EARLY MODERN EUROPE

The modern world began to be born in Europe and its colonies between the fifteenth and the eighteenth centuries—replete with all the contradictions that have marked modernity ever since. Using printed and visual primary sources, as well as recent scholarship, this course explores the manifestations of that paradoxical civilization: Renaissance and Reformation, secular state building and religious war, Scientific Revolution and witch hunts, absolutism and republicanism, emergent capitalism and renewed serfdom, cosmopolitan Enlightenment and localistic everyday life, revolution and enslavement. The lectures, discussions, readings, viewings, and essays, which combine chronological and topical approaches, introduce the rich variety of sources, genres, modes of analysis, and interpretations that historians employ to understand the past and its relation to the present.

The requirements for the course include:
1) Regular, on-time attendance in class.
2) Regular, informed participation in the weekly discussions.
3) A short paper (length: 1000-1500 words; i.e., 4-5 typed pages), due via email by noon on Sunday, February 13. A fuller explanation of the assignment will be distributed separately (this is Paper 1).
4) An hour examination on Friday, 4 March.
5) A very short paper due at the beginning of class, Monday, 21 March (this is Paper 2).
6) A final examination, which will be scheduled by the Registrar.

All students should purchase the following paperback books:
Jean de Léry, History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil (also available in electronic version on Tripod)
Raffaella Sarti, Europe At Home. Family and Material Culture 1500-1800

Students wishing a narrative survey of the period are advised to consult the following textbook, two copies of which are on General Reserve: John Merriman, A History of Modern Europe, volume 1. The appropriate pages are listed in the assignments below as JM.

This course, like any other, is premised on mutual respect and honesty. Thus I expect that the work you submit is your own. Plagiarism will be severely penalized: any work containing plagiarized material will be granted the grade of no credit and may subject you to prosecution before the CJC. In order to clarify the issue of academic honesty, I will distribute copies of the History Department's guidelines. When in doubt, especially about citations, check with me.
The history department has implemented the following policy on attendance: Students are required to attend all classes and fulfill on time all required work for the successful completion of the course. Unexcused absences and late submission of written work will result either in a lower grade or failure to pass the course.

**SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

I. 17 Jan. Lecture: Introduction

19 L: Europe at the End of the Middle Ages  
Reading: JM, pp. 3-38

21 Discussion: Doing History  
Reading: primary documents (handout)

II. 24 Jan. L: The Context of the Renaissance in Italy  
JM, pp. 47-86

26 L: Renaissance Structures and Cultures  
Reading (all available on Blackboard):  
Petrarch, “Ascent of Mont Ventoux”  
Salutati, “Letter to Giuliano Zonarini”  
Cassandra Fedele, “Oration in Praise of Letters,” and Laura Cereta,  
“Defense of the Liberal Instruction of Women,” in *Her Immaculate Hand*, nos. 12 and 14 only (pp. 74-77 and 81-84)

28 D: Humanist Modes of Thinking and Writing: letters, orations, dialogues  
Reading: (both on Blackboard):  
Leonardo Bruni, “The Dialogues”  
Poggio Bracciolini, “On Nobility”

III. 31 Jan. L: The Coming of the Reformations  
Reading:  
Desiderius Erasmus, from *The Praise of Folly* (Blackboard)  
JM, pp. 87-99

2 Feb. L: Patterns of Reformation  
Reading (all available on Blackboard):  
Martin Luther, from *The Freedom of a Christian*  
“The Schleitheim Confession of Faith”  
JM, pp. 99-137

4 D: Reforming Christian Doctrine and Practice: a colloquy  
Reading:  
Ignatius Loyola, from *The Spiritual Exercises* (Blackboard)  
Council of Trent documents (Blackboard)  
Lucas Cranach the Younger, “Two Kinds of Preaching” (handout)
IV.  7 Feb.  L: Religion and Civil Strife I: Empire and War in Central Europe
Reading:
JM, pp. 159-177
Start reading Kagan, *Lucrecia's Dreams*

9  L: Religion and Civil Strife II: States and Revolts in Western Europe
Reading:
JM, pp. 138-159
Continue reading Kagan, *Lucrecia's Dreams*

11  No Class: Prophecy and Power in the Sixteenth Century
**Paper due** via email by noon, Sunday Feb. 13 (see #3, above)

JM, pp. 181-197, 222-231, 274-299

16  L: The United Provinces and England: Revolt, Republic, and Restoration
JM, pp. 197-222, 232-273

18  D: Representations of Power
See separate assignment sheet

VI.  22 Feb.  L: The First European Empires
Reading: Léry, *History of a Voyage*, pp. xv-lxii, 225-231
JM, pp. 38-46

23  L: The First Global Empires
Reading: Léry, *History of a Voyage*, pp. 3-111, 232-243
JM, pp. 316-323, 451-462

25  D: Intercultural Encounters: “Europeans” and “Others”
Reading: Léry, *History of a Voyage*, pp. 112-224, 243-256

VII.  28 Feb.  L: Nobility over Monarchy: Poland, Sweden, and the Ottoman Empire
JM, pp. 310-311, 487-491

2  Mar.  L: Monarchy over Nobility: Austria, Prussia, and Russia
JM, pp. 299-310, 311-316, 432-436

4    **HOUR TEST**

SPRING VACATION

VIII.  14 Mar.  L: Classical and Renaissance Science
JM, pp. 327-330

16  L: The “Scientific Revolution”
18 L: New Directions in Early Modern History
   Assignment: Attend the symposium this morning about developments in the study of early modern history
   Write up a short (1-2 page) opinion piece on why you find one new development particularly interesting, or, why you found none particularly interesting. The paper is due on Monday, 21 March, at the beginning of class.

IX. 21 Mar. L: Social Structures and Social Strains
   Reading: Sarti, *Europe At Home*, preface, introduction, chapter I
   JM, pp. 354-366, 384-393
   Paper due at the beginning of class. This is paper 2 (#5 above).

23 L: Families Made and Unmade
   Reading: Sarti, *Europe At Home*, chapter II

25 D: Home and Family
   Reading: Sarti, *Europe At Home*, chapter III (Review chaps. I and II)

   JM, pp. 354-366

30 L: Atlantic Transformations
   JM, pp. 384-397

1 Apr. D: Material Culture
   Reading: Sarti, *Europe At Home*, chapters IV-VII

XII. 4 Apr. L: Economic Transformations in the 18th Century
   JM, 366-384

6 L: Imperial Competition and World Wars
   JM, pp. 442-72, 484-87

8 D: Empires Compared
   Reading: see separate sheet on Blackboard

XI. 11 Apr. L: “Official” Culture and “Popular” Culture
   Reading: Bob Scribner, “Is a History of Popular Culture Possible?”
   (Blackboard)

   Reading: Witch Persecutions at Bamberg:
   [http://history.hanover.edu/texts/bamberg.html](http://history.hanover.edu/texts/bamberg.html)

   Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, Statement of Thesis and Notes (Blackboard)
15  D: Witch Crazes
   Reading: see separate sheet on Blackboard

XIII.  18 Apr.  L: The Material Conditions of Knowledge: Printing and Literacy
   Reading: H. J. Martin, “Publishing Conditions and Strategies in Ancien
   Regime France” (Blackboard)
   Rab Houston, “Literacy and Society in the West” (Blackboard)

20  L: What was the Enlightenment?
   Reading: start Friday’s reading (see separate sheet)
   JM, pp. 399-427, 436-441

22  D: Enlightenment Ideologies and Prejudices
   Reading: finish assignment (see separate sheet on Blackboard)

XIV.  25 Apr.  L: What was Enlightened about Enlightened Absolutism?
   Reading: start Friday’s reading (see separate sheet)
   JM, pp. 427-436

27  L: Atlantic Revolutions
   Reading: continue Friday’s reading (see separate sheet)
   JM, 472-484, 491, 495-547

29  D: Rights and Revolutions
   Reading: see separate sheet on Blackboard

Date TBA  FINAL EXAMINATION