

Introduction to World History  
HIST 125-008  
Time: MWF 1:30 pm – 2:20 pm  
Room: Planetary 120

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History is the story of us, a conversation about events, and a study of change over time. Everything has a history. The study of history is based on the interpretation of primary sources; that is, the words and images created by people at the time. We will engage with the material through classroom discussions, conversations in online spaces, and individual analysis. During this class, we will discuss the larger impact of events, and how different events combine to influence later events. At the end of this class, you will be able to construct a rough timeline of historical events. You will also understand the multiple connections between events, the long ranging impacts of historical moments, and you will be able to identify recurring patterns in history.

Throughout the semester, we will be analyzing historical sources, including digital history sources, tools, and presentations. You will learn how to evaluate secondary sources for accuracy, objectivity, and utility. You will learn how to read primary sources for historical value, and how to create a narrative from a collection of primary sources. You will also learn to properly cite your sources, both primary and secondary, and how to support your assertions with good evidence. These skills are widely applicable outside of the historian's workspace; both are valuable critical thinking skills that will help you evaluate news media, political conversations, and even works of fiction.

Readings will be selected from the following:

*Worlds Together Worlds Apart, Volume 2, Concise Edition*, by Elizabeth Pollard

*Victors and Vanquished: Spanish and Nahua Views of the Conquest of Mexico*, by Stuart B. Schwartz

*Religious Transformations in the Early Modern World*, by Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks

*Abina & The Important Men*, by Trevor Getz

*Persepolis Vol. 1*, by Marjane Satrapi

*1989: Democratic Revolutions at the Cold War's End*, by Padraic Kenney

The Internet Modern History Sourcebook: <http://legacy.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/modsbook.asp>  
(assignments noted as links in Blackboard)

**Expectations:** I expect that you will come to class regularly and promptly, that you will complete all of the assigned readings before the class meeting for which they are assigned, that all assignments will be turned in as instructed and on time, and that you will contact me when you have questions or when you have difficulty with class or the material. You may expect that I will reply to all external communications within 24 hours, I will post grades, discussion questions, and project parameters in a timely fashion as noted in the syllabus, I will answer questions during class, I will tell you what I expect for all assignments and will clarify as much as you need, and I will hold our conversations outside of class confidential unless you tell me otherwise.

**Technology Policy:** Students are encouraged to use laptops, tablets, and smartphones in class, but are not required to do so. I will, from time to time, ask that students with devices search for something on the Internet. Please silence all devices at the beginning of class. Please be respectful of your peers and your instructor and do not engage in activities that are unrelated to class. If you choose to use a laptop or tablet as a note-taking device, please be sure to charge it fully before class, as there is a limited number of outlets available in most classrooms on campus. When contacting me via email, use your GMU student email account and email my GMU account.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** The integrity of the university community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using Chicago style format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me.

**Disability Accommodations:** If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (<http://ds.gmu.edu/>). All academic accommodations must be arranged through Disability Services.

**Trigger Warning:** Several of the assigned sources can be upsetting and disturbing. To a degree, this is the point of reading them – learning is an uncomfortable process. If you have specific triggers, please let me know and I will note assignments accordingly. However, this will not release you from the assignment. The trigger warnings are to give you the tools you require to complete the assigned work.

**Late policy:** Some assignments are eligible for late submission. Late assignments incur a 5% penalty for every 24 hours they are late. This includes weekends and holidays.

**Grades:**

**10%: Attendance and Discussion**

Attendance is vital to your success in this class. Each class meeting is worth one point overall. Discussion Days are also included in this portion of your grade. I have assigned 5 supplemental reading books (see book list above), and each book will be discussed in a single class meeting. You must read the book in full before the Discussion Day, as well as completing the Discussion Preparation assignments.

**10%: Prompt Response Homework**

I have posted a list of prompts under the Assignments tab on Blackboard. There is one prompt

for each class meeting. You will draw your responses from the current supplemental book or from assignments on Blackboard, found in the Supplemental Readings folder under the Assignments tab. Once we have our discussion of the primary source collection or graphic history, you will begin reading the next supplemental reading and draw your responses from there. You will turn in a hard copy response to the prompts, either handwritten or typed, at the beginning of each class meeting. Responses are eligible for late submission, and all must be submitted by our last class meeting, Friday, December 7.

### **10%: Twitter**

Create a professional Twitter handle for this class and follow @ProfBizri, and I will follow you back. You must follow all your classmates and the Graduate Teaching Assistant and tweet at least 3 times per “Twitter week,” which is Monday-Sunday. For example, the first Twitter week runs from Monday, August 27 to Sunday, September 2. The final week for credit ends December 9. All Twitter handles should be set and following by Wednesday, August 29, by 11: 59 pm. Include the hashtag #HIST125008F18 in your tweets, so I may identify your section. You will earn 3 points for following @ProfBizri by the deadline and 1 point for each Tweet about history, to a maximum of 3 points per week. *The Twitter assignment happens in real time and is NOT eligible for late submission.*

I want to see what histories interest you. You may tweet about the history of a favorite sport, hobby, or your major. You may use Twitter for class purposes. You can post a question or comment on one of the assigned readings or something interesting you found online. You can respond to someone else’s tweet. You may post questions that come up during class, live-tweet lectures, or post a current news article that is relevant to class. On Discussion Days, you may tweet your comments, respond to another student’s question, or have a conversation with classmates about the book being discussed.

### **15%: Research Project**

You will select at least four primary sources that address a specific and narrow topic, state a thesis, and make an argument based on your analysis of the sources. You will summarize each source and analyze their contents for historical information. You will provide historical context and explain how the four sources work together to tell a story. Your thesis will be the story the sources tell, and you will use the sources as evidence for your argument. The topic should be one that interests you, because you will be doing independent research on it. You may use non-textual resources.

Thesis: A conclusion you have drawn based on your interpretation of the readings.

Argument: The use of evidence to support your thesis.

Evidence: Excerpts, themes, and concepts from the readings that support your conclusion.

**Please note:** This is a research *project*. You may write a paper or create a digital presentation. The paper should be 5-7 typed, double spaced pages. The digital presentation’s parameters depend on the type, so you will need to schedule an appointment with me in my office hours to set your parameters.

This is your opportunity to be creative! For example, if you are interested in the history of

medical practices, you can use sources on medical treatment from the Internet History Sourcebook on how doctors treated smallpox around the world. Alternately, you may find several different perspectives on the same problem – for example, how did other empires view Dutch expansion in southeast Asia? You may consider large historical problems and find sources that show how perspectives on it have changed over time – good examples of this are the treatment of slaves and the treatment of women.

The project is due **Monday, November 19**. If you are submitting a paper, you must have the hard copy in class. If you are doing a digital project, you must email me the link by the beginning of class on Monday.

### **15%: Research Process**

The following assignments are a part of a research process and will be graded individually. While these assignments are a separate grade, they will greatly improve your project overall.

1. *Broad topic or research question*: Submit either a broad topic you would like to learn more about or a historical question you would like answered. The topic or question should be broad at this point. Examples of a topic would be the history of the automobile or the history of French resistance in World War II. Examples of a research question would be “How did religion influence westward exploration?” or “What was the role of the Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade?” **Due September 10**
2. *Primary source selection*: You will select a primary source that address your chosen research topic. You will write a short essay (1-2 pages) about the source in which you describe the source, summarize it, and explain the questions it raises. **Due September 24**
3. *Historical context essay*. You will write a short essay (2-3 pages) situating your source in the historical moment in which it was created. This will be based on secondary source research, using at least 3 secondary sources. Secondary sources are sources created by scholars from primary sources. You may use no more than one encyclopedia entry. This assignment will require you attach a bibliography page. **Due October 15**
4. *Primary Source Analysis*: You will analyze at least one of your primary sources by addressing each of the questions below. You will write your answer as an essay. You will cite the source using Chicago style format. (See Blackboard for links to format guides.) The source analysis should be 1-2 pages in length. Submit hard copies, Times New Roman font, size 12 point, stapled. **Due October 29**
  - a. Identify the source.
  - b. Summarize the source.
  - c. Who is the intended audience?
  - d. What is the author’s goal? (What is the main idea or thesis of the source?)
  - e. Why is the source important? (So what?)
5. *Workshop Day*. Bring a rough draft to class with you. You will be divided into work groups and you will peer review each other’s drafts. You will critique the paper’s clarity, grammar, structure, and any specific issues for which the writer has requested feedback. **November 12: bring a hard copy and a pen to class.**

### **15%: Quizzes**

There will be three quizzes during the semester. Quizzes will be based on lecture and readings.

They will test you on facts –who, what, when, and where – that we covered in the preceding weeks of class. You will be expected to do basic analysis and synthesis.

**15%: Final Exam**

The final will be comprehensive. No blue books or Scantron sheets required. The exam will require more analysis and synthesis than the quizzes. I will expect you to make judgement calls on the exam based on what you have learned over the semester, and that you will defend them with examples from class.

**10%: What Did I Miss? Secondary Source Project**

The nature of a survey course means a great deal of information will be left out. After the majority of the term has passed, you will research an event, location, or person you believe should have been included. You will assess the available digital secondary sources and select the best one on the topic. You will determine criteria for what makes the source the “best” one. You may submit an existing source, or you may create your own secondary source. Sources must be freely accessible – that is, not behind a paywall or requiring a credential to view.

Secondary sources can be scholarly or popular, and can come from any freely accessible site on the Internet. They can be ridiculous or serious, as long as they fulfill the criteria you establish for the “best” secondary sources. Social media and online videos are the most common submissions.

You may also create a new digital secondary source for this project. If you opted to do a digital presentation for your research project, you must select a new topic for this project. A source you create must meet all the parameters of the assignment. Again, social media are the most commonly created digital sources.

The submission period is between Monday, November 26 and the final class period, Friday, December 7. This is an online submission, through Blackboard, and must be submitted by 11:59 pm on December 7.

**Extra Credit:**

You may attempt any, or all, extra credit opportunities. You may earn a maximum of 10% extra credit overall. Pokemon Go! and the Random Extra Credit points are added together, and you will earn a percentage based on how many points you earn between the two. For example, if a total of 30 extra credit points are offered over term, and you earn 24, you will earn 8% extra credit points. Whatever you earn between Pokemon Go! and Random Extra Credit will be added to the points you earn for Yelp.com reviews, to maximum of 10%.

The percentage is applied to your regular credit grade. For example, if you earn 89/100 overall in the class, and the full 10% extra credit allowed, you will earn 8.9 points to add to your final grade, making it 97.8/100.

**Yelp.com Review:**

Visit a historical site and write a Yelp review of it. Include the site’s mission, their interpretation of the history, and how your visit went. Each portion of the review must be substantive, with specific examples. Yelp reviews are graded on a scale of one to five. A review that earns a grade

of 5/5 earns 1% extra credit overall.

You may submit up to **TEN** Yelp reviews over the course of the term, and you may submit a maximum of two per week. Reviews must be posted live to Yelp.com. They must be shared on your class Twitter account to be graded.

The review itself must answer the following six questions:

1. Is there a fee?
2. Who is the intended audience for the site? (Who is it for?)
3. When did you visit?
4. What makes up the site? (A monument? A park? A building?)
5. What is the site's mission? Does it succeed?
6. What is your reasoning for the rating you gave?

### **Pokemon Go!:**

This opportunity focuses on historical landmark signs – the roadside markers detailing a significant event that happened in that location. You will locate the sign and either use the app to catch a monster on the sign or take a selfie with the sign. Either will show that you were at the sign. You may submit up to **TEN** unique signs.

### **Random Extra Credit:**

I will occasionally offer Random Extra Credit in class, in addition to the opportunities listed above. To complete the Random Extra Credit, you must be in class to hear the brief.

### **Schedule**

Week 1: 27-31 August

Chapter 11: Crisis and Recovery in Afro-Eurasia, 1300-1500

**29 August: Twitter Account set up**

Week 2: 3-7 September

**3 September: No Class – Labor Day**

Chapter 12: Contact, Commerce, and Colonization, 1450-1600

Week 3: 10-14 September

**10 September: Research Topic Due**

**12 September: *Victors & Vanquished* Discussion Day**

Chapter 13: Worlds Entangled, 1600-1750

Week 4: 17-21 September

**21 September: Quiz #1**

Chapter 14: Cultures of Splendor and Power, 1500-1780

Week 5: 24-28 September

**24 September: Primary Source Selection Essay due**

Chapter 15: Reordering the World, 1750-1850

Week 6: 1-5 October

**3 October: *Religious Transformations in the Early Modern World* Discussion Day**

Week 7: 8-12 October

**8 October: No Class – Fall Break**

**\*Class Meets on Tuesday, 9 October**

Chapter 16: Alternative Visions of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

Week 8: 15-19 October

**15 October: Historical Context Essay due**

**19 October: Quiz #2**

Chapter 17: Nations and Empires, 1850-1914

Week 9: 22-26 October

Chapter 18: An Unsettled World, 1890-1914

**24 October: *Abina & The Important Men* Discussion Day**

Week 10: 29 October – 2 November

Chapter 19: Of Masses and Visions of the Modern, 1919-1939

**29 October: Primary Source Analysis Essay due**

Week 11: 5-9 November

Chapter 20: The Three-World Order, 1940-1975

**9 November: Quiz #3**

Week 12: 12-16 November

**12 November: Workshop Day**

**16 November: *Persepolis* Discussion Day**

Week 13: 19-23 November

**\*No Class 21-23 November – Thanksgiving break**

**19 November: Research Project due**

Week 14: 26-30 November

Chapter 21: Globalization, 1970-2000

Week 15: 3-7 December

Epilogue: 2001-The Present

**3 December: 1989 Discussion Day**

**7 December: What Did I Miss? Project due by 11:59 pm**

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 18, 1:30 pm – 4:15 pm

**\*\*Please be advised, the syllabus may change. All changes will be posted to Blackboard.**