

Senior seminar in History  
Fall, 2005  
Professor LaRosa  
Rhodes College

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Office Hours: T, W seven am to noon, and by appointment  
Office: 311 Clough, x 3656

This course is a seminar designed to reinforce and refine a more sophisticated approach to the study of history. The course will focus on the variety of approaches and methodologies employed by professional historians. The course will not move in chronological order, nor will it focus on any specific geographic area. Emphasis will be placed on reading, writing and discussing history. This is YOUR seminar, and the degree to which you participate and take charge of the seminar determines the ultimate outcome.

Texts:

I have ordered six texts for purchase at the college bookstore. They can also be found at Amazon.com

Cohen.	<i>History in Three Keys</i>
Green & Troup.	<i>The Houses of History</i>
Hoffer.	<i>Past Imperfect</i>
Parenti.	<i>History as Mystery</i>
Womack.	<i>Zapata and the Mexican Revolution</i>
Zemon Davis, N.	<i>The Return of Martin Guerre</i>

Requirements:

Each student is required to attend class weekly. There are no excused absences from this course. Since we meet only once a week, please adjust your schedules accordingly. Attendance will be taken. Any student missing two classes – for whatever reason – will be dropped from the class. This is not negotiable, except if the Professor determines it to be so. There are no exams in this course.

Students will submit written work each week. On even number weeks, students will submit 5-6 page essays (of c. 1400-1500 words) based, normally on a book or topic agreed to beforehand. On the odd weeks, students will submit shorter papers (of about three pages or 750 words) on select topics. All work will be graded. Fifty percent of your grade will be determined by the seven substantive essays, and twenty five percent will be determined by participation/attendance and the remaining twenty five percent will be based on the shorter essays.

The longer essays should be a thoughtful analysis of the text. I want to see you “challenge” the author in your essay, and explain, to me, the method of the author, the weaknesses (in your opinion) strength of the argument, and sources consulted. Your essays must be error free and assiduously proof-read. All work is to be submitted on paper, in person, during class time. No late papers are accepted. No electronic copy will be accepted.

Each week, we will meet for 2 and a half hours, from 2-4:30. We will take a short (15) break in the middle of the seminar. I envision the seminar as unfolding, each week, as follows:

1. Professor introduces theme for the week (about 40 minutes)
2. Three students (previously selected) lead a discussion on the week’s reading (about 30 minutes)
3. Break
4. Four or Five Students (randomly selected) read their papers to the class; criticism from the class. About one hour.
5. Plan for next session, announcements, etc

We will meet fifteen times during the course of the semester; week nine is “Fall Break” and we will not meet during that week.

Week One: Introduction to the course.  
Read Parenti.

Week Two: Challenging the mainstream.  
Due: Parenti paper in class.  
Reading: chapters one and two, G and T.  
Reading: Find an article in a historical journal that uses a Marxist approach

Week Three: Comparing empiricists and Marxists....  
Due: Short explicative essay concerning the article.  
Reading. Zemon Davis.

Week Four: Approaches to the study of Early Modern European History  
Due: Zemon Davis paper  
Reading: Chapters 3 and 4 (G and T)

Week Five: Psychohistory and *Annales*  
Due: Find an article that belongs to the realm of either psychohistory or the *Annales* school and be prepared to explain the article in class. The article should be from a scholarly journal. Short paper due.  
Reading: chapter six, (G and T), plus an essay that belongs to the realm of quantitative history from the library.

Week Six: Quantitative History.

Due: Essay explaining the methodological challenges to Quantitative history based on your reading.

Reading: (G and T) pp 204-252, chapter nine, plus James, Doña María's story.

Week Seven: Ranke, Toynbee and Oral history methodology (narrative).

Due: A short essay on narrative history, and oral history

Reading: chapter ten, (G and T), plus a recent scholarly essay written by a historian concerned with questions of gender.

Week Eight: Gender History

Due: Essay on Gender as topic of analysis (based on your individual research)

Reading: Start Womack

Week Nine: No class, fall break

Week Ten: Latin American Marxist Historiography (and the Mexican Revolution)

Paper due: Zapata

Reading: chapter five and seven (G and T); plus an essay from either the field of historical sociology or historical anthropology

Week Eleven: Sociology and Anthropology as History?

Due: Essay comparing historical sociology with historical anthropology.

Reading: Cohen

Week Twelve: Modern Chinese History

Due: Cohen paper

Reading: find one essay which compares slave systems in different time periods, and geographic locals.

Week Thirteen: A discussion of the historiography of modern slavery

Due: Short essay on comparative slavery

Reading: Hoffer

Week Fourteen: Lying with history?

Due: Hoffer paper

Reading: essays on literature as history (in the library)

Week Fifteen: History as literature and vice-versa.

Due: Short essay on literature as history

Week Sixteen: Conclusions. Evaluating course and methodologies studied.