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Historical Analysis Goals

By the end of the course, students will have refined their ability to:

- interpret a primary source (historical document) by analyzing its structure, audience, goals, and biases;
- identify and critique the argument of a secondary source (a book or article by a present-day historian), while situating that source within a larger historical debate or literature.
- evaluate and synthesize the ideas in a body of historical writings;
- explain the manner in which historical analysis of the past often differs from analyses by other types of scholars.

Writing and Discussion Goals

By the end of the semester, students will have improved their ability to:

- craft a clear, specific, and nuanced thesis statement in response to a historical question;
- construct a well-organized, evidence-rich, and cohesive paper in defense of a central argument.
- present their ideas orally in class, using evidence to support their ideas or to add nuance to the larger discussion.

Keep these goals in mind throughout the semester. Class discussions will be based on the analysis of primary sources and secondary sources; writing assignments will be graded based on your ability to develop a nuanced thesis and to defend that thesis in a well-organized paper.

Assignments and grading

Your grade in this class will be based on the following requirements. Note that you must hand in every written assignment in order to pass the class, and that if your grades improve steadily over the course of the semester, I will take that into consideration in deciding your final grade:

Film analysis (15%). A 2-page analysis of the film *A Midwife's Tale* due on Friday, September 10, at 5:00 PM by email. A revised version of this paper will then be due on Friday, September 17, at 5:00 PM.

Short paper (15%). A 3-page analysis on the history of things that aren't people, due on Monday, October 4, at 10:00 PM (by email.) A revised version is due on Monday, October 11, at 10:00 PM.

Oral history analysis (20%). A 4-to-5-page analysis of the oral history interviews of the Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System (available online), which looks at life under Stalin; this paper will be due at 5:00 PM on Friday, November 19; a revised version will be due on Friday, December 3, at 5:00 PM.

Annotated bibliography with introduction (20%). Your final assignment of the semester will be to write a research guide to a topic that interests you. There will be several preliminary due dates, with the final project due on December 17.

Class participation

- You should therefore come to class with copies of the day's reading and with your notes on what you've read. (You are welcome to bring the readings either in hard copies or on a computer, but you should remember that it is often easier to mark significant passages in a paper copy of the readings.) In particular, I recommend that you make note of quotations and details in the readings that you find especially compelling.
- Although I hope that all students will take part in the discussion (ideally speaking at least once per class session on average), remember that the thoughtfulness of your comments is generally more important than the quantity of your remarks.

I also realize that some students will always be more talkative or more reserved than others. I'm happy to talk to you at any time about ways you might become more involved, and I think it's part of my job to make sure the classroom atmosphere is conducive to a broad, inclusive discussion.

Students sometimes ask if talking to me in office hours can substitute for participation in class. My answer: not entirely. Talking to me in class can show engagement with the material, so if you've been quiet in class, it can help me understand how you've related to course materials. (If you've been active in class, I'm also happy to talk to you, but coming to office hours won't improve your grade.) On the other hand, I value class participation in part because discussion helps all your classmates to understand the course material and to have a good class experience, so coming to office hours is never a perfect substitute for class discussion.

- Class participation depends on attendance. I'll therefore keep track of your attendance throughout the semester; in normal times, I would lower your participation grade if you missed class more than three times and (in general) give a participation grade of F or zero to students who missed more than six times. My main suggestion for COVID times: please keep in touch with me if you're missing class! I am prepared to

discuss course readings in more detail, to answer questions, to talk about the history major, or to discuss any academic questions that might concern you.

Academic accommodations

Grinnell College makes reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students need to provide documentation to the Coordinator for Student Disability Resources, John Hirschman. Students should then notify me within the first few days of classes so that we can discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course and coordinate your accommodations.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

Unit One: What is History?

Friday, August 27: Introduction to the Course

Monday, August 30: What is History?

Reading: John Arnold, *History: A Very Short Introduction*, pp. 1-14
Annette Gordon-Reed, "Origin Stories: Africans in Texas" [Pioneerweb]

Wednesday, September 1: Sources, Facts, and Interpretations

Reading: Arnold, pp. 15-79
Assignment: email me 4 important quotations from Arnold that you feel capture his approach to history (deadline: Tuesday, August 31, at 10 PM)

Friday, September 3: Is the Past a Foreign Country?

Reading: Robert Darnton, "Workers Revolt: The Great Cat Massacre of the Rue St. Severin" [Pioneerweb]

Monday, September 6: How to Read a Source

Reading: Arnold, 80-109
short primary sources [Pioneerweb]

Wednesday, September 8: A Midwife's Tale

Viewing: watch the film *A Midwife's Tale* available at the following URL:
https://fod.infobase.com/p_ViewVideo.aspx?xtid=44085

Friday, September 10: A Midwife's Tale, continued

Reading: Reading: Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale* excerpts [Pioneerweb]

Reading: selection of fairy tales from Perrault and Afanas'ev [Pioneerweb]

Wednesday, September 29: Folklore and French Peasant Life

Reading: Robert Darnton, "Peasants Tell Tales" [Pioneerweb]

Friday, October 1: Slavery, Sex, and Politics in Early America

Reading: James Thomson Callender, "The President, Again" [Pioneerweb]
Madison Hemings, "Recollections of Madison Hemings" [Pioneerweb]
Venetria Patton and Ronald Jemal Stevens, "Competing Truths in the Thomas
Jefferson-Sally Hemings Paternity Dispute" [Pioneerweb]

Monday, October 4: The Hemings Story

Reading: Dd61 0 Td[()-4 (n)-4 ((eer)-1 (w)-2 4 (s)-oDn (od J)-11 (e)42tyo8)-4 (o)-4 (f)tTjEMC :lings" [P

Monday, November 15: Stalin and the Cult of Personality

Reading: Jan Plamper, *The Stalin Cult* excerpts [Pioneerweb]
Sarah Davies, "Stalin and the Making of the Leader Cult" [Pioneerweb] Sarah
Davies, "The Leader Cult in Official Discourse" [Pioneerweb]

Wednesday, November 17: The Terror

Reading: Eugenia Ginzburg, *Journey into the Whirlwind*, excerpts [Pioneerweb]

Friday, November 19:

Reading:

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Unit Seven: Summing Things Up
The Story of a Woman in 19th-Century Japan

Monday, December 6: Telling the Story of a Japanese Woman

Reading: Amy Stanley, *Stranger in the Shogun's City: A Japanese Woman and Her World*,
pp. xvii-f()-9()-1gc o1.13 Td()TjEMC /P 6