**History 41800: European Society and Culture, 1350-1800**

**T TR 10:30-11:45 UNIV 001**

**Professor James Farr**

**311 UNIV**

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**Office Hours: 1:30-2:30 Tuesday and by appt.**

This course will examine European society and culture from 1350-1800. We will explore in depth the following topics: disease and death; social status and civility; gender relations; marriage, family, and sexuality; artistic representation; and science and religion. As we analyze these topics, we will consider the methodology and primary sources that socio-cultural historians use to build their interpretations of the early modern age. This was a time which, for some men (and fewer women), life may have been marked by "Renaissance" and ultimately of "Enlightenment," but the lives of many more were "nasty, brutish, and short." Class time will blend lectures and films with ample discussions based primarily on the required readings.

**REQUIRED READINGS**:

Aberth, John, ed.. *The Black Death: The Great Mortality of 1348-1350: A Brief History with Documents*. Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2005.

Crosby, Alfred. *The Measure of Reality: Quantification and Western Society.* Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Hartman, Mary S. *The Household and the Making of History*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Mayer, Thomas F., ed. *The Trial of Galileo*. University of Toronto Press, 2012.

Molière. ‘The Would-Be Gentleman,’ `The Misanthrope,’ and ‘The Learned Ladies’ [PDFs to be distributed; do not purchase]

Handouts

**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:**

Class participation: 40%

Writing Assignments on readings (assignments to be distributed periodically in class): 40%

Primary Source Critique: 20%

Late assignments will be penalized 1 letter grade

**Primary Source Critique**

This assignment requires you to create a source-analytical essay based upon a primary source you will select in consultation with the professor. In this essay you will be expected to present 1) a **brief overview** of the source's contents and the historical context with which the source deals (what events, phenomena, persons, etc. on which the source provides information) 2) a discussion of the source's **biases** (what is the source’s audience? Why was it written? What is its tone and style of presentation? What unstated assumptions does the author make? What are the limitations of the medium?) 3) So what? Why is this source historically significant? How can it further our historical knowledge about a specific subject? This entails a discussion of **what questions** the source might be used to answer that relate to at least **two major themes** in the current work of historians.  Be sure to provide specific examples from the source illustrating how the source can help answer these questions as well as specific indications of what other sources would be necessary to answer these questions and why they would be helpful. You are **not** asked to answer the questions, simply to pose significant ones, and explain why they are significant. 4) a conclusion 5) a bibliography. This paper should be at least 1500 words.  It must also be properly footnoted and documented.

**CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:**

January 10: Introduction

12: Fake News? Reading Sources

17: **Disease, Dying and Death**

19: Class discussion; Read Aberth, Preface, Part One (Introduction), and Chapter 1 in Part Two (Geographical Origins)

24: Class discussion; Read Aberth, Chapter 2 in Part Two (Symptoms and Transmission) and Chapter 3 in Part Two (Medical Responses)

26: Class discussion; Read Aberth, Chapter 4 in Part Two (Societal and Economic Impact)

31: Class Discussion; Read Aberth, Chapter 5 (Religious Mentalities) and Chapter 6 (The Psyche of Hysteria) in Part Two

February 2: Class Discussion; Read Aberth, Chapter 7 (The Artistic Response) in Part Two

7: **Society: Hierarchy and Community**

9: Class Discussion; read Molière, `The Would-Be Gentleman’

14: no class: Read Molière, `The Misanthrope,’ and watch film `The Misanthrope’ [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UbOfsYXvvoc]

16: Class Discussion on film and play

21: Gender relations; Read Molière, `The Learned Women’

23: The Importance of Community: in-class viewing of film: `The Return of Martin Guerre’

28: in-class viewing of film: `The Return of Martin Guerre’

March 2: Discussion of film

7: Marriage, Family and Sexuality; Read Hartman, Preface, Chapters 1 and 2

9: Read Hartman, Chapters 3 and 4

14, 16: no class; spring break

21: Read Hartman, Chapters 5 and 6

23: Read Hartman, chapters 7, 8 and Epilogue

28: **Seeing, Measuring, Knowing**

30: Taking the Measure of Things: Read Crosby, Preface, chapters 1-3

April 4: Chapters 4-6

6: chapters 7-8

11: chapters 9-11

13: Knowing: Science and Religion; Read Mayer, vi-xii; Introduction, and Cast of Characters

18: Read Documents I and II

20: Read Documents III and IV

25: Read Documents V and VI

27: Read Documents VII and VIII; **Primary Source Critique due; submit as either e-mail attachment by 3 p.m. to** **jrfarr@purdue.edu****.**

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**Course and Instructor Evaluation**

During the last two weeks of the semester, you will be provided an opportunity to evaluate this course and your instructor. To this end, Purdue has transitioned to online course evaluations. On Monday of the fifteenth week of classes, you will receive an official email from evaluation administrators with a link to the online evaluation site. You will have two weeks to complete this evaluation. Your participation in this evaluation is an integral part of this course. Your feedback is vital to improving education at Purdue University. I strongly urge you to participate in the evaluation system.

**Disclaimer**: In the event of a major campus emergency, the above requirements, deadlines and grading policies are subject to changes that may be required by a revised semester calendar. Any such changes in this course will be posted, once the course resumes, on the course website or can be obtained by contacting the instructor via email or phone.