

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

Spring Semester 2010
Wednesdays 3:30-6:20 PM
MHRA 1210

Jodi Bilinkoff
MHRA 2114
Office Hours: MW 10:00-11:00 and by appointment

CONTACT INFORMATION:

History Department Office: 334-5992
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REQUIRED TEXTS:

Benvenuto Cellini, Autobiography
Christopher Columbus The Four Voyages
Madame de Sévigné, Selected Letters

For reference I have ordered Jonathan Zophy A Short History of Renaissance and Reformation Europe (3rd. edition). You may, however, use any other Western Civilization 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.

There is also a set of documents on e-reserves.

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 several 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 of 15-25 pages in length (15-page minimum for undergraduates; 20-page minimum 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 oral participation in class, including discussion of the common readings and progress reports on research projects. 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, because of illness or another legitimate excuse you must miss a class or arrive late, please contact me ahead of time so I don't have to hold up the class for the other students. I will check my messages and e-mail before each class meeting. Two unexcused absences will result in a student being dropped from the course.

UNCG takes its Academic Integrity Policy very seriously, and so do I. We will review correct citation of sources and how to avoid plagiarism during the course of the semester. Students may also consult:

<http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity>. Any work containing plagiarized material will receive a failing grade and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for appropriate action.

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:

- Jan 20 Introduction to Course
Constructing Identities, Writing about Identities
- Jan 27 The Self as a Work of Art: Benvenuto Cellini
Autobiography, 1-11, 19-83, 92-104, 113-117, 141-152
[Renaissance Italy, Sixteenth Century, Counter-Reformation]
- Feb 3 Cellini, Autobiography
161-174, 184-230, 236-239, 250-274, 289-306, 356-353
389-402
- Feb 10 Personality, Politics, Religion: Thomas More and his
Circle
Thomas More and Margaret More Roper, excerpts from
The Last Letters of Thomas More [E-reserves]
[English Reformation, Henry VIII, Renaissance Humanism]

- Feb 17 1-2 PAGE PROSPECTI OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE
ORAL PRESENTATIONS ON PLANNED RESEARCH PROJECTS
- Feb 24 Discovering Columbus
The Four Voyages
27-36, 82-92, 100-114, 115-122, 127-128, 158-199
[Age of Discoveries, Spain and its Empire, Ferdinand and Isabella]
- Mar 3 Columbus, The Four Voyages
206-226, 241-253, 259-264, 265-276, 283-304, 318-320
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE
- Mar 10 SPRING BREAK (NO CLASS)
- Mar 17 Letters from Court and Country: Madame de Sévigné
Selected Letters, Intro, 29-30, 55-59, 61-62, 67-72, 75-81, 85-90, 110-113, 124-131, 140-141, 154-158
[Seventeenth-Century France, Louis XIV]
Guest: Dr. Bertrand Landry, Dept of Romance Languages
- Mar 24 Madame de Sévigné, Selected Letters
164-166, 173-175, 179-180, 182, 185-186, 188-189
193-195, 196-197, 206-210, 216-218, 222-224, 228-31, 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 OUTLINES DUE
ORAL PROGRESS REPORTS
SIGN UP FOR INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS
PEER REVIEWERS ASSIGNED
- Week of Mar 29 INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS (NO CLASS)

Apr 7 NO CLASS
Students continue to work on their papers.

Apr 14 NO CLASS
Students continue to work on their papers.

Apr 19 COPIES OF DRAFTS DUE TO DR. BILINKOFF AND TO
YOUR PEER REVIEWER BY 12:00 NOON. PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS
IS A MONDAY. SEND YOUR DRAFTS BY E-MAIL ATTACHMENT IN
MICROSOFT WORD OR AS A PDF FILE.

Apr 21 DISCUSSION OF DRAFTS
ASSESSMENT OF PEER REVIEWS
SIGN UP FOR INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

Week of April 26 INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS (NO CLASS)

FRIDAY MAY 7 FINAL PAPERS DUE IN DR. BILINKOFF'S MAILBOX
IN THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT OFFICE MHRA 2118A BY
2:00 PM; YOU MAY HAND IN YOUR PAPER EARLIER IF
YOU WISH.

