

01: 506: 495

Honors Initial Thesis Writing Seminar S17

History Honors Program

Professor Barbara Cooper

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Tuesday 9: 50 – 11:10 CAC VD-301 [occasionally in VD 308]

Readings:

We will be reading a small number of articles I have loaded to the “Resources” tab of our Sakai site.

Week 1 Orientations Jan 17

Oral introductions of your projects to one another in class

Week 2 From Topics to Questions Jan 24

Prior Assignment: Read *Craft of Research* pp. 35-65

On your own: Set up appointments with your advisor so that you have regular contact throughout the semester. Get the dates into both your own and your adviser’s agendas so that you really meet.

Go to the library: You should be seeking out secondary sources that will help you situate your research project. Make use of at least two of the library Research Guides first—the librarians will expect you to have used them before you seek help. Often the most useful books are the ones next to the one you were looking for. ***This means actually going to the library!***

Week 3 Jan 31 [No Meeting]

Week 4 From Problems to Sources Feb. 7

Prior Assignment: Read Booth pp. 68-end

On your own: You should be reading your secondary sources to prepare your annotated bibliography and using them to help you locate primary sources.

As you develop your bibliography you should draw upon the MLA guidelines posted on our Resources page as a link to the Purdue OWL site. We will use MLA style in the class ***unless*** your advisor has a preference for another style. Now would be a good time to make sure you know which style you need to master. Learn the style and be consistent. You will need this working bibliography when you meet with the librarian.

Week 5 Working with Librarians **Meet in the Library on your own time** Feb 14 [No Meeting]

Assignment: *Your goal is to identify and assemble primary sources.* Make an appointment with one of the librarians—it is up to you to choose the ones who make the most sense given your project region, period, and themes. The History librarians make sense, but there may be others who are even more useful in light of your topic.

http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/subject_librarians

Send your working bibliography to the librarian in advance, and bring a printed version to your meeting. Your bibliography should include the key primary and secondary materials you have read so far for your project, including 1-3 sentences explaining the importance of each. Your list should include on the order of seven secondary works and three primary sources. Think about the questions you want to ask before you arrive.

Week 6 What is an Archive? Feb. 21

Prior Assignment: Read Marisa J. Fuentes, "Power and Historical Figuring: Rachael Pringle Polgreen's Troubled Archive," *Gender & History* 22 (3) 2010, pp. 564-84, posted on our site.

Week 7 Feb 28 [No Meeting]

Week 8 Situating a Primary Source March 7

Prior Assignment: Read Alastair Bellany, "Singing Libel in Early Stuart England: The Case of the Staines Fiddlers, 1627," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 69 (1) 2006, 177-94.

You should be continuing to read your secondary sources and collecting ideas about archives. Where are the sources you need? How will you consult them? What do you need to know "situate" them? Are there materials you need to add to your bibliography to situate your sources? If you need help with this consult your adviser.

Spring Break

You should have a strong bibliography and a sense for what your primary sources will be and where they are to be found.

Week 9 March 21 [No Meeting]

By now you should be working closely with primary sources. If you are having trouble understanding your primary sources you should be talking with your adviser.

Week 10 Theoretical Frames March 28

Prior Assignment: Read Joan W. Scott's classic essay, "Gender: A Useful Category of Analysis" *AHR* 91, (5) 1986, 1053-75.

Week 11 April 4 [No Meeting]

You should be working closely with your primary sources and attempting to contextualize them. Think about the source you want to share next week and make sure you have copies for everyone.

Week 12 Interpreting Primary Sources April 11

Prior Assignment: Choose a primary source that is challenging for you to understand that you think would be useful for your thesis but that you would like help interpreting. *It should be something that raises new questions*, not simply something that has been used by others to make a familiar argument that you do not intend to challenge. Bring enough copies of **one page** of your source (something suitable in a small chunk) for us to look at together. Be prepared to contextualize it for us.

Week 13 April 18

Read Zinsser excerpt and come to class prepared to discuss it.

Week 14 April 25

Final Class—come prepared to discuss how you plan to get your research and writing done over the summer.

April 28

This is the 2017 Honors conference date—come see what it is like so you have an idea of what it will be like for you when you do yours. What's a good presentation? What makes an impressive thesis?