

TRENT UNIVERSITY

HISTORY/CANADIAN STUDIES 4030

2009-2010

THE HISTORY OF NIGHT

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OFFICE HOURS:

Night is a time of pleasure and danger, a time of shadows and dreams. Darkness corrodes the structures of routine existence, and permits alternative ways of understanding and being in the world. In the context of this course, however, the term, 'night', is meant in a broad sense, as encompassing the dark side of human experience, not simply activities that go on between sundown and sunrise. In particular, History 403 is concerned with the impact of sexuality, crime and commercial entertainment on Western society.

Because darkness warps conventional meanings, it is a useful avenue to approach what some historians call 'the new cultural history'. These scholars conceive of culture in an anthropological sense, as the way existence is organized and ordered. They are interested in exploring how people create and sustain meaning in their lives. Meaning is not natural, obvious or 'given'. It is a human creation, communicated in countless ways, and continually contested by different groups. This course is intended, in part, as an introduction to 'new cultural history'.

In the first term, we will look at a number of recent books and articles to get an idea of the sorts of questions being asked in this field, the kinds of sources being used, and the analytical methods being employed.

In the second term, you will have a chance to apply some of these approaches to a topic of your own choosing. You will be expected to produce an original research paper of about 35 pages, based either on primary sources or an extensive body of secondary literature. Regular classes will not be held during this term. Instead, meetings with individual students will be scheduled, during which the progress of the papers will be discussed.

It is Trent University's intent to create an inclusive learning environment. If a student has a disability and/or health consideration and feels that s/he may need accommodation to succeed in this course, the student should contact the Disability Services Office (BL Suite 109, 748-1281, disabilityservices@trentu.ca) as soon as possible. For more details, see page 12 of the Trent Calendar under 'Access to Instruction.'

EVALUATION:

1. Tutorial Participation: 25%

The mark is based on attendance, preparation for, and participation in tutorials, including those in the second term. If you are absent from more than one tutorial in the first term, without legitimate reason, you must submit a summary of the reading or readings for the missed class at the next tutorial. For each summary not submitted, two marks will be deducted from the final grade.

2. First Term Essay: 25%

The first term paper involves a 3000 word review of an important secondary work relating to the topic of your second term research essay. This review should indicate the thesis, situate the book in its wider historiographical context, and assess its contribution to scholarship by discussing its strengths and weaknesses. It is essential to consult other materials beside the featured book. The title of the work to be reviewed must be approved by me, no later than the week after the first reading break, but hopefully before then.

The essay is due on November 19, in class.

3. Second Term Paper 50%

This paper should be about 35 pages long. If it is based on secondary sources, a minimum of 40 significant bibliographic items should be used. (Please note that a book containing a number of essays counts as one item.) The topic does not necessarily have to relate to the themes of night or darkness, but it should involve some aspect of cultural history. Choose your topic carefully, taking into consideration the availability and location of sources. Depending on what you chose to investigate, travel and/or reliance on Interlibrary Loan may be necessary.

This essay is due on March 18, at noon.

IMPORTANT MATTERS REGARDING ESSAYS

1. **Academic dishonesty**, which includes plagiarism and cheating, is an extremely serious academic offence and carries penalties ranging from a zero grade on an assignment to expulsion from the university. Definitions, penalties and procedures for dealing with plagiarism and cheating are set out in Trent University's *Academic Integrity Policy*. You have a responsibility to educate yourself – unfamiliarity is not an excuse. You are strongly encouraged to visit Trent's Academic Integrity website to learn more – www.trentu.ca/academicintegrity.
2. **For your protection**: because assignments sometimes get lost, and because questions of authorship sometimes arise, it is essential that, if requested, you be able to document your creative process in producing assignments. You must keep your research notes and rough drafts for essays and assignments, even after the finished work has been graded and returned. If composing on a computer, make hard copies of work in progress or use the 'save as' function at regular intervals so that you have a track record of how the assignment evolved. The sequence of drafts should be carefully noted.
3. All assignments must be original, produced by you, and prepared for this course alone. An essay prepared for or used in another course will be failed. If you are drawing heavily from sources used in assignments for previous or current courses, you should notify me beforehand.
4. Late papers will be accepted only if there is a legitimate reason for the delay. Essays not handed to me personally should be deposited in the essay drop box located near the History Department office at LEC. If an essay is submitted in any other way, you assume all risk that it does not go astray.

BOOK PURCHASE LIST:

Roger A. Ekirch, *At Day's Close*

Timothy J. Gilfoyle, *A Pickpocket's Tale*

George Chauncey, *Gay New York*

Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Republic of Suffering*

Walter Johnson, *Soul By Soul*

Canadian Scholars Press, Repro-Text

SEMINAR SCHEDULE - FALL TERM

1. September 17

INTRODUCTION

2. September 24

NIGHT'S EARLY MODERN HISTORY

Reading:

Roger A. Ekirch, *At Day's Close: Night in Times Past*
(Norton 2005)

3. October 1

GAY NIGHTS

Reading:

George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (Basic Books 1994)

4. October 8

LADIES OF THE NIGHT

Reading:

Walter Johnson, *Soul By Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Harvard 1999)

5. October 15

ROUND TABLE ON RESEARCH PAPER TOPICS

Reading:

There is no formal reading for this week, but you should make a start on Gilfoyle's book for the next week

6. October 22

THE UNDERWORLD

Reading:

Timothy J. Gilfoyle, *A Pickpocket's Tale: The Underworld of Nineteenth-Century New York* (Norton 2006)

7. November 5

BLACK SHROUDS

Reading:

Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (Knopf 2008)

8. November 12

CONSTRUCTING CRIME AND CRIMINALS

Readings:

Frank Mort, 'Scandalous Events: Metropolitan Culture and Moral Change in Post-Second World War London', *Representations* 93 (Winter 2006), 106-37

Daniel A. Cohen, 'Blood Will Out: Sensationalism, Horror, and the Roots of American Crime Literature,' in Nancy Isenberg and Andrew Burstein, eds., *Mortal Remains: Death in Early America* (University of Pennsylvania Press 2003), 31-55

David E. Ruth, *Inventing the Public Enemy: The Gangster in American Culture, 1918-1934* (University of Chicago Press 1996), Ch. 5, 'The Invention in the Flesh: Al Capone of Chicago,' 118-43

9. November 19

ADDICTIONS

Readings:

Timothy A. Hickman, *The Secret Leprosy of Modern Days: Narcotic Addiction and Cultural Crisis in the United States, 1870-1920* (University of Massachusetts Press 2007), Ch. 2, 'Narcotic Addiction: "The Secret Leprosy of Modern Days,"' 33-58.

Eric C. Schneider, *Smack: Heroin and the American City* (University of Pennsylvania Press 2008), Ch. 3, 'The Plague,' and Ch. 4, 'The Panic over Adolescent Heroin Use,' 35-74.

Catherine Carstairs, *Jailed for Possession: Illegal Drug Use, Regulation, and Power in Canada, 1920-1961* (University of Toronto Press 2006), Ch. 4 'After a Short Struggle': Police Officers and Drug Users, 92-114.

10. November 26

WOMEN IN THE LIME LIGHT

Readings:

Susan Glenn, Ch. 6, ‘“Nationally Advertised Legs”: How Broadway Invented “The Girls”,’ *Female Spectacle: The Theatrical Roots of Modern Feminism* (Harvard 2000), 155-87

John F. Kasson, ‘Behind Shirley Temple’s Smile: Children, Emotional Labor, and the Great Depression,’ in James W. Cook, Lawrence B. Glickman and Michael O’Malley, eds., *The Cultural Turn in U.S. History: Past, Present, and Future* (University of Chicago Press 2008), 185-216

11. December 3

MODERN NIGHTMARES

Readings:

Mark Danner, Part I, ‘Torture and Truth’; Part II, ‘The Logic of Torture’; and Part III, ‘The Secret Road to Abu Ghraib’ in *Torture and Truth: America, Abu Ghraib and the War on Terror* (New York Review Books 2004), 1-49.

Philip Gourevitch and Errol Morris, ‘Exposure: The woman behind the camera at Abu Ghraib,’ *New Yorker*, 24 March 2008, 44-57.