

# New School Histories

ULEC2800, Fall 2019

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Tuesday, 4:00-5:15pm

Rm. 104, Univ. Center

When the New School for Social Research opened its doors a hundred years ago, it offered courses in the social sciences and public affairs – and a new vision of higher education. It was not a university; it did not offer degrees. The founders thought that people would come to the school for “no other purpose than to learn.” A century later, the New School has changed in almost every way. Design, the arts, a spirit of activism, and degree programs dominate. But the school continues to strive to offer disciplinary experimentation, political involvement, and a global lens that offers a critical perspective on higher education. In what ways have these values been realized (or not), and how? We construct answers to these questions by assembling a history of the school from scrapbooks of newspaper articles, memoirs, artwork, and interviews. The basis of the course are the academic and artistic works of The New School’s faculty and students since its establishment. We will also participate in university centenary activities throughout the semester.

## Learning Objectives

- Learn about archives, how to navigate them and build historical interpretations from sources in them.
- Learn various research methods, including archival investigation and interviews.
- Understand central issues of higher education over the last century and into the future.
- Write papers that convey analytical thinking, a command of readings, original ideas, and accurate acknowledgement of sources.
- Synthesize your understanding of the past of the university with its present and future by conceiving and producing an agenda for the new president.

## Readings and Materials

Course materials are available in Canvas under the Resources tab and on reserve, where applicable. The scrapbooks (and a great deal of other fascinating material--catalogs, audio recordings of lectures, etc.) can be accessed through the [archives](#) of the university (digital collections [here](#)). If you need to contact the archives directly, email [archivist@newschool.edu](mailto:archivist@newschool.edu).

There are three books on the history of the New School that you may consult on reserve under our class name at the List Library in the 16th St. building:

Friedlander, *A Light in Dark Times: The New School for Social Research and Its University in Exile* (2019)

Rutkoff and Scott, *New School: A History of the New School for Social Research* (1986)

Krohn, *Intellectuals in Exile: Refugee Scholars and the New School for Social Research* (1993)

Also check out the material assembled on the New School Histories [website](#), including biographies and readings, as well as [essays](#) in *Public Seminar*.

## Assignments

Weekly Questions (10%): Each week, come up with three questions based on the week's readings, ongoing discussion, and previous lectures, and post in Canvas discussion section by 3pm on Tuesday (i.e., before the week's lecture).

Interpreting the Scrapbooks (20%): Each student will be assigned a part of a scrapbook to browse through. Think about what happened at the school at that time; identify important people, events, or audiences and write 5 double-spaced pages synthesizing what you find. Think about these questions: If this was the only item you had to understand the school, what could you say about it? What does the scrapbook reveal that we might not know otherwise about the school? How do these primary sources square with the later interpretations you've read and we've discussed? Your paper should be a history of the early years of the school, taking into account the scrapbook but also other readings, what we've discussed in class, etc.

Festival of the New Review (20%): Work with one other person in your discussion section to write a review of four separate events during the Festival of the New. Consider the reviews of programs in the scrapbooks and think about what you observed, provide context for and interpretation of the event, or evaluate them. Together write one 5-page paper that details what the events tell us about the state of the school right now.

Interviews (20%): Individually, conduct interviews of two people connected to the school from different perspectives (students, alums, staff, faculty members). Ask them what they know about the past of the New School and what is necessary for its future. Write a 5-page summary and analysis of your interviews, considering what they knew or didn't know about the school's past and how that informed their ideas about its future.

Agenda for a New President (30%): Final projects will build upon the knowledge we gain throughout the course on the New School and higher education in general. Teams will collaborate on writing and presenting an account of the past and a vision for the new president that identifies the mission, strengths, and directions that the university should take in its second century. Each group will put together a 5-min. presentation and a 10-page paper. The presentations will take place the final week of class in a town hall open to the entire university.

## Class Schedule

Week 1	Introduction
Aug 27	Visit Exhibition, "In the Historical Present"
Week 2	Democracy and Education
Sept 3	Readings: Gary Gutting, "What is College For?," <i>New York Times</i> (2011) John Dewey, <i>Democracy and Education</i> (1916): chs. 4, 11 Herbert Croly, "A School of Social Research," <i>The New Republic</i> (1918) Proposal for an Independent School of Social Science (1918) <u>Assignment Due in Discussion</u> : Find a New School item new to you and formulate a question about the history of the school from that item.
Week 3	The New History and a New School
Sept 10	Readings: "1919" from an unpublished history of The New School (1959) Elsie Clews Parsons, <i>Social Rule: A Study of the Will to Power</i> (1916): chs. 1, 3

“Junior League Split by Radicalism,” Scrapbook #1 (1919)

On Histories of the New School [website](#) read bios of [Clara Mayer](#), [Emily James Smith Putnam](#), [Dorothy Payne Whitney Straight Elmhirst](#), [Elsie Clews Parsons](#), and [Mary Urban](#)

Lecture: Elena Gleed

Discussion: choose scrapbook sections for paper and presentation in Week 5

Week 4  
Sept 17

Early Years at Parsons and Mannes

Readings: Frank Alvah Parsons, “Art in Advertising,” *Art and Progress* (1911)

Frank Alvah Parsons, *Art: Its Principles and Practice as Applied to Modern Life* (1917):  
Intro

Molly Rottman, [What We Know About Parsons School of Design’s Namesake](#), *Public Seminar* (January 2019)

Jessica Key, [bios on David Mannes](#) and [Clara Mannes](#)

Browse through the [first course catalog](#) of Mannes (1916)

Week 5  
Sept 24

Arts as Social Research--**meet in the Orozco Room, 66 W. 12th St., 7th floor**

Readings: Aaron Copland, “From Composer to Interpreter to Listener,” from *What to Listen for in Music* (1939)

Alvin Johnson, “Notes On The New School Murals” (1945?)

Jennifer Wilson, [Dynamic Symmetry: A Mathematical Structure in New School History](#), *Public Seminar* (May 2019)

*Offense + Dissent* (2014): [Red Scare, Yellow Curtain](#)

Assignment Due in Discussion: Interpreting the Scrapbooks Paper

Week 6  
Oct 1

**FESTIVAL OF THE NEW**

Lecture open to public; no meetings of discussion sections

Listen: *New Histories*, Ep. 3: [Building Pirate Ships and Castles](#)

Assignment: Attend two other events of the festival and with another person write about the four separate events you attended.

Oct 8

NO CLASS--Yom Kippur

Week 7  
Oct 15

The University-in-Exile and Dramatic Workshop

Readings: Alvin Johnson, Foreword to first issue of *Social Research* (1934)

Judith Friedlander, [A Multi-Campus University in Exile](#), *Public Seminar* (February 2019)

Ira Katznelson, [Reflections on The New School’s Founding Moments, 1919 and 1933](#) *Social Research* (2009)

Mark Larrimore, [Are the Arts a Critical Facet of Social Research?](#), *Public Seminar* (November 2018)

Assignment Due in Discussion: Festival Review

Week 8  
Oct 22

Educating Adults

Readings: Correspondence between Hans Simons and Alvin Johnson (1953)

Julia Foulkes, [What Does It Mean to Educate Adults?](#), *Public Seminar* (Nov 2018)

Slide Deck, Claire McCardell, Parsons, and Uniquely “American” Fashion

Listen: *New Histories*, [Ep. 1: A Place to Go for Adult Values](#)

Lecture: Nate Hoe

- Week 9  
Oct 29 Strangers in the City  
Readings: Alfred Schütz, "The Stranger: An Essay in Social Psychology," *American Journal of Sociology* (1944)  
Anatole Broyard, *Kafka was the Rage: A Greenwich Village Memoir* (1997): chs. 1-4  
Erich Fromm, "Our Way of Life Makes Us Miserable," *Sat. Evening Post* (1964)  
Assignment Due: Final Project team formation
- Week 10  
Nov 5 Undergraduate Experiments (Parsons, Liberal Arts)  
Readings: J. Allan Tate, *Notes toward a Philosophy of Design Education* (1969)  
Joseph S. Lobenthal, "The Catabolism of a Student Revolt," *Journal of Higher Education* (1969)  
Mark Larrimore, [The New School's Long Road to a Four-Year College](#), *Public Seminar* (Sept 2019)
- Week 11  
Nov 12 Students' Perspectives  
Readings: "19 Students Seized in Occupation of the New School," *NYT* (1970)  
*Offense + Dissent* (2014): [My God! We're Losing a Great Country](#)  
"Evolution or Revolution? A Close Look at Parsons School of Design on its 75th Birthday," *Interior Design* (1971): 85-87, 94-95, 105  
Guest speaker: Anna Robinson Sweet, New School Archives  
Assignment Due in Discussion: Interview Paper
- Week 12  
Nov 19 Becoming a University: Matsunaga Affair + Mobilization  
Readings: Jonathan Fanton [speeches], "A Work in Progress" (Convocation, 1994),  
"Establishing a Network for Collective Influence" (Parsons Commencement, 1992), "The Matsunaga Exhibit and Freedom of Expression: Letter to the University Community" (1989)  
*Offense + Dissent* (2014): [The Matsunaga Affair: Is Racist Art Freedom of Expression](#)  
"Rethinking Europe in a Global Context" (1996)  
Eyal Press, "Nightmare on Twelfth Street," *Lingua Franca* (1997)  
Assignment Due: Outline of Final Project
- Week 13  
Nov 26 Gender Troubles  
Readings: Ann Snitow, "Refugees from Utopia" (2010)  
Arruzza, Fraser, & Bhattacharya, *Feminism for the 99%*: Intro (2019)  
Judy Pryor-Ramirez, [Nurturing Subversive Seeds: What the New School's Mobilization Taught Me](#), *Public Seminar* (March 2019)  
Listen *New Histories*, Ep. 2: [Allergies to Gender](#)  
Lecture: Cayla Clinkenbeard
- Week 14  
Dec 3 Performance and Design  
Readings: Tanya Kalmonovitch, [Tar Sands Songbook](#)  
[Parsons and Baltimore Symphony Orchestra Reinvent Orchestral Garments](#) (2018)

Michael McHugh, [Newschool.coop?: Envisioning a Cooperative University](#),  
*Public Seminar* (August 2018)

Position Description, New School President (2019)

“The New School’s Leader on Global Goals and What Lies Ahead,” *New York Times* (7 June 2019)

Assignment Due: Draft of Final Project

Week 15      Town Hall/Forum

Dec 10      Assignment Due: Final Project (group presentation and paper)

### **Class Policies**

Attendance: All students are required to attend the lecture and discussion sections each week. Your grade for the course as a whole will be lowered one step upon more than 2 absences of either lecture or discussion sections (i.e., 3 absences in either section of the class will result in a move from B to B-; 4 absences will result in another step downward from B- to C+). A total of more than 4 absences across the lecture and discussion sections will result in an automatic failure of the class.

Lateness: If you are more than ten minutes late to a class it will count as an absence. Late papers will not be accepted and no incompletes given.

Cell Phones + Laptops: Cell phone and laptop use is prohibited at all times in the classroom. Turn them OFF before class. Exceptions will be made to accommodate students with documentation.

Academic Honesty. Plagiarism -- the use of another person’s words or ideas in any academic work -- or any other form of academic dishonesty will result in serious academic penalties, from a failing grade in the class to expulsion from the university. For information on avoiding plagiarism through proper acknowledgements, including expectations for paraphrasing source material and forms of citation in research and writing, students should visit the University Learning Center.

Please note that students must receive prior permission from instructors to submit the same or substantially overlapping material for two different assignments. Submission of the same work for two assignments without prior permission is plagiarism.

### **Other Important Information**

Libraries. [The New School Library](#) offers frequent research workshops for students, the day, time, and location of which are found on the Library’s webpages. The library also provides one-on-one support for students who want additional assistance in conducting research.

University Learning Center. The [University Learning Center](#) (ULC) provides individual tutoring sessions in Adobe, ESL, Writing, Math, Economics, and Time Management. Sessions are interactive, with both tutor and student participating. Appointments can be scheduled on Starfish or you can stop by for a walk-in session. The ULC also offers several academic and skill-building workshops. The ULC is located on the 6th floor of 66 West 12th Street, 212.229.5121, [learningcenter@newschool.edu](mailto:learningcenter@newschool.edu).

Disabilities. In keeping with the university’s policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student requesting accommodations must contact [Student Disability Services](#), 63 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Rm 425, 212.229.5626, [studentdisability@newschool.edu](mailto:studentdisability@newschool.edu).