

History 400W:

The Historian's Craft-- Seminar in the Historiography of Witchcraft in the Western Tradition

Professor E.A. Pollard

Fall 2008 Tuesdays 4:00-6:40 PM

Course Webpage: blackboard.sdsu.edu

AH 1112 (ITS Learning Research Studio)

(then enter SDSU username and password;
select Historian's Craft from "My Courses")

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(also by appointment and in Bb virtual chat)

Course Description:

History 400W is the gateway course for the major in history at San Diego State University. The goal of this course is to introduce majors to historical methods, theory, and writing in the discipline of history through a close examination of one field of historical inquiry. Our field of inquiry for this section of 400W this semester is the historiography of witchcraft in the western tradition, from the Greco-Roman World, through Medieval Europe, Early-Modern Europe, and Colonial America. In this writing-intensive course you will learn how to pursue historical research, how to apply historical methods to that research, how to read and ask questions of scholarly articles and books, how to contribute to scholarly discourse, how to produce a historiographic assessment of a given topic, and how to use information technology to conduct and to share your work. These skills are essential for papers you will write and presentations you will make in history classes here at SDSU and beyond.

Although the work of a historian is sometimes conducted in isolation, his/her work is evaluated and discussed within the wider community of academia. The grading and assignments for this course will reflect that collegiate discourse. This course will attempt to create a learning-community of historians through: 1) your active participation (in-class and on-line), 2) your "two-pagers" which encourage you to interact with scholarly ideas and with one another in class, 3) your PowerPoint presentations of book reviews where you share with our smaller community of scholars in-class while placing the book you have read within the larger context of witchcraft studies, and 4) a peer-reviewed historiographical essay (preceded by a Wikipedia contribution, presentation, and bibliography) which will require you to find your own place and voice within the scholarly community both within our classroom and beyond.

Grading:

You must complete all the assignments in order to pass this class. Failure to submit in timely fashion any one of the assignments will result in a failing grade in the class.

10% Participation (In-Class and On-Line)

Class participation will be measured on the basis of the value of the contributions you make to discussions both in-class and on-line, including your *500-word summaries of two class meetings posted to Bb*, your substantive interactions with others' posted summaries on Bb *at least four times over the course of the semester*, and any other on-line (in-class or follow-up) activity. *Regular attendance* is vital for consistent and valuable participation in-class. Class time will focus on 1) discussing the critical scholarship and other readings, 2) on developing interpretive skills vital to pursuing the study of history, and 3) on incorporating information technology into your understanding of history.

Attendance at class meetings IS REQUIRED. Arrive to class on-time and remain the length of class or you will not receive credit for attending that day. As a general rule, extensions on paper/assignment due dates (both draft and final) will **not** be granted. PLAN AHEAD. Late work will result in a lowered grade (one letter-grade reduction for each day late).

Among other uses, Blackboard will be actively employed for the distribution of handouts, peer reviewing of papers, posting of class summaries by students, continuation of classroom discussion, posting of Power Point presentations, and posting of assignment guidelines and help-sheets.

In your written work and in your classroom involvement (both in person and on-line) you will be expected to adhere to "acceptable standards of conduct" as discussed on the web page for the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities (<http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr/>).

15% Weekly "Two-Pagers" (500 words each "**")

Getting into the habit of writing is one of the best ways to become more confident in expressing your ideas and your critical analysis in writing. For this reason, a central component of this 400W class will be to write "two-pagers" in response to the readings you are completing each week for weeks 2-12 (ten total-- note two parts in week 4). The top nine scores of the ten journals will be counted for your grade. Your thinking for the "two-pagers" will form the basis of our classroom discussions. Having a clearly articulated position will allow you to excel at participation.

20% Critical Evaluation of Book and 2 Book Reviews (Power Point Presentation and 1500-word essay)

During weeks 7-10, members of the class will present book reviews of scholarly books that are illustrative of trends in historical methods in general and in witchcraft studies in particular. Every student will conduct a book review assignment for ONE of these books. You will be responsible for acquiring, either at the library or by means of a book vendor such as amazon.com or bn.com, the book assigned to you. The book assignments will be distributed such that each book is reviewed by two students. Each week during this four week period, we will focus on a different period of witchcraft in history: the Greco-Roman World, Medieval Europe, Early Modern Europe, and Colonial America. Each class over the course of this four week period, the two pairs of students responsible for the books on the syllabus will present their review of the book and will help to lead discussion. These book review assignments will involve finding at least two scholarly book reviews of the book you have chosen as well as writing your own review of the book that interacts with the findings of the other reviewers you have found. Detailed guidelines for the presentation and written book review are available on Bb. The final written version of the assignment is **due to the professor in class on Tuesday, 11/4** (except week 10 reviewers, whose reviews are due on 11/7 by 5PM as an e-mail attachment).

20% Sharing Research (Including Contribution to Wikipedia and Presentation about that Contribution and its Relationship to Your Larger Historiography Project)

From week 7 on, you should be thinking in an even more focused way about the period (Greco-Roman Mediterranean, Medieval Europe, Early Modern Europe, and Colonial Americas) and precise issue on which you will focus your historiography of witchcraft studies. As each period comes under discussion, take careful notes about the issues that arise, the ways that those issues are discussed by the scholars of the period, and how those issues and debates might intersect with your own research interests. You should begin compiling a bibliography of books, articles and sources (primary and secondary) that are central to the historiographic debates on witchcraft studies in the period you have chosen.

BEFORE 11/4, you should visit the professor during office hours to select a topic of interest. On 11/13 or 11/18, you will meet individually with the professor about your on-going research. During week 14, each student will conduct a 10-minute, organized, illustrated Power Point presentation of his/her on-going historiographic study, focusing on your contribution to Wikipedia related to your research. Detailed guidelines for the "sharing research" presentation are available on Bb.

35% Historiographical Essay and Bibliography (4000 words, bibliography not included; grade includes active participation in the draft and review process)

For this assignment, you will assemble a bibliography of the works that are central to your topic. You will analyze how those scholars and their works construct arguments, make use of sources, and interact with one another. You will then compose an original historiographical essay that summarizes the central issues, arguments, source materials for your topic AND tries to explain the changes/developments in the field. Detailed guidelines for the historiographical essay and bibliography are posted to Bb. A guided draft and peer review process will take place on Bb and in class during the final three weeks of the course. The final paper is due to the professor by **4PM IN CLASS, on Tuesday, December 16, 2008**.

Readings: The following texts are available at Aztec Shops and KB Books:

Gilderhus, Mark T. *History and Historians: A Historiographic Introduction*, 6th Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2007.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th Edition. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007

Williams, Robert C. *The Historian's Toolbox: A Student's Guide to the Theory and Craft of History*, 2nd Edition. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe Publishers, 2007.

ECR: In addition to these assigned textbooks and to cut down on costs to you, I have made other required reading selections available for you on Electronic Course Reserve (marked ECR on the syllabus). These readings are required. You can access these by going <<http://ecr.sdsu.edu/eres/>>, selecting "Electronic Reserves and Reserves Pages", navigate to our course (either by "course number" HIST 400W, "course name" Historian's Craft, or "Instructor" Pollard), use the password <pamphile> and then scroll down the readings to find the short title you need.

Instructions for accessing the academic journal databases (JSTOR, etc.): Go to the SDSU Library homepage <infodome.sdsu.edu>. Click "Articles & Research Guides," on the right-hand side of the page. Browse "Article Databases Listed by Title," to locate the database you need (as indicated on the syllabus, e.g. JSTOR, ProQuest, Academic Search Premier). Enter your name and Red ID when prompted (if accessing from off-campus). Use the search feature to search by author's last name or by the title of the article (not by journal title).

Calendar of Readings and Assignments

(Note: Readings and your responses to the "***" should be completed by the time you come to class on the day for which the reading is listed. The professor reserves the right to adjust the readings slightly, should the need arise.)

Week One: INTRODUCTION
9/2 Introduction to the Course and Topic

PART A: BACKGROUND ON DOING HISTORY

Week Two: What is History?
9/9 Readings: Williams xiii-44, Gilderhus 1-51.

**(1)What are the differences and similarities in how Williams and Gilderhus attempt to explain the study of history? Include a list of at least five questions that your readings in Williams and Gilderhus raised for you.

Week Three: What is Magic? --- Interdisciplinarity and Defining a Topic
9/16 Readings: (ECR) Alan Segal. "On the Nature of Magic: A Report on a Dialogue between a Historian and a Sociologist," 275-92; (JSTOR) Geertz, Hildred. "An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, I." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 6 (1975): 71-89; (JSTOR) Thomas, K.V. "An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, II." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 6 (1975): 91-109; (ECR) Diane Purkiss. "Holocaust of One's Own," 7-29.

**(2) How does the discipline of each scholar shape his/her approach to the study of magic in the articles for this week? How could their approaches be useful to the historian who is exploring the issue of magic as a historical phenomenon? In what ways are they problematic? Include at least four questions that these articles raise for you.

Week Four: Picking a Topic, Pursuing Your Research, Citing Your Evidence
9/23 Readings: Williams 47-55, Gilderhus 133-47, Williams 55-89; (ECR) Menand, Louis. "The End Matter," *New Yorker*, October 6, 2003, 120-26. Review Turabian (especially 160-215, and the whole to get a sense of the contents/usefulness of the book to you).

** (3A): Of the many tips that Williams and Gilderhus suggest for helping students write quality research papers, discuss which three you think you could most benefit from and why?

Library Session (5:30-6:40 PM)

** (3B) Write out before class a discussion of the three skills for researching history about which you would like to learn more and why (and how you have run into troubles with library research in the past). Consider the upcoming assignments in this class as you compile your list.

Week Five: Doing History: Speculation and Interpretation

9/30 Speculation: Readings: Williams 126-45, Gilderhus 52-73.

Consider the following question while doing this reading: How does the historical speculation described by Williams compare with the ways that Gilderhus discusses historical speculation?

Interpretation (i.e. Consensus and Conflict in the Community of Scholars)

Readings: Williams 110-21; (ECR) Levack, Brian P. Review of *Witches of the Atlantic World: A Historical Reader and Primary Sourcebook*, by Elaine G. Breslaw; (ECR) Rowland, Ingrid and Anthony Grafton. Review of *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief*, by Walter Stephens; (Academic Search Premier) Dickie, M.W. Review of *Greek and Roman Necromancy*, by Daniel Ogden; (ECR) Griffin, Jasper. "That Old Black Magic." Review of *Greek and Roman Necromancy*, by Daniel Ogden.

** (4) After reading each of the reviews, thinking about how each attempts to place the book being reviewed into the wider field of scholarship, focus in on two of the reviews. Who is the author of the review and what are his/her credentials to write the review? In what publication was each review published and how does that impact the types of feedback that the authors give about the book under review? In what ways could you use these reviews to help you guide your research?

Week Six: Gender and Telling a Story

10/7 Gender and History

Readings: Williams 121-25; (JSTOR) Garrett, Clarke. "Women and Witches: Patterns of Analysis." *Signs* 3 (Winter 1977): 461-70; Balfe, Judith F. "Comment on Clarke Garrett's 'Women and Witches.'" *Signs* 4 (Autumn 1978): 201-2; Honnegger, Claudia. "Comment on Garrett's 'Women and Witches.'" *Signs* 4 (Summer 1979): 792-98; Moia, Nelly. "Comment on Garrett's 'Women and Witches.'" *Signs* 4 (Summer 1979): 798-802; Garrett, Clarke "Reply to Honnegger and Moia." *Signs* 4 (Summer 1979): 802-4; (ECR) Hulst, Linda, "Witch as Woman."

** (5) What are the main issues fueling the debate generated by Garrett in *Signs* (i.e. what has gotten these scholars so worked up)? How does Hulst's chapter, written more than twenty-five years later, relate to that debate?

Telling a story (narrative and explanation)

Readings: Williams 90-109, Gilderhus 74-91.

Consider the following questions while doing this reading: What are some of the central points of the narrative so far in the book you are reading for weeks 7-10? To what extent is your author focusing on narrative and/or explanation?

PART B: LOOKING AT HOW OTHERS HAVE DONE HISTORY

Over the next four weeks, class members will review books on witchcraft during each of the historical periods we are covering in this class. Two students will review the books for each week. Each week you will do several activities to prepare for class:

- 1) there is an *assigned reading* that everyone in the class will complete for background on the period;
- 2) every student must find (on JSTOR, Proquest, or Academic Search Premier), read, and prepare questions for the reviewers based on, *at least one scholarly review of each book* discussed that day;
- 3) use the readings and book reviews to spur your browsing of Wikipedia for problematic entries and gaps in coverage.

Include a list/discussion of these at the end of your journal each week.

Week Seven: Historiography of Greco-Roman Witchcraft

10/14 (ECR) M.W. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 1-17 and 323-24; (Proquest) S.I. Johnston, "Describing the Undefinable: New Books on Magic and Old Problems of Definition," *History of Religions* 43, no. 1 (August 2003): 50-54; (Academic Search Premier) Peter Green, "Now, Now, Quickly, Quickly," *New Republic*, August 21, 2000, 44-48; (ECR) Peter Green, "The Methods of Ancient Magic," *Times Literary Supplement* 5168 (4/19/2002): 5-6.

** (6) From reading the four assigned readings for this week and the reviews of Faraone and Janowitz, what are some of the issues that make up the historiography of magic in Greco-Roman antiquity? In other words, what seem to be some of the major themes and discussions in the scholarship and how do those appear to have changed over time (from what you can tell from these readings)? What are some good and bad entries on Wikipedia, related to the readings for this week?

Review: Faraone, C.A, *Ancient Greek Love Magic*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Review: Janowitz, Naomi. *Magic in the Roman World: Pagans, Jews, and Christians*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2001.

Week Eight: Historiography of Magic in the Medieval Period

10/21 (JSTOR) R. Kieckhefer, "The Specific Rationality of Medieval Magic," *AHR* 99 (June 1994): 813-36. (You find the search engine!) M. Bailey, "The Disenchantment of Magic: Spells, Charms, and Superstition in Early Modern Witchcraft Literature," *AHR* 111 (2006): 383-404.

** (7) From the articles by Kieckhefer and Bailey and from the reviews of their books, who are some of the major scholars and what are some of the major themes and sources important to the study of magic in the medieval period? How well or poorly are topics related to magic in the medieval period covered on Wikipedia (give specific examples)?

Review: Bailey, M. *Battling Demons: Witchcraft, Heresy, and Reform in the Late Middle Ages*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003.

Review: Kieckhefer, Richard. *Magic in the Middle Ages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Week Nine: Historiography of Magic in the Early Modern Period

10/28 (JSTOR) E. William Monter, "The Historiography of European Witchcraft: Progress and Prospects," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 2, no. 4 (1972): 435-51; (Academic Search Premier) Elspeth Whitney, "International Trends: The Witch "She"/ The Historian "He": Gender and the Historiography of the European Witch-Hunts," *Journal of Women's History* 7, no. 3 (1995): 77-101.

** (8) How does the historiography of early modern witchcraft studies appear to have changed in the decades separating the treatments by Monter and Whitney? How do the books for this week fit into the historiographical trends? What are some GAPS/STUBS for early modern magic-related topics on Wikipedia?

Review: Ruggiero, G. *Binding Passions: Tales of Magic, Marriage, and Power at the End of the Renaissance*. New York, NY: Oxford, 1993.

Review: Willis, Deborah. *Malevolent Nurture: Witch-Hunting and Maternal Power in Early Modern England*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995.

Week Ten: Historiography of Witchcraft in Colonial America

11/4 (ECR) Elaine G. Breslaw. Excerpt from *Witches of the Atlantic World: A Historical Reader & Primary Sourcebook*, 427-87.

** (9) According to Breslaw's selections and the books under review, what are some of the major debates in the scholarship on witchcraft accusation in Colonial America? Based on this week's readings, how would you improve Wikipedia's treatment of topics related to witchcraft in Colonial America (i.e. what entries would you add or modify and how)?

Review: Karlson, Carol F. *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: Witchcraft in Colonial New England*. New York, NY: Norton, 1987.

Review: Norton, Mary Beth. *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

Written Book Review Due to professor in class on 11/4

(except week 10 reviewers, who may submit their reviews by e-mail by 5PM on 11/7)

*****In the weeks BEFORE 11/4, you must visit with the professor during office hours to pick a topic for your research projects that you will be completing in the final one-third of the class.**

PART C: DOING HISTORY YOURSELF

Week Eleven: Beginning Research

11/11 No Class --- Veterans Day

Use this week to make significant head-way on your research for your topic. Schedule a 10-minute meeting to discuss with the professor your on-going research for your Wikipedia entry and your Historiography (in the available blocks on 11/13 or 11/18). Bring to your meeting ideas, notes, working bibliography, and other research materials

Week Twelve: Continuing Research --- Contrasting Types of Secondary Scholarship

11/18 (ECR) Stacy Schiff. "Know it All." *New Yorker*, July 31, 2006, 36-43 and Roy Rosenzweig. "Can History be Open Source? Wikipedia and the Future of the Past." *Journal of American History* 93, no. 1 (June 2006): 117-46 (on-line at <http://chnm.gmu.edu/resources/essays/d/42>).

** (10) Using the topic you are exploring for your historiography project, find two general encyclopedia articles on that topic (one on Wikipedia and the other in another encyclopedia such as *Britannica*). Find a treatment of the topic in a specialized encyclopedia (such as a dictionary of religion or witchcraft). Find an article-length treatment of your topic on JSTOR. Write 500 words comparing and contrasting how each source deals with your topic. Include at the top of the "two-pager" a proper bibliographic citation for each treatment consulted (i.e. a four-source bibliography).

Week Thirteen: Continuing Research --- Beginning to Write

11/25 NO CLASS --- Post your entry to Wikipedia by 5PM on 11/25. Outline and begin drafting your final historiography paper.

Week Fourteen: Sharing Research

12/2 In-class 10-minute presentations of Wikipedia Project and on-going Historiography Research (See Bb for list of materials to submit to professor in class on this day.)

Week Fifteen: Participating in a Community of Historians --- Discussion of Feedback: What to do with it?

12/5 Post Draft of Paper, with writer review, to your peer group on Bb by 5PM (Friday)

12/8 Post Reviews of Peers' papers to Bb by 5PM (Monday)

12/9 In-Class Peer Review in small groups

Bring to class copies of the reviews that you wrote for those in your peer group AND copies of responses to your own paper. Be ready to ask questions of your reviewers and to answer questions about the feedback you have offered to others.

Week Sixteen: Conclusions

12/16 Synthesis of Historiographic Trends in the Study of Witchcraft in the Western Tradition
Overview of the Course: Review of Skills Acquisition (Including Information Technology) and How to Take These Skills into Your Future Studies in History
(ECR) Robert C. Williams. "Teaching the Theory and Practice of History" *Perspectives* (September 2002): 31-32; Tom Scott. "Historian's Craft" *Perspectives* (September 2002): 33-34; Claudine Ferrell. "Method in the Madness," *Perspectives* (September 2002): 36-37.

Final Paper Due: Tuesday, December 16, 2008 at 4 PM (IN CLASS)