

George Washington University  
History 198.10  
Readings for the History Major

Spring 2005

Richard Stott  
316 Phillips Hall  
202-994-8154  
rstott@gwu.edu

Office Hours:  
Monday 11-1,  
Wednesday 12-2  
and by appointment

The focus of this course is on historiography, or the history of historical writing. The readings will trace the evolution of historical writing from the Greeks to the present. The course will pay particular attention to twentieth-century historiography and current debates over its direction. It is a seminar and each student is responsible for the following:

1. **Attendance.** You must attend class each week. If an absence is unavoidable, you must submit a three-page written review of the general reading for the week.
2. **Participation.** You are expected to come to class having done the reading and thought about it. To encourage discussion, each student will be asked to bring a written question to class that I will read.
3. **Special Reports.** Each student will do a four page written review of one of the books listed under "Reports." The student doing the report will also make an oral presentation to the class.
4. **Quizzes.** There will be at least two quizzes during the semester on that week's reading.
5. **Final Paper.** Pick a historian or subject and read three additional books on it. I will be happy to help you choose the historian or subject and the book. Then write a twelve page review essay analyzing the work in context and in depth. The essay should contain biographical information about the author, a synopsis of the work within the context of his or her scholarly career, summaries from reviews and your own assessment. A two-page paper proposal is due on February 16. The first page of the proposal should explain your topic and why you have chosen to write about it, the second the sources you will use. Optional drafts will be accepted on April 13. The

paper is due May 6.

**Grading.** Grading will be based on class participation, including attendance, discussion, your questions and quizzes (50%), the book report (10%) and the twelve page final paper (40%). There are no exams.

**Course Website:** The course website is on *Blackboard*.

**The following books are available for purchase at the bookstore:**

Portable Greek Historians, M. Finley (ed.)

Suetonius, The Twelve Caesars, R. Graves (trans), M. Grant (ed.)

Asser, Alfred the Great

The Vinland Sagas, ed. Magnus Magnusson

Edward Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire

Francis Parkman, Montcalm and Wolfe

Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto

Rudolph Binion, Hitler Among the Germans

Natalie Zemon Davis, Return of Martin Guerre

Edward Said, Orientalism

Michel Foucault, History of Sexuality, Vol 1. - Introduction

**Suggestions for reading the assignments**

Here are some questions to guide you in your reading:

1. The influence of background of the historian and its influence on his or her writing? Pertinent details about social status, education and political background should be considered as they relate to writing history.

2. What is the author's purpose in writing history? Does the writer believe readers can learn lessons from the past? What audience did the historian have in mind?

3. What factors seem to have influenced the author's choice of a subject? What emphasis did the writer place on political, military, economic, social, cultural aspects of history? What seems most interesting and important to the author? What is left out?

5. What kinds of evidence did the author use? (e.g, official printed documents, letters, newspapers, memoirs, oral history, archeological evidence, etc.) How does the historian evaluate or authenticate the sources that are used?

6. What is the author's view of causation? Does the historian

believe in progress, retrogression? Is history linear, cyclical?

7. What is the author's concept of human nature? Does the writer believe that humans control their own destiny, or are they in the grip of forces larger than themselves? Does the author adhere to the "great man" theory of history?

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Topics and Assignments</b>  |
|-------------|--|
| January 19  | Topic: Introduction  |
| January 26  | Topic: Ancient History - Greek<br>Reading: Herodotus, Books 1, 2, 7, 8 in <u>Portable Greek Historians</u> , pp. 27-215  |
| February 2  | Topic: Ancient History - Greek<br>Reading: Thucydides, "History of the Peloponnesian War," in <u>Portable Greek Historians</u> , pp. 217-278, 298-379<br>Reports: Polybius, <u>The Histories</u> , trans. Mortimer Chambers, ed. E. Badian; Xenophon, <u>Anabasis</u> , trans. Carleton Brownson   |
| February 9  | Topic: Ancient History - Roman<br>Reading: Suetonius, <u>Twelve Ceasars</u> , pp. 1-107, 213-248<br>Reports: Julius Caesar, <u>The Civil Wars</u> ; Livy, <u>The History of Rome and Italy</u> , trans. and ed. by Betty Radice; Tacitus, <u>Annals of Imperial Rome</u><br>Josephus, <u>The Jewish War</u> ; Plutarch, <u>Makers of Imperial Rome</u> |
| February 16 | Topic: Medieval History<br>Reading: Asser, <u>Alfred the Great</u> , pp., 9-110<br>Reports: The Venerable Bede, <u>Ecclesiastical History of England</u> ; Geoffrey of Monmouth, <u>History of the Kings of Britain</u> ;<br><b>Paper Proposal Due</b>   |
| February 23 | Topic: Medieval History<br>Reading: <u>Vinland Sagas</u><br>Reports: <u>Self and Society in Medieval France: The Memoirs of Abbot Guibert of Nogent</u> , ed. By John F. Benton; <u>Song of Roland</u> ; Geoffrey de Villehardouin, "The Life of St. Louis," pp. 163-  |

353 in Villehardouin and Joinville, Chronicles of the Crusades; Arab Histories of the Crusades; ed. Francesco Gabrieli

March 2            Topic: Enlightenment and Romantic History  
Reading: Edward Gibbon, Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire, chs. 1-3, 15  
Reports: Voltaire, The Age of Louis XIV;  
Machiavelli, History of Florence and the Affairs of Italy, ed. Felix Gilbert, or Florentine Histories, trans. and ed. Harvey Mansfield;  
Francis Bacon, Reign of King Henry the Seventh;  
Bernal Diaz del Castillo, The Discovery and Conquest of Mexico

March 9            Topic: Enlightenment and Romantic History  
Reading: Francis Parkman, Montcalm and Wolfe, Chs. 1, 11, 14-15, 20, 24-25, 27-28, 32  
Reports: William Prescott, The Conquest of Mexico or The Conquest of Peru; George Bancroft, History of the United States, pick a volume or use Russel Nye's one-volume abridgement; John Lothrop Motley, Rise of the Dutch Republic; Thomas Macaulay, The History of England, ed. H. R. Trevor-Roper  
Thomas Carlyle, History of the French Revolution

March 16            **No Class - Spring Break**

March 23            Topic: Marxist History  
Reading: Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto, entire  
Reports: Eric Hobsbawm, The Age of Empire, 1875-1914; Eric Hobsbawm, The Age of Extremes, 1914-1991; Albert Soboul, A Short History of the French Revolution, 1787-1799; Marcus Rediker, Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea

March 30            Topic: Psychohistory  
Reading: Rudolph Binion, Hitler Among the Germans  
Reports: Erik Erikson, Young Man Luther; Erik Erikson, Ghandi's Truth; George B. Fogie, Patricide in the House Divided; Sigmund Freud and William C. Bullitt, Thomas Woodrow Wilson

April 6            Topic: Microhistory

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Topics and Assignments</b>  |
|-------------|--|
|             | Reading: Natalie Zemon Davis, <u>The Return of Martin Guerre</u> , entire<br>Reports: Carlo Ginzberg, <u>The Cheese and the Worms</u> ; John Demos, <u>Unredeemed Captive</u> ; Laura Thatcher Ulrich, <u>A Midwife's Tale</u>   |
| April 13    | Topic: Cultural Studies<br>Reading: Edward Said, <u>Orientalism</u><br>Reports: Paul Gilroy, <u>Black Atlantic</u> ; W. T. Lhammon, <u>Raising Cain: Black Face Performance from Jim Crow to Hip Hop</u> ; Richard Slotkin, <u>Gunfighter Nation</u> ; Partha Chatterjee, <u>A Princely Imposter?</u><br><b>Optional drafts due</b>  |
| April 20    | Topic: History as Discourse<br>Reading: Michel Foucault, <u>History of Sexuality</u> , Vol 1. - Introduction<br>Reports: Michel Foucault, <u>Discipline and Punish</u> , Judith Walkowitz, <u>City of Dreadful Delight</u> ;   |
| April 27    | Topic: History as Fiction<br>Reading: Hayden White, "The Fictions of Factual Representation," in White, <u>Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism</u> , pp. 121-134; Edmund Morris, "Celluloid Commandos," Ch. 14 in <u>Dutch</u><br><b>Both on Blackboard</b><br>Reports: John Demos, <u>The Unredeemed Captive</u> ; Simon Schama, <u>Dead Certainties</u> ; Richard Rosenfeld, <u>American Aurora</u> |

**Final Papers due in the History Department Office - May 6 -- 4:00 p.m.**