

History 300.05 Seminar in Historical Analysis

Fall 2006

Prof. Waldrep

Thursday, 4:10-6:55 in HSS155

<http://bss.sfsu.edu/waldrep/>

Office Hours:

2:00-4 P.M. on Thursday in Sci225 and by appointment. E-mail

cwaldrep@sfsu.edu.

Objectives:

This class differs from most history classes. In this class, students will focus on the work of historians: research, analysis, and writing. Students will locate and analyze primary sources, critique the work of other historians (including student-historians), and present their own work, both orally and in writing.

Texts:

Gilderhus, *History and Historians*; Turabian, *Manual for Writers*; Rciahr Marius and Melvin Page, *A Short Guide to Writing About History*; Maria Lucia Pallares-Burke, *The New History: Confessions and Conversations*.

Requirements:

Papers should be turned in on the day they are due. Papers still missing on November 30 will be graded as zero and those students should not expect to turn in a final paper. If I am not in my office, submit late papers in the history department by placing the paper in my mailbox. Late papers cannot receive a grade higher than "B."

Please understand that the final research paper grade covers not just the final paper itself, due during final exam week, but the whole process involved in writing the papers. Papers turned in by students who have not participated in the review process will not be graded or accepted.

Never cite an encyclopedia – especially online encyclopedias – as a sources. Online sources should not be used unless they can be cited as though they were not online sources.

Calculation of final grade:

Short papers: 40%

Class participation: 10%

Research paper process: 40%

Final exam: 10%

Schedule of Classes

August 31: Introduction to the class: Popular history versus academic history. Historical consciousness.

September 7: Discussion of Gilderhus, *History and Historians*; Marius and Page, *Short Guide*, 1-28.

September 14: For this class, read Pallares-Burke, *The New History: Confessions and Conversations*. For this class bring a single paper where you have written sentences summarizing each author's historical method, one sentence for each author.

Reading: Marius and Page, *Short Guide*, 29-74.

September 21: For this class, choose one of the authors from Pallares-Burke and write a five-page analysis of that author's method of doing history. Do not choose Jack Goody as your author. Oral presentation.

September 28: For this class read a book written by the author you chose for the last assignment. Write a five-page analysis that explains whether that author really followed the method claimed in Pallares-Burke. Meet in the library, room 426A. Written assignment due October 5.

Reading: Marius and Page, *Short Guide*, 75-98.

October 5: Government documents.

Meet on the fifth floor of the library. You will be assigned a small research assignment. Write your results in a brief paper and turn in October 12.

Reading: Marius and Page, *Short Guide*, 99-178.

October 12: Archives. We will be completing a written assignment based on Ginzburg's slow-reading method.

Meet at the Labor Archives.

Reading: Carlo Ginzburg, "Latitude, Slaves, and the Bible: An Experiment in Microhistory," *Critical Inquiry* 31 (Spring 2005): 665-683.

October 19: Building library skills. Read the article placed on e-reserve for this assignment. What can you find out about the author? Locate book reviews of books written by the author. Search computer databases for articles or books that might help you analyze this article. Write your findings in a brief paper. Briefly describe what you learned, using footnotes to indicate sources consulted. Follow Turabian.

October 26:

Selecting a topic: Meet individually with Prof. Waldrep in Sci225. Have two or three possible topics in mind before the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is to nail down a research topic. It is important that your topic be easily searchable with available resources. You should not

spend a large amount of time locating sources; most of the work should be directed to analyzing the sources, not finding them.

After this meeting, you should be ready to begin work on your brief research paper in earnest. Investigate libraries and archives appropriate to your topic.

November 2: Book review of a book related to your topic. These reviews should be submitted to *Ex Post Facto*, the SFSU history journal, but they should also serve your paper project. Find an academic book, published in this century, that you can agree or disagree with when writing your paper. Three pages plus an oral presentation. Books reviewed must have a copyright no later than 2000.

Readings: Marius and Page, *Short Guide*, 210-222.

November 9: Writing an introduction.

The first two pages of your paper, including the introduction, are due today.

Your introduction must state your topic and show its importance; summarize what other historians have said about your subject; and state your thesis.

Readings: David W. Blight, "For Something Beyond the Battlefield': Frederick Douglass and the Struggle for the Memory of the Civil War," *Journal of American History* 75 (1989): 1156-1178; Hendrik Hartog, "Lawyering, Husbands' Rights, and the 'Unwritten Law' in Nineteenth Century America," *Journal of American History* 84 (1997): 67-96; Christopher Waldrep, "The Making of a Border State Society: James McGready, the Great Revival, and the Prosecution of Profanity in Kentucky," *American Historical Review*, 99 (June 1994): 767-784. All available on line.

No class November 16 or 23.

November 30: The first five pages are due today. Small group critiques.

December 7 and 14: Presentation and critique of research findings. The final paper is due final exam day and should not go beyond twelve pages. This is a short paper.

Your oral presentation must be carefully organized and rehearsed. Practice by actually reading aloud what you plan to say in class.

After the oral presentations, student critics will make oral comments on the papers delivered. Criticism must be constructive. Plan to talk for about ten minutes and turn in a five page critique at the end of class. These critiques should identify the subject covered and the thesis. Summarize the evidence and assess its effectiveness. Is the paper well organized? Do the conclusions follow the evidence? Critics should also provide questions for the authors to consider. Make suggestions for improving the papers. Provide a copy of the written critique to both the author and instructor.

There will be a final exam. It will be posted at bss.sfsu.edu/Waldrep.

