

Historiography

-Mark Brilliant, UC Berkeley

What is the question (or questions) to which the work of historiography offers an answer?

Historians arrive at their projects in a number of ways. Sometimes they identify (or stumble upon) a curious or unusual set of circumstances or coming together of historical events. Other times, they are driven by more ordered concerns – a current issue or event whose historic lineage they would like to trace. Still other times, perhaps most of the time, they simply have an issue or an event from the past about which they'd like to know more. Starting points such as these, in turn, give rise to a research question to which historians propose to offer an answer.

1. Describe an action or an event that you would like to investigate more?
2. Why does this topic interest you? Is it a personal experience or do you just want to know more about that event?