

WORLDS OF INQUIRY HISTORY 501

Fridays 9:00-11:40
Spring Semester, 2019
Rush Rhees 362

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Office Hours (in Rush Rhees 452):

Tuesday, Wednesday 1-2pm, and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce students to the practice of history by highlighting the scholarship of several University of Rochester History Department faculty members. The structure of the course derives in part from the division of faculty interests into three “spheres of inquiry”: the world of nations (defined on our website as emphasizing “the complications of government, nationalism, war, and power”), the world of goods (“commerce and trade, the supporting institutions and the consequence of various modes of productions and consumption”), and the world of knowledge (“which focuses on the production and uses of ideas”). This semester, our subjects will be Profs. Mike Jarvis, Jean Pedersen, Pablo Sierra, Robert Westbrook, and myself. As will hardly be surprising to you, the divisions between the various worlds of inquiry are hardly neat and you will see elements of each in all of us. I will therefore not presume to put any of us into a single box. Even so, it will be worthwhile to consider, as we read and discuss, where emphases lay and how various political, social, cultural, material, and intellectual contexts and approaches shape our work.

Each unit of the course will be divided into two parts: 1) a week devoted to discussing one or more readings that influenced the faculty member whose work we are discussing, 2) a week on examples of that person’s past and/or current scholarship (you get a bonus week on my work). At each class meeting, we’ll both analyze the content of what we’re reading and think about how the texts relate to or reveal the subject historian’s intellectual and professional evolution.

COURSE INFORMATION

Communication: Please come speak with me if you have any questions or concerns about the class. I can be more understanding of your needs if you bring them to my attention before there is a serious problem. I am available during regular office hours without an appointment. If you cannot make those hours, please contact me to schedule a better time. You may also speak to me by email or phone.

Attendance: Attendance at all class meetings is mandatory and I reserve the right to lower grades for students who miss more than two. If you must miss a class session, please let me know in advance.



From Jean Mansel, *La Fleur des histoires* (1459-1463)

Accommodations: I encourage you to talk with me about any concern or situation that affects your ability to complete your academic work successfully. Students requiring classroom accommodations should contact the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, 1-154 Dewey Hall, 585-275-9049. For more about the accommodations, see: www.rochester.edu/college/cetl/undergraduate/disability.

Academic Honesty: All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. More information is available at: www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/. You are encouraged to discuss course readings/assignments with your colleagues. However, all written work must be done independently.

Writing Help: We will discuss each writing assignment in detail during class. I am also always willing to talk about writing individually: to help you plan an essay, work through the process, or go over a past paper. I strongly encourage all students to take advantage of this by coming to office hours. Another very useful resource is the U of R Writing and Speaking Center, which is dedicated to helping writers at all skill levels to improve. You can reach them at 273-3577, by stopping by Rush Rhees G-121, or by scheduling an appointment at <http://writing.rochester.edu/help/index.html>.

READINGS

We will be reading a variety of books, chapters, and articles. All of the chapters and articles will either be available on BlackBoard or will be distributed in class. The books will be available at the university bookstore, though all are also available for loan at the library and some (especially for those by UR authors) through the department.

- Herman Lee Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness, 1570-1640* (Indiana University Press, 2005), ISBN 978-0253223319
- Thomas Devaney, *Enemies in the Plaza: Urban Spectacle and the End of Spanish Frontier Culture, 1460-1492* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), ISBN 978-0812247138
- Michael Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade: Bermuda, Bermudians, and the Maritime Atlantic World, 1680-1783* (UNC Press, 2012), ISBN 978-0807872840
- Christopher Lasch, *Plain Style: A Guide to Written English*, ed. Stewart Weaver (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), ISBN 978-0812218145
- Jean Elisabeth Pedersen, *Legislating the French Family: Feminism, Theater and Republican Politics, 1870-1920* (Rutgers University Press, 2003), ISBN 978-0813532790
- Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (Cambridge, 1989), ISBN 978-0521379830
- Joan Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (Columbia University Press, 1999), ISBN 978-0231118576
- Pablo M. Sierra Silva, *Urban Slavery in Colonial Mexico: Puebla de Los Angeles, 1531-1706* (Cambridge, 2018), ISBN 978-1108412186
- Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (Basic Books, 1977), ISBN 978-0465052714
- Robert Westbrook, *Why We Fought: Forging American Obligations in World War II* (Smithsonian Institution, 2010), ISBN 978-1588342959

ASSIGNMENTS

Writing: In this course, you will write weekly reading responses (1-2 pages each) as well as a final paper (20-25 pages). Brief descriptions of these projects are below; more details will follow. All papers must be double-spaced in 12 point font, have 1 inch margins on all sides, and have page numbers. Make sure to proofread your papers yourself for grammatical and spelling errors. Don't rely on spell-check; it misses far too many common errors.

Reading responses: These are concise and critical responses to the day's readings that explore issues, themes, or ideas that strike you as noteworthy for whatever reason. Each should develop an argument centered on a single concept from one of the readings (it is sometimes more useful to closely consider a section or even a short passage in relation to the whole than to try to intensively analyze the entire text). **Do not write a summary of the text.** You might also compare the reading for the day with other texts we've encountered or relate it to larger questions that have come up in our discussions. The purpose of this assignment is twofold. First, it is excellent practice for identifying relevant aspects of texts, for writing concisely, and for developing coherent and focused written arguments. Second, your responses should provide you with observations and questions that you can contribute to class discussion. **Since these are meant, in part, to stimulate discussion, I will not accept late reading responses.**

Final Paper: The major written component of this course is a substantive analysis of a single historian. This can be a person in your field or it can be yourself. A couple of thoughts about this project: First, an engaging, well-crafted paper does not emerge fully formed at the end of the semester. You must get an early start on identifying your subject and reading widely in order to give yourself time. To that end you'll need to submit a topic proposal on **March 29**. This proposal should be ~2 pages and include a paragraph describing your topic, a paragraph giving a brief rationale, and a short annotated bibliography. Second, this paper is meant to act on two levels: 1) thinking about an individual's intellectual development, and 2) analyzing the ideas with which that person has engaged (thus, despite my use of the terms, I am not really looking for biography or autobiography). Please **do not** privilege one of these aspects at the expense of the other; they should be developed in concert.

Option 1: An Intellectual Biography: Choose an active historian in your field (preferably someone senior, as this will give you more material with which to work) and explore his or her career—intellectual genealogy, influences, contributions, evolution, and legacies. Your goals here are to: 1) situate the historian within their field, 2) understand how that historian evolved within particular intellectual contexts, 3) closely examine how he engaged with, adapted, adopted, debunked, extended, confirmed, or problematized existing ideas in the field, 4) consider the ways in which she built upon those existing ideas to do something original, and 5) reflect on how that historian's work might intersect with your own (What have you learned from this that you might apply in your own work – either in terms of professional development or in your research or otherwise?)

Option 2: An Intellectual Autobiography: This should be reflective—a means not only of reporting your influences and trajectory, but also of discovering it—but it should also be intellectually rigorous. You should think about the various influences on how you approach the past (teachers and professors, scholars you're read, sources that made a profound impression, presentations you've seen, etc., etc.) and how you emulate them, grapple with them, oppose them, and/or build upon them. You should read as much as you can about all your influences (What else did the historian who wrote that great article do

and at what point in her career did the article emerge? What did that favorite undergrad professor actually research anyway and how did that impact his teaching? And so on). You should take a hard look at your own prior and current production to observe and analyze how your perspectives have changed or remained consistent. You should situate yourself within your field (Into what schools of thought might you fit? What contributions do you aim to make?) And you should explore how your future evolution might proceed (What's the core of your historical perspective that you think will remain in place? What theories/frameworks/ approaches do you need to learn more about? What kind of sources do you need to work on? And etc.)

Option 3: Something Else: If you have an idea for a different final paper theme that generally fits the goals and approaches of this course, do let me know and we can discuss.

Class Participation: This is a seminar, and a small one. If it is to be pleasant and productive, you must attend all class meetings having read the assigned texts and ready to discuss them. **Simple attendance is not enough; there is no such thing as passive participation.** Come prepared with questions and comments (the reading responses are meant to facilitate this) but do not limit your discussion contributions to what you've written down in advance; you also need to respond and build upon others' thoughts. I expect and encourage a diversity of perspectives, as well as honest and respectful disagreement. If you are having difficulties speaking up in class, please come see me and we will develop some strategies together.

GRADING

Participation and attendance:	40%
Reading responses	20%
Final paper:	40%

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND READINGS

January 18: Introductions

The Society for U.S. Intellectual History (S-USIH) blog has a regular "Classic Book Reviews" feature. In preparation for our first meeting, please read these two entries:

- David Hall, "Puritanism: No Tidy Box of Axioms": <http://s-usih.org/2016/09/puritanism-no-tidy-box-of-axioms.html#more-13668>. Sept. 18, 2016.
- Caroline Winterer, "The Aquarial View: Taking Things Seriously in the History of Ideas": <http://s-usih.org/2016/08/the-aquarial-view-taking-things-seriously-in-the-history-of-ideas.html#more-13502>. August 28, 2016.

January 25: Historical rhetoric

- Stewart Weaver, "Christopher Lasch and the Politics of the Plain Style," introduction to Christopher Lasch, *Plain Style: A Guide to Written English*, ed. Stewart Weaver (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002)
- And the rest of *Plain Style* for your personal edification and for discussion of writing in general and historical writing in particular.

Unit 1 – Devaney

February 1

- Angus MacKay, “Ritual and Propaganda in Fifteenth-Century Castile,” *Past and Present* 107 (1985): 3-43.
- Teofilo Ruiz, “Elite and Popular Culture in Late Fifteenth-Century Castilian Festivals: The Case of Jaén,” in *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe*, ed. Barbara Hanawalt and Kathryn Reyerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 296–318
- Barbara F. Weissberger, “¡A tierra, puto! Alfonso de Palencia’s Discourse of Effeminacy,” in *Queer Iberia: Sexualities, Cultures, and Crossings from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance*, ed. Josiah Blackmore and Gregory S. Hutcheson (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), 291-324.

February 8:

- Thomas Devaney, *Enemies in the Plaza: Urban Spectacle and the End of Spanish Frontier Culture, 1460-1492* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015)
- Dissertation and book prospectuses for *Enemies in the Plaza*

February 15:

- Monique Scheer, “Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (and Is That What Makes Them Have a History)? A Bourdieuan Approach to Understanding Emotion,” *History and Theory* 51.2 (2012): 193-220.
- Thomas Devaney, “Virtue, Virility and History in Fifteenth-Century Castile,” *Speculum* 88.3 (July, 2013): 721-49.
- Thomas Devaney, “Seeing the Virgin: Emotions and Visual Perception on Pilgrimage,” in *Sight and Visual Perception in Medieval and Renaissance Europe*, ed. Ann Buckley and Edward Coleman (Turnhout: Brepols, forthcoming 2019)

Unit 2 – Jarvis

February 22:

- Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (Cambridge, 1989)

March 1:

- Selections from: Michael Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade: Bermuda, Bermudians, and the Maritime Atlantic World, 1680-1783* (UNC Press, 2012)
- Additional articles

Unit 3 – Sierra

March 8:

- Herman Lee Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness, 1570-1640* (Indiana University Press, 2005)

March 15: Spring Break (no class)

March 22:

- Pablo M. Sierra Silva, *Urban Slavery in Colonial Mexico: Puebla de Los Ángeles, 1531-1706* (Cambridge, 2018)

Unit 4 – Westbrook

W - March 29: (topics for final paper due)

- Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (Basic Books, 1977)
- Letter: Robert Westbrook to Michael Walzer, 4 September 2006

W- April 5:

- Robert Westbrook, *Why We Fought: Forging American Obligations in World War II* (Smithsonian Institution, 2010)
- Robert Westbrook, *Rethinking the Good War*, Chapter 1, “A Necessary War?”
- Robert Westbrook, “Pragmatism and War” in Chad Kautzer and Eduardo Mendieta, eds., *Pragmatism, Nation, and Race: Community in the Age of Empire* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 242-253.

Unit 4 – Pedersen

W- April 12:

- Joan Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (Columbia University Press, 1999)
- Possible selections from: Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution*; and Karen Offen, *European Feminisms, 1700-1950*

W - April 19:

- Selections from Jean Elisabeth Pedersen, *Legislating the French Family: Feminism, Theater and Republican Politics, 1870–1920* (Rutgers University Press, 2003)
- Additional articles

Conclusions

W – April 26: Reflections (papers due)

- Dexter Perkins, *Yield of the Years: An Autobiography* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1969), selections TBA.