

**History 610.001: Study and Writing of History**  
**Fall 2017**  
**Wednesdays 4:30 pm – 7:10 pm**  
**Innovation Hall 137**

**Professor Joan Bristol**

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**Office hours: Wednesdays 2 pm – 3 pm; Thursdays 10 am – 11 am**

This course examines trends in historical analysis and focuses primarily on the work of twentieth- and twenty-first-century scholars working in the United States. Most of the scholars whose work we will examine wrote on early modern Europe and the Americas. This class is focused on historiography rather than on a specific region or time period, however. We will discuss the way that historians choose and interpret their sources, the elements that affect their interpretations, and how and why these interpretations have developed and changed over time.

***Assignments and grading:***

- 1) *Class participation (33% of the final grade)*. Participation will be measured by involvement in class discussions.
- 2) *Class blog (33% of final grade)*: You will post to the class blog ten times over the course of the semester. You may write about some aspect of the readings that you found interesting or puzzling, you may compare it to other books we have read, you can write about the sources the author used, or you may do something else. The requirement is that you make clear that you have read, understood, and thought about the book and that you are able to assess it in a holistic way and make connections to the larger class theme. At least once during the semester you will summarize verbally the main points that your fellow students have made on the blog.
- 3) *Essay, due at the end of the semester (33% of the final grade)*. Please see the assignment below.

***Class policies:***

- 1) Please arrive in class on time and stay for the entire class period. If you know that you will be late to class or that you need to leave early please let me know ahead of time.
- 2) Do not eat during class. (You may bring a drink but don't spill it.)
- 3) If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

***Honor Code:***

George Mason has an honor code you must adhere to it. It is as follows:

*"To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work."*

If I suspect plagiarism or other forms of cheating I will submit my findings to the Honor Committee immediately. You are responsible for understanding what constitutes plagiarism and other kinds of cheating. If you do not understand what constitutes plagiarism and cheating ask me for clarification.

***Required texts***

These are available for purchase in the bookstore and from other booksellers, on reserve in the library, and through WRLC and ILL (in all cases this should be the most recent paperback edition):

Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*

Cronon, *Changes in the Land*

Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*

Kierner, *Scandal at Bizarre*

Prescott, *History of the Conquest of Mexico*

Townsend, *History's Babel*

Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*

***Schedule:***

**Week 1 (8/30): Introduction**

***\*\*Please read this before you come to class on the first day.\*\****

American Historical Association, *Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct*.

<https://www.historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/statements-and-standards-of-the-profession/statement-on-standards-of-professional-conduct>.

**Week 2 (9/6): History as a Profession**

Townsend, *History's Babel* (2013)

*September 5 is the last day to add classes and the last day to drop without tuition penalty.*

**Week 3 (9/13): Constructing Historical Narratives**

Trouillot, *Silencing the Past* (1995)

*September 19 is the last day to drop with 33% tuition penalty.*

**Week 4 (9/20): 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Historical Narrative**

Prescott, *History of the Conquest of Mexico* (1843) **SELECTIONS**

*By today you should have looked at the Dictionary of Concepts in History (see assignment below). Please email me one term that you think would not be in a 2017 version and one that you think should be in a 2017 version.*

**Week 5 (9/27): Annales (and Global History I: the Mediterranean)**

Bloch, *Feudal Society* Vol. 1 (1939)

*September 29 is the final drop deadline (67% tuition penalty).*

**Week 6 (10/4): Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (1996).**

**Week 7 (10/11): Marxist History**

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848), Chapter I, "Bourgeois and Proletarians." This is available online at the Marxist Internet Archive.

Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852), Chapter I, beginning with "Hegel remarks somewhere" and ending with "Hic Rhodus, hic salta!" It is about 7 pages. This is available online at the Marxist Internet Archive.

E.P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," *Past & Present* 38 (1967): 56-97.

E.P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past & Present* 50 (1971): 76-136.

**Week 8 (10/18): The Linguistic Turn**

Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (1974)

**Week 9 (10/25): Environmental History**

Cronon, *Changes in the Land* (1983)

**Week 10 (11/1): Gender History**

Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91:5 (December 1986): 1053-1075.

Joanne Meyerowitz, "A History of 'Gender,'" *American Historical Review* 113:5 (December 2008): 1346-1356.

Joan W. Scott, "Unanswered Questions," *American Historical Review* 113:5 (December 2008): 1422-1430.

Toby L. Ditz, "Shipwrecked; or, Masculinity Imperiled: Mercantile Representations of Failure and the Gendered Self in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia," *Journal of American History* 81:1 (June 1994): 51-80.

**Week 11 (11/8): Global History II (Atlantic World and Diaspora)**

John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*

**Week 12 (11/15): Microhistory**

Kierner, *Scandal at Bizarre* (2004)

**Week 13 (11/22): No class. Thanksgiving break.**

**Week 14 (11/29): 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Historical Narrative**

Townsend, *Malintzin's Choices* (2006)

*By today please email me the introductory paragraph (with your thesis statement and an outline/roadmap of the way the paper will unfold). It does not have to be the paragraph you hand in at the end (my thesis always changes as I write the paper) but it is a way to get you started.*

**Week 15 (12/6): Global History III (Commodities)**

Beckert, *Empire of Cotton* (2014)

FINAL PAPER DUE Monday December 18. Please email them to me in Word.

## **History 610 Fall 2017 Final paper assignment**

Due Monday December 18. Please email the papers to me in Word.

Please look at Harry Ritter, *Dictionary of Concepts in History*, Greenwood Press, 1986 (available at Fenwick Library) and discuss:

- a) two entries in the 1986 text that would not appear in a 2017 version
- b) two entries that are not in the 1986 text that would appear in a 2017 version

Explain your answers and tie them together with an overarching thesis that explains some aspect of the historiography we have discussed this semester. Support your ideas with information from at least six texts that we have discussed in class. Feel free to bring in texts and ideas from your other classes, past and present.

The goal of this paper is to demonstrate that 1) you understand the issues we've discussed in class and 2) that you can talk about the books we've read in a confident and comprehensive way.

### **Due dates during the semester:**

September 20: Please email me one term that you think would not be in a 2017 version and one that you think should be in a 2017 version.

November 29: By today please email me the introductory paragraph (with your thesis statement and an outline/roadmap of the way the paper will unfold).

The paper should be between 15 and 25 pages.