



**DeVry Institute of Technology
Long Island City, New York**

July 2007 (Session A)

Contemporary Global History (HUMN 410-Section ACC_W)

Dr. Ronald A. Milon

Dean

Business and Technology

DeVry Institute of Technology

Class meetings: **Tuesdays 6 PM – 8:50 PM**

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About the Professor: Dr. Milon is the Dean of the Business, CIS and NetCom programs at DeVry Institute of Technology in Long Island City, New York. He has taught History, Political Science and Critical Thinking courses since 1990. He received his B.S. degree in History and Political Science from SUNY College at Brockport (1987), his first M.A. degree in History from the University of Buffalo (1989), his second M.A. degree in Political Science from the New School University (1995) and his third masters (MAIA) in International Affairs from the New School University (1995). From 1989 – 1992 Dr. Milon was a Ralph Bunche Fellow on the United Nations. He received his Ph.D. in Adult Education and post secondary education from [Capella University](http://www.capella.edu) (2006).

Course Description: This course examines major 20th century political, social, economic and technological developments in a global context. It also establishes a context for historical events and suggests relationships among them. The impact of technological innovation on contemporary society, politics, military power and economic conditions is explored. The course also explores the values, practices, and applications of the discipline of history, and demonstrates through historical analogy how history may be used to understand and explain the dynamics of today's world. Because of the multitude of complex regional and global developments and personalities, which comprise this century, there is no expectation that all significant aspects of this period of history will be dealt with. Attempting to do so would likely result in you receiving a superficial compendium of facts, and the reduction of student performance outcomes to the minimal levels of knowledge and comprehension. Because of this the approach this course will be topical in coverage.

Finally, students are responsible for knowledge of the class requirements, procedures, policies and announcements made in class!! SO READ THIS SYLLBUS CAREFULLY.

Prerequisite: ENGL-13

II. Textbooks & Readings:

The textbook for this course is available at the bookstore here at DeVry. When possible I will provide copies of the additional readings for you.

**Crossley, Lees, and Servos, (2004) Global Society: The World Since 1900.
New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.**

The Crossley, Lees, and Servos, (2004) book will serve as the course textbook. Students should complete all assigned readings and have knowledge of the questions given by the instructor related to such readings. These questions will appear on course examinations.

In addition to the assigned readings you are required to keep up with current events in world affairs. Reading the New York Times or another national newspaper will help keep you up to date on current affairs.

Students should watch the national nightly news, C-Span, MSNBC, or CNN in order to get a handle on current national issues. You are also strongly encouraged to watch documentaries on PBS or the History Channel that may relate to topics covered in this course. These programs are not required, but they will help in providing current views on issues of global and national importance. From time to time I will suggest some documentaries to watch

as they are aired on TV. Presentations provided by the instructor during class along with supplemental readings will also be available on eCollege.

III. Course Objectives and General Education Program Outcomes:

1. Given the deliberate distortion and misuse of history in 20th and 21st century secular and religious ideology and propaganda, formulate a set of principles to govern historical research and the teaching of history to minimize the risk of ideological distortion and political misuse of history.
2. Given a present-day national or international situation with apparent negative consequences for the future, apply the tools and resources of history to assessing the probable short- and long-term outcomes of the situation and to proposing rational solutions.
3. Given the dominance of Western technology and economic institutions in global economic and cultural life, assess the challenges of technological and economic globalization to the cultural values and social patterns of a traditional society, e.g., Japan, Saudi Arabia, or India.
4. Given the concept of a “revolution of rising expectations,” analyze a failed 20th century constitutional system, e.g., Nationalist China in 1911-1949 or the USSR in 1986-1991, and the continuing challenge rising expectations present to contemporary regimes, e.g., the People’s Republic of China or Egypt.
5. Given the central role of charismatic leaders in authoritarian movements of the contemporary period, analyze the conditions under which such leaders are most able to mobilize the masses in their respective states.
6. Given the concept of sovereign power and the continuing appeal of nationalism, evaluate the challenges to developing effective collective security arrangements, e.g., the League of Nations and the United Nations.
7. Given the background and nature of the September 11, 2001, attacks, analyze the domestic and international challenges posed to exceptionally strong and technologically advanced states by international terrorist movements and sustained low-intensity conflict.
8. Given the generally enlarged role of modern governments in citizens’ lives, analyze the factors that have contributed to the increase in governmental authority over economic and social activities during the contemporary period.
9. Given the global political, economic, and cultural dominance of the U.S. after World War

II to the present, characterize the position of the U.S. in terms of both positive and negative impacts on the world's developing nations.

10. Given the critical role of mass protest movements and political violence in effecting change during the contemporary period, compare and contrast the goals, methods, and effectiveness of violent and non-violent movements for social, economic, and political change.

11. Given repeated cases of genocide in the 20th century, e.g., the Nazi holocaust, Cambodia under Pol Pot, "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia, Rwanda, and others, analyze the roots of such behavior and explain how "civilized" peoples can become involved in institutionalized mass genocidal murder.

Working through the materials of this course will not only give you important information for understanding the development of our world. You will also learn skills of analysis, writing and reading. You will learn to place issues into historical context, to consider evidence, and to develop arguments. It is important to keep up with assignments and to come to class ready to participate achieve these objectives. The midterm, group presentation, take-home assignment, and final exam will assess your progress in achieving these objectives.

IV. Rationale for this course

As citizens in a democratic society possessing the credentials of higher education, our graduates should be able to demonstrate a capacity to understand the complex and rapidly changing world in which they live and to use that understanding to enrich their daily lives as they assume increasingly responsible positions in their communities and profession. Students should also be able to reflect upon current affairs from a historical point of reference and construct "lessons" for the promoting of economic and social stability as a new century begins.

V. Class Expectations and Grading:

The following will be required of you while taking this class:

A) Midterm	150 points	(To be completed via eCollege)
B) Comprehensive Final Exam	400 points	(To be completed in class)
C) Quizzes	200 points	(To be completed via eCollege)
D) Issue Paper	100 points	
E) Presentation	100 points	
E) eCollege Participation	200 points	

1150 points

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Issue Paper: Students must complete a take home issue essay assignment (5 - 8 typed pages in length) that focus on two of the five topics (questions) given on page 9 (Appendix I) of this course syllabus. Using both the textbook, other pertinent outside readings and resources you will be asked to address a major question in the global history. The issue paper must be typed double-spaced, with 1/2 margin. The paper is due during week 7.

Student presentation: Students will select a country and give a brief presentation and provide a summary paper (1 – 2 pages) covering the following:

- 1) Is it rich, poor, or middling? how do you know?
- 2) Where is it located?
- 3) How long has it existed as an independent country?
- 4) What type of government does it currently possess?
- 5) What else of interest do you know of the country?

eCollege Participation: **The Threaded Discussion Area** (TDA) is an online forum for class discussion during the time we're not in the onsite classroom. These discussions will be drawn from text, practical applications and other areas designed to further the learning experience. Each student is expected to participate in each discussion a MINIMUM of 3 times per week. These activities comprise over 15% of your total score for the course. Each week, I will assign one to three discussion topics, and you are expected to participate fully in each topic on a weekly basis. In order to meet DeVry's minimum attendance requirements, you will need to contribute to the discussion on at least three different days of the week: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, for example. **Your responses in the discussion threads must be well thought out, well developed, and well written. Responding with merely an I agree, or any other insubstantial reaction will not earn you any points.** Your comments must reflect the course reading, the contributions of other participants, what we've covered in the classroom and your own careful thought. They must add value to the discussion. If you agree with what someone has posted, explain and elaborate your thoughts. If you disagree, tell us why you disagree.

Everyone who attends (posts responses) will get some points for a threaded discussion assignment, but only those who participate fully will receive the full credit each week. Besides, students who fully participate enjoy the course more (it's fun) and learn more. I strongly encourage all of you to contribute to the TDA as much as you can. You are not restricted to just answering the questions that I post. Talk to each other and address each other by name. That's part of getting to know each other better. Answer and post as many comments and responses as you like beyond the minimal requirement. Sharing and discussing with others in the class is part of the give and take of learning.

Attendance will be taken within the first 10 minutes of the class. **Students who are not present when attendance is taken will be marked as absent.** Attendance counts for 50 points toward your final grade.

VI. The Philosophy of the Professor:

[General Philosophy] See me to discuss what action we can take if you are having problems. I am here to help you, so please see me before little problems become **BIG** ones.

[Specific Regulations]

- 1) Again, you are expected to have the assigned readings completed on the date the topic will be discussed. A quiz may be given on that day or you may be called upon in class.
- 2) I am VERY STRICT about make up exams. You must have a legitimate excuse (such as Medical care, death).
- 3) I am VERY STRICT about granting incompletes. Only in an extreme case will I even consider that option.
- 4) **General Education Attendance Policy:** Attendance will be taken within the first 10 minutes of the class. Students who are not present when attendance is taken will be marked as absent. Students who arrive after attendance is taken are strongly encouraged to stay in the class, however they will not be marked present. There will be no partial credit given for lateness.
- 5) A Note on Plagiarism: Plagiarism is defined by the American College Dictionary as "...copying or imitating the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author and passing off the same as one's original work." **Plagiarism is clear grounds for failure and possible dismissal from DeVry. If you are in doubt about the definition and seriousness of plagiarism, check pages 18- 20 of the DeVry Student Handbook or with the college handbook or see the instructor.** The responsibility in this matter is solely that of the student. Disclaiming intent not to plagiarize is not a valid defense.
- 6) The Honor System: Any one receiving or giving answers or talking during any examination or test given during class will receive a ZERO for that assignment and will receive a (F) for a final

course grade.

7) Respect: The relationship established by the instructor and the student is very special in encouraging educational development. I offer respect to my students and I expect the same in return. Students should refrain from talking while the lecture is taking place. If you have a question, of course you may ask it. **Turn your beepers and cell phones to silent mode since they disrupt the class.** Rude behavior will not be tolerated at any time during lectures or discussions.

VII. Course Outline:

Week	Topic/Homework	Assignments	Online Activities	TCOs
1	Introduction to the class: assignments, expectations. What is History? Timeline. <u>Homework:</u> Read Chapter 1: p. 16-37; Chapter 2: p. 62 only; Chapter 3: p. 68-82.		Quiz Threaded Discussions	2
2	Technology breakthroughs, colonialism, World War I. <u>Homework:</u> Read Chapter 4: p. 131-143; Chapter 5: all.		Quiz Threaded Discussions	3
3	Nationalism, nonviolent resistance, more tech breakthroughs. <u>Homework:</u> Read Chapter 6: p. 197-204; Chapter 7: 219-229	Prepare for midterm	Quiz Threaded Discussions	6, 10
4	The Great Depression, the rise of fascism. Midterm exam. <u>Homework:</u> Chapter 7: p. 232-238; Chapter 8: p. 249-268 + 275-282.		Midterm Threaded Discussions	5, 8
5	Propaganda, World War II. <u>Homework:</u> Read Chapter 9: p. 291-292 +310-323; Chapter 10: p. 331-341		Threaded Discussions	1, 11
6	The Cold War, Arab and Asian Nationalism, . <u>Homework:</u> Chapter 11: p. 358-365 + 372 + 378-383; Chapter 12: p. 393-403.	Presentations	Quiz Threaded Discussions	4, 9
7	Popular culture, civil rights movements. <u>Homework:</u> Chapter 13: p. 422-424 +432 + 436 +450-451; Chapter 14: p. 485-486; Chapter 15: p. 497-504.	Issue paper and Presentations	Threaded Discussions	10
8	Final Exam			7

VIII. DeVry School Calendar:

2007 Summer Semester: July 9, 2007 – October 28, 2007

Monday	July 9	Session A begins
Monday	July 16	Semester-length courses begin
Sunday	September 2	Session A ends
Monday	September 3	Session B begins (no classes)
Sunday	October 28	Session B and semester-length courses end

Appendix I

Select two of the five questions that follow for your take home issue assignment. For reference to generalizations made in your papers refer to the text and other assigned readings, other outside research and pertinent news articles. This assignment should be between 5 to 7 doubled spaced typed pages. The assignment will be due on week 7.

A) Today some of the best minds in our country are giving serious thought to the establishment of permanent world peace. Basing your answer upon your knowledge of modern history, discuss three problems involved in the establishment of a suitable and permanent peace.

B) Explain the significance of each of the following in bringing about an end of the Cold War: the breakdown of the Soviet Union, the globalization of the market, the increased economic and political strength of the United States, technology and its impact on spreading information to the masses, and the globalization of democratic ideas.

C) Communism and Capitalism are two major philosophies that shape the course of events in the modern world. Discuss which had the most impact and why.

D) **“In this new world order, the United States will not be a super power”** Agree or disagree and discuss.

E) What problems and challenges societies currently face and how were these problems and challenges shaped by the last 50 years?

F) Terrorism has become a major fear in our lives since September 11, 2001. How have we prepared to protect ourselves from terrorist acts? How does our current period of terrorist fears relate to other periods covered in this course? How could we have prevented 9/11 from happening using historical ideas and events from the past 100 years?

G) Political cartoon: Review and analysis



Source: Justus, *Minneapolis Star*, 1947 (adapted)

Describe what this cartoon is trying to relate in terms of historical events covered in this class. How does it relate to historical and current events and practices?

APPENDIX II
Selected Contemporary History Bibliography

- Adamthwaite, Anthony. *The Making of the Second World War* (1979).
- Afigbo, A.E., et al. *The Making of Modern Africa*. 2 vols. (1986).
- Arjornand, Said. *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran* (1988).
- Bailey, Kathleen C. *Doomsday Weapons in the hands of Many: The Arms Control Challenge of the 90s* (1991).
- Bialer, Seweryn. *The Soviet Paradox: External Expansion, Internal Decline* (1986).
- Bolter, J. David. *Turing's Man: Western Culture in the Computer Age* (1984).
- Brzezinski, Zbigniew. *Out of Control: Global Turmoil on the Eve of the 21st Century* (1993).**
- Calleo, David P. *Beyond American Hegemony* (1987).**
- Calvocoressi, Peter, Guy Wint, and John Pritchard. *Total War: Causes and Course of the Second World War*. Rev. 2d ed. (1988).
- Carr, E.H. *The Meaning of the Russian Revolution* (1979).**
- Cassells, Alan. *Fascism* (1975).
- Dominguez, Jorge I. *Cuba: Order and Revolution* (1978).
- Ekins, Paul. *A New World Order: Grassroots Movements for Global Change* (1992).
- Eksteins, Modris. *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (1990).
- Fairbank, John K., Edwin O. Reischauer, and Albert M. Craig. *East Asia: Transition and Transformation* (1978).**
- Fussell, Paul. *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975).
- Galbraith, John Kenneth. *The Great Crash* (1988).
- Goldschmidt, Arthur, Jr. *A Concise History of the Middle East*, 4th ed. (1991).**
- Hane, Mikiso. *Modern Japan: A Historical Survey*, 2d ed. (1992).
- Hart, John Mason. *Revolutionary Mexico: The Coming and Process of the Mexican Revolution* (1987).
- Hiden, John, and John Farquharson. *Explaining Hitler's Germany: Historians and the Third Reich*, 2nd ed. (1989).
- Horowitz, Irving Louis, ed. *Cuban Communism*, 6th ed. (1987).
- Hourani, Albert. *A History of the Arab Peoples* (1991).
- Hughes, Robert. *The Shock of the New: Art and the Century of Change* (1981).
- Hunter, Shireen T. *Iran After Khomeini* (1992).
- Johnson, Paul. *Modern Times: The World from the Twenties to the Nineties*. Revised ed. (1991).**
- Kaiser, Robert G. *Why Gorbachev Happened* (1992).**
- Kennedy, Paul. *Preparing for the Twenty-first Century* (1993).**
- Kennedy, Paul. *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military***

Conflict from 1500 to 2000 (1987).

- Kindleberger, Charles P. *The World in Depression, 1929-1939*, 2d ed. (1986).
Lukacs, John. *The End of the Twentieth Century and the End of the Modern Age* (1993).
MacDonald, Callum A. *Korea: The War Before Vietnam* (1987).
Mazrui, Ali. *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* (1986).
McNeill, William H. *A History of the Human Community*, 2 vols. (1992).
Mehta, Ved. *Mahatma Gandhi and His Apostles* (1983).
Meisner, Maurice. *Mao's China and After: A History of the People's Republic* (1986).
Reischauer, Edwin O. *Japan: The Story of a Nation*, 4th ed. (1989).
Reitsma, H. A., and J.M.G. Kleinpenning. *The Third World in Perspective* (1989).
Skidmore, Thomas E., and Peter H. Smith. *Modern Latin America*, 3d ed. (1992).
Smith, Charles D. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 2d ed. (1992).
Sontag, Raymond V. *A Broken World* (1971).
Snow, Donald M. *The Shape of the Future: The Post-Cold War World* (1991).
Stavrianos, L.S. *Global Rift: The Third World Comes of Age* (1981).
Thompson, Leonard. *A History of South Africa* (1990).
VonLaue, Theodore H. *Why Lenin? Why Stalin? A Reappraisal of the Russian Revolution, 1900-1930* (1964).
Weber, Eugen. *Varieties of Fascism* (1982).
Wegs, J. Robert. *Europe Since 1945: A Concise History*, 2d ed. (1984).
Weinberg, Gerhard L. *A World at Arms: A Global History of World War II* (1994).
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Wright, Gordon. *The Ordeal of Total War* (1968).
Yapp, M.E. *The Near East Since the First World War* (1991).

Web Sources

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www.crisisweb.org
www.culturalorientation.net
www.emulateme.com/alphanationtext.htm
www.fas.org
www.globalissues.org
www.historyguy.com
<http://www.historynet.com>
<http://history.hanover.edu>
www.learner.org
www.mideastweb.org
www.ndcf.org
www.un.com

www.worldatlas.com

Appendix III

History Definitions

What follows are a series of quotations about history and the historian's craft. They have been culled from a variety of sources and they appear here in totally random order. Their purpose is to incite, energize and stimulate your historical imagination.

* * *

"History,' Stephen said, 'is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake.'" **James Joyce**

"Since history has no properly scientific value, its only purpose is educative. And if historians neglect to educate the public, if they fail to interest it intelligently in the past, then all their historical learning is valueless except in so far as it educates themselves." **G. M. Trevelyan.**

"To each eye, perhaps, the outlines of a great civilization present a different picture. In the wide ocean upon which we venture, the possible ways and directions are many; and the same studies which have served for my work might easily, in other hands, not only receive a wholly different treatment and application, but lead to essentially different conclusions." **Jacob Burckhardt**

"History is the witness that testifies to the passing of time; it illuminates reality, vitalizes memory, provides guidance in daily life, and brings us tidings of antiquity." **Cicero**

"The past is useless. That explains why it is past." **Wright Morris**

"Faithfulness to the truth of history involves far more than a research, however patient and scrupulous, into special facts. Such facts may be detailed with the most minute exactness, and yet the narrative, taken as a whole, may be unmeaning or untrue. The narrator must seek to imbue himself with the life and spirit of the time. He must study events in their bearings near and remote; in the character, habits, and manners of those who took part in them. He must himself be, as it were, a sharer or a spectator of the action he describes." **Francis Parkman**

"History . . . is indeed little more than the register of the crimes, follies, and misfortunes of mankind." **Edward Gibbon**

"There is properly no history; only biography." **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

"The study of history is the best medicine for a sick mind; for in history you have a record of the infinite variety of human experience plainly set out for all to see; and in that record you can find

yourself and your country both examples and warnings; fine things to take as models, base things rotten through and through, to avoid." **Livy**

"What experience and history teach is this-that people and governments never have learned anything from history, or acted on principles deduced from it." **G. W. F. Hegel**

"Everything must be recaptured and relocated in the general framework of history, so that despite the difficulties, the fundamental paradoxes and contradictions, we may respect the unity of history which is also the unity of life." **Fernand Braudel**

"The function of the historian is neither to love the past nor to emancipate himself from the past, but to master and understand it as the key to the understanding of the present." **E. H. Carr**

"If you do not like the past, change it." **William L. Burton**

"History does nothing, possesses no enormous wealth, fights no battles. It is rather man, the real, living man, who does everything, possesses, fights. It is not *History*, as if she were a person apart, who uses men as a means to work out her purposes, but history itself is nothing but the activity of men pursuing their purposes." **Karl Marx**

"An historian should yield himself to his subject, become immersed in the place and period of his choice, standing apart from it now and then for a fresh view." **Samuel Eliot Morison**

"History is *for* human self-knowledge. Knowing yourself means knowing, first, what it is to be a person; secondly, knowing what it is to be the kind of person you are; and thirdly, knowing what it is to be the person *you* are and nobody else is. Knowing yourself means knowing what you can do; and since nobody knows what they can do until they try, the only clue to what man can do is what man has done. The value of history, then, is that it teaches us what man has done and thus what man is." **R. G. Collingwood**

"History is more or less bunk." **Henry Ford**

"That historians should give their own country a break, I grant you; but not so as to state things contrary to fact. For there are plenty of mistakes made by writers out of ignorance, and which any man finds it difficult to avoid. But if we knowingly write what is false, whether for the sake of our country or our friends or just to be pleasant, what difference is there between us and hack writers? Readers should be very attentive to and critical of historians, and they in turn should be constantly on their guard." **Polybius**

"You have reckoned that history ought to judge the past and to instruct the contemporary world as to the future. The present attempt does not yield to that high office. It will merely tell how it really was." **Leopold von Ranke**

"Time in its irresistible and ceaseless flow carries along on its flood all created things and drowns them in the depths of obscurity. . . . But the tale of history forms a very strong bulwark against the stream of time, and checks in some measure its irresistible flow, so that, of all things done in it, as many as history has taken over it secures and binds together, and does not allow them to slip away into the abyss of oblivion." **Anna Comnena**

"Only a good-for-nothing is not interested in his past." **Sigmund Freud**

"Every past is worth condemning." **Friedrich Nietzsche**

"The historian does simply not come in to replenish the gaps of memory. He constantly challenges even those memories that have survived intact." **Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi**

"Each age tries to form its own conception of the past. Each age writes the history of the past anew with reference to the conditions uppermost in its own time." **Frederick Jackson Turner**

Source: The History Guide, Retrieved on September 21, 2006 from
<http://www.historyguide.org/history.html>.

Appendix IV

Why Study History?

By Peter N. Stearns

<http://www.theaha.org/pubs/stearns.htm>

People live in the present. They plan for and worry about the future. History, however, is the study of the past. Given all the demands that press in from living in the present and anticipating what is yet to come, why bother with what has been? Given all the desirable and available branches of knowledge, why insist—as most American educational programs do—on a good bit of history? And why urge many students to study even more history than they are required to?

Any subject of study needs justification: its advocates must explain why it is worth attention. Most widely accepted subjects—and history is certainly one of them—attract some people who simply like the information and modes of thought involved. But audiences less spontaneously drawn to the subject and more doubtful about why to bother need to know what the purpose is.

Historians do not perform heart transplants, improve highway design, or arrest criminals. In a society that quite correctly expects education to serve useful purposes, the functions of history can seem more difficult to define than those of engineering or medicine. History is in fact very useful, actually indispensable, but the products of historical study are less tangible, sometimes less immediate, than those that stem from some other disciplines.

In the past history has been justified for reasons we would no longer accept. For instance, one of the reasons history holds its place in current education is because earlier leaders believed that a knowledge of certain historical facts helped distinguish the educated from the uneducated; the person who could reel off the date of the Norman conquest of England (1066) or the name of the person who came up with the theory of evolution at about the same time that Darwin did (Wallace) was deemed superior—a better candidate for law school or even a business promotion. Knowledge of historical facts has been used as a screening device in many societies, from China to the United States, and the habit is still with us to some extent. Unfortunately, this use can encourage mindless memorization—a real but not very appealing aspect of the discipline.

History should be studied because it is essential to individuals and to society, and because it harbors beauty. There are many ways to discuss the real functions of the subject—as there are many different historical talents and many different paths to historical meaning. All definitions of history's utility, however, rely on two fundamental facts.

History Helps Us Understand People and Societies

In the first place, history offers a storehouse of information about how people and societies behave. Understanding the operations of people and societies is difficult, though a number of disciplines make the attempt. An exclusive reliance on current data would needlessly handicap our efforts. How can we evaluate war if the nation is at peace—unless we use historical materials? How can we understand genius, the influence of technological innovation, or the role that beliefs play in shaping family life, if we don't use what we know about experiences in the past? Some social scientists attempt to formulate laws or theories about human behavior. But even these recourses depend on historical information, except for in limited, often artificial cases in which experiments can be devised to determine how people act. Major aspects of a society's operation, like mass elections, missionary activities, or military alliances,

cannot be set up as precise experiments. Consequently, history must serve, however imperfectly, as our laboratory, and data from the past must serve as our most vital evidence in the unavoidable quest to figure out why our complex species behaves as it does in societal settings. This, fundamentally, is why we cannot stay away from history: it offers the only extensive evidential base for the contemplation and analysis of how societies function, and people need to have some sense of how societies function simply to run their own lives.

History Helps Us Understand Change and How the Society We Live in Came to Be

The second reason history is inescapable as a subject of serious study follows closely on the first. The past causes the present, and so the future. Any time we try to know why something happened—whether a shift in political party dominance in the American Congress, a major change in the teenage suicide rate, or a war in the Balkans or the Middle East—we have to look for factors that took shape earlier. Sometimes fairly recent history will suffice to explain a major development, but often we need to look further back to identify the causes of change. Only through studying history can we grasp how things change; only through history can we begin to comprehend the factors that cause change; and only through history can we understand what elements of an institution or a society persist despite change.

The importance of history in explaining and understanding change in human behavior is no mere abstraction. Take an important human phenomenon such as alcoholism. Through biological experiments scientists have identified specific genes that seem to cause a proclivity toward alcohol addiction in some individuals. This is a notable advance. But alcoholism, as a social reality, has a history: rates of alcoholism have risen and fallen, and they have varied from one group to the next. Attitudes and policies about alcoholism have also changed and varied. History is indispensable to understanding why such changes occur. And in many ways historical analysis is a more challenging kind of exploration than genetic experimentation. Historians have in fact greatly contributed in recent decades to our understanding of trends (or patterns of change) in alcoholism and to our grasp of the dimensions of addiction as an evolving social problem.

One of the leading concerns of contemporary American politics is low voter turnout, even for major elections. A historical analysis of changes in voter turnout can help us begin to understand the problem we face today. What were turnouts in the past? When did the decline set in? Once we determine when the trend began, we can try to identify which of the factors present at the time combined to set the trend in motion. Do the same factors sustain the trend still, or are there new ingredients that have contributed to it in more recent decades? A purely contemporary analysis may shed some light on the problem, but a historical assessment is clearly fundamental—and essential for anyone concerned about American political health today.

History, then, provides the only extensive materials available to study the human condition. It also focuses attention on the complex processes of social change, including the factors that are causing change around us today. Here, at base, are the two related reasons many people become enthralled with the examination of the past and why our society requires and encourages the study of history as a major subject in the schools.

The Importance of History in Our Own Lives

These two fundamental reasons for studying history underlie more specific and quite diverse uses of history in our own lives. History well told is beautiful. Many of the historians who most appeal to the general reading public know the importance of dramatic and skillful writing—as well as of accuracy. Biography and military history appeal in part because of the tales they contain. History as art and entertainment serves a real purpose, on aesthetic grounds but also on the level of human understanding. Stories well done are stories that reveal how people and societies have actually functioned, and they prompt thoughts about the human experience in other times and places. The same

aesthetic and humanistic goals inspire people to immerse themselves in efforts to reconstruct quite remote pasts, far removed from immediate, present-day utility. Exploring what historians sometimes call the "pastness of the past"—the ways people in distant ages constructed their lives—involves a sense of beauty and excitement, and ultimately another perspective on human life and society.

History Contributes to Moral Understanding

History also provides a terrain for moral contemplation. Studying the stories of individuals and situations in the past allows a student of history to test his or her own moral sense, to hone it against some of the real complexities individuals have faced in difficult settings. People who have weathered adversity not just in some work of fiction, but in real, historical circumstances can provide inspiration. "History teaching by example" is one phrase that describes this use of a study of the past—a study not only of certifiable heroes, the great men and women of history who successfully worked through moral dilemmas, but also of more ordinary people who provide lessons in courage, diligence, or constructive protest.

History Provides Identity

History also helps provide identity, and this is unquestionably one of the reasons all modern nations encourage its teaching in some form. Historical data include evidence about how families, groups, institutions and whole countries were formed and about how they have evolved while retaining cohesion. For many Americans, studying the history of one's own family is the most obvious use of history, for it provides facts about genealogy and (at a slightly more complex level) a basis for understanding how the family has interacted with larger historical change. Family identity is established and confirmed. Many institutions, businesses, communities, and social units, such as ethnic groups in the United States, use history for similar identity purposes. Merely defining the group in the present pales against the possibility of forming an identity based on a rich past. And of course nations use identity history as well—and sometimes abuse it. Histories that tell the national story, emphasizing distinctive features of the national experience, are meant to drive home an understanding of national values and a commitment to national loyalty.

Studying History Is Essential for Good Citizenship

A study of history is essential for good citizenship. This is the most common justification for the place of history in school curricula. Sometimes advocates of citizenship history hope merely to promote national identity and loyalty through a history spiced by vivid stories and lessons in individual success and morality. But the importance of history for citizenship goes beyond this narrow goal and can even challenge it at some points.

History that lays the foundation for genuine citizenship returns, in one sense, to the essential uses of the study of the past. History provides data about the emergence of national institutions, problems, and values—it's the only significant storehouse of such data available. It offers evidence also about how nations have interacted with other societies, providing international and comparative perspectives essential for responsible citizenship. Further, studying history helps us understand how recent, current, and prospective changes that affect the lives of citizens are emerging or may emerge and what causes are involved. More important, studying history encourages habits of mind that are vital for responsible public behavior, whether as a national or community leader, an informed voter, a petitioner, or a simple observer.

What Skills Does a Student of History Develop?

What does a well-trained student of history, schooled to work on past materials and on case studies in social change, learn how to do? The list is manageable, but it contains several overlapping categories.

The Ability to Assess Evidence. The study of history builds experience in dealing with and assessing various kinds of evidence—the sorts of evidence historians use in shaping the most accurate pictures of the past that they can. Learning how to interpret the statements of past political leaders—one kind of evidence—helps form the capacity to distinguish between the objective and the self-serving among statements made by present-day political leaders. Learning how to combine different kinds of evidence—public statements, private records, numerical data, visual materials—develops the ability to make coherent arguments based on a variety of data. This skill can also be applied to information encountered in everyday life.

The Ability to Assess Conflicting Interpretations. Learning history means gaining some skill in sorting through diverse, often conflicting interpretations. Understanding how societies work—the central goal of historical study—is inherently imprecise, and the same certainly holds true for understanding what is going on in the present day. Learning how to identify and evaluate conflicting interpretations is an essential citizenship skill for which history, as an often-contested laboratory of human experience, provides training. This is one area in which the full benefits of historical study sometimes clash with the narrower uses of the past to construct identity. Experience in examining past situations provides a constructively critical sense that can be applied to partisan claims about the glories of national or group identity. The study of history in no sense undermines loyalty or commitment, but it does teach the need for assessing arguments, and it provides opportunities to engage in debate and achieve perspective.

Experience in Assessing Past Examples of Change. Experience in assessing past examples of change is vital to understanding change in society today—it's an essential skill in what we are regularly told is our "ever-changing world." Analysis of change means developing some capacity for determining the magnitude and significance of change, for some changes are more fundamental than others. Comparing particular changes to relevant examples from the past helps students of history develop this capacity. The ability to identify the continuities that always accompany even the most dramatic changes also comes from studying history, as does the skill to determine probable causes of change. Learning history helps one figure out, for example, if one main factor—such as a technological innovation or some deliberate new policy—accounts for a change or whether, as is more commonly the case, a number of factors combine to generate the actual change that occurs.

Historical study, in sum, is crucial to the promotion of that elusive creature, the well-informed citizen. It provides basic factual information about the background of our political institutions and about the values and problems that affect our social well-being. It also contributes to our capacity to use evidence, assess interpretations, and analyze change and continuities. No one can ever quite deal with the present as the historian deals with the past—we lack the perspective for this feat; but we can move in this direction by applying historical habits of mind, and we will function as better citizens in the process.

History Is Useful in the World of Work

History is useful for work. Its study helps create good businesspeople, professionals, and political leaders. The number of explicit professional jobs for historians is considerable, but most people who study history do not become professional historians. Professional historians teach at various levels, work in museums and media centers, do historical research for businesses or public agencies, or participate in the growing number of historical consultancies. These categories are important—indeed vital—to keep the basic enterprise of history going, but most people who study history use their training for broader professional purposes. Students of history find their experience directly relevant to jobs in a variety of careers as well as to further study in fields like law and public administration. Employers often deliberately seek students with the kinds of capacities historical study promotes. The reasons are not hard to identify: students of history acquire, by studying different phases of the past and different societies in the past, a broad perspective that gives them the range and flexibility required in many work situations. They develop research skills, the ability to find and evaluate sources of information, and the means to identify and evaluate diverse interpretations. Work in history also improves basic writing and speaking skills and is directly relevant to many of

the analytical requirements in the public and private sectors, where the capacity to identify, assess, and explain trends is essential. Historical study is unquestionably an asset for a variety of work and professional situations, even though it does not, for most students, lead as directly to a particular job slot, as do some technical fields. But history particularly prepares students for the long haul in their careers, its qualities helping adaptation and advancement beyond entry-level employment. There is no denying that in our society many people who are drawn to historical study worry about relevance. In our changing economy, there is concern about job futures in most fields. Historical training is not, however, an indulgence; it applies directly to many careers and can clearly help us in our working lives.

What Kind of History Should We Study?

The question of why we should study history entails several subsidiary issues about what kind of history should be studied. Historians and the general public alike can generate a lot of heat about what specific history courses should appear in what part of the curriculum. Many of the benefits of history derive from various kinds of history, whether local or national or focused on one culture or the world. Gripping instances of history as storytelling, as moral example, and as analysis come from all sorts of settings. The most intense debates about what history should cover occur in relation to identity history and the attempt to argue that knowledge of certain historical facts marks one as an educated person. Some people feel that in order to become good citizens students must learn to recite the preamble of the American constitution or be able to identify Thomas Edison—though many historians would dissent from an unduly long list of factual obligations. Correspondingly, some feminists, eager to use history as part of their struggle, want to make sure that students know the names of key past leaders such as Susan B. Anthony. The range of possible survey and memorization chores is considerable—one reason that history texts are often quite long.

There is a fundamental tension in teaching and learning history between covering facts and developing historical habits of mind. Because history provides an immediate background to our own life and age, it is highly desirable to learn about forces that arose in the past and continue to affect the modern world. This type of knowledge requires some attention to comprehending the development of national institutions and trends. It also demands some historical understanding of key forces in the wider world. The ongoing tension between Christianity and Islam, for instance, requires some knowledge of patterns that took shape over 12 centuries ago. Indeed, the pressing need to learn about issues of importance throughout the world is the basic reason that world history has been gaining ground in American curriculums. Historical habits of mind are enriched when we learn to compare different patterns of historical development, which means some study of other national traditions and civilizations.

The key to developing historical habits of mind, however, is having repeated experience in historical inquiry. Such experience should involve a variety of materials and a diversity of analytical problems. Facts are essential in this process, for historical analysis depends on data, but it does not matter whether these facts come from local, national, or world history—although it's most useful to study a range of settings. What matters is learning how to assess different magnitudes of historical change, different examples of conflicting interpretations, and multiple kinds of evidence. Developing the ability to repeat fundamental thinking habits through increasingly complex exercises is essential. Historical processes and institutions that are deemed especially important to specific curriculums can, of course, be used to teach historical inquiry. Appropriate balance is the obvious goal, with an insistence on factual knowledge not allowed to overshadow the need to develop historical habits of mind.

Exposure to certain essential historical episodes and experience in historical inquiry are crucial to any program of historical study, but they require supplement. No program can be fully functional if it does not allow for whimsy and individual taste. Pursuing particular stories or types of problems, simply because they tickle the fancy, contributes to a rounded intellectual life. Similarly, no program in history is complete unless it provides some understanding of the ongoing role of historical inquiry in expanding our knowledge of the past and, with it, of human and social behavior.

The past two decades have seen a genuine explosion of historical information and analysis, as additional facets of human behavior have been subjected to research and interpretation. And there is every sign that historians are continuing to expand our understanding of the past. It's clear that the discipline of history is a source of innovation and not merely a framework for repeated renderings of established data and familiar stories.

Why study history? The answer is because we virtually must, to gain access to the laboratory of human experience. When we study it reasonably well, and so acquire some usable habits of mind, as well as some basic data about the forces that affect our own lives, we emerge with relevant skills and an enhanced capacity for informed citizenship, critical thinking, and simple awareness. The uses of history are varied. Studying history can help us develop some literally "salable" skills, but its study must not be pinned down to the narrowest utilitarianism. Some history—that confined to personal recollections about changes and continuities in the immediate environment—is essential to function beyond childhood. Some history depends on personal taste, where one finds beauty, the joy of discovery, or intellectual challenge. Between the inescapable minimum and the pleasure of deep commitment comes the history that, through cumulative skill in interpreting the unfolding human record, provides a real grasp of how the world works.

Further Reading

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