How to write your historiographical essay
Due Wednesday night, March 24, 2010 (mail it to your peer and to me as a DOC or PDF).

4-6 pages, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font

There are various ways of writing an essay of this kind. Do not look for samples online. Follow these instructions instead.

The essay will discuss only secondary sources and needs to include these elements:
1. One general theme that will eventually be part of your 20-25 page paper (like women in the homefront during World War II or the rodeo as cultural performance).
2. A minimum of four sub-themes directly related to the general theme (like women and financial concerns or women and the anguish of having a loved one fighting abroad).
3. A minimum of eight secondary sources in total (articles, chapters or books).
4. A minimum of four secondary sources per theme.
5. An introduction and a conclusion.
6. Footnotes. Learn how to insert footnotes with your word-processing program and use the format I indicated for the bibliography.
7. Of course, you need to paraphrase repeatedly in a paper of this kind, but you may quote text a maximum of one time per page (no more than two lines per quote). I prefer that you do not quote at all.

Use the following outlines (I included two versions of the same outline):

Version 1 (basic).
1. Introduction
   a. Topic of 20-25 page paper
   b. Theme of historiography
   c. Subthemes in historiography
   d. Topic sentence
2. Subtheme 1
   a. Description of subtheme.
   b. Author 1.
   c. Author 2
   d. Author 3
   e. Author 4 (etc.)
   f. Conclusion
3. Subtheme 2
4. Subtheme 3
5. Subtheme 4
6. Conclusion
   a. General reference to topic
   b. How these scholars help regarding theme
   c. How these scholars help you
   d. Connect to your 20-25 page paper.
Version 2 (elaborate).

1. Introduction
   a. Mention the topic of your 20-25 page paper (WWII interviews, our cultural understanding of the cowboy, etc). Write something like this: Movies, television programs, and x and y commonly portray the American cowboy as ________. These depictions often obscure the historical reality of the actual cowboys of THIS PLACE DURING THIS TIME. One must look at THESE PRIMARY SOURCES to compare myth and reality.
   b. Identify the general theme of your historiography by explaining why it is an important element of the topic of your 20-25 page paper.
   c. Mention how the general theme of your historiography fits within the larger theme of your paper. (Something like this: An important aspect of ______ is ______ because it _______.)
   d. Mention that scholars have looked at the general theme your historiography discusses and that, more specifically, they have focused on X-number of subthemes. Identify the subthemes without calling them “subthemes,” like this: They have focused their analysis on the following issues: the anguish of war, the burden of financial concerns, x, y, and z.
   e. Write a topic sentence. A paper of this kind should have a topic sentence that captures what scholars have highlighted. If your topic sentence immediately follows the previous mention of the subthemes, then it should look like this: Scholars who have studied X-GENERAL THEME have concluded that these issues ____________ (ARE WHAT? or ILLUSTRATE WHAT? Be specific) because they _______________ (REVEAL or DEMONSTRATE WHAT? about the general theme).

2. Subtheme 1 (Each subtheme may have one or two paragraphs, preferably one, but you cannot have two subthemes in one paragraph)
   a. Explain the importance of subtheme 1 within your general theme. For instance, why is anguish over a loved one at war an important part of the homefront experiences of women during World War II?
   b. Mention that scholars have analyzed this subtheme from various perspectives (refer to the perspectives: African American women, mothers, wives, or whatever the articles or chapters discuss).
   c. Write 1-3 sentences that describe what author 1 has looked at and what he or she argues. Name the author (first and last name) and the title of the article. Insert a full footnote (like this).  

   ![Footnote Example](image)

   The second and subsequent times that you refer to the same author use only the last name, and, in your footnotes, use only the last name and the page you are citing (like this).  

   ![Footnote Example](image)

   NOTE: you must write a footnote each time you quote or paraphrase any part of someone else’s work.
   d. Do the same with author 2.
   e. Do the same with author 3.
   f. Do the same with author 4 (etc.).
   g. Write a conclusion of what these authors conclude about this subtheme.

3. Do the same for subtheme 2.
4. Do the same for subtheme 3.
5. Do the same for subtheme 4 (etc).
6. Conclusion.
   a. Make some reference to the historical topic you have discussed.
   b. Discuss how these scholars help our understanding of the general theme and the subthemes.
   c. More importantly, how do they help you? Explain what questions or ideas you have as you approach the topic or you paper. Be as specific as you can. That is, it is very likely that the general theme of the historiography does not entirely connect to your topic. For instance, the historiography might be about women in the homefront and your topic could be Mexican women in the homefront. This is where you connect the two. What might be the similarities and differences?

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2 Stewart, 572.