

Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University
IR539: History, Policy & Statecraft
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM, ZoomLand

Professor Jayita Sarkar
she/her/hers

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:00-2:00 PM
Appointments mandatory: <https://jsarkar.youcanbook.me>

Email: jsarkar@bu.edu

This class will be held synchronously on Zoom [i.e. during class time].
You are strongly encouraged to keep videos on during class.
When you are participating in class discussions, please turn on your mics.

“History is the art of making an argument about the past by telling a story accountable to evidence”.
— Jill Lepore, *The Story of America: Essays on Origins*

“We know the future only by the past we project into it. History, in this sense, is all we have.”
— John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What can we learn from our recent past? How can we use history to understand the past, contemplate the present, and anticipate the future? How effective is historical analysis to resolve contemporary policy problems? What is counterfactual reasoning? Are counterfactuals useful to understand strategies adopted by states and their leaders? How to effectively employ historical analogies to understand the present? How can we effectively use primary sources obtained through archival research for policy analysis and research? What is oral history and how can we effectively conduct oral history interviews for research? How is an onsite archival repository different from (and similar to) a library, and how to ace archival research? These are some of the questions that this course will collectively examine and seek to answer.

The course will connect history with current policy problems to make sense of national strategies and grand strategies of states in the international system, leaders' policy choices, and group dynamics at play in past events. It will integrate a conceptual analysis of the past with hands-on training in conducting archival research, oral history interviews and analyzing large corpus of textual data manually and through appropriate software. This course will conclude with a visit to John F. Kennedy Presidential Library in Boston, MA for a hands-on training in historical research (no additional cost anticipated). No background in historical research and/or history is required to take this course.

Pre-requisite: First-Year Writing Seminar (e.g., WR 100 or WR 120).

M.A. Tracks: Diplomacy; Security

B.A. Tracks: International Systems & World Order; Foreign Policy & Security

BU Hub: Historical Consciousness, Writing Intensive, Critical Thinking

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will have achieved the following course learning outcomes:

- Demonstrate a strong basis of knowledge of what history is, and how it helps understand contemporary international politics
- Demonstrate an understanding of what the historical method is, and how it is related to but distinct from social science research using historical data
- Demonstrate the ability to conduct research and analysis by visiting an onsite archive in the city
- Develop the ability to use knowledge of the past to investigate contemporary policy problems

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism is a serious offence and will not be tolerated. The undergraduate members of this class will follow the “Academic Code of Conduct” of Boston University, accessible here:

<https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>

All graduate members of this class will follow the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Academic Conduct Code can be found at <http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/graduate/grs-forms-policies-procedures/academic-discipline-procedures/>.

INSTRUCTIONAL FORMAT

Our classes are 3.5 hours or 210 minutes long. So, we will divide each class meeting into **two meetings of 75-minutes each, one meeting of 30 minutes, and two breaks of 15 minutes** each. The meetings will be divided as follows:

I

9:00 – 9:40 AM: 40 minutes lecture

9:40 – 9:55 AM: 15 minutes breakout room discussion [with prompts given by instructor]

9:55 – 10:15 AM: 20 minutes Q&A: Report back on breakout room discussions.

**10:15 – 10:30 AM: 15 minutes of coffee break. Feel free to turn off mics and videos.*

II

10:30 – 11:10 AM: 40 minutes lecture

11:10 – 11:25 AM: 15 minutes breakout room discussion [with prompts given by instructor]

11:25 – 11:45 AM: 20 minutes Q&A: Report back on breakout room discussions

**11:45 – 12:00 noon: 15 minutes of coffee break. Feel free to turn off mics and videos.*

III

12:00 – 12:30 PM: 30 minutes: wrap-up lecture, exercises, etc.

Community of Learning: Class and University Policies

- 1) Please refer to technology-related code of conduct addendum to the syllabus [last page of this document].
- 2) Course members' responsibilities for ensuring a positive learning environment
Students are expected to be punctual in class. Late arrivals will affect class participation grade.
- 3) It is important to be respectful, logical and evidence-based in class discussions.
 - On argumentation, see: <http://www.csun.edu/~hcpas003/argument.html>
 - On logical fallacies, see: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/fallacies/>

The instructor will respond to emails within 24 hours of receiving them, except on weekends. So, clarifications related to Monday sessions must be sought during the previous week, and not over the weekend.

4) Attendance & Absences

Students' attendance in this class is mandatory. If a student cannot attend a session, they must email the instructor in advance in order to excuse themselves. Any more than two absences during the semester will result in a deduction in the participation grade by one grade letter. Students who must be absent from class for religious observance must notify the instructor as early as possible, and at least two weeks in advance.

5) Assignment Completion & Late Work

All assignments must be sent by email to the instructor before 5pm (Eastern Standard Time) on the day it is due. Late work without adequate justification will be penalized by one letter grade for that assignment. Students who will miss examinations for unforeseen factors or factors beyond their control must contact me as early as possible so that makeup assignments can be scheduled.

BOOKS & COURSEWARE

There is no required textbook for this course. There are required readings. These readings will be made available to the students through Blackboard.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Attendance & Active Participation (30 points):** Regular attendance in class is mandatory but merely showing up to class will not suffice. In this course, **we take the readings seriously**, and we dissect each and every argument in the readings during class. Throughout the semester, each student will make presentation on a chosen academic assigned reading for 15 minutes, which will be followed by a 5-minute Q&A by the entire class. Presentation (10%), participation in Q&A (10%), and regular attendance and in-class discussions (10%) will account for the 30% of the final grade. Students will be briefed on how to read effectively through handouts like Patrick Rael's 'Predatory Reading'. *same expectations for undergraduate and graduate levels*

2. **Weekly Response Papers (25 points):** Students are required to submit prior to the beginning of each class a response paper by email to the instructor in which they will analyze any two of the required readings of the day, and share what intellectual reactions the reading generated. What are its historical insights? Does s/he agree with the author? Why? Why not? These are some of the questions that the response essay will tackle. Each response paper should be between 750 and 1000 words long. *same expectations for undergraduate and graduate levels*
3. **Historical Op-Eds (15 x 3 = 45 points):** Students are expected to write historically grounded op-eds, where they will begin with a policy hook, cite 2-3 primary source documents, and relevant scholarly books and articles, to explain a current policy problem through historical analysis to a lay audience. Three such op-eds of 15 points each will be part of 45% of the total grade for this course. These op-eds will be submitted on Week 3, Week 5 and Week 7 and will be 1000-1100 words each for graduate students, and 900-1000 words for undergraduate students. Guidelines will be circulated on Week 2.

- On historical op-eds see: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2017/06/26/welcome-to-made-by-history/>

GRADING CRITERIA & SCALE

Explanation of grades and GPA at Boston University can be found by following this link: <https://www.bu.edu/reg/academics/grades-gpa/>

A	93 – 100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76

STATEMENT ON ACCESSIBILITY

BU is committed to providing equal access to our coursework and programs to all students. In order to be sure that accommodations can be made in time for all exams and assignments, please plan to turn in your accommodations letter as soon as possible and no later than 14 days from the first exam/assignment. After you turn in your letter, please meet with your professor to discuss the plan for accommodations so we can be sure that they are adequate and you are supported in your learning. If you have further questions or need additional support, please contact the Office of Disability Services (access@bu.edu).

CAMPUS RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

Please make use of BU resources to support yourself, friends and classmates when in distress: http://www.bu.edu/helpinfo/pdf/10102_SHS.pdf

DETAILS OF CLASS MEETINGS

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION: THINKING HISTORICALLY

Why study the past? How do we study the past? How to study the past most effectively? Why bother?

Thursday, May 21:

- Elman, Colin, and Miriam Fendius Elman. *Bridges and Boundaries: Historians, Political Scientists, and the Study of International Relations*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001.
 - Chapter 16: "International History: Why Historians Do It Differently than Political Scientists" by Paul W. Schroeder
- Jervis, Robert. "International Politics and Diplomatic History: Fruitful Differences." *H-Diplo/ISSF*, 12 March 2010.
<https://issforum.org/essays/essay-1-jervis-inagural>
- Ted Talk, Chris Nichols on "The untold story about American isolationism," 2018:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ehla0x_bxi4

WEEK 2: ANALOGIES, CAUSATION & COUNTERFACTUALS

****Weekly response papers will be due from Week 2 onward.**

What are historical analogies? Why are they so commonly abused?

What is a causal relationship? When is it a correlation instead?

What is counterfactual reasoning? How does historical context interfere with counterfactual reasoning?

What is the utility of counterfactuals in deriving causal relationships?

Tuesday, May 26:

- Carr, Edward Hallett. *What Is History?* The George Macaulay Trevelyan Lectures, 1961, New York; Knopf, 1962. Chapter IV: Causation in History
- Morgenthau, Hans J. "Remarks on the Validity of Historical Analogies," *Social Research* 39, no. 2 (Summer 1972): 360-364.
- Neustadt, Richard E. and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986.
 - Chapter 5: Dodging Bothersome Analogues
- Gordon, Peter, "Why Historical Analogy Matters," *The New York Review of Books*, 7 January 2020. <https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2020/01/07/why-historical-analogy-matters/>

- Richard Fontaine and Vance Serchuk, "The Uses and Abuses of Historical Analogy on North Korea," *The Atlantic*, 17 October 2017.
<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/10/the-uses-and-misuses-of-historical-analogy-on-north-korea/541866/>

Thursday, May 28:

****Instructor will discuss historical op-eds, and their expectations.**

- Gaddis, John Lewis. *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
 - Chapter 6: Causation, Contingency and Counterfactuals
- Gavin, Francis J. "What If? The Historian and the Counterfactual." *Security Studies* 24, no. 3 (2015): 425-30.
- Levy, Jack S. "Counterfactuals, Causal Inference, and Historical Analysis." *Security Studies* 24, no. 3 (2015): 378-402.

WEEK 3: MEMORIES & PRIMARY SOURCES

Guiding Questions: How to interpret primary sources? What are their limitations? How do memory and politics play out in archives and how does that influence history writing?

Tuesday, June 2:

- Trachtenberg, Marc. *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006.
 - Chapter 3: The Critical Analysis of Historical Texts
- Berger, Thomas U. *War, Guilt, and World Politics after World War II*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
 - Chapter 1: Politics and memory in an age of apology
- "How do governments and citizens shape historical memory?" <https://vimeo.com/182718473>
- "What is historical memory?" <https://vimeo.com/182718468>

Thursday, June 4:

- Farmer, Ashley D. "In Search of the Black Women's History Archive," *Modern American History* vol. 1, no. 2 (July 2018): 289-293.
- Smallwood, Stephanie E. "The Politics of the Archive and History's Accountability to the Enslaved," *History of the Present* vol. 6, no. 2 (Fall 2016): 117-132.

- Kendi, Ibram X. "The Hopefulness and Hopelessness of 1619," *The Atlantic*, 20 August 2019. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/08/historical-significance-1619/596365/>
- Goldstein, Dana, "Two States, Eight Textbooks, Two American Stories," *The New York Times*, 12 January 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/01/12/us/texas-vs-california-history-textbooks.html>

WEEK 4

Tuesday, June 9: JFKL

Archivist from JFK Presidential Library will discuss primary sources on the Cuban Missile Crisis

- May, Ernest R. "John F. Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *BBC*, Last updated Nov. 2013. http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/coldwar/kennedy_cuban_missile_01.shtml
- Movie: Fail-Safe, 1964
- Movie: Dr. Strangelove, 1964

CASES 1 & 2

Thursday, June 11: Rise of the Right + NRA

Guest speaker: Cari Babitzke, BU History (10:30-11:45 AM)

- Heather Cox Richardson, *How the South Won the Civil War* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020).
Chapter 6: The West and the South Join Forces
Chapter 7: The Rise of the New West
 - Kevin M. Kruse and Julian E. Zelizer, *Fault Lines: A History of the United States since 1974* (London and New York: W.W. Norton, 2019);
Chapter 5: Turning Right
 - Patrick J. Charles, *Armed in America: A History of Gun Rights from Colonial Militias to Concealed Carry* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2018)
 - Chapter 6: The NRA Comandeers the Gun-Rights Movement
 - Chapter 7: Gun Rights Fire
 - Chapter 8: The Birth of the Gun-Rights Golden Age
 - Jill Lepore, "Battleground America: One Nation Under Gun," *The New Yorker*, 16 April 2012.
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WEEK 5

CASES 3 & 4

Tuesday, June 16: Pandemics and Epidemics in History

- Kate Brown, “The Coronavirus Pandemic is not a Natural Disaster,” *New Yorker*, 13 April 2020. <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/annals-of-inquiry/the-pandemic-is-not-a-natural-disaster>
- David Arnold, “Death and the Modern Empire: The 1918-19 Influenza Epidemic in India,” *Transactions of the Royal History of Science* 29 (2019): 181-200.
- The Bombay Plague Epidemic of 1896 with Shruti Kapila, University of Cambridge:
 - <https://anchor.fm/economics-of-coronavirus/episodes/The-Bombay-Plague-Epidemic-of-1896-and-Modern-Indian-Politics-with-Shruti-Kapila-eer022>
- Heidi Tworek, “Communicable Disease: Information, Health and Globalization in the Interwar Period,” *American Historical Review* 124, no. 3 (2019): 813-842.
- Erez Manela, “Smallpox Eradication and the Rise of Global Governance,” in *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 251-262.

June 16: Op-Ed #1 due by 5 PM through Blackboard as a Turnitin assignment.

Thursday, June 18: Capitalism. U.S. Empire. Colonialism

- Vanessa Ogle, “Archipelago Capitalism: Tax Havens, Offshore Money, and the State, 1950s–1970s,” *American Historical Review* 15 (2016): 331-362.
- Brooke Blower, “Nation of Outposts: Forts, Factories, Bases, and the Making of American Power,” *Diplomatic History* Vol. 41, No. 3 (2017): 439- 459.
- Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire: A History of the Greater United States* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019).
 - Introduction: Looking Beyond the Logo Map, OR
 - Podcast: <https://www.theguardian.com/profile/daniel-immerwahr>
- Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin (ed.). *Internationalisms: A Twentieth-Century History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
 - Chapter 6: “Empires, States and the League of Nations,”— Susan Pedersen

WEEK 6 CASES 5 & 6

Thursday, June 23: White Power Movement

- Kathleen Belew, *Bringing the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018)
 - Introduction
 - Chapter 3: A Unified Moment
 - Chapter 4: Mercenaries and Paramilitary Praxis
 - Chapter 5: The Revolutionary Turn
- Podcast, “Rallying Behind Racism: The Women of White Supremacy,” 18 Oct. 2019
<https://audioboom.com/posts/7400412-rallying-behind-racism-the-women-of-white-supremacy>
- Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin (ed.). *Internationalisms: A Twentieth-Century History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
 - Chapter 9: “Fascist Internationalism” – Madeleine Herren

Thursday, June 25: Immigration. Presidential Authority

- Paul Kramer, “The Geopolitics of Mobility: Immigration Policy and American Global Power in the Long Twentieth Century,” *American Historical Review* (April 2018): 393-438.
 - Ellen D. Wu, “It's Time to Center War in U.S. Immigration History,” *Modern American History* 2, no. 2 (2019): 215-235.
 - *Impeachment: An American History* (New York, NY: Modern Library, 2019)
Chapter: “Andrew Johnson by Jon Meacham”
Chapter: “Richard Nixon by Timothy Naftali”
- Suri, Jeremi. “The Presidency is Too Big to Succeed,” *The Atlantic*, 9 May 2018
<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2018/05/the-real-reason-the-presidency-is-impossible/559877/>

June 25: Op-Ed #2 due by 5 PM through Blackboard as a Turnitin assignment.

WEEK 7

CASE 7

Tuesday, June 30: Technology & Society

Margaret O'Mara. *The Code: Silicon Valley and the Remaking of America* (New York, NY: Penguin, 2019).

- Chapter 5: The Money Men
- Chapter 8: Power to the People

Mar Hicks, *Programmed Inequality: How Britain Discarded Women Technologists and Lost Its Edge in Computing* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2018).

- Chapter 3: Luck and Labor Shortage: Gender Flux, Professionalization, and Growing Opportunities for Computer Workers, 1955-1967

Meredith Broussard. *Artificial Unintelligence: How Computers Misunderstand the World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2018).

- Chapter 6: People Problems
- Chapter 11: Third-Wave AI

June 30: Op-Ed #3 due by 5 PM through Blackboard as a Turnitin assignment.
