

Fall '06

HIS 300.01 – Seminar in Historical Analysis

M: 16:10-18:55

Office: SCI 267A

Office Hours: MW 2:15-3:30 or by appointment

Website: <http://bss.sfsu.edu/jrodriguez/> [select HIST 300 under “My Courses”]

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HSS 152

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The purpose of this course is to introduce students to historical research and analysis as well as different approaches and methodology to history. The course will be roughly divided into two parts. In the first half, we will be learning and discussing methods for gathering, understanding, and synthesizing historical data as well as the mechanics of writing good history papers. In the second half, we are going to be focusing on historians in action by looking at some examples of methodological approaches.

### Books

Natalie Z. Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Harvard, 1984)

Karen Dubinsky, *The Second Greatest Disappointment: Honeymooning and Tourism at Niagara Falls* (Rutgers, 1999)

Richard Marius, *A Short Guide to Writing about History* (Longman, 1998)

Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* (Chicago, 1996)

Additional Sources are available on Electronic Reserve – Password “university” [Case Sensitive]

### Grades

Paper 1 – Possible Research Topics: 5%

Paper 2 – Proof of Completion of OASIS: 5%

Paper 3 – Abstract and Preliminary Bibliography: 10%

Paper 4 – Brief Bibliographic Essay on at least 3 of your secondary sources: 10%

Paper 5 – Book Review: 15%

Paper 6 – First Draft of Research Paper: 10%

Paper 7 – Critique of another student’s paper: 5%

Paper 8 – Research Paper: 30%

Class Participation – 10%

### Assignments

Paper 1: Turn in a brief description of two possible topics that you would like to write on—each description should be about a paragraph where you provide a short outline of the problem and some of the issues you are going to explore. **Due 9/18.**

Paper 2: Complete Library University requirement (OASIS) and submit proof (information available at [http://www.library.sfsu.edu/instruction/research\\_skills.html](http://www.library.sfsu.edu/instruction/research_skills.html)). Print out proof from MySFSU and turn in at the beginning of class. **Due 10/2.**

Paper 3: Select one of the two topics from Paper 1 and develop an abstract for it. The abstract describes your project in more detail as well as providing a working thesis. Also include a working bibliography with at least 6 primary sources and 6 secondary sources. The bibliographical sources should be relevant to your topic and part of your grade will be based on their quality. Additionally, at least 2 of your secondary sources must be articles from academic journals; you must attach the first page of the articles with the abstract. The abstract should be about half a page plus the bibliography. **Due 10/9.**

Paper 4: Brief Bibliographic Essay on 3 of your secondary sources. This should be a 2-3 page discussion on the main arguments proposed by 3 of the secondary sources that you are planning on using. It will be a mini-historiographical essay, based on the instructions provided by the chapter from Brundage. You should then be able to incorporate this material into your final paper. **Due 10/23.**

Paper 5: Book Review. The Review should be a minimum of 3 full pages and no more than 4. Select one of the books that we are discussing in class (Davis or Dubinsky) and write a critical review of the author's work where you evaluate the following:

- a. What is the author's thesis? Provide a concise summary of the argument.
- b. Provide a summary of the book. This does not need to include every single detail—just the major points. Here you should also discuss questions the author is asking, source material he or she is using, and other information you consider relevant. It is important that you convey to me that you have understood the book.
- c. Critique the work. Does the author succeed in what he or she is trying to accomplish? Are there problems with the argument or with the way it is presented? Is the book well-written or is it dull? This is the part of the review where your critical thinking skills will be on display. Make sure they are evident in your finished assignment.

The Book Review should not be a series of answers to the questions posed above, but a well-written and stimulating essay where the answers are part of the narrative. If you are unsure on how to do this, consult Marius, Appendix B, for more on how to write a book review. You can also consult reviews written by professional historians in any major academic journal. **Due the day we discuss the book.**

Paper 6: First Draft of Research Paper. This should be a first draft of your paper including at least 5 fully written pages. The idea is to make sure that your thesis is developing correctly; that your source material is relevant; that you are using pertinent secondary literature; and that your grammar and mechanics are acceptable. You will bring two copies to class. One, I will grade. The second will be commented on and proofread by one of your classmates. This paper cannot be late. If it is, you automatically forfeit paper 7. **Due 11/6.**

Paper 7: You will go over someone else's paper 6, proofreading it, making comments and corrections along the way. In the last page, you will provide a paragraph worth of comments and make sure to put your name. When you have finished, photocopy the paper. On the due date, turn in the original and the photocopy. **Due Thursday, Nov. 9.**

Paper 8: Research Paper. Further details during class discussions and available on the website. **Due 12/11.**

**Late papers will be accepted up to one week after they are due. All late papers will be penalized 5% for each day they are late.**

### **General Writing Guidelines**

All papers should be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, with one-inch margins all around. The papers should conform to the page requirements. You should use footnotes (not endnotes) when appropriate, include page numbers and the paper should be free of spelling and grammatical mistakes. It is very important that you stick to the page limits. If you need more space than allotted for the research paper, you must see me and explain why. Bad writing will affect your grade.

### **Class Participation**

Class participation makes up 10% of your grade. It is measured by your comments in class discussions. I expect everyone to show up having read the assignments and ready to speak up. If you are fatally shy or believe that you cannot make useful comments, now is the time to get over it. Do not risk your grade by not speaking up.

### **Exams**

At this time, I do not have any exams planned and it is up to you that we keep it that way. As long as I see that people are keeping up with the readings and actively participating in the class discussions there will be no need for an exam. If you stop doing the assigned readings or discussion drops off, we will be having a final on Monday, Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 P. M. It will cover all of the readings for the semester.

### **Readings and Weekly Discussion Topics**

#### **Week 1 (8/28)**

##### Class Introduction

Thinking Assignment: Begin thinking about possible topics on which you would like to do your research paper. Come up with at least two topics.

#### **Week 2 (9/11)**

##### The Nature of History

Eric Foner, "Preface" in *Who owns History? Rethinking the Past in a Changing World* (Hill and Wang, 2002) [e-reserve]

John Tosh, "The Uses of History" in *The Pursuit of History* (Longman, 2002) 26-53 [e-reserve]

**Week 3 (9/18)**

Sources, Historiography, and Planning your Essay

John Tosh, "Using the Sources" in *The Pursuit of History* (Longman, 2002) 83-107 [e-reserve]

Marius, Introduction, chs. 1 – 2

Martha Hanna, "A Republic of Letters: The Epistolary Tradition in France during World War I" in *American Historical Review* 108 (2003) 1338-1343 [e-reserve]

**Paper 1 Due**

**Week 4 (9/25)**

Writing the History Essay

Marius, chs. 3 – 5

Anthony Brundage, "Exploring Changing Interpretations: The Historiographic Essay" in *Going to the Sources: A Guide to Historical Research and Writing* (Harlan Davidson, 2002) 48-67

Packet of Sample Introductions

**Week 5 (10/2)**

Using the Library – Session at the Library

Meet in LIB 426A

**Paper 2 Due.**

**Week 6 (10/9)**

Polishing and Editing

Marius, chs. 6 – 8

Packet of Sample Book Reviews

**Paper 3 Due**

**Week 7 (10/16)**

Individual Meetings w/ Professor

**Week 8 (10/23)**

Approaches – Biography

Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*

**Paper 4 Due**

**Week 9 (10/30)**

Approaches – Microhistory and Psychohistory

Silvano Cavazza, "Double Death: Resurrection and Baptism in a Seventeenth Century Rite" in Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero, eds. *History from Crime* (Baltimore, 1994) 1-31

John Demos, *Entertaining Satan: Witchcraft and the Culture of Early New England* (Oxford, 1982) 97-131 [e-reserve]

Discussion Document: *The Possession of Elizabeth Knapp* [online]

#### **Week 10 (11/6)**

##### Approaches – Social History

Robert Darnton, "Workers Revolt: The Great Cat Massacre of the Rue Saint-Séverin" in *The Great Cat Massacre and other Episodes in French Cultural History* (Vintage Books, 1985) 75-106 [e-reserve]

Louis S. Warren, "Buffalo Bill Meets Dracula: William F. Cody, Bram Stoker and the Frontiers of Racial Decay" in *American Historical Review* 107 (2002) 1124-1157

Discussion Document: *The Martyrdom of St. Perpetua* [online]

**Paper 6 Due**

**Paper 7 Due Thursday, 11/09 in my office before 4:00 P.M.**

#### **Week 11 (11/13)**

Individual Meetings with Professor to Discuss First Drafts.

#### **Week 12 (11/20)**

NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

#### **Week 13 (11/27)**

##### Approaches – Gender and Sexuality

Dubinsky, *The Second Greatest Disappointment*

#### **Week 14 (12/4)**

##### Approaches – Anthropology and Archaeology

James C. Scott, "Small arms fire in the class war" in *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, 1985) 1-27

Roberta Gilchrist, "Christian Bodies and Souls: The Archaeology of Life and Death in Later Medieval Hospitals" in Steven Bassett, ed. *Death in Towns: Urban Responses to the Dying and the Dead, 100-1600* (London, 1992) 101-118

Discussion Document: Virginia Runaways: Runaway Slave Advertisements [online]

#### **Week 15 (12/11)**

##### Class Wrap-up

**Paper 8 Due**