

Hist 610-002
Fall 2011
W 7:20-10 pm
Krug 205
Office hours: Wed. 4-5 and by appt.

Dina M. Copelman
RB 357 B
703-993-1260 (office)
571-239-1713 (cell)
dcopelma@gmu.edu;
dcopelma@gmail.com
ONLY TO EMAIL ASSIGNMENTS

THE STUDY AND WRITING OF HISTORY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines 20th and 21st century trends in historical analysis. We will pay particular attention to the historical subfields that emerged since the 1960s (for example: the histories of race and ethnicities, women's and gender history, the history of imperialism and post colonialism, etc.). We will not look at all of these, but will try to understand the underlying processes behind new histories by examining some of them. Cultural and social history are the broad rubrics under which most of our work will fall, and we will also be interested in the ways disciplinary boundaries have been both crossed and enforced as history was influenced by trends in other disciplines and other disciplines turned to history. In examining changes in historical practice we will be looking both at how historical and social forces affected historical practices and at debates within and among historical camps. Attention to the ways that historians choose and interpret their sources, efforts to expand the realm of sources and the ways to use them, as well as changing forms of presentation will also form part of our discussions.

BOOKS/READINGS

PLEASE NOTE: You will be reading many articles and excerpts from longer works. To access these I have created a **Dropbox** account for this class. To access the readings you will have to go to www.dropbox.com and login. **The login email is dcopelma@gmail.com and the password is fall2011.** Once in the account go to the "Public" folder; course readings and materials will be in the folder named "HIST 610." I aim to make all readings other than the books listed above available in Dropbox. If I cannot, I will let you know how to access materials online or if I will be providing photocopies of particular items.

The following books have been ordered for the course (available in the campus bookstore)

Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*
Martha Howell & Walter Prevenier, *From Reliable Sources*
Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*
Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*
Geoff Eley, *A Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society*
Kathy Peiss, *Zoot Suit*
Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin' Alive*
Daniel T. Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*

Over the course of the semester I may be adding and/or changing some materials that are not currently listed on this syllabus. These additional readings will be announced in class and on email. It is your responsibility to keep up with these additions and other class news.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Additional information on assignments will be provided and discussed in class at least a week before deadlines. Assignments are to be submitted by email and should be sent to dcopelma@gmail.com

1. **Preparation for and participation in class discussions** (15% of the grade)

2. **Journal** 2 page responses to questions about readings. Have to be written before class and used in class discussions. All students have to respond to the first two sets of questions and turn those in electronically on September 21. I have provided the questions to answer through the week of October 5. I will provide questions for the remaining weeks by late September. Students can skip two weeks over the course of the semester: before the midterm either October 12 or 19; after the midterm either November 30 or December 7. Due dates: September 21, November 9 and December 14. (25%)
3. **Take-home Midterm** 6-8 pages. Due October 22 at 11:59 pm. Questions will be handed out in advance (25%)
4. **Final Assignment** 10-12 pages. Due December 14 at 11:59 pm. I will provide a choice of significant historical debates/forums on different topics and you will write a paper exploring some of the key texts and key issues related to that topic. Choice of debate and a preliminary bibliography will have to be approved by the professor (35%)

WEEKLY SCHDEULE

By Sunday evening I will usually send an email to the class highlighting the key themes and major issues we will be covering in class, along with news and reminders. It is your responsibility to make sure you are receiving these emails and I will expect you to have read them by the following class.

August 31 Introduction

Syllabus

The Return of Martin Guerre (movie)

Sept. 7 Telling the Story

Review Syllabus; check email

Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*

"American Historical Review Forum: The Return of Martin Guerre"

Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream*, Introduction

Journal Questions:

--What are the main points of debate between Finlay and Davis?

--Why is objectivity like nailing jelly to the wall?

--According to Novick should objectivity be the guiding principle of historical work?

Sept. 14 Evidence, Methods and Theory

Martha Howell & Walter Prevenier, *From Reliable Sources*

Karl Marx, Excerpts

Frederick Engels, "Historical Materialism"

Journal Questions:

--What are some of the main methods Howell and Prevenier discuss?

--Provide a summary of for each of the Marx and Engels excerpts by listing/describing 4 or 5 of its main points

Sept. 21 →NO CLASS—Submit journal entries electronically to dcopelma@gmail.com

Sept. 28 Social History: Macro, Micro and Points In-between?

Fernand Bruadel, selections

E. P. Thompson, selections

Clifford Geertz, "Balinese Cockfight"

Suzanne Desan "Crowds, Community and Ritual in the Work of E.P. Thompson and

Natalie Zemon Davis"

Journal Questions:

--How are these works related to "social history"?

--Identify some key similarities and differences between these works?

--What are Desan's criticisms of Thompson and Davis?

- October 5** **Gender**
 Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis"
AHR Forum: Revisiting "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis"
Journal of Women's History, 20th anniversary issue
 Leonore Davidoff, "Class and Gender in Victorian England" [NB I might change this!]
Journal Questions:
 --What does the term "gender" refer to and why, according to Scott, is it necessary?
 --Comment on two of the pieces in the *AHR Forum* on Scott's article
 --According to the Editors of *The Journal of Women's History* what have been some of the main trends and debates in the field?
- October 12** **Identities: Race, Region and Representations**
 Barbara Fields, "Ideology and Race in American History"
 David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness*
 Readings on Atlantic History
 Walter Johnson, "The Slave Trader, the White Slave, and the Politics of Racial Determination in the 1850s"
- October 19** **Nations, Nationality**
 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*
 Edward Said, *Orientalism*
 Additional materials to be assigned
- October 22** →Take-home Midterm due. Send to dcopelma@gmail.com by 11:59 pm.
- October 26** **Power, Culture, Language**
 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*
 Patricia O'Brien, "Michel Foucault's History of Culture,"
 Joan Scott, "The Evidence of Experience"
- Nov. 2** **Being an Historian**
 Geoff Eley, *A Crooked Line*
 Natalie Zemon Davis, "A Life of Learning"
 Nicolas Eustace, "When Fish Walk on Land: Social History in a Postmodern World" OR
 Paula Fass, "Cultural History/Social History: Some Reflections on a Continuing Dialogue"
- Nov. 9** **Individual Meetings to discuss final assignment**
 → Submit journals electronically to dcopelma@gmail.com
- Nov. 16** Kathy Peiss, *Zoot Suit*
- Nov. 23** **THANKSGIVING—NO CLASS**
- Nov. 30** Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin' Alive*
- Dec. 7** Daniel T. Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*
- Dec. 14** **Keep open in case of make-up class.**
 → Final Assignment and last Journal submission due electronically [possibly subject to change]

DISABILITY

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

HONOR CODE

Submit work under your own name, and remember that plagiarism is a violation of the GMU Honor Code. The Honor Code states, "Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work." Plagiarism means using words, ideas, opinions, or factual information from another person or source without giving due credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books and articles consulted is not sufficient. Nor does rearrangement of another person's phrasing (paraphrase) release one from the obligation to document one's sources. Plagiarism is a form of fraudulently claiming someone else's work as your own, and as such is the equivalent of cheating on an exam. **A serious academic offense, plagiarism is grounds for failing at least the assignment, if not the whole course.** If you are unclear about what you should document, consult with me. When in doubt, document. (*Adapted from the English Department Statement on Plagiarism*)

Honor Code can be found online at <http://honorcode.gmu.edu>

LAST DAY TO ADD/LAST DAY TO DROP

September 6, 2011 is the last day for students to add a class to their schedules. Similarly, September 6, 2011 is the last day for students to drop classes and receive a 100% refund. The last day a student can drop without obtaining special permission is September 30, 2011