

# HISTORY 221, Sections 01-04: THE MEDIEVAL LEGACY

## **Course Information:**

History 221, Spring 2007

Lecture (all students): MW 9:00-9:50, Science 101

Discussion Section 01: F 8:00-8:50 (CRN 10562), Moore HRA 1210

Discussion Section 02: F 9:00-9:50 (CRN 10563), STON 369

Discussion Section 03: F 9:00-9:50 (CRN 10565), BRYN 335

Discussion Section 04: F 10:00-10:50 (CRN 10566), CURY 303

## **Instructor Information:**

Dr. Richard Barton

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Home phone: 274-8318, no calls after 9 PM

Mailbox: 2118A Moore HRA

Email: rebarton@uncg.edu

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## **Teaching Assistant Information:**

Bruce Peebles (sections 1 and 3)

Office: 2323 Moore HRA, cubicle C

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Natasha Thompson (sections 2 and 4)

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**Office hours** (for Barton): Tuesdays 9:00-10:00; Wednesdays 10:00-12:00, and by appointment

## **Course Description:**

This course explores the rich legacy of Medieval Europe. The Middle Ages lasted from the collapse of the Roman Empire in the west (around 500 AD) until the so-called Renaissance (14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries AD). This is an enormous time span, and I have no intention of trying to cover every event and every aspect of the Middle Ages. Rather, we will focus on several themes examined over three sub-periods of the Middle Ages. We begin with the ancestors of the Middle Ages: the civilization of Rome, its Christian overlay, and the arrival of the Germanic tribes. From there we will look in turn at the Early (c.500-950), Central (c.950-1250) and Late Middle Ages (c.1250-1500). Within each of these mini-periods we will examine several of the following themes: the nature and effectiveness of government (primarily kingship), the role of Christian belief and Christian institutions in shaping medieval life, the shape of everyday life, and the capacity of women to exercise power.

The process of our trip through the Middle Ages, however, will not merely be one of mastering names and dates (although you certainly must do a fair amount of memorization). Indeed, a major purpose of the class is to demonstrate to you the methods by which historians

approach the past. Thus we will be interested in learning about the nature of the sources available to us, and, above all, in learning how to interpret them. Interpretation, after all, is the keystone of the historian's craft, and it will be one of our purposes in this course to subject all of the material at our disposal to careful prodding, questioning, and criticism.

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

A student who successfully completes this class should expect to:

1. Demonstrate broad knowledge of the political, religious, and social history of the European Middle Ages (c.500-1500)
2. Interpret primary sources from the period under study and using both written and oral skills to analyze them
3. Synthesize material read from a variety of sources to produce a larger analytical conclusion
4. Recognize and employ methods used by historians to analyze the past (chronology, periodization, comparison/contrast, continuity/change, and some theory, including gender)
5. Communicate analytical thought in writing and in speech.
6. Recognize an academic argument and criticize it

### **REQUIRED BOOKS** (available for sale in the UNCG bookstore):

1. C. Warren Hollister and Judith Bennett, *Medieval Europe: A Short History*, 10<sup>th</sup> edition (McGraw-Hill, 2005) [ISBN 0072955155]
2. Chretien de Troyes, *Erec and Enide*, trans. Dorothy Gilbert (Univ. of California Press, 1992) [ISBN: 0520073460]
3. Merry Wiesner, et al., eds., *Discovering the Medieval Past: a Look at the Evidence* (Houghton Mifflin, 2003) [ISBN: 0-618-24668-1]
4. On-Line texts. The bulk of your primary source reading will be located on-line, either on Blackboard, or at my web-site, or at the superior academic site known as the On-Line Medieval Sourcebook. For each text I have indicated the URL where that text may be found. If you have trouble using the internet, please see me for assistance. Please note that the on-line version of this syllabus will have direct hyper-links to these texts.
5. Reserve Room: a few readings will be available in Jackson Library's Reserve Room (now found at the Circulation Desk).

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

1. **Attendance and Participation** (10% of your grade)

Attendance in class is mandatory. Roll will be taken in discussion sections, but not in lecture. Students are allowed to miss one discussion section without penalty, but will have 2 points removed from their final grades for every subsequent absence. Although I will not take roll in lecture, I strongly advise you to attend. Active participation in discussion sections is a vital part

of the learning process, and will be worth 10% of your final grade. Each TA will evaluate individual students' performances in his/her sections, but the following broad guidelines apply. If you come to class but never open your mouth, your participation grade will be no better than a C. If you speak infrequently, but offer strong comments when you do speak (or if you speak a lot, but with only occasional insight), your discussion grade will be in the B range. If you speak frequently and with insight, your discussion grade will be in the A range.

## 2. **Assignments** (10%)

Over the course of the semester I will ask you to complete six short assignments, two during each third of the course. The format and due-date of these assignments will be determined by your Teaching Assistants. Assignments will be graded on a 10-point scale, and the lowest grade of the six will be dropped.

## 3. **First Take-Home Midterm Exam:** due February 14 in class (20%)

The exam will include several short responses (analogous to the assignments) and one longer, synthetic essay. The goal of the longer essay will be to have you evaluate and synthesize (that is, pull together) material from the readings and discussions. The exam questions will be provided at least ten days in advance; your answers are due in class on Monday February 14

## 4. **Second Take-Home Midterm Examination:** due April 2, in class (20%)

Same format as the first midterm; you will write two short answers and one longer essay.

## 5. **Article Review**, due-dates March 23 and April 16 (10%)

You will choose one academic article from a list provided by me. You will then read the article and critique it, paying attention to its argument and the author's success (or not) in demonstrating/proving that argument. You will also relate the article to the class in some way. You must submit (in writing) your choice of article to your TA on March 23. The review will be due on April 16.

## 6. **Take-Home Final Exam:** Friday May 4, due in Science 101 at 8 AM (30% of your grade)

The format of this exam will be similar to that of the midterms with one important exception. Most of the final will be like a third midterm for the final part of the course (that is, two short answers and a synthesis essay on the Late Middle Ages). But you will also write a second synthesis essay which addresses one of the broad themes of the course; in this essay you will need to make reference to material from all three sections of the course.

### **GRADE BREAKDOWN:**

Attendance and Discussion:	10%
Assignments	10%
First Midterm:	20%
Second Midterm:	20%
Article Review	10%
Final Exam:	30%

### **THE "LEGAL" STUFF**

1. In case later consultation should prove necessary, students should keep copies of all graded assignments until the end of the semester (at least).
2. All course requirements must be completed to receive a grade for the class.

3. Late Work: Assignments are due on the date and at the time listed on the syllabus; if a crisis (such as illness) arises, it is your responsibility to contact me or your TA. If you do not contact one of us, the work (when eventually received) will be penalized. Contact may be made by phone, email, or a note left in my mailbox in the History Department (2118A Moore HRA); your TA will distribute his/her contact information in the first discussion section. You are welcome to call me at home, so long as it is before 9 PM.

4. PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism is a type of cheating, and occurs when a person passes off (whether intentionally or un-intentionally) someone else's words or ideas as their own. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense, which, in its most overt forms, can result in formal disciplinary action by the university (at the most extreme, this might include expulsion). This is a notoriously thorny area for students. Many students unintentionally commit plagiarism by "borrowing" ideas, interpretations, and/or actual words from other authors. Make sure that your words are your own, and that your interpretations are also your own. If you find yourself using someone else's words or ideas, make sure you have given him/her credit by using a footnote, endnote, or parenthetical citation. Note: my comments in class do not need to be cited.

5. BE CAUTIOUS in using websites. Many students feel that they can obtain the "answer" (or even a good interpretation) concerning a historical problem by simply looking it up on the web. While the web has many uses, this is almost invariably a fatal strategy. Looking up someone else's ideas is no substitute for your own analysis. Some observations from the instructor's point of view: 1) use of a web-site without citing it (even if it is crap) is plagiarism, which, if detected, can result in serious academic penalties (see above); 2) instructors can often detect uncited use of a website when either the writing style of the student's paper changes drastically, or when facts/ideas/dates/people not discussed in class or in any of the assigned readings appear in an assignment. Again, I don't want to discourage you from gaining more perspectives by using the web. What I'm saying is that ultimately you are being evaluated on your analysis of the assigned readings, not on your ability to plug the ideas of some web site into your essay.

## SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

Primary source readings are preceded in the following syllabus by one of these three adjectives:

Required: you must read that text and will be held responsible for it on exams

Recommended: I'd love for you to read it, but won't test you specifically on it. Use of it on exams will impress me.

Optional: this text will help your comprehension of the daily topic, but won't be on the exams

### UNIT 1: The Early Middle Ages

January 8: Course Introduction: Historians and Their Method

Textbook Reading: Hollister/Bennett (abbrev. H/B), p. 93 (Medieval Myth)

January 10: Europe In 500: Roman, Christian, and Germanic

Primary Source Readings:

Required: How to Read Primary Sources

(<http://www.uncg.edu/~rebarton/221-fa01-primary-source.html>)

Required: Salvian, on Roman decline

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/salvian1.html>)

Textbook Readings: Hollister/Bennett, 1-38 [Note: although you should always look up words you don't know in a dictionary, the textbook helps you out by providing a glossary at the back for words that appear in bold. Be sure to take advantage of this resource.]

January 12: Discussion Sections

Readings: Wiesner, p. 1-26 (Slave Law in Roman and Germanic Society)

January 15: Martin Luther King, Jr Day: NO CLASS

January 17: Germanic Kingship: Clovis and Theodoric

Primary Sources:

Required: Clovis Stories: the Vase of Soissons and his Conversion

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/gregtours1.html>)

Required: Conversion of Clovis

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/496clovis.html>)

Required: Salic Law (ie., Law of Salian Franks)

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/salic-law.html>)

Required: Letters of Theodoric

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/theodoric1.html>)

Textbook Reading:

H/B, 38-49, and Color Illustration 1

January 19: Discussion Sections: Early Germanic Kingship

January 22: Women in Frankish Society

Primary Sources:

Required: Frankish Queens: <http://www.uncg.edu/~rebarton/frankish-queens.htm>

Textbook Reading: H/B: re-read pp. 44-45 (on Clotilda)

January 24: Early Medieval Belief: Saints, Miracles, Sacraments

Primary Source Readings:

Required: The Nicene Creed (<http://www.uncg.edu/~rebarton/church-fathers.htm>)

Required: the Life of St Martin of Tours (Blackboard)

Textbook Reading: H/B, 50-55, 61-67, Color Illustration 2 (go back and compare to Figure 1.2)

January 26: Discussion Sections

January 29: Monasticism: Saint Benedict and his Rule

Primary Source Readings:

Required: Rule of Saint Benedict

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/rul-benedict.html>)

Required: Foundation of Cluny, 909

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/chart-cluny.html>)

Textbook Reading: H/B, 56-61

January 31: Politics and Warfare c.700-900

Primary Source Readings:

Required: Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/einhard.html>)

Textbook Reading: H/B, 97-111, 119-124

February 2: Discussion Sections

Discussion Topic: Monasticism

February 5: Charlemagne and Alfred

Primary Source Readings:

Required: Asser, *Life of Alfred* (<http://omacl.org/KingAlfred/>)

Textbook Reading: H/B, 124-135

February 7: Carolingian Renaissance

Primary Source Readings:

Required: General capitulary on the missi, 802

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/carol-missi1.html>)

Required: Charlemagne's letter to Baugulf

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/carol-baugulf.html>)

Textbook Reading:

H/B, 111-118, Color Illustration 3

February 9: Discussion Sections

Discussion Topic: Early Medieval Kingship: Compare and Contrast Einhard and Asser

## **UNIT II: The Central or High Middle Ages**

February 12: Economic Take-Off

Required: Wiesner, 27-45

Required: Demographic Tables

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/pop-in-eur.html>)

Textbook Reading: H/B, 149-159, 167-179

February 14: First Take-Home Exam due in class

February 14: Power and Lordship

Primary Source Reading:

Required: Fulbert of Chartres: Letter concerning obligations of lord and vassal

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/fulbert1.html>)

Required: Agreement Between Hugh of Lusignan and William of Aquitaine

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/agreement.html>)

Required: Norman Noblewomen

(<http://www.uncg.edu/~rebarton/normanwomen.htm>)

Textbook Reading: H/B, 133-147, 180-185

February 16: Discussion Sections: Lordship

February 19: Kings and States: 1000-1150

Primary Source Readings:

Required: Wiesner, 46-69

Textbook Readings: H/B, 215-225, 266-270, 277-280

February 21: Kings and States: 1150-1300

Primary Source Reading:

Required: Magna Carta

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/magnacarta.html>)

Required: St Louis Dispenses Justice, 1259 (Blackboard)

Textbook Reading: H/B, 270-277, 280-286

February 23: Discussion Sections: High Medieval Kingship

February 26: Church Developments: Papacy

Primary Source Readings:

Required: Gelasian Doctrine

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/gelasius1.html>)

Required: Ban on Lay Investitures

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/g7-invest1.html>)

Required: Henry IV to Gregory VII

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/henry4-to-g7a.html>)

Required: Gregory Deposes Henry IV

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/g7-ban1.html>)

Required: Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), selected canons

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/lateran4.html>)

Textbook Reading: H/B, 201-207, 240-246, 250-265

February 28: Church Developments: New Religious Orders

Primary Source Reading:

Required: Thomas of Celano, Lives of St Francis

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/stfran-lives.html>)

Textbook Reading: H/B, 186-201, 207-213

March 2: Discussion Sections: the High Medieval Church

March 5: Spring Break

March 7: Spring Break

March 9: Spring Break

March 12: Peasant Life

Primary Source Readings:

Required: Wiesner, 195-220

Required: Texts on Peasant Servitude

(<http://www.uncg.edu/~rebarton/peasant-life.htm>  
(<http://www.uncg.edu/~rebarton/peasant-servitude.html>)

Textbook Reading: H/B, 156-167

March 14: Crusades

Primary Source Readings:

Required: Wiesner, 94-114

Textbook Reading: H/B, 225-239

March 16: Discussion Sections: Peasants and Crusaders

March 19: Commercial Revolution

Primary Source Reading:

Required: Wiesner, 115-131

Required: *Erec and Enide*, pp. 1-33 (skim) and lines 1-508 (read!)

Textbook Reading:

H/B, 167-179

March 21: Universities

Primary Source Reading:

Required: Wiesner, 70-93

Required: Abelard, excerpts from "History of my Calamities"

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/abelard-sel.html>)

Required: *Erec and Enide*, lines 508-2506

Textbook Reading: H/B: 246-249, 307-319

March 23: Discussion Sections: Commercial and Educational Changes

March 23: Choice of article for Article review due in discussion section

March 26: Law and Society

Primary Source Readings:

Required: Gratian on Marriage

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/gratian1.html>)

Required: *Erec and Enide*, lines 2507-4561

Textbook Reading: H/B, 289-300, 308-309

March 28: Chivalry

Primary Source Reading:

Required: *Erec and Enide*, lines 4561-6924

March 30: Discussion Sections: Chivalry

### **UNIT 3: the Late Middle Ages**

April 2: Second Take-Home Midterm Due in Class

April 2: Calamities: the Plague

Primary Source Reading:

Required: Wiesner, pp. 160-194

Textbook Reading:

H/B, 321-330

April 4: Calamities: War

Primary Source Reading:

Required: Jean Froissart on the Hundred Years' War:

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/froissart1.html>)

Reserve Room: "Chronicle of the Reign of Henry V," in Emilie Amt, ed.,

*Medieval England, 1000-1500: a Reader* (Broadview, 2001), 383-391.

Textbook Reading:

H/B, 335-336, 346-349

April 6: Spring Holiday: No Class

April 9: Peasants and Social Change

## Primary Source Reading:

Required: Jean Froissart on the Jacquerie

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/froissart2.html>)

Required: Anonimale Chronicle on the Peasants' Revolt of 1381

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/anon1381.html>)

Required: Jack Cade's Manifesto, 1450

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1450jackcade.html>)

## Textbook Reading:

H/B, 330-335

## April 11: Towns and Guilds

## Primary Source Reading

Handout: Maryanne Kowaleski, ed., *Medieval Towns: A Reader*  
(Broadview, 2006), 110-115, 176-180

Required: Wiesner, 221-239

## April 13: Discussion Sections: Plague (Wiesner, 160-194) and Guilds (Wiesner 221-239)

## April 16: Article Review due in Class

## April 16: Church Developments: the Papacy

## Primary Source Readings:

Required: Boniface VIII: the bull *Unam Sanctam*

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/b8-unam.html>)

Required: University of Paris on the Schism, 1393

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/grtschism2.html>)

Required: Council of Constance, decree *Frequens*, 1417

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/constance2.html>)

Textbook Reading: H/B, 336-339

## April 18: Religious Developments: Popular Piety and Heresy

## Primary Source Reading:

Required: Wiesner, 240-264

## Textbook Reading:

H/B, 339-345

## April 20: Discussion Sections: Late Medieval Christianity

## April 23: State Formation

## Primary Source Readings

Recommended: Growth of Parliamentary Government in England

(<http://www.uncg.edu/~rebarton/english-parliament.htm>)

Required: Reserve Room: "the Manner of Holding Parliament", in Emilie Amt,  
ed., *Medieval England, 1000-1500: a Reader* (Broadview, 2001), 294-305

Required: Blackboard: Parliament of 1399

Textbook Reading: H/B, 346-356

## April 25: Female Heroes? Joan of Arc and Christine of Pizan

## Primary Source Readings:

Required: The Life and Trial of Joan of Arc

(<http://www.uncg.edu/~rebarton/joanofarc.htm>)

Textbook Reading: H/B, 352-353, 366-383

April 27: Discussion Sections: Governmental Change and Women's Roles

April 30: Making Sense of the Middle Ages

May 1 (Tuesday, but follows Friday schedule): Discussion Sections: Review

May 2: Reading Day (no class)

May 4: Final Take-Home Exams due at 8:00 AM in Science 101

## CITATION OF SOURCES

For any written assignment defined as a formal writing assignment (ie., all the essays required in this course), you are expected to provide specific citations to the texts that you use in support of your paper.

### What are citations?

In general: they are bookmarks for the reader, allowing him/her to return to the source you have used to make your point. They also serve as acknowledgments of the sources you have used (particularly so that your reader does not think you are passing off someone else's ideas as your own)

In practice: citations are brief statements of the author and/or title of the work you are referring to, along with a reference point (usually a page number) within that work. For example, if you wanted to make a parenthetical citation of Hollister's opinions of King John in a paper, you would include a citation such as this .... (Hollister, p. 256).

### Types of Citations

1. Parenthetical citations: appear in parentheses directly after the words to which they provide reference.

Parenthetical citations usually include the author's last name and the number of the page to which you are referring). For example, "Juhel of Mayenne was only 20 years old or so when he founded the priory of Marmoutier in his castle keep (Barton, p. 369)." The words in quotation marks are what you've written; but since you've taken this information from another source, you need to indicate that source. Here the citation appears in parentheses to some book by Barton at p. 369. NOTE: parenthetical citations are informal; they are acceptable (sometimes) in student writing, but never appear in formal academic work.

2. Formal citations (endnotes or footnotes): this is the way that scholars cite their references. The format of a footnote is indistinguishable from that of an endnote; the only difference between them lies in where they appear on the page (footnotes at the bottom of each page; endnotes in a separate list at the end of the paper). Modern word-processing makes it childishly easy to create either sort of note; look (usually) under the "insert" pull-down menu of your word-processor and you will find a choice for "footnotes/endnotes". When you create one, a superscript number will appear in the body of your text where you created the note. That number is meant to alert the reader that he or she ought now to redirect his/her eyes either to the bottom of the page (footnote)

or the back of the paper (endnote) for the relevant citation. NOTE: although word-processors allow the creation of superscript note numbers as roman numerals (e.g., i, ii, v, xiii), this is to be avoided. Always make sure you are creating arabic numerals (e.g., 1, 2, 3). [see the end of the next paragraph for examples]

What appears within the foot- or endnote is also important. For a book, you ought to include all of the information you would provide in a bibliographic entry: author, title of book (underlined or italicized), and publishing information (place published, publisher, date published). If the work to which you are referring is an article, the format is slightly different: author, title of article (in quotation marks), title of journal (italicized or underlined), volume number of journal, and year of journal. Either way, you will also need to include the specific page number to which you are referring the reader. If you are citing a web-site (or on-line text), the rules are less clear. If the on-line material is clearly derived from a book, then you ought to provide all of the usual information one expects for a book, but you should add the URL and the webpage title; if the page lacks proper bibliographic information, provide whatever you can. Here is an example of a footnote to a book.<sup>1</sup> Here is an example of a citation to an article.<sup>2</sup> (note that an endnote would look the same, but would simply appear at the end of the document in a separate list). Here is an example of a citation to a web-site.<sup>3</sup> Here is an example of a second citation to the book you already cited.<sup>4</sup> Here is a second citation to the article you already cited once.<sup>5</sup> And here is a third citation to that same book.<sup>6</sup> [Note that once you have provided the full bibliographic information to a source in a first citation, you can abbreviate that material for all subsequent citations of that source. Usually it suffices to use the author's last name and a couple of words of the title (plus the relevant page number)].

### **WHEN must you provide a citation?**

1. Whenever you use an author's words directly. In this case, the author's words must appear in quotation marks in the body of your essay and the citation should appear immediately after the closed quotation mark. For instance, in the following made-up sentence I quote myself and use a parenthetical citation to a made-up work: "As the noted medieval historian, Richard Barton, once said, 'Medieval History is cool' (Barton, p. 297)."
2. Whenever you have paraphrased a source (that is, taken the gist of it and reworked it into your own words) or when you refer to an episode from a source (for example, "In the relief

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<sup>1</sup> Mary W. Smith, *Footnoting for Fun and Profit* (Boston: Academic Press, 1980), 44.

<sup>2</sup> John Q. Doe, "How to Create Footnotes," *Journal of Scholarship* 15 (1999), 219.

<sup>3</sup> *Cartulaire de l'abbaye cardinale de la Trinité de Vendôme*, ed. Charles Métais, volume 1 (Paris: A. Picard et fils, 1893), 1:14-18. Translated from the Latin by Richard Barton and published on-line under the title "Land Tenure and Family Conflict: the Honor of Vendôme, c. 1006-1040," at <http://www.uncg.edu/~rebarton/vendome.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> Smith, *Footnoting*, 78.

<sup>5</sup> Doe, "How to Create Footnotes," 220.

<sup>6</sup> Smith, *Footnoting*, 123.

clause of Magna Carta, the barons demanded ....”). Because you are not using the exact words of the original text, you have some leeway about where you place the citation. Place it either at the end of the paragraph or immediately after the relevant portion of your paper.

3. Whenever you mention a fact or event that is not generally known. Lots of confusion can and does exist about what is and what is not “generally well-known.” Use common sense. You don’t need to cite Hollister if you state that the Battle of Hastings occurred in 1066 (this is a famous and well-known event/date). More obscure material might require a citation.

### **PRIMARY SOURCES VERSUS SECONDARY SOURCES**

Do not be confused about the distinction between primary and secondary sources. Many students assume that ‘primary source’ means ‘the source which I use the most’ or ‘the source which is most useful to me’; occasionally a student will say that ‘the textbook is the best primary source for the middle ages’ or something like this. Such a comment is incorrect, since ‘primary source’ carries a specialized meaning to historians. Make sure you know the difference:

Primary Sources: things written down during the period under study. The interpretation of these documents by subsequent historians constitutes the basic task of history. “History”, as a process, is the interpretation of primary sources.

-examples: diaries, letters, financial accounts, works of literature, philosophy, etc.

Secondary Sources: sources written by persons living after the period they are studying. Any work which interprets the past is a secondary source.

-examples: all textbooks, every work of history, biographies, lectures, student essays

Grey Areas: what about a biography of the emperor Charlemagne (died 814) written in 950? Is it a primary source or secondary source? It’s a good question. Technically it would be a secondary source, since the author could have had no direct knowledge of Charles or his time. For the purposes of this course, however, we will consider as primary sources any source composed by a medieval author.

#### The Straight Dope For History 221:

Primary Sources: all of the on-line texts; Erec and Enide; most of the readings in Wiesner.

Secondary Sources: Hollister/Bennett (the textbook); the introductions to each chapter in Wiesner; some of the articles in Wiesner; the scholarly article you choose for the Article Review; the introductions to on-line primary sources; my lectures; your exam essays and responses.