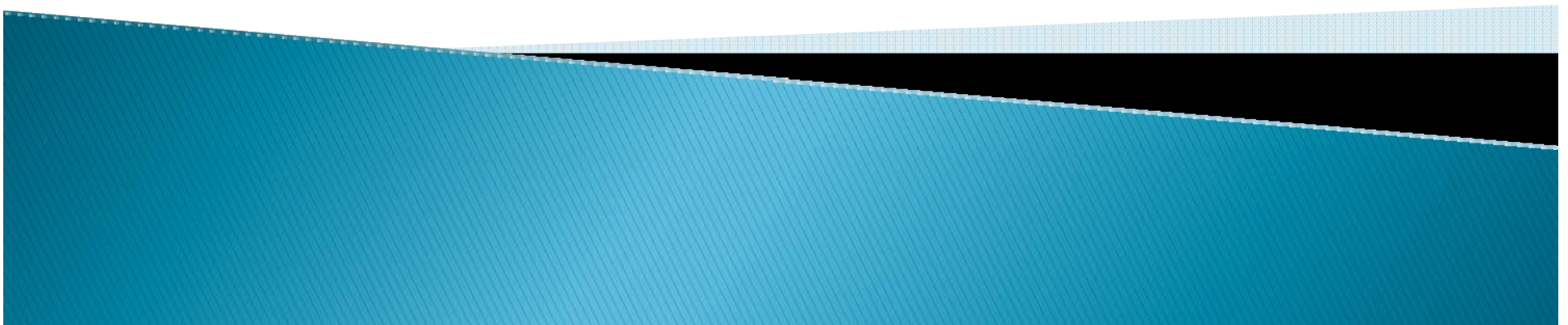


# Making History:

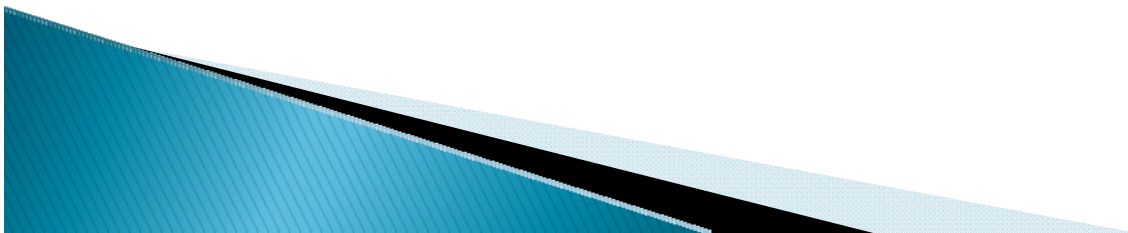
## Facilitating Student Engagement with Archival Materials

Keith Edward Beebe, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Church History  
Whitworth University  
Spokane, WA



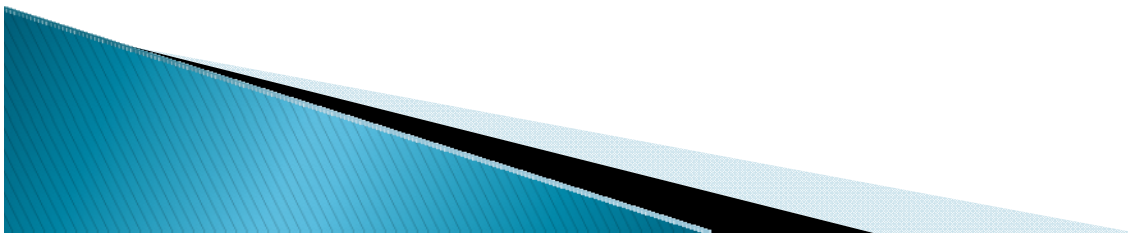
# TH-315 History of Christianity II: Christian Renewal Movements

- ▶ Fulfills Theology major requirement
- ▶ Modified seminar format (limited enrollment–20 students)
- ▶ Focus: Primary sources/research methods



# TH-315 History of Christianity II: Christian Renewal Movements

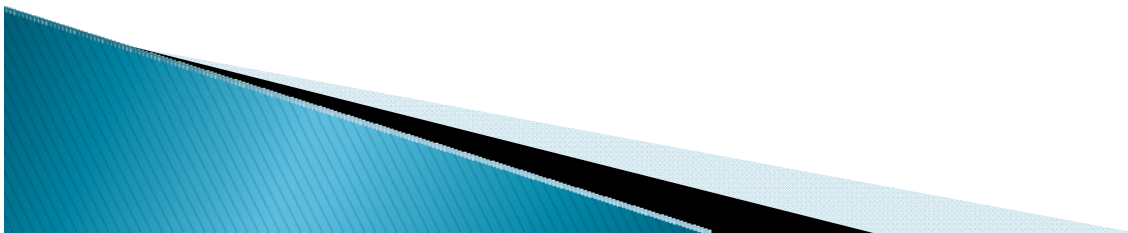
- ▶ 16<sup>th</sup> century – 21<sup>st</sup> century
  - Protestant Reformation
  - English & American Puritanism
  - German Pietism
  - 18<sup>th</sup> century “Great Awakening”/Methodism
  - 19<sup>th</sup> century 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> awakenings/“revivalism”
  - Pentecostalism/Holiness/charismatic movements
  - Mainline renewal movements
  - 20<sup>th</sup>–century evangelists
  - Campus movements/Jesus People



# Assignment #6: Archival research (Group presentation)

From syllabus:

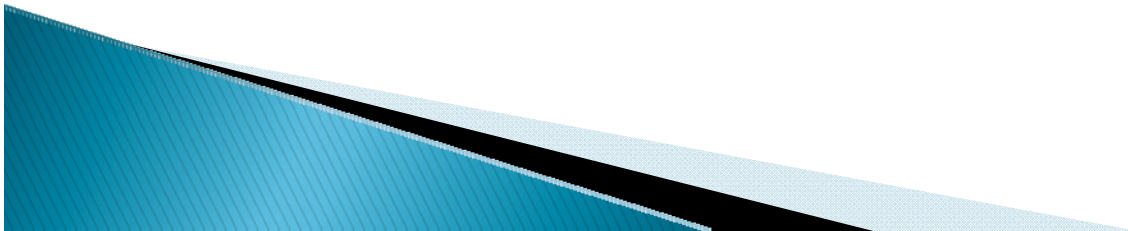
**The purpose of this assignment is to familiarize students with the methods used and issues involved in conducting research using archival materials.** In this assignment, students will work in groups of 2–3 people to research the ‘spiritual history’ of Whitworth College from its founding (1890) to today, focusing on the spiritual aspects of collegiate life at Whitworth and any periods of spiritual renewal that may be evident within the historical record. Each group will be assigned a different time period in the college’s history to research. In order to receive full credit for this assignment, each student will: 1) attend the one-hour “Conducting Archival Research” workshop (as scheduled in the syllabus), 2) contribute her/his research findings toward a group report to be presented in class, and 3) submit a one-page, single-spaced report of his/her role and specific assignment in the group, the specific materials the student consulted, and his/her individual research findings.



# Assignment #6: Archival research (Group presentation)

Specific goals for project:

- ▶ Accessible
- ▶ Collaborative
- ▶ Aggregative
- ▶ Comprehensive
- ▶ Evaluative



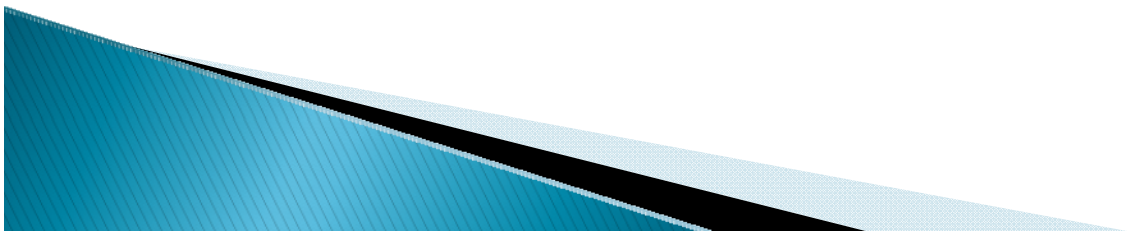
# Goal #1: Accessible

- ▶ Use of local archival materials
- ▶ Options considered:
  - Local histories of Spokane congregations
  - Nez Perce “Talmaks” revival “camp meetings” (1871–73→)
  - Spokane “Healing Rooms” (John G. Lake, 1915–20)
  - Whitworth University: spiritual history



# From syllabus:

The purpose of this assignment is to familiarize students with the methods used and issues involved in conducting research using archival materials. **In this assignment, students will work in groups of 2–3 people to research the ‘spiritual history’ of Whitworth College from its founding (1890) to today, focusing on the spiritual aspects of collegiate life at Whitworth and any periods of spiritual renewal that may be evident within the historical record.** Each group will be assigned a different time period in the college’s history to research. In order to receive full credit for this assignment, each student will: 1) attend the one-hour “Conducting Archival Research” workshop (as scheduled in the syllabus), 2) contribute her/his research findings toward a group report to be presented in class, and 3) submit a one-page, single-spaced report of his/her role and specific assignment in the group, the specific materials the student consulted, and his/her individual research findings.

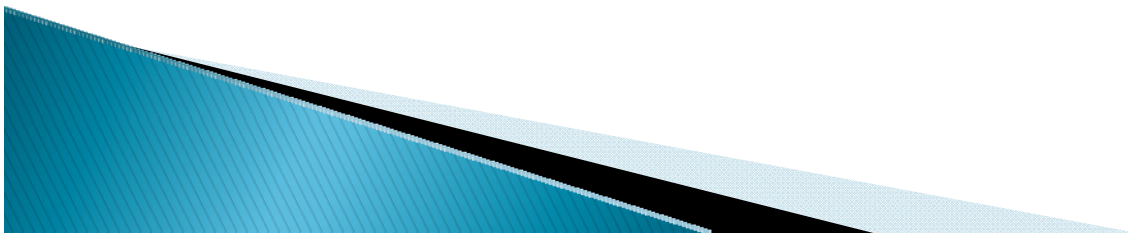


# Goal #1: Accessible

## Spiritual History of Whitworth

Familiarity with:

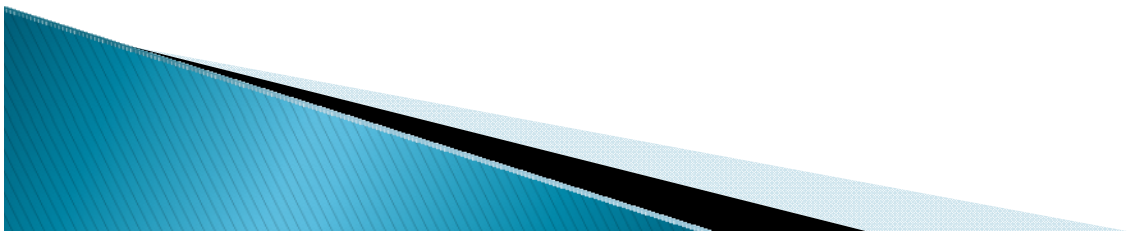
- ▶ Topic (immediate interest)
- ▶ Facilities (WU library & personnel)
- ▶ Materials
  - Yearbook
  - Whitworthian student newspaper
  - Catalogue



# Goal #2: Collaborative

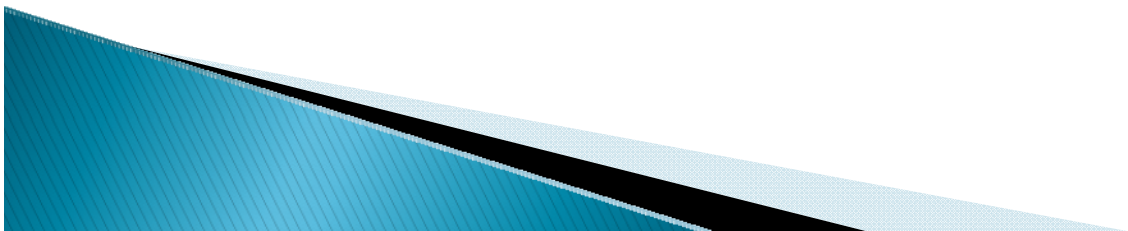
Between instructor and archivist

- ▶ Co-planning of project
- ▶ “Conducting Archival Research” session led by WU archivist
- ▶ On-site student assistance from archivist



# From syllabus:

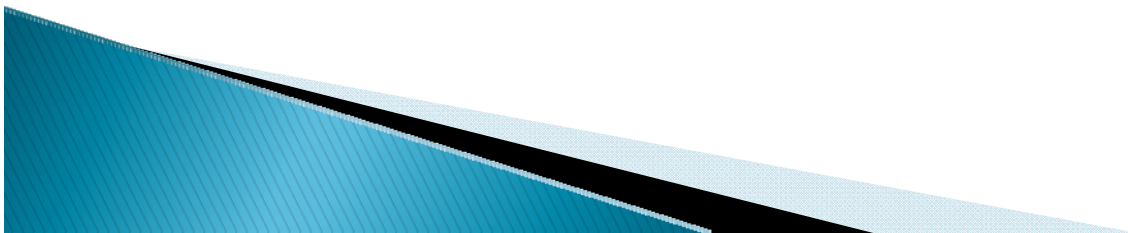
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# Goal #2: Collaborative

Between instructor and archivist

- ▶ Co-planning of project
- ▶ “Conducting Archival Research” session led by WU archivist
- ▶ On-site student assistance from archivist



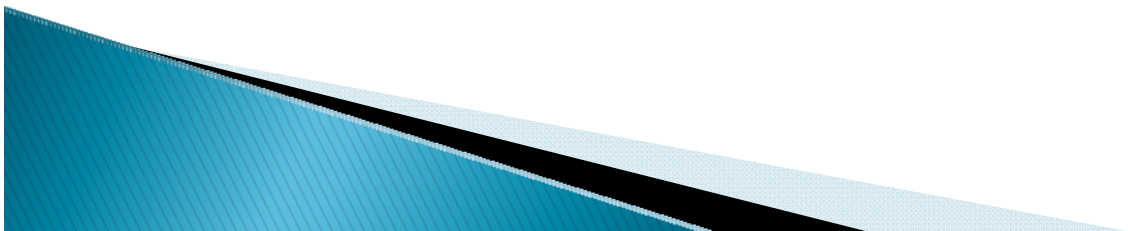
# Goal #2: Collaborative

Between students in class

- ▶ Class divided into research groups (2–3 persons each)
  - 1890–1920
  - 1920–1940
  - 1940–1960
  - 1960–1980
  - 1980–2005

Between students in research group

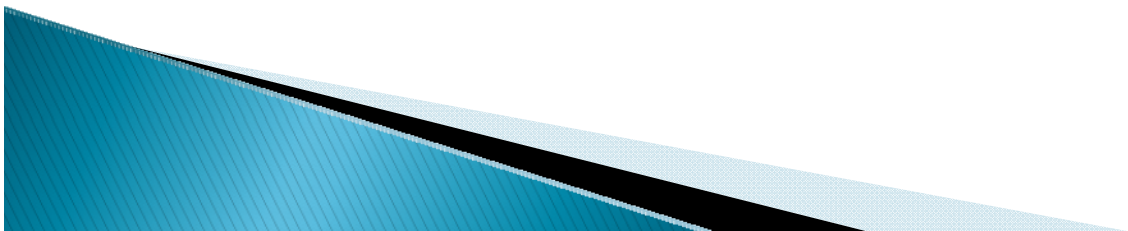
- ▶ Division of research duties (by source type, etc.)
- ▶ Mutual encouragement & accountability



# Goal #3: Aggregative

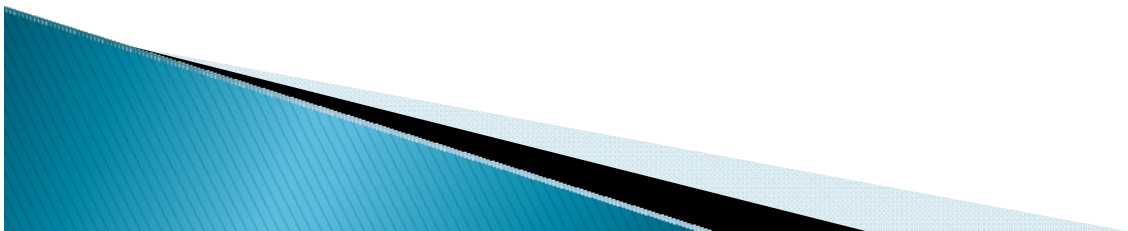
While each student must conduct independent research...

- ▶ Each student contributes to the narrative of the research group
- ▶ Each student/research group contributes to the narrative of the larger class
  - How?.....



# From syllabus:

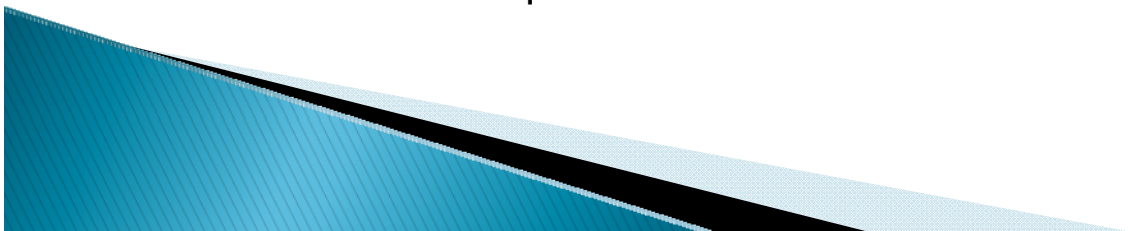
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# Research questions (from syllabus)

## *Research questions to be explored:*

- ▶ Describe the spiritual life at Whitworth College (in the classroom, or in extra-curricular activities/programs) during the period you researched.
- ▶ Were there any changes in the spiritual life at Whitworth during the period? Were there any new religious activities or groups established? Were there any changes to the established spiritual programs (chapel, etc.)?
- ▶ Was there any type of 'spiritual renewal' during this period (either among certain groups, programs, or campus-wide)?
- ▶ What spiritual questions or issues were students concerned with during this period?
- ▶ Did the college emphasize the relationship between faith and learning (in publications or curriculum)? Was there a connection between faith and learning in the classroom?
- ▶ What additional questions or issues arise from the research you conducted?



# Goal #4: Comprehensive

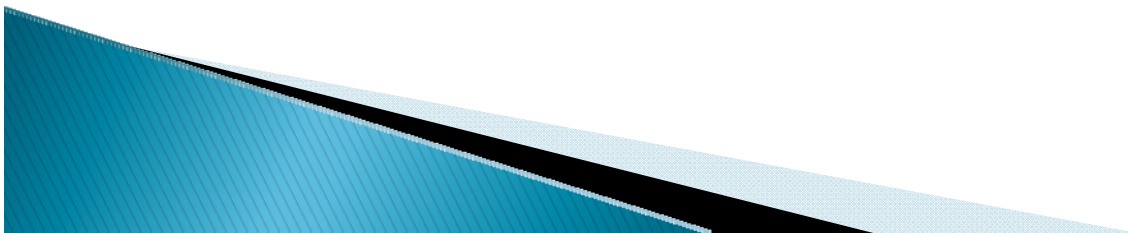
## Group reports & class timeline

- ▶ Students make connections within their assigned period
- ▶ Students see their assigned period within a larger historical context
- ▶ Students see the particulars of the research topic within the wider backdrop of its contemporary cultural/social setting



# Student observations

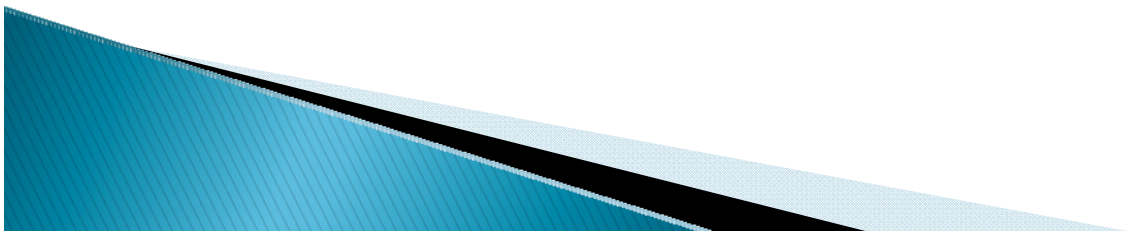
- ▶ Comparisons and contrasts between earlier periods and today
- ▶ Silence on reporting of religious activity during certain periods
- ▶ Influence of the college president on spiritual emphasis on campus (programs encouraged, faculty hires, etc.)



# Goal #5: Evaluative

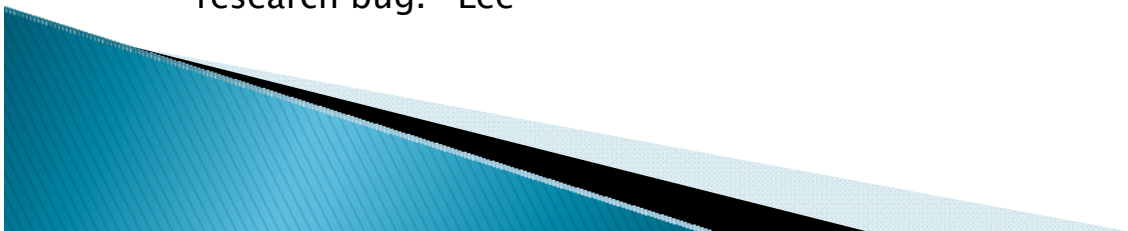
## Historical analysis:

- ▶ Students as interpreters of archival data
  - Draw independent conclusions
  - Formulate theories
  - Share findings
- ▶ Peer review: conclusions tested by informed classmates



# Student experience (in course evaluations)

- ▶ “The primary sources...I was skeptical at first, but it turned out they were fascinating!”
- ▶ “Looking at old documents and learning about the history of Whitworth were quite entertaining.”
- ▶ “I thought that the Whitworth assignment was really fun.”
- ▶ The library archive assignment was 🤔
- ▶ The Whitworth spiritual history didn't feel like it was as pertinent, but I really liked that one...”
- ▶ “Tracking Whitworth's spiritual history was impactful, but perhaps better suited for earlier in the semester”
- ▶ “A good idea, but I wish we could have polished it a bit more & talked with our groups more.”
- ▶ “I loved the class presentation on Whitworth College's spiritual life, and maybe we could've spent more time on this because it was interesting to see Whitworth's spiritual life through primary sources.”
- ▶ “I found this assignment to be completely fascinating and have undoubtedly been bit by the research bug.- Lee”



# Changes made to assignment based upon student feedback

- ▶ Increase point value of assignment
- ▶ Highlight the purpose for this assignment as they started working on it–

## *To familiarize students with basic work of the historian*

- An introduction to the use of primary and secondary source texts
- To introduce students to materials, tools, and methodologies for conducting historical research
- To familiarize students with issues related to the analysis and interpretation of historical events
- To foster student ability to develop and formulate independent conclusions

