

# History 496: Historical Methods and Philosophy of History

Instructor: Dr. J. L. Spangler

Fall Term, 2013

Tuesdays, 1400-16:45



The Archive at Forchtenstein Castle, Austria

## Course Description

This seminar, meant for students who have been accepted to our honours program, introduces the traditions and practices of the craft of history and explores ongoing debates about how history can and should be written. The first half of the course will focus on the key categories of analysis that historians of the early twentieth century relied upon to construct their narratives, such as the nation, the state, class, society, the public sphere, and civil society. In the middle of the term, we'll focus on the expanding field of "memory studies," and then we'll finish the class by examining how historians have reacted to postmodern ideas and their supposed challenge to historical truth.

## The Details

The course will be conducted in seminar format--class time will be devoted primarily to discussion of common readings. Participation in discussion will account for about 25% of the final mark. There is an assigned textbook for the course (Lambert and Schofield's *Making History: An Introduction to the History and Practices of a Discipline*) that will be supplemented with several scholarly articles, book excerpts, and/or primary sources each week. There will be no midterm or final exam. Instead, students will write one-page assessments of readings at several points during the term as well as 2 short papers (probably 5-7 pages each).