HISTORY 511B SEMINAR IN HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND WRITING:
SELF AND SOCIETY IN EUROPE, 1350-1700

Fall Semester 2006
Mondays 3:30-6:20 PM
Humanities 2204

Jodi Bilinkoff Humanities 2114
Office Hours:
MWF 10:00-10:45 and by appointment

CONTACT INFORMATION:
Office/Voice Mail: 334-4646
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REQUIRED TEXTS:
Benvenuto Cellini, Autobiography
William Roper, The Life of Sir Thomas More
Christopher Columbus The Four Voyages
Madame de Sévigné, Selected Letters
Johanna Petersen, The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen, Written by Herself

For reference I have ordered Jonathan Zophy, A Short History of Renaissance and Reformation Europe. You may, however, use any other Western Civ or European history text.

These books are available for purchase at the UNCG Bookstore and are also on reserve at Jackson Library. Using the internet can frequently result in savings on book purchases.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:

We will be examining biographical and autobiographical texts, which were produced in abundance in Europe and its colonies in the period between 1350 and 1700. At the heart of our inquiry will be what scholars call "the construction of
identities," how individuals perceive and present their own lives, or the lives of others. We will read and discuss together some representative texts from the period and identify analytical categories such as class, gender, geographical origin, profession, religious orientation, political persuasion, intended audience, and genre. Students will then choose a text or group of texts to investigate and contextualize on their own. There is a wealth of material in English in Jackson Library. I have compiled a bibliography to aid you in making your choices, and will, of course, be available throughout the semester for consultation.

GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS:

This is a research seminar, which means that the major enterprise of the semester will be producing a research paper, approximately 15-20 pages (15 pages minimum) in length for undergraduates, 20-25 pages for graduate students. The paper itself will count for 60% of the final grade.

During the course of the semester each student will prepare a research prospectus, detailed outline and annotated bibliography; together they will constitute 20% of the final grade. The remaining 20% of the grade will be derived from various oral presentations, including class participation, oral reports based on the common readings, and progress reports on research projects. Oral reports will be assigned after our first meeting. I do not intend to lecture at any length in this class, thus student participation is absolutely crucial to its success. Let me remind you that the Renaissance was a great age of oratory as well as written masterpieces!

Please make every effort to attend each class meeting, there is, after all, only one each week. If you have to miss a class or come late, please contact me so we don’t have to hold up the class for the other students. I will check my voice mail and e-mail before each class meeting.

RESPONSIBILITY CLAUSE: If you are unable to hand in any of your assignments on time or make an oral presentation for any reason it is YOUR responsibility to contact me. If I am not contacted directly or by message before the deadline I will not accept late assignments. See above for ways of contacting me.
COURSE SCHEDULE:

Aug 14   Introduction to Course; Constructing Identities, Writing about Identities; Italy and the Renaissance

Aug 21   The Self as a Work of Art: Benvenuto Cellini
1-11, 19-83, 92-104, 113-117, 141-152

Aug 28   Cellini
389-402

Sep 4    LABOR DAY

Sep 11   Personality, Politics, Reformation: Thomas More and his Circle
More on More; Margaret Roper on More [e-reserves]

Sep 18   William Roper on More
7-125
1-2 PAGE PROSPECTUS OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Sept 25  Discovering Columbus
Columbus
27-36, 82-92, 100-114, 115-122, 127-128,
158-199

Oct 2    Columbus

Oct 6    LAST DAY TO DROP CLASSES

Oct 9    FALL BREAK

Oct 16   Letters from Court and Country: Madame de Sévigné
Intro, 29-30, 55-59, 61-62, 67-72, 75-81, 85-90
110-113, 124-131, 140-141, 154-158
DRAFT OF ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

Oct 23   Madame de Sévigné
164-166, 173-175, 179-180, 182, 185-186, 188-189
193-195, 196-197, 206-210, 216-218, 222-224, 228-231,
233-238, 246-248, 257, 264-265, 267-269, 271-272,
280-282, 289-291, 298-300, 304-306, 308-311, 311-314,
320
DETAILED OUTLINE DUE

Oct 30   ORAL PROGRESS REPORTS
Nov 6      A Pietist Life: Johanna Petersen
            59-80  [Intro 1-43]

Nov 13     Johanna Petersen
            80-98
            DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE, BRING 2 COPIES

Nov 20     RESEARCH IN PROGRESS, NO CLASS

Nov 27     DISCUSSION OF DRAFTS

Dec 4      Drafts returned, final discussion, suitably festive end
            of term

FRIDAY DEC 8  RESEARCH PAPERS DUE IN DR. BILINKOFF'S MAILBOX
              IN HISTORY DEPARTMENT OFFICE HUMANITIES 2118A BY 2
              PM; YOU MAY HAND IT IN EARLIER IF YOU CHOOSE.