

RM Historical Research Project

Your research project for this class is broken down into 4 parts. You must complete the parts in order and you may not hand in a later part before you have received a corrected copy of the previous part from me. You will be working towards writing a well-researched, well-argued and well-written 1000 word essay that is presented in the proper academic format. Much of the rest of the term will be devoted towards developing skills in these areas and learning information about the subjects you are writing about.

The proposal (worth 5%) will be due on April 14th. For the proposal you will have to choose the topic that you are working on from the selection below. In your proposal I will expect you to have the following elements:

1. A specific research question and an explanation of why that question is both interesting and important in historical terms (i.e. why is it important that we should know the answer to your question.)
2. An explanation of how you plan to answer that question using the given sources. You will have had to at least start reading your sources.
3. A bibliography of your sources in proper MLA format.

A well-written proposal will look very similar to the introduction to your final essay.

The literature review (worth 5%) will be due on April 27th. For the literature review you will have had to read all of your sources and thought about what they have to say on your topic. You will have to re-write your proposal to include all of your sources and then provide an annotated bibliography. For an example see: <http://historiesofcatastrophicdreaming.wordpress.com/how-to-write-a-research-paper/example-proposal-and-annotated-bibliography/>

The paragraphs in your annotated bibliography will look very similar to the paragraphs in the evidence section of your final essay.

The rough draft (worth 5%) will be due on May 2nd. You should treat the rough draft as if it were a final draft. It will have to be presented in the proper academic format with a title page, citations, page numbers and a bibliography. I will be marking it hard because you have a lot of time to work on it and I expect it to be a well-researched, well-argued and well-written 1000 word essay.

The final draft (worth 15%) will be due on May 12th. Hopefully your rough draft was so fantastic that you only have minor revisions to do to get a really good mark. If there were major problems then you will have a lot of work to do.

Topics for the Research Paper.

I will provide you with electronic copies of as many of the sources as possible, otherwise you will be responsible for getting them from the Dawson library or another library in the city.

A historiographical paper. General research question: How do ordinary people become mass murderers? Explain and compare the arguments of two or more different historians on this topic and judge which you find to be the most convincing. Choose this option if you are interested in the use of psychology and ethics to understand the past.

List of Sources:

Christopher Browning, Ordinary Men

Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, Hitler's Willing Executioners

Inga Clendinnen, "The Men in the Green Tunics: The Order Police in Poland"

A historiographical paper. General research question: Why did Hitler and the Nazi's want to eliminate Jews and other people from Europe? Explain and compare the arguments of two or more different historians on this topic and judge which you find to be the most convincing. Choose this option if you are interested in what different historians think was the reason behind the genocidal directives of the Nazis. This topic also touches on psychology.

List of Sources:

Richard L. Rubenstein, "Religion and the Origin of the Death Camps: A Psychoanalytic Interpretation" in After Auschwitz.

Cohen, Peter. The Architecture of Doom. First Run Features, 1991.

Another source chosen in consultation with Ben.

A primary source paper. General research question: Can novels help us understand the past? Choose one of the following novels: Primo Levi's Survival in Auschwitz or Elie Wiesel's Night. Explain with reference to secondary sources (chosen in consultation with Ben) how reading Night or Survival in Auschwitz helps us understand the Holocaust.

A primary source paper. General research question: How do you represent the past in a novel? Compare two of the following accounts of the Holocaust: Art Spiegelman's Maus, Primo Levi's Survival in Auschwitz and/or Elie Wiesel's Night. Compare how the authors approach the topic of the Holocaust. Choose this option if you like reading novels or personal accounts of events. This paper will have to engage with the question of how an event like the Holocaust can be represented in the form of a novel or comic book.

A primary source paper about memory. General research question: How does the past shape the lives of future generations? Historians are not only interested in the past - some are more concerned with how we remember the past. Compare two or more of the following sources with reference to secondary sources. Choose this option if you are interested in how the Holocaust affects the daily lives of survivors and their children.

Art Spiegelman, Maus

Helen Epstein, Children of the Holocaust

James E. Young, The Texture of Memory