collection is perfectly acceptable, the colored versions are much more handsome; these are available from the LOC.) Second, select a neighborhood, building complex, or other area from the larger map. This portion of the Sanborn map will serve as the footprint for your architectural reconstruction. Finally, using SketchUp, reconstruct the historical area. Think carefully about how you want to present your reconstruction. Detailed? Schematically—something on the order of Monopoly houses? A combination of both? In the text accompanying your project, provide the historical background for your neighborhood, reflect on the process of completing the project, and discuss what you gained (or not) historically from creating an architectural reconstruction.

#### 5) Historical Atlas Project (final)

The final assignment is a prototype of a two-page or four-page spread for a historical atlas on a particular topic. Although class discussion will describe more fully the requirements, the prototype should include several of the following:

- a textual discussion of a historical spatial problem
- a digital map or maps drawn or created by the author that demonstrates understanding of cartographic principles and conventions
- other photographs or visuals that illuminate, enhance, or illustrate the topic
- a chart, graph, or table
- a text document scan
- captions for all images, maps, or other visuals (charts and graphs, for example)
- attention to the requirements of print format: font, color, layout, image resolution
- scans of pages and discussion added to digital portfolio or blog

It’s extremely important to get an early start on your historical atlas project. Let me say that again: start early. A project is the result of long hours and hard work. You can expect to spend at least eight hours each week on your work and more in the research phase. This is not said to spook you but to furnish a clear-sighted estimate of what is necessary.

## **SELF-EVALUATION GUIDELINES**

Oftentimes, a letter grade does not reflect the effort that students put into a course, the amount a student has learned, or the skills that a student has acquired. A self-evaluation is one way of remedying this deficiency by illustrating and documenting your participation in the course from your perspective. This is the time to argue for yourself and put your best foot forward. In fact, it is in your interest to do the best job that you can on this assignment. The self-evaluation should be a one-page, typed single-spaced paper in which you address the following topics:

### I. Evaluation of your participation in the class

- A. attendance
- B. time devoted to the materials
  1. assigned/web visits reading
  2. blog posts

- 3. preliminary projects
  - 4. final project
  - C. class participation
    - 1. seminar discussion
    - 2. blog comments
  - D. the ways in which you think you improved or not
  - E. the problems you encountered in your effort to complete the class assignments to your satisfaction.
  - F. what you would have done differently
  - G. some of the skills or knowledge that you acquired
- II. A general assessment of how you will apply what you have gained (or not) from the class in the future