

HISTORY 511B            SEMINAR IN HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND WRITING:  
SELF AND SOCIETY IN EUROPE, 1350-1700

Fall Semester 2006  
Mondays 3:30-6:20 PM  
Humanities 2204

Jodi Bilinkoff    Humanities 2114  
Office Hours:  
MWF 10:00-10:45 and by appointment

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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REQUIRED TEXTS:

Benvenuto Cellini, Autobiography  
William Roper, The Life of Sir Thomas More  
Christopher Columbus The Four Voyages  
Madame de Sévigné, Selected Letters  
Johanna Petersen, The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen,  
Written by Herself

For reference I have ordered Jonathan Zophy, A Short History of Renaissance and Reformation Europe. You may, however, use any other Western Civ or European history text.

These books are available for purchase at the UNCG Bookstore and are also on reserve at Jackson Library. Using the internet can frequently result in savings on book purchases.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:

We will be examining biographical and autobiographical texts, which were produced in abundance in Europe and its colonies in the period between 1350 and 1700. At the heart of our inquiry will be what scholars call "the construction of

identities," how individuals perceive and present their own lives, or the lives of others. We will read and discuss together some representative texts from the period and identify analytical categories such as class, gender, geographical origin, profession, religious orientation, political persuasion, intended audience, and genre. Students will then choose a text or group of texts to investigate and contextualize on their own. There is a wealth of material in English in Jackson Library. I have compiled a bibliography to aid you in making your choices, and will, of course, be available throughout the semester for consultation.

#### GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS:

This is a research seminar, which means that the major enterprise of the semester will be producing a research paper, approximately 15-20 pages (15 pages minimum) in length for undergraduates, 20-25 pages for graduate students. The paper itself will count for 60% of the final grade.

During the course of the semester each student will prepare a research prospectus, detailed outline and annotated bibliography; together they will constitute 20% of the final grade. The remaining 20% of the grade will be derived from various oral presentations, including class participation, oral reports based on the common readings, and progress reports on research projects. Oral reports will be assigned after our first meeting. I do not intend to lecture at any length in this class, thus student participation is absolutely crucial to its success. Let me remind you that the Renaissance was a great age of oratory as well as written masterpieces!

Please make every effort to attend each class meeting, there is, after all, only one each week. If you have to miss a class or come late, please contact me so we don't have to hold up the class for the other students. I will check my voice mail and e-mail before each class meeting.

**RESPONSIBILITY CLAUSE:** If you are unable to hand in any of your assignments on time or make an oral presentation for any reason it is YOUR responsibility to contact me. If I am not contacted directly or by message before the deadline I will not accept late assignments. See above for ways of contacting me.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

- Aug 14 Introduction to Course; Constructing Identities,  
Writing about Identities; Italy and the Renaissance
- Aug 21 The Self as a Work of Art: Benvenuto Cellini  
1-11, 19-83, 92-104, 113-117, 141-152
- Aug 28 Cellini  
161-174, 184-230, 236-239, 250-274, 289-306, 356-353,  
389-402
- Sep 4 LABOR DAY
- Sep 11 Personality, Politics, Reformation: Thomas More and his  
Circle  
More on More; Margaret Roper on More [e-reserves]
- Sep 18 William Roper on More  
7-125  
1-2 PAGE PROSPECTUS OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE
- Sept 25 Discovering Columbus  
Columbus  
27-36, 82-92, 100-114, 115-122, 127-128,  
158-199
- Oct 2 Columbus  
206-226, 241-253, 259-264, 265-276, 283-304, 318-320
- Oct 6 LAST DAY TO DROP CLASSES
- Oct 9 FALL BREAK
- Oct 16 Letters from Court and Country: Madame de Sévigné  
Intro, 29-30, 55-59, 61-62, 67-72, 75-81, 85-90  
110-113, 124-131, 140-141, 154-158  
DRAFT OF ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE
- Oct 23 Madame de Sévigné  
164-166, 173-175, 179-180, 182, 185-186, 188-189  
193-195, 196-197, 206-210, 216-218, 222-224, 228-231,  
233-238, 246-248, 257, 264-265, 267-269, 271-272,  
280-282, 289-291, 298-300, 304-306, 308-311, 311-314,  
320  
DETAILED OUTLINE DUE
- Oct 30 ORAL PROGRESS REPORTS

Nov 6      A Pietist Life: Johanna Petersen  
            59-80 [Intro 1-43]

Nov 13     Johanna Petersen  
            80-98  
            DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE, BRING 2 COPIES

Nov 20     RESEARCH IN PROGRESS, NO CLASS

Nov 27     DISCUSSION OF DRAFTS

Dec 4      Drafts returned, final discussion, suitably festive end  
            of term

FRIDAY DEC 8 RESEARCH PAPERS DUE IN DR. BILINKOFF'S MAILBOX  
              IN HISTORY DEPARTMENT OFFICE HUMANITIES 2118A BY 2  
              PM; YOU MAY HAND IT IN EARLIER IF YOU CHOOSE.