



History 3000: Introduction to Historical Studies
Spring 2007 (CRN 15991)
Arts and Humanities, Rm. 319
TT 5:30 - 7:10 p.m.

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Course design

COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION: Hist 3000. Introduction to Historical Studies. (4) The nature of historical knowledge and analysis, historical resources in Atlanta-area research libraries and archives, and exercises in historical writing and thinking.

In line with this description, completion of this course will allow you to

1. Access, utilize, and cite various types of historical materials, with special attention to Internet and electronic resources;
2. Understand and describe the difference between primary and secondary historical sources, and apply critical analysis to their interpretation;
3. Design and carry out a small research project utilizing archival materials, and present the results in oral and written formats using correct citation forms;
4. Discuss the relationship between historical theory or thinking and its sources.
5. Write proficiently, because in this course, we write as well as discuss.

We have all heard the phrase, "The facts speak for themselves." *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection* (5th ed., 2005), our core book of readings, will make us think twice the next time we hear this phrase. What are the facts? How are they selected? How are they interpreted? Is their selection and interpretation skewed – deliberately or, perhaps, unintentionally? We'll talk about this in class, assisted by the very practical and useful *A Student's Guide to History* (10th ed., 2007).

As historians, we need to be aware of the full range of "facts" and how to "read" them. Where do we find them? How do we assemble them? How do we write them up? We can't collect every precious fact, or pack every fact into a paper (or exam). How do we determine selection principles . . . and organizing themes? Are we guided by a thesis? Is it clearly stated?

Students must do *all the readings* for each class. Formerly, I had *every* student write full responses to every chapter of ATF (*After the Fact*), because those chapters are so insightful and fun. To save you time, for most chapters of ATF I am designating groups of students (groups #1, 2, and 3, in rotation) to write full responses. Those not writing full responses will be asked *in class* to write briefer comments. This means you must attend every class, and must get to class on time – otherwise your grade will be a zero. If this is a problem, talk to me at the beginning of the term. Written assignments turned in *after their due date* will suffer a late penalty.

You must not miss scheduled special sessions such as the GSU Library Instruction session or Carter Archives visit. The things you learn at these sessions are essential to the success of this course, and cannot be repeated or duplicated. Clear your calendars.

Grading (no midterm or final exam; **pluses and minuses** given – explained under www.gsu.edu/es)

55 percent of the course grade: "full" writing exercises (as contained in the syllabus, including ATF readings). These will each be graded on a 10-point scale. Written comments on the book *1421: The Year China Discovered America* (2004) and a related item will be evaluated on a 40-point scale. At the end of the term, all these will be collectively adjusted to constitute **60 percent** of the course grade.

20 percent of the course grade: in-class writing responses (brief responses to ATF, etc.), presence and participation. (Missed in-class responses may be substituted by *full* responses for a grade.)

25 percent: archives research project. This consists of several parts: scheduled visit to the Jimmy Carter Library (date: **Thursday, February 8**) . . . return visit(s) to research your topics of choice. . . oral presentation of findings to the class. . . submission as a written paper of about five pages (observe guidelines). The written paper is **due on Thursday, April 26**, at the time of **our last scheduled class**.

Books for purchase:

Davidson, James West and Mark Hamilton Lytle, *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection* (5th ed.; Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005)

Benjamin, Jules R., *A Student's Guide to History* (10th ed.; Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007).

Menzies, Gavin, *1421: The Year China Discovered America* (New York: HarperCollins, Perennial edition, 2004). Case of the "art of historical detection" (subtitle of *After the Fact*, above), applied to China and the world. Menzies claims that "accepted history has been turned upside down" (p. 491). You be the judge. (Check out its **web site** www.1421.tv)

Schedule of topics and reading assignments**WEEK 1. January 9**

Introduction to course and to the major in History; "Class profile data";

"How Internet Savvy are You?" (in-class survey)

January 11 – Q. What are historians trying to do, and how do they go about it?

Read (and bring to class): *After the Fact*, pp. v-x: "About the Authors," contents, preface

Benjamin, pp. v-xvii: preface, contents, note to students, **ch. 1**, pp. 1-17, and App. B on historical sources in your own backyard, pp. 245 – 249. Inside front cover **pay particular attention** to list of "Guidelines Boxes" and "Using Technology for Research and Writing"; inside back cover see "Directory: Documentation Models"

handout in class: "GSU Department of History Statement on Academic Honesty"; see also comments on **plagiarism** in Benjamin, pp. 56, 75, 115-118, and 131-132.

WEEK 2. January 16

"**HOW TO STUDY**" (readings from Benjamin)

Benjamin, ch. 2, SKIM pp. 19-56 (on how to read an assignment, take notes in class, prepare for exams)

January 18

On "facts" and "history"

Read: *After the Fact*, "Introduction," and "**Prologue: The Strange Death of Silas Deane**," pp. xi-xxxi.

DUE (all students): responses to Silas Deane reading, with comments on the Web Site.

- Hand out Library Information Sheet (**for Library Information Session, on January 23**).

WEEK 3. January 23

Library session TODAY – today's reading and today's session to be discussed on January 25

Read Benjamin, 84-100, App. A on reference sources, pp. 185-197 (skim 197-243).

NOTE "H-Net," 243.

*****GSU Library Information Session, with Joel Glogowski, GSU Library**

Bring Library Information Session assignment - **DUE (all students) Tuesday, January 30**

January 25

Social history based on primary sources: *After the Fact*, Ch. 1: "Serving Time in Virginia," pp. 1-23.

DUE (all students): responses to the question sheet, with comments on the Web Site.

WEEK 4. January 30:

Hysteria in history: *After the Fact*, Ch. 2: "The Visible and Invisible Worlds of Salem: Studying Crisis at the Community Level," pp. 24-48.

DUE (group 1): responses to ATF question sheet; **(all students): Library assignment**

February 1

Documentary analysis: *After the Fact*, Ch. 3: "Declaring Independence: The Strategies of Documentary Analysis," pp. 49-72

Handout: "Interpreting the Declaration of Independence by Translation: A Round Table," *The Journal of American History*, vol. 85, no. 4 (March 1999). Individual articles discuss translations of the Declaration into dozens of different languages, and their impact.

DUE (group 2): responses to the question sheet, with comments on the Web Site

WEEK 5. February 6

Grand theories: *After the Fact*, Ch. 5: "Jackson's Frontier – and Turner's: History and Grand Theory," pp. 99-123

DUE: 1) (group 3) responses to the question sheet, AND 2) (all students) – 5 points:

A brief written description of what you found *at each of the following:*

- 1) type in www.jimmycarterlibrary.org . . .
- 2) click on **Library/Research** at top of page . . .
- 3) click on **Manuscript Collections**. . .
- 4) click on **Jimmy Carter Presidential Materials** (scroll down to "List of Subject Categories" – the most important part of this search - note "volume" column for quantity of materials. **WHAT DID YOU FIND? WHAT LOOKS GOOD TO YOU?**)

February 8: JIMMY CARTER LIBRARY (5:30 – 6:45 p.m.) – (details explained in class)

"Introduction to the Jimmy Carter Library and Archives," with **Mr. Albert Nason**, Archivist, National Archives and Records Administration / Jimmy Carter Library

- **Driving directions: follow MAP handout. From GSU, take Freedom Parkway, enter at first entrance on left at sign, "Oversized Vehicles." Park there, next to Carter Library.**

WEEK 6. February 13

Benjamin, ch. 4, "How to Research a History Topic," pp. 77-120 (including pp. 119-120 of ch. 5).

DUE (ALL students): summarize Benjamin's meaning when he speaks of needing to "decide on a topic, narrow the topic to a theme, and then refine the theme into a thesis" (p. 77) as on the question sheet)

-- class will begin by talking about the Carter Library visit and Benjamin's discussion, including about choosing a topic from materials at the Carter Archives

February 15. No class – use time for Carter Library research project

WEEK 7. February 20

Ecological transformations: *After the Fact*, Ch. 6: "The Invisible Pioneers: Ecological Transformations along the Western Frontier," pp. 124-149

DUE (group 1): responses to the question sheet, with comments on the Web Site.

February 22

Uses of psychohistory: *After the Fact*, Ch. 7: "The Madness of John Brown: The Uses of Psychohistory," pp. 150-175 . . . plus

Benjamin, ch. 3 on how to write history assignments, pp. 57-75.

DUE: (group 2): responses to *After the Fact* question sheet and to questions on Benjamin

Week 8. February 27

Oral history / African Americans: *After the Fact*, Ch. 8: "The View from the Bottom Rail: Oral History and the Freedpeople," pp. 177-209

DUE (group 3): responses to the question sheet, with comments on the Web Site.

March 1

Photographic evidence: *After the Fact*, Ch. 9: "The Mirror with a Memory: Photographic Evidence and the Urban Scene," pp. 210-233

DUE (group 1): responses to the question sheet (without a web site assignment), and to questions on Benjamin, ch. 5 on how to write a research paper, pp. 119-161 (skim 161-184).

MARCH 3 – 11 (NO CLASSES – Spring break)

Week 9. March 13

Politics and regulation: *After the Fact*, Ch. 10: "USDA Government Inspected: The Jungle of Political History," pp. 234-261

DUE (group 2): responses to the question sheet, with comments on the Web Site.

March 15

History versus law: *After the Fact*, Ch. 11: "Sacco and Vanzetti: The Case of History versus Law," pp. 262-288

DUE (group 3): responses to the question sheet, with comments on the Web Site.

VIDEO: "Sacco and Vanzetti," film by Peter Miller (2006; 81 mins.)

WEEK 10. March 20

Migration in history: *After the Fact*, Ch. 12: "Dust Bowl Odyssey: The Collective History of a Migration," pp. 289-316

DUE (group 1): responses to the question sheet, with comments on the Web Site.

March 22

The A-Bomb and Uses of "Models" in Decision-making: *After the Fact*, Ch. 13:

"The Decision to Drop the Bomb: The Uses of Models in History," pp. 317-345

DUE (group 2): responses to the question sheet, with comments on the Web Site.

WEEK 11. March 27 – no class (use time for Carter Library research project)

March 29

Images and women in the mass media: *After the Fact*, Ch. 14: "From Rosie to Lucy," pp. 346-373

DUE (group 3): responses to the question sheet, with comments on the Web Site.

VIDEO: "A Midwife's Tale" (1997; 88 mins.). Historian Laurel Ulrich, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *A Midwife's Tale* (1991) recounts the life and times of Maine midwife Martha Ballard, from Ballard's 27-year diary (1785-1812), in the turbulent decades after the American Revolution. A classic example of women's history, of what historians do - and how they do it.

Week 12. April 3 (hand out readings for "Chinese historiography" and questions for Menzies book, due Thursday, April 12)

Audiotapes in the Watergate scandal: *After the Fact*, Ch. 15: "Breaking into Watergate: Plumbing a Presidency through Audiotapes," pp. 374-399

DUE (group 1): responses to the question sheet, with comments on the Web Site.

April 5

History and Myth in Films: *After the Fact*, Ch., 15: "Where Trouble Comes: History and Myth in the Films of Vietnam," pp. 364-95.

DUE (group 2): responses to the question sheet, with comments on the Web Site

WEEK 13. April 10 - no class (finish “Chinese historiography” and Menzies, respond to questions)

April 12

Reynolds: lecture on “Chinese Traditions of History and Historiography”

DUE (all students): responses (40 points) to questions for
Menzies, *1521: The Year China Discovered America* (2004), and
“Introduction” of W. G. Beasley and E. G. Pulleyblank, *Historical Writing on the
Peoples of Asia: Historians of China and Japan* (London, 1961), pp. 1-9 (a handout).

Week 14. April 17

Gender and the Body: *After the Fact*, Ch. 17: “The Body in Question,” pp. 432-462

DUE (group 3): responses to the question sheet, with comments on “Additional Readings”

April 19 – no class (finish Carter Library project)

WEEK 15. April 24 – STUDENT REPORTS on Carter Library research projects

NOTE: In your **oral report** (and less so in your **written report** – which focuses on the substance of your topic and findings), you may insofar as it is helpful pick up on Benjamin’s points that in researching a history topic (Ch. 4), you need to “decide on a **topic**, narrow the topic to a **theme**, and then refine the theme into a **thesis**” (p. 77). Did you do this? Was it relevant to your research exercise?

April 26: STUDENT REPORTS on Carter Library projects (**last class**)

DUE (all students): ALL written papers on archives project

NOTE: If you want to know your course grade before they are available to you on GoSolar, give me a **stamped, self-addressed envelop** to mail to you. If you want me to mail you your Carter Library paper with my comments, provide me a large envelope with sufficient postage. Do not call me or e-mail me about your grades.

Students wishing to pick up their **research papers** with my comments on them (as well as your course grade) may come to the History Department front office (Rm. 805 G) **after May 8**. The papers will be there, arranged in alphabetical order, A to Z.

NOTE: I leave for China on May 8 with a China Study Abroad program. I will return to Atlanta on about August 10. Have a good summer!!