**History 2B: Social Knowledge and Social Power**

**TA:** Sam Shah  
**Office:** Bunche Hall 2155  
**Office Hours:** Monday 1:30-3:30  
**Email:** samjshah@ucla.edu  
**Mailbox:** TA mailroom, Bunche Hall 6272

**Introduction:** Welcome to History 2B! The discussion section is here to give us a chance to dive into the readings together, and to explore and challenge the major themes of the class. It is a place for you to ask questions, express your views, and engage with your classmates and their ideas.

**Readings:** In this course, we will be reading a lot of secondary sources. What we want to get from the readings is two-fold. First is to simply understand their content. Second is to critically analyze them. Secondary sources are works of interpretation. You should be able to answer the following for each paper you read:

1. What is the topic of the paper?
2. What is the question the paper is trying to answer? (Often times this is implicit – and you have to figure it out from the argument presented.)
3. What is the author’s proposed answer to that question – or in other words, what is the thesis of the paper?
4. What types of evidence did the author use to evidence his or her thesis – and similarly, what evidence did the author fail to use that might help/hurt his or her argument?
5. What framework or form of argumentation did the author use to evidence his or her thesis? (In other words, in what way does the author argue his or her thesis?)
6. What are the assumptions made in the paper?

And finally, from all this, draw your own conclusion about the paper. Do you agree with the author’s interpretation? Why – what about it made it a strong case? Or if not, why not?

Don’t be scared or intimidated if the text seems difficult or foreign! Reading as a scholar is a skill much like any other – and it takes practice to learn how to do it. Each week there will be a common set of readings posted on the class website – which everyone will read. **Please print out and bring your readings to section! In addition, each week you should find about 50 pages of additional reading on a related topic, read that, and be prepared to bring them up in discussion.** Also, a friendly caveat: there is a substantial amount of reading (and writing) required in this course. Remember to portion out enough time each week to get it done before section.

**Grading:** The course syllabus from Prof. Traweek provides the grading breakdown. Section accounts for 15% of your course grade – and is based on your section participation and attendance. I will be grading your essays and bibliographies. If you have any concerns about the grading system, please let me know.

Cheating and plagiarism will **not** be tolerated. Be careful to document and attribute all quotations and ideas that are not your own – and if you have questions, please ask. Also, late assignments without a documented excuse will **lose one letter grade** each day late – including Saturday and Sunday. In addition to turning in a hard copy, each assignment must be emailed to: uclahistory2b@gmail.com.

**Written Assignments:** There are a number of shorter assignments in this course.

*April 7:* a 1-page bibliography on the history of the social sciences/social thought [5%]
April 14: a 1-page analytic review on one of Prof. Traweek’s papers [10%]
April 28: a 2-page analytic review (more directions TBA) [10%]
May 12: a 2-page analytic review (more directions TBA) [10%]
May 26: a 2-page analytic review (more directions TBA) [10%]
June 2: a 1-page topic and bibliography for end-of-quarter paper (more directions TBA) [10%]
June 13: a 6-page end-of-quarter paper (more directions TBA) [30%]

To do a proper analytic review, you need to answer the 6 questions above in a clear and scholarly fashion. This review, then, requires clear writing (e.g. no contractions, your own thesis statement, no vagueness, proper grammar and punctuation, etc.) Analytic reviews are not summaries. (You should write them as if the audience read the paper a few months ago.)

Attendance and Participation: Regular attendance is required in this section. If you are unable to attend, let me know ahead of time, and be ready to explain why. All written assignment should be turned in even if you are absent.

Remember that this is a discussion section, not a lecture, so participation from every member is expected. Make comments, ask questions, join debates, whatever, but be involved! You will not receive a lower grade just for having a bad week, which happens to everyone, but if you continually add a little to the discussion, it will have a real effect on your final grade.

Lastly: If you have any questions, I am more than happy to meet with you during office hours or through appointment.

How do we know anything? What can we call “knowledge”? Do we take it on faith?

“Calvin and Hobbes” – Bill Watterson