

HH337D

# The Renaissance: Popes, Plague, Princes, and Profits

Spring 2019 • MWF • Sampson 115

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## *Course Description*

This course examines the social, cultural, intellectual, and political history of late medieval and Renaissance Europe, with particular focus on Italy but also including the Northern Renaissance and Renaissance views on Africa and the Atlantic World. The Renaissance was a period of artistic revival and creativity, but with this cultural efflorescence came restricted social opportunities. As new influences opened the world to a few, political and economic circumstances limited changes in the social order. Beginning in the fourteenth century and continuing through the mid seventeenth, we will examine the revival of classical antiquity the invention of humanism; civic life and urban culture; the Black Death; family and kinship; art and patronage; Machiavelli and Renaissance political thought; religious minorities and religious authority; changing notions of gender and the status of women; and scientific exploration and cosmography.

## *Books: Required*

Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, trans. Mark Musas and Peter Bondanella (New York: Signet Classics, 2010) (ISBN: 9780451531735).  
Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988) (ISBN: 978-0192821447).  
Mary Hollingsworth, *The Cardinal's Hat: Money, Ambition, and Everyday Life in the Court of a Borgia Prince* (New York: Overlook Press, 2005) (ISBN: 978-1585678037).  
John M. Najemy, ed., *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) (ISBN: 978-0451531735).

## *Books: Recommended*

\*\* Assigned portions of the following are available online; however, we will be using both extensively and I recommend you purchase both.

Gene Brucker, *Giovanni and Lusanna: Love and Marriage in Renaissance Florence*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Revised Edition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004) (ISBN: 978-0520244955).  
Gene Brucker, *The Society of Renaissance Florence: A Documentary Study*, reprint (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001) (out of print, any edition is acceptable).

*\*\* In the second week of class, there will be a book-check as part of your grade. You are responsible for having all your books purchased by then.*

*\*\* Additional readings will be posted to Blackboard. Please print them out and bring them to class.*

*\*\* Additional readings may be distributed and read in class.*

### ***Assessment***

- **Participation** (15%) – *including attendance and participation in class discussion and bringing your readings to class each day.*
- **Essays** (40%) – *two essays, based on primary sources, 4-5 pages each, on topics TBA.*
- **Podcast assignment** (25%) – *including a podcast (with a partner), a transcript, and a 6-page essay. More details to follow.*
- **Final exam** (20%)

### ***Course Policies***

- There will be frequent class discussions, and it is important that you contribute regularly. Your participation grade won't be based on whether or not you have "good" or "bad" things to say, it is more about your overall level of interest and engagement with the material.
- Use of laptops will **not** be permitted in class. Please print out all readings before class.
- Extensions must be arranged before assignments are due and are at the discretion of the professor. Papers turned in late without approved extensions will drop by one grade for every day that they are late.
- Papers without proper citation will not be accepted and will be returned to the student to be rewritten. Please refer to the Chicago Manual of Style for proper citation formatting (we will go over this in class).
- Submit all written assignments (short papers, final paper, and take-home exam) by blackboard to the professor.

### ***Learning Objectives***

This course responds to the History Department's Learning Outcomes criteria by helping students develop the humanistic skills necessary to approach modern ethical and cultural questions through a deep understanding of human history as rooted in the structures of place, society, and culture and shaped by personal aspirations. Historical study prepares students to evaluate and process complex, incomplete, and often contradictory material, bringing together disparate sources to construct persuasive arguments, while allowing room to revise interpretations in light of additional information. Ultimately, this trains students to think through problems with *inductive* rather than deductive reasoning.

## ***Academic Integrity***

Students are required to abide by the Naval Academy's policies on academic integrity. Cheating and plagiarism are serious, and they rarely go uncaught. It's not worth it to risk your academic and professional careers, so don't even think about trying it. If you have any questions about how to properly use sources and cite references, I will be more than happy to help you. In addition, one of the class periods will be devoted to citing and writing academic papers.

## ***Changes to the Syllabus***

The professor reserves the right to make alterations to the syllabus throughout the semester. Students will be given ample notification should any changes be made.

## ***Course Calendar***

- Tuesday, Jan. 8 [Monday schedule] ***Introduction***
- Wednesday, Jan. 9 ***Views of the Renaissance***  
Selections from Jacob Burkhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*.  
Joan Kelly-Gadol, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, ed. Renate Bridenthal et. al (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1977).
- Friday, Jan. 11 ***Manuscript Hunters***  
Selections from Francesco Petrarch, *Familiar Letters*.  
Selections from Pier Paolo Vergerio, *On Liberal Studies*.  
Poggio Bracciolini, *Letter to Guarino Veronese*.  
Cencio Romano, *Letter to Francesco da Fiano*.
- Monday, Jan. 14 ***Foundations: The Medieval Commune***  
Najemy, "Introduction," and Chp. 9 (pp. 184-92 and 195-203 only).  
"Civic Life in the Age of Communes," in *The Towns of Late Medieval Italy: Select Sources*, ed. Trevor Dean (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 11-16, 39-41, 50-53, 58-60.
- Wednesday, Jan. 16 ***The Wealth of Medieval Italy***  
Najemy, Chp. 6, "The Economy" (pp. 140-44 only)  
Documents on guild activities, and Benedetto Dei, "Letter to a Venetian," in Bartlett, *Civilization of the Italian Renaissance*, pp. 59-60 and pp. 61-62.

Documents from Brucker, *The Society of Renaissance Florence*, “The Economic Structure.”

Friday, Jan. 18

***Explorations of the Self***

Petrarch, *To Posterity*.

Giannozzo Manetti, *On the Dignity and Excellence of Man*.

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man*.

Monday, Jan. 21

**No class – MLK Day – Go volunteer somewhere**

Wednesday, Jan. 23

***Florence and the Medici***

Selections from Dale Kent, *The Rise of the Medici*.

Anthony Molho, “Cosimo de’ Medici, *Pater Patria* or *Padrino?*”

Friday, Jan. 25

***Conspicuous Consumption***

Selections from Richard Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence*

Diane Owen Hughes, “Sumptuary Law and Social Relations in Renaissance Italy.”

Documents from Brucker, *The Society of Renaissance Florence*, “Sumptuary Legislation in Venice.”

Monday, Jan. 28

***The Black Death***

Giovanni Boccaccio, “Preface,” in *The Decameron*, pp. 3-14.

Selection of documents from Rosemary Horrox, *The Black Death*.

**First short paper is due Monday, Jan 28 by 23:59**

Wednesday, Jan. 30

***Modern Science and the Black Death***

Boris V. Schmid, et al., “Climate-driven introduction of the Black Death and successive plague reintroductions into Europe,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112 (2005): 3020-3025.

Lester K. Little, “Plague Historians in Lab Coats,” *Past and Present* (2011) 213 (1): 267-290.

Friday, Feb. 1

***Urban Life and Values***

Christian Klapisch-Zuber, “Kin, Friends, and Neighbors”  
The Urban Territory of a Merchant Family in 1400.”

David Herlihy, “Social Mobility in Florence.”

- Monday, Feb. 4 ***Honor, Violence, and Street Life***  
 "Piety and Social Distinction in Late Medieval Roman Peacemaking," *Speculum* 89.4 (2014): 974-1004.  
 Documents from Brucker, "Violence and Control"
- Wednesday, Feb. 6 ***The Social World of Renaissance Italy***  
 Boccaccio, I, 1 and 2; IV, 1; V, 9; VI, 2; VII, 8; VIII, 2.
- Friday, Feb. 8 ***The Family in Theory and Practice***  
 Stanely Chojnacki, "Wives and Husbands in Late Medieval Venice."  
 Alberti, "On the Family."  
 Francesco Barbaro, "On Wifely Duties."
- Monday, Feb. 11 ***Family Strategies and Social Control***  
 Christian Klapisch-Zuber, "Maternity, Widowhood, and Dowry in Florence."  
 Selection of testaments and marriage contracts.
- Wednesday, Feb. 13 ***Men and Women in Renaissance Italy***  
 Boccaccio, Days: II, 10; III, 1 and 10; V, 4 and 10; IX, 9; X, 10.
- Friday, Feb. 15 ***Sinful Women?***  
 Bernardino da Siena, "On the Vanity of Women."  
 Isotta Nogarola, "The Sin of Adam and Eve."  
 Selections from Laura Cereta, *Letters*.
- Monday, Feb. 18 ***No Class – Washington's Birthday***
- Wednesday, Feb. 20 ***Marriage, Gender, and Kinship***  
 Brucker, *Giovanni and Lusanna*, Chps. 1-3.
- Friday, Feb. 22 ***Marriage, Gender, and Kinship***  
 Finish reading Brucker, *Giovanni and Lusanna*, Chps. 4-5.  
In class: Discussion of *Giovanni and Lusanna*.
- Monday, Feb. 25 ***Equal and Unequal Women***  
 Selections from Moderata Fonte, *The Worth of Women*.  
 Selections from Arcangela Tarabotti, *On Paternal Tyranny*.  
 Selections from Marie Le Jars de Gournay, *The Equality of Men and Women*.
- Wednesday, Feb. 27 ***Public Morality***  
 Najemy, Chp. 5 (pp. 103-105, 110-123 only).

Documents from Brucker, *The Society of Renaissance Florence*, “Prostitution,” “Sodomy,” and “The Surveillance of the Convents.”

Friday, Mar. 1

***Economic and Social Dislocation***

Documents from Brucker, *The Society of Renaissance Florence*, “On the Poor,” and “Demands of the Ciompi.”

Selections from Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (New York: Norton, 1998).

Juan Luis Vives, *Assistance to the Poor*.  
Bernadino da Siena, “On Usury.”

Monday, Mar. 4

***The Merchant’s Virtues***

Boccaccio, III, 3; VI, 10; VII, 2, 3, and 5; VIII, 10; IX, 3.

Wednesday, Mar. 6

***Patronage and Power***

Isabella d’Este, *Letters on Painters*.

Dürer, *Letters*.

Najemy, Chp. 8 (pp. 165-182 only).

Friday, Mar. 8

**No class – I will be leaving on an MO to the UK**

\*\* Reading day (catch up or get ahead on readings).

Hollingsworth, *The Cardinal’s Hat*, Chps. 1-2.

March 11 – March 16

**No Class – Spring Break**

Monday, Mar. 18

**No Class – I will be away at a conference in Toronto**

\*\* Reading day (catch up or get ahead on readings)

Hollingsworth, *The Cardinal’s Hat*, Chps. 3-4.

Wednesday, Mar. 20

***Art and Production***

Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, pp. 1-27.

Friday, Mar. 22

***Art and Perceptions***

Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, pp. 32-71.

Monday, Mar. 25

***The Renaissance Papacy***

Najemy, Chp. 3 (pp. 59-70 only).

Najemy, Chp. 11 (pp. 226-238 only).

Hollingsworth, *The Cardinal’s Hat*, Chp. 5

Wednesday, Mar. 27

***Princes of the Church***

Lorenzo de’Medici, “Paternal Advice to a Cardinal.”

Girolamo Savonarola, “Advent Sermon.”

Hollingsworth, *The Cardinal's Hat*, Chp. 6.

Friday, Mar. 29

***Princes of the Church***

Finish reading Hollingsworth, *The Cardinal's Hat*, Chps. 7-8.

In class: Discussion of *The Cardinal's Hat*

**Second short paper is due, Sunday March 31 by 23:59**

Monday, Apr. 1

**Final Project Info Session**

No readings – Presentation on how to produce your humanism podcast.

Wednesday, Apr. 3

***Humanism and Political Theory***

Peter Burke, "The Renaissance Abroad," in *The Renaissance*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Palgrave, 1997), pp. 27-48.

Erasmus, *On the Education of a Christian Prince*.

Selections from Thomas More, *Utopia*.

Friday, Apr. 5

***The State as a Work of Art***

Selections from Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Art of War*.

Monday, Apr. 8

***Jews and Muslims***

Lauro Quirini, *Letter to Pope Nicholas V on the Fall of Constantinople*.

Documents from Brucker, *The Society of Renaissance Florence*, "The Jews."

Diane Owen Hughes, "Earrings for Circumcision," in *Dressing Renaissance Florence: Families, Fortunes, and Fine Clothing* by Carole Collier Frick.

"Capture and Trial of an Armenian Spy in Navarre," translated by Amanda L. Scott

Wednesday, Apr. 10

***On the Margins***

Sally McKee, "Domestic Slavery in Renaissance Italy" in *Slavery and Abolition* 29 N.3 (2008): 305-326.

Documents from Brucker, *The Society of Renaissance Florence*, "Servitude."

Documents on Gypsies and other Travelers.

Friday, Apr. 12

***Africa and the Renaissance***

Selections from Thomas Earle and Kate Lowe, eds., *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*.

Monday, Apr. 15

***New Worlds, New Discoveries***

Selections from David Abulafia, *The Discovery of Mankind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).  
Christopher Columbus, "Letter from the New World."  
Selections from *The Voyage of Pedro Álvares Cabral to Brazil and India*, translated by William B. Greenlee.

Wednesday, Apr. 17

***Renaissance Cosmography***

Selections from Surekha Davies, *Renaissance Ethnography and the Invention of the Human* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).  
Selections from Amerigo Vespucci, *Letters*.

Friday, Apr. 19

***Scientific Inquiries and the Renaissance Mind***

Selections from Sir Walter Raleigh, *The Discoverie of the Empyre of Guiana*.  
Selections from Francis Bacon, *The New Organon*.

Monday, Apr. 22

***Godliness and Profit***

Selections from Mariët Westermann, *A Worldly Art: The Dutch Republic 1585-1718*.

Wednesday, Apr. 24

**No class**

Work on your podcasts

Friday, Apr. 26

**No class**

Work on your podcasts

Monday, Apr. 29

***Conclusion***

Paula Findlen and Kenneth Gouwens, "Introduction: The Persistence of the Renaissance," *AHR* 102 (1998): 51-54.  
William J. Bouwsma, "The Renaissance and the Drama of Western History," *AHR* 84 (1979): 1-15.

**Turn in Podcasts, Transcripts, and Essays by 23:59 on Wednesday, May 1**

***Final Exam – check schedule for place and time***