

**Syllabus
History 607
Fall Quarter 2009**

Professor Peggy Pascoe
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Class Meets: 123 McKenzie Hall, Wednesdays, 5:00 p.m.

Course Goals:

History 607 is a graduate-level research seminar in which the central assignment is for each of you to prepare a substantial, 25-page research paper based on primary sources. (The hope is that you'll be writing papers good enough to submit for publication and/or to eventually become part of your thesis or dissertation).

To this end, I'm going to emphasize four criteria, over and over again. To my mind, at least, the best history research papers:

- depend on an abundance of well-selected and well-analyzed primary sources
- use those sources to develop of a compelling historical argument
- place that argument in the context of existing scholarship and secondary sources
- demonstrate both originality and a persuasive claim to a larger significance.

Required Readings:

Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis"

Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s*, 1994 ed.

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, vol. 1.

Selected articles written by graduate students and published in the *Journal of American History*.

Grades:

As in most graduate-level courses, your grade for this course will depend primarily on the quality of your final research paper. Keep in mind, though, that since each of several smaller, building-block assignments listed on the syllabus will help you write your final paper--and because all the students in the class will benefit from your participation--I will lower the grades of students who do not complete the assigned readings, participate in class discussions, and complete each assignment in time for the due dates. The due dates for all assignments are clearly marked on the syllabus, and I'll expect to see all your final papers in their most polished form on **Wednesday, December 9, 2009 by 5:00 p.m.**

Class Schedule and Assignments:

Wed, Sept 30

Introductions

Sign up for Reading Presentations

Sign up for Article Analysis Presentations

Announcements (Oregon heritage; OSU Lecture; grant-writing info; health issues)

Initial discussion of research topics

Wed, Oct 7

Reading Presentations on Scott, Omi and Winant, and Foucault (see pp. 4-5)

Hand in **Paper Topic Assignment** (see p. 6)

Wed, Oct 14

Article Analysis Presentations (see pp. 7-9)

Discussion: Taking Research Notes

Wed, Oct 21

Article Analysis Presentations (see pp. 7-9)

Hand in **Annotated Bibliography Assignment** (see p. 10)

Wed, Oct 28

Discussions:

What makes a good paper introduction?

How does your paper relate to the existing scholarship?

Wed, Nov 4

Outlines, Outlines, Outlines

Come to class with four copies of at least one outline for the bulk of your paper (and alternative outlines, too, if you wish). Your outlines need not be lengthy, or contain fancy numbering schemes; the idea is that when other students look at your outline, they should be able to see its brilliance at a glance. One copy will be turned in to me at the end of class; I'll read it and give you a response by email.

Wed, Nov 11

Discussions:

How to Solve Problems

How to Keeping Going Despite all the Distractions

Wed, Nov 18

Finishing Touches: Titles, Subtitles, Citations

One More Time: Why is Your Paper New and Significant?

Wed, Nov 25

NO CLASS: Work on your Paper Drafts, which should be complete by December 2.

Wed, Dec 2

This is our last regular class. Rather than ask each of you to make a formal presentation about your paper, I'm going to ask you to read 3 pages of your paper out loud in class. Any three pages will do, though I encourage you to choose something that gets at the heart of your argument.

Student Exchange Assignment: Bring 2 copies of your paper draft (which should, by now, be nearly complete) to exchange with other students, and prepare to read and comment on two other students' papers by noon on **Saturday, December 5th**. (This is a student exchange only; I will read your final papers next week).

Wed, Dec 9

Your final papers are due in my office by 5:00 p.m. on **Wednesday, December 9th**. If I'm not in when you arrive, just slip your paper under my door, and, of course, be sure to keep an extra copy somewhere safe. If you're worried about whether I've received your paper, just send me an email; I'll be happy to confirm that it arrived safe and sound.

Reading Presentation Assignment
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Background: The idea of this assignment is to make you familiar with three classic pieces of scholarship on the history and theory of gender, race, and sexuality:

Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," originally published in 1986

Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s*, originally published in 1986, though we will read the 1994 edition.

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, vol. 1, originally published in 1978.

Directions: I'm going to divide our class into 3 groups, each of which will focus on presenting one of these three works to the rest of the class on **Wednesday, October 7** (although, of course, I want all of you to read significant parts of all three of the assigned works). I encourage you to choose the work group that will cover the topic you know the least about; that is, if you're especially interested in the history of race, I encourage you to choose either Scott or Foucault, so that you'll learn something about the history and conceptualization of gender or sexuality, too.

Once your group has been formed, I want you to read your chosen work and prepare with your group an oral report to the class. You may assume that your work dramatically changed the way scholars thought of its particular subject. Each of these books spends a great deal of time debunking the scholarship that came before it, scholarship that will now, I suspect, sound hopelessly antiquated to you. That's fine, because I'd rather you spend relatively little time on what each of these writers is arguing *against*, and instead focus your attention on the conception of gender, race, or sexuality that each of these writers is arguing *for*. Tell us what the elements of that conception of gender, race, or sexuality are; how you think they might compare to our working understandings of the other topics (gender, race, or sex), and give us any examples you can think of that show how this author or authors' ideas have been used in other works of history/scholarship with which you are familiar. My hope is to give you a working genealogy of the most dominant ways of thinking about race, gender, and sexuality, partly so that you'll know where our disciplines have been coming from on these subjects, and partly so that you can begin to think about how these concepts may be in need of re-thinking, perhaps in your own work.

Ground Rules: Your group's report should be no longer than 10 minutes in total length, and everyone in your group should participate. The idea is to get us started discussing each of these three classic works, and, eventually, to generate a conversation about how

they might related to each other. This assignment is oral only; it need not be handed in, and will not be formally graded.

**Paper Topic Assignment
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Come to class on **Wednesday, October 7** with a one or two paragraph written description of the topic of your paper, as you see it right now, after your summer's work thinking through all the possibilities. Pose your research question as clearly as possible, and include any information you can (at this point) about your probable findings and their significance.

Attach a discussion of the primary sources you will be using for your project. This can take the form of a simple list, or a longer, text-based discussion, but in either case, your goal is to convince me that you've located enough primary sources to be able to sustain a promising 25-page research paper.

I'll read your assignments and get back to you individually by email before our next class.

Article Analysis Presentation Assignment
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Background: Here, to get you started, is a description of the annual competition for the Louis Pelzer Memorial Award from the website of the Organization of American Historians.

The Louis Pelzer Memorial Award was first given in 1949 for the best essay in American history by a graduate student. The prize is \$500, a medal, a certificate and publication of the essay in the *Journal of American History*. The essay may be about any period or topic in the history of the United States, and the author must be enrolled in a graduate program at any level, in any field. Entries should not exceed 7,000 words (including endnotes) and should be mailed to the office of the Journal of American History, 1125 E. Atwater, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47401. The deadline is December 1. Louis Pelzer was president of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association 1935-36 and was editor of the Mississippi Valley Historical Review 1941-46. The year noted for the award is the year in which the award was given. Submissions were received during the year prior to that year. The winning essay is published in the *Journal of American History*.

Directions: Choose a working partner for this assignment, and the two of you choose one article from the list of selected past winners of the Pelzer Prize below. Choose an article that you and your partner would like to analyze in some depth, and come to class on your assigned day prepared to analyze the following aspects of your chosen article:

- its primary sources
- its historical argument
- its relationships to secondary sources and established scholarship
- its claims to originality and larger significance

Finish your report by telling us about the strengths and weaknesses of your article; why you think the selection committee for the Pelzer Award might have chosen it; and whether there are any elements of this article you might be able to use in developing your own research.

List of Articles:

1990 Leslie J. Reagan, "'About to Meet Her Maker': Dying Declarations, Inquests, and the Investigation of Criminal Abortion Deaths, Chicago, 1895-1940," (JAH, March 1991)

Partners/Presentation Date:

1991 Jodi Vandenberg-Daves, "Pursuing a Partnership between the Sexes: The Debate over Programs for Women and Girls in the Young Men's Christian Association, 1914-1933," (JAH, March 1992)

Partners/Presentation Date:

1992 Margaret T. McFadden, "'America's Boyfriend Who Can't Get a Date': Gender, Race, and the Cultural Work of the Jack Benny Program, 1932-1946" (JAH, June 1993)

Partners/Presentation Date:

1996 Jeffrey P. Moran, "'Modernism Gone Mad': Sex Education Comes to Chicago, 1913" (JAH, September 1996)

Partners/Presentation Date:

1997 Richard C. Rath, "Echo and Narcissus: The Afrocentric Pragmatism of W.E.B. DuBois" (JAH, September 1997)

Partners/Presentation Date:

1998 Mae M. Ngai, "The Architecture of Race in Immigration Law: A Reexamination of the Immigration Act of 1924" (JAH, June 1999)

Partners/Presentation Date:

2002 Lauren Rebecca Sklaroff, University of Virginia, "Constructing G.I. Joe Louis: Cultural Solutions to the 'Negro Problem' during World War II" (JAH, December 2002)

Partners/Presentation Date:

2003 Margot Canaday, University of Minnesota, "Building a Straight State: Sexuality and Social Citizenship under the 1944 G.I. Bill" (JAH, December 2003)

Partners/Presentation Date:

2004 Danielle McGuire, Rutgers University, "'It Was Like All of Us Had Been Raped': Black Womanhood, White Violence, and the Civil Rights Movement" (JAH, December 2004)

Partners/Presentation Date:

2005 Kevin Dawson, University of South Carolina, "Enslaved Swimmers and Divers in the Atlantic World." (JAH, March 2006)

Partners/Presentation Date:

2006 Wendy Anne Warren, Yale University, "'The Cause of Her Grief': The Rape of a Slave Woman in Early New England" (JAH, March 2007)

Partners/Presentation Date:

2007 Andrew W. Kahrl, Indiana University, "'Why the Police at No. 4 'Get Busy' When They Hear the Whistle of the 'Razor Beach' Boat': Steamboat Excursions, Pleasure Resorts, and the Emergence of Segregation Culture on the Potomac River, 1890-1920" (JAH, March 2008 - Title "'The Slightest Semblance of Unruliness': Steamboat Excursions, Pleasure Resorts, and the Emergence of Segregation Culture on the Potomac River)

Partners/Presentation Date:

Annotated Bibliography Assignment
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Over the summer, you all worked hard to identify a list of secondary scholarship (books and articles by other scholars/historians) that would be most important to your research papers. For this assignment, which is due in class on **Wednesday, October 21**, I'd like you to begin by choosing the 10 most important citations on your list. Include books and articles that you think are important arguments on your subject, that you found inspirational, or that you disagree with and plan to revise or challenge in your own work.

List each book or article in the exact same form you will use in the bibliography for your paper; that is, in *Chicago Manual of Style* bibliographic form.

(If you need help with this, see the library's cheat sheet on the web at:

<http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/citing/chicago.html#refs-sample>, but be sure to follow the bibliography examples, rather than the footnote examples.)

Under each citation, put an annotation for that work. An annotation should be no more than one paragraph long. In it, you should mention the sources, coverage, argument, and significance of each article or book, and tell how it relates to your own research.

There are three good reasons for this assignment:

- 1) it will ensure that you've read and thoroughly digested your secondary bibliographies.
- 2) it will give me a means of reviewing the existing literature in your field, so that I can see how your research fits in with and/or challenges the current scholarship.
- 3) it will give you your first practice at building the kind of bibliography that is routinely required as part of national grant competitions, which award funding for researching and writing outstanding theses and dissertations.