

WHAT IS "REVISIONIST HISTORY?"

Insights from the event
"Revising the Cold War"
hosted by the Albert Lepage Center
for History in the Public Interest

Historical scholarship relies on revision.

Scholars of the Cold War continually revise through:

1 New Sources

The declassification of Cold War records provides new sources for scholars to examine.

2 Expanding Interpretations

The conflict between the the United States and Soviet Union influenced global events but did not fully determine them.

3 Increasing Diversity

Including accounts from different historical actors, such as communist refugees who influenced US foreign policy, presents a more complete picture of the Cold War period.

4 Opening up the Conversation

Involving political scientists, scientists, and people who lived through the Cold War enriches historians discussions about nuclear weapons and their legacy.

5 Shifting Scholarly Understandings

Rather than declaring the United States to have won the Cold War and the Soviet Union to have lost, it is also possible to see imperialism as the true victor.

6 An Evolving Process

With each revision of the scholarship, Cold War narratives make more space for the people and places between the superpowers.

"There are many different people who have varied perspectives on the Cold War period. Understanding all of that is important to the story."

- Manu Bhagavan, Professor of History and Human Rights, Hunter College