

Writing Lives: Changing Conceptions of the Self in France

IDS 2935

Professor Sheryl Kroen

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Course Details:

Class time: T/Th (period 3: 9:35-10:25): lectures mixed with discussion of required readings
In FLG 0260

Th (period 5, in CBD 0210; period 6, in MAT 0051, or period 7, in MT 0051):
break-out sections with teaching assistant devoted to discussion, writing
workshops, and other activities as described in “Week-by-Week” schedule below.

Office Hrs: Professor Kroen: Keene-Flint 219, Thursday, 12-2 PM

Teaching Assistant: Rachel Laue, Keene-Flint 215, Tuesday, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM.

Quest Theme 2: Identities

General Education: Humanities, Writing (2000 words)

(note that a minimum grade of C is required for General Education and Writing credit)

This course is a traditional face-to-face class focused on the written and spoken exchange of ideas. Students will be engaged through class discussion with the instructor and TA and with one another, as well as regular comments from instructor and TA on their written work. We will use a process writing model that includes writing workshops, in-class enactments, and peer-editing groups, all of which offer additional personal engagement with the class materials and the “writing life”.

Course Description: This Quest Identities I course explores changing conceptions of the self since the seventeenth century from the perspective of France, the country that gave the world Louis XIV’s glittering court at Versailles; the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the Rights of Man; and Paris, the quintessentially modern capital of the nineteenth century. The course opens with the memoir and life of Gluckl of Hameln, a relatively unknown seventeenth-century Jewish woman, and ends after WWII with the memoirs of the very famous Simone de Beauvoir, the founder of modern feminism. In between students will explore the events, the authors, the artists, and the social scientists that make France a particularly propitious place to explore centuries of debate about the modern self. Multi-media lectures and in-class discussions and workshops offer students the opportunity to see, read, analyze, and write about different kinds of evidence (including memoirs, novels, political treatises, plays, portraits, and

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| | addressed OR all portions addressed but unequally | Generally equal analysis of all portions of the prompt Some quotes to advance analysis Quotes typically followed by interpretation | Generally easy to follow Errors in syntax/sentence structure sometimes weaken analysis | one of the following: spelling, grammar, or punctuation | reflect differences in the quality of analysis and number of minor errors |
| C | Most portions not addressed OR portions addressed without support | Little analysis Unequal analysis Quotes not supported by interpretation | Generally well organized Large block quotes or paragraphs Several errors in syntax/sentence structure that significantly limit clarity | Errors in two or more of the following: spelling, grammar, punctuation | Pluses or minuses reflect differences in the quality of analysis and number of minor errors |
| D | Prompt not followed | No quotes No analysis Failure to address major parts of prompt | Organization is confusing | Errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation | Pluses or minuses reflect differences in the quality of analysis and number of minor errors |
| E (failing) | Failure to turn in assignment | | | | |

For information on UF policies on grading see:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Quest 1 Description and Student Learning Outcomes

Quest 1 Description:

Quest 1 courses are multidisciplinary explorations of essential questions about the human condition that are not easy to answer, but also not easy to ignore: What makes life worth living? What makes a society a fair one? How do we manage conflicts? Who are we in relation to other people or to the natural world? To grapple with the kinds of open-ended and complex intellectual challenges they will face as critical, creative, and self-reflective adults navigating a complex and interconnected world, Quest 1 students apply approaches from the humanities to mine works for evidence, create arguments, and articulate ideas.

Quest 1 SLOs:

- Identify, describe, and explain the history, theories, and methodologies used to examine essential questions about the human condition within and across the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Content).
- Analyze and evaluate essential questions about the human condition using established practices appropriate for the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Critical Thinking).
- Connect course content with critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond (Connection).
- Develop and present clear and effective responses to essential questions in oral and written forms as appropriate to the relevant humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Communication).

Humanities Description: Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

Humanities SLOS:

- Identify, describe, and explain the history, underlying theory and methodologies used in the course (Content).
- Identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives (Critical Thinking).
- Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively (Communication).

Writing requirement (WR 2,000)

For courses that confer WR credit, the course grades have two components:

To receive writing credit, 1) a student must receive a grade of “C” or higher, and 2) you must turn in all essays totaling 2,000 words to receive credit for writing 2,000 words. The writing requirement ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning.

PLEASE NOTE: a grade of “C-” will not confer credit for the University Writing Requirement.

The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on the student's written assignments with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. Conferring credit for the University Writing Requirement, this course requires that essays conform to the following assessment rubric. More specific rubrics and guidelines applicable to individual assignments may be delivered during the course of the semester.

This course’s objectives:

Reflecting the Quest 1 and Gen Ed H Curricular Objectives, during this class students will learn:

1. Key themes, principles, terminology, and methodologies from historical and literary analysis that can be used to answer essential questions about the historical origins of contemporary “identity”.
2. A range of the elements, biases, and influences that have shaped essential western understandings of “identity” and selfhood since the Enlightenment.
3. The use of analytical writing and of the writing process as tools for developing clear and effective analysis of historical and literary texts.

This course’s Student learning outcomes:

Reflecting the Quest I and Gen Ed H Curricular Student Learning Outcomes, by the end of this course, student will be able to:

1. Identify, describe and explain how the tools of the humanities can help with becoming a more informed citizen (Content SLO, Gen Ed Humanities and Quest 1)
2. Identify, analyze, and critically reflect on a variety of sources: personal memoirs, biographies, portraits, monuments, museums, novels and plays (Critical Thinking SLO, Quest 1 and Humanities)
3. Identify, analyze, and critically reflect on the connection between course content and their intellectual and personal development at UF and beyond (Connection SLO, Quest 1)
4. Develop and present clear and effective analyses in written form appropriate to the relevant humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Communication SLO for Gen Ed Humanities and Quest 1).

Policies and Expectations:

Please keep electronic distractions to a minimum. While you may feel perfectly comfortable multi-tasking in class, it is disturbing to the instructor and to those around you. Anyone caught texting in class will be marked absent for the day.

Come to class prepared to discuss the texts assigned for each day. The readings provide the raw material for all discussions. The more prepared you are before class, the more you will get out of both lectures and discussions. Class participation is essential. Students can expect a respectful and open atmosphere in which to participate in discussions.

Late work will not be accepted without penalty. Please make every effort to apprise the instructor of adverse circumstances that affect your ability to attend class or complete assignments on time. Official documentation is required to excuse an absence and to schedule make-up assignments. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Policy on Plagiarism: In writing essays, be sure to give proper credit whenever you use words, phrases, ideas, arguments, and conclusions drawn from someone else's work. Failure to give credit by quoting and/or footnoting is plagiarism. All incidents of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of students and met with sanctions (e.g failing grade for affected assignment, failing grade for the course, etc.). Please review the University's student code of conduct and conflict resolution procedures.

Accommodations for disabilities: Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Course Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>

Counseling services: Phone number and contact site for university counseling services and mental health services: 392-1575, <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

Week by Week Schedule:

Week 1: Introductions (Professor, the TA, this course, you)

T, Jan.7: *Introduction*

UNIT I: Writing Lives on the Margins

Th., Jan. 9: *How to read Natalie Zemon Davis—and especially her footnotes—for the tools this cultural historian borrows from other disciplines to explore 3 seventeenth-century lives*

Read: Prologue to *Women on the Margins* Look over the Table of Contents, the conclusion, and leaf through the rest of the book.

Th, Jan. 9 section: NZD suggests many ways for thinking about the identity of Gluckl (gender, class, occupation, geography, age, religion, family position). In **one paragraph, maximum 250 words**, explain how you would define your identity in relation to these categories. This exercise will not be graded. At the end of the semester, after reading about 200 years of conceptualizing identity, you will have the opportunity to reconsider your initial response.

Week 2: Natalie Zemon Davis, *Women on the Margins*

T, Jan. 14: *Between the Footnotes and the Text*: NZD's interdisciplinary toolbox

Read: "Arguing with God: Glickl Bas Judah Leib," the first essay in *Women on the Margins* (~75 pages)

Th., Jan 16: Discussion: Sources and how Natalie Zemon Davis uses them

Th., Jan. 16 section: **Reading Response:** Use the preface and the footnotes to explain how NZD employs the methods and perspectives of the disciplines of history, anthropology, and/or literary criticism to fill out her portrait of Gluckl of Hameln. Feel free to focus on how NZD uses a particular source.

Week 3: Gluckl of Hameln

T, Jan. 21: Lecture: Early Modern Lives/Identities

Read: Conclusion to *Women on the Margins* and excerpts *The Memoirs of Gluckel of Hameln* (1646-1724) (republished in 1977) (maximum 50 pages required)

Th., Jan. 23: Early modern lives: Glikl bas Judah Leib, Marie de l'Incarnation and Maria Sibylla Merian

Reading Response due: use both Davis's essay about Gluckel and the memoir on which it was based to discuss how Natalie Zemon Davis makes one particular point.

Th., Jan. 23 section: *Workshop* in preparation for first 750-word (approx. 3-page) extended analysis due on Monday, on evidence, and the disciplinary tools that allow one writing woman--Natalie Zemon Davis--to bring different another—Gluckl—back to life.

ESSAY for Unit I is DUE, Tuesday, Jan. 28: 750-word (approx. 3-page) extended analysis of NZD essay on Gluckel. You are welcome to integrate ideas and paragraphs developed in your two earlier reading responses.

Unit 2: Fashioning the Self in the Age of Enlightenment and Revolution

Week 4: Louis XIV and Court Culture

Tu., Jan. 28: *Lecture: The Age of Absolutism, the 24/7 Spectacle of Monarchy at Versailles; The Modern Great Nation at the Invalides*

Th., Jan. 30: *Lecture/Discussion: Sermons, Paintings, Sculptures Plays: How the “Portrait of the Catholic Consumer King” made its way into the lives of 20,000,000 Frenchmen*

Read: excerpts, Norbert Elias, “The Civilizing Process” and “Court Culture;” excerpts from St. Simon’s (very critical) memoirs of life at court. (50 pages)

Recommended reading: The second essay by NZ Davis about Marie d’Incarnation intersects nicely with this week’s lectures and reading.

Th., Jan. 30 section: *Rites and Rituals at Court; discussion of Elias and St. Simon*

Week 5: The Enlightenment

Tu, Feb. 4: *Lecture: The Republic of Letters, and the Project of Enlightenment*

Read: Excerpts Montesquieu, *Persian Letters* (30 pages); Preface and entries on “Woman” from *Encyclopédie* of D’Alembert and Diderot (20 pages)

Recommended reading: The third essay by NZ Davis intersects nicely with the discussion this week on the Enlightenment.

Reading Response: Discuss St. Simon’s depiction of the court in relation to Montesquieu’s; use Elias in your discussion if you find it useful. OR Discuss the project of Enlightenment, either by way of the preface or the entries on Woman in *The Encyclopedia*; integrate NZ Davis if you find it useful, especially on the woman question.

Th., Feb. 6: *Lecture/Discussion: Debates about the Nature of Man, the Origins and Stages of Civilization, and the Woman Question*

Th., Feb. 6 section: In class reading/performance of Marivaux’s *Isle of Slaves* (1725)

Week 6: The Novel, the Theater, Portraiture

Tu., Feb. 11: Lecture/Discussion: *Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his readers*

Read: excerpts *Emile* (1762) (20 pages)

Th., Feb. 13: Lecture/Discussion: *A woman reader writes back: Isabelle de Charriere: Portraiture and Self-Fashioning in the 18th century*

Read: “The Nobleman” (the first story in the collection, under 20 pages) and the translator’s superb introduction (under 10 pages). (Full citation: Isabelle de Charriere, *The Nobleman and Other Romances*, translated and with an introduction by Caroline Warman, Penguin Books, 2012)

Reading Response: Do a close reading of Marivaux, Rousseau, and/or Charriere on a topic of your choice.

Th., Feb. 13 section: Discussion of Rousseau and Charrière

Week 7: Inventing Human Rights

Tu., Feb. 18: Discussion Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights*

Read: Lynn Hunt’s *Inventing Human Rights*, entire

Th., Feb. 20. *The French Revolution: Creating the New Man with New Habits*

Th., Feb. 20 section: Workshop, playing with Lynn Hunt’s website on the French Revolution

Reading Response: Explain Lynn Hunt’s argument about the relationship between new cultural practices (like reading novels) and the revolutionary declarations of human rights. Or, discuss Hunt’s argument about the relationship between universal human rights and the struggles of women, Jews, Protestants, and slaves in particular.

Week 8: The New Nation and its Heroes

Tu., Feb. 25: *The Pantheon: Enacting the New Sacred Nation in Stone, around its fallen heroes*

Visit the website for the Pantheon and do a virtual tour.

Th., Feb. 27: *Conclusions Age of Enlightenment and Revolution by way of a Lecture and Virtual Tour of the monument, the Invalides, as it was updated by Napoleon I*

Th., Feb. 27 section: In class workshop in preparation for **750-word (approx. 3-page) essays due Tuesday, March 10 on eighteenth century topics using two sources. You are welcome to**

develop ideas from earlier reading responses. For primary sources you may use any portrait, monument or text we have considered. For secondary sources you may use NZ Davis or Hunt.

Spring Break

Paper due Tuesday, March 10 in class.

Part III: The Birth of the Modern Subject in a world of Commodity Capitalism

Week 9: Paris, Capital of the 19th Century

Tu., Mar. 10: Lecture: *The Arcades of Paris: The Industrial and Consumer Revolutions*

Th., Mar. 12: Lecture/Discussion: *The Railway Journey: How to Study the Experience of Modern Commodity Capitalism?*

Read: Schivelbusch, Foreword, Chapters 1-9, omitting 6, total: 119 pages

Th., Mar. 12 Section: discuss Schivelbusch and the experience of modernity.

Week 10: Paris, Capital of the 19th Century cont.

Tu., Mar. 17: Lecture/Discussion: *Great Exhibitions (and an update on the Invalides), The Remaking of Paris, and the Department Store*

Read: rest of Schivelbusch (50 pages)

Th., Mar. 19. *A Crash Course on Modern Social Science defining the Self in the 19th century*

Reading Response: Discuss Marx, Benjamin, Simmel, Elias, Foucault, or Freud (or any other contributor to modern social science in the index) in relation to Schivelbusch's "The Railway Journey." Or, explain and illustrate the significance of any of the following terms: panoramic vision, circulation, the commodity. Or, discuss how Schivelbusch uses sources and or/analogy to make his arguments.

Th., Mar. 19 Section: Discuss Modernity and the Self according to Schivelbusch

Part IV: History, Memory, and Commemoration

Week 11: The Promise and Failure of the Third Republic (1871-1939)

Tu., Mar. 24: Lecture/Discussion: *Le West End (of Paris): Self Fashioning in the Third Republic*

Read: Edmund de Waal, *Hare with Amber Eyes* (2012), Prologue and Part I on Paris (~100 pages)

Th., Mar. 26: *The Camondo Family and the Nissim de Camondo Museum: how Collections/Museums write lives*

Reading Response: Discuss how Edmund De Waal, the ceramicist, and amateur historian uses evidence to writes the lives of the Ephrussi Family. Or... Write about one object in the Camondo Collection and explain how it served to self-fashion the identity of its owner/collector as well as of the Enlightened French State that ultimately failed his descendants. Or... Write about these two neighbors in “Le West End” together!

Th., Mar. 26 Section: Camondo Family: visit and do a virtual tour of the Nissim de Camondo Museum

<https://madparis.fr/francais/musees/musee-nissim-de-camondo/>

As with our units on the Pantheon and the Invalides, this and the next few classes use an existing museum/monument in Paris as a living site for the negotiation of French identity and History. Review the website/tours on the Pantheon and the Invalides in preparation for next week’s lecture.

Week 12: The Great Nation and Empire, 1871-1944

Tu., Mar. 31: *An update from The Pantheon and The Invalides: The Empire and The Great Nation through WWI and Vichy*

Th., Apr. 2: *The Vichy Syndrome: Reckoning with the Past (eventually)*

Th., Apr. 2 section: Field Trip to Harn Museum (Experiential Learning)

In addition to visiting an exhibit (to be determined), students will meet with curators to learn about the practical constraints and skills involved in designing and mounting exhibits. This will be essential experience that will help the students who want to do their final exercise as a design of an exhibit of some kind.

Due Tuesday7, Apr. 7: 1250-word (approx. 5-page) essay on a topic of your choice, developed from a reading response written on a nineteenth century topic inspired by Schivelbusch, or DeWaal, or the Nissim de Camondo Museum, the Invalides, or the Pantheon. Feel free to circle back and make comparisons drawn from your work earlier in the course.

Part V: Conclusions

Week 13: Postwar Voices Writing Lives

Tu., Apr. 7: Lecture/Discussion: *Simone de Beauvoir: activist, memoirist, novelist*

Read: “Introduction” to the *Second Sex* (20 pages); Excerpts from *Memoirs* (20 pages)

Th., Apr. 9: Lecture/Discussion: Franz Fanon

Read: Excerpts *Wretched of the Earth* (20 pages)

Reading Response: Discuss Beauvoir’s conception of the Second Sex, or Fanon’s conception of the new man with new habits born of the colonial struggle for freedom.

Th., Apr. 9 section. Discussion of Beauvoir and Fanon

Quest Student Survey, presentation by Quest Ambassadors

Week 14: “Decentered” History

Tu., Apr. 14: Natalie Zemon Davis: A Writing Woman writing the lives of the slaves and their owners

Read 1 of the following:

Natalie Zemon Davis, “Decentering History: Local Stories and Cultural Crossings in a Global World,” *History and Theory* Vol. 50, No. 2 (May 2011), pp. 188-202.

or

Natalie Zemon Davis, “Judges, Masters, Diviners: Slaves’ Experience of Criminal Justice in Colonial Suriname,” *Law and History Review*, Vol. 29, No. 4, *Law, Slavery, and Justice: A Special Issue* (November 2011), pp. 925-984.

Reading Response: Discuss the evolving practice of microhistory over three decades in the hands of Natalie Zemon Davis by comparing this recent work with the earlier studies of *Women on the Margins* we read at the beginning of this course.

Th., Apr. 16: Writing Lives, Writing History

Th., Apr. 16 section: Workshop in preparation for final project: students will present outlines and drafts of the final project. Course evaluations.

Final Project, due Tuesday, April 21 in class: either: 1) a 1250-word (approx. 5-page) analysis or redesign of one of the exhibits/monuments we have studied together (Versailles, the Invalides, the Pantheon, the Musée Nissim de Commando, the Musée d’Orsay, or one that you have identified on your own); or 2) a 1250-word (approx. 5-page) essay analyzing the different approaches to Writing Lives we have considered in this course (considering at least 2 sources); or 3) a 1250-word (approx. 5-page) proposal for an exhibit, a screenplay, or any other creative

form that would allow you to reflect on the different approaches to Writing Lives we have considered in this course (considering at least 2 sources).

Week 15: Conclusions

Tu., Apr. 21: **Final projects/essays due in class**

In class exercise: In the first week I asked you to write **one paragraph** about how you would define your identity. Now you have an opportunity to reconsider your response in 250 words, in light of what you have learned in this class. This is your “connection assignment.”

Open Discussion