

Grinnell College  
Department of History  
Spring 2008

**History 338: Histories of Leisure**

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Mears 212

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Course Meetings: MW 2:15-4:05 PM, Mears 115

Office Hours: Monday 10:15-12 p.m., Thursday 2:30-3:30 p.m., or by appointment

From well-heeled British travelers visiting Rome on a “Grand Tour” in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to contemporary spectators attending the final match of the Champions League soccer competition at the Stade de France in Paris, “leisure” – in its many guises – has constituted an increasingly central part of the European social and cultural historical experience. This seminar will examine the development and transformation of leisure in Europe over the past several centuries, focusing particularly on four types of leisure pursuits: spectatorship, consumption, travel and tourism, and sport. The first half of the course will be devoted to common readings designed to familiarize students with these topics; students will then research and write a major independent paper during the remainder of the semester

**Course Requirements**

This course has two fundamental requirements: participating actively in discussion and producing a research paper of 20-25 pages in length, based on primary sources. I will weight each approximately equally in determining your final grade.

*Discussion*

All students are expected to do all of the course readings at the time they are indicated on the syllabus, and to actively participate in class. In addition, you will co-lead one discussion over the course of the semester. (Course dates for these discussions are marked on the syllabus with an asterisk). Discussion facilitators will be responsible for briefly introducing the readings and preparing key questions for our mutual contemplation. You must meet with me before class to discuss your plans for the discussion.

In addition, you will turn in a two-page primary source analysis on February 13, as part of our in-class discussion on tourism. This paper comprises part of your discussion grade.

*The Research Paper*

For your research paper, you will submit a series of preliminary documents as the semester elapses to keep your research and writing on schedule. These are designed to help you not only conceptualize your project, but to also formulate the historical “problem” that you see yourself addressing. As the syllabus indicates, you will be responsible for a paper proposal (Feb. 29), a two-page statement of your argument, along with an analysis of the primary sources you plan on

using for your paper (April 4) which you will then present to the class during the week of April 7-9, a 10-page segment of your rough draft (April 21 at noon), a full rough draft (May 2), and your final draft (May 13).

During the latter half of the semester, we will periodically meet in small groups to discuss each other's works-in-progress. (I will distribute a more detailed schedule of this once we get closer to the second part of the course). As such, you will be peer-editing each other's work; it is thus essential that you stick to the deadlines on the syllabus and not turn in work late.

### Texts and Readings

The following books (except for Buford) are available for purchase at the Grinnell College Bookstore. While I will attempt to place a copy of each on reserve at Burling Library, I would strongly recommend that you purchase them for your own convenience and to look incredibly well-read when you carry them around campus or display them prominently on your bookshelf.

Rudy Koshar, ed., *Histories of Leisure* (Oxford, U.K.: Berg, 2002)

Vanessa Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin-de-Siècle Paris* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1999)

Christopher Thompson, *The Tour de France: A Cultural History* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2006)

Bill Buford, *Among the Thugs* (London: Vintage Books, 1991)

The following readings are required and available on PioneerWeb:

Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens. A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1950), 195-213

Chris Humphrey, *The Politics of Carnival: Festive Misrule in Medieval England* (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 2001), 1-110

Peter Burke, "The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe," *Past and Present*, No. 146 (Feb., 1995), 136-150

Alessandro Arcangeli, *Recreation in the Renaissance: Attitudes towards Leisure and Pastimes in European Culture, c. 1425-1675* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 1-127

Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning, *The Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process* (Oxford, U.K.: Blackwell, 1985), 19-62

Hugh Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution, c. 1780-c. 1880* (London: Croom Helm, Ltd. 1980), 9-55, 76-139

Rudy Koshar, *German Travel Cultures* (Oxford, U.K.: Berg, 2000), 61-101

Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973, orig. 1899), 60-80

Mary Louise Roberts, "Gender, Consumption, and Commodity Culture," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 103, No. 3. (Jun., 1998), 817-844

Sean O'Connell, *The car in British society: Class, gender and motoring, 1896-1939* (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 1998), 43-111

Pierre de Coubertin, *Olympism: Selected Writings* (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 2000), 531-584, 635-638.

- Victoria de Grazia, *The culture of consent: Mass organization of leisure in fascist Italy* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 1-93  
 Phyllis Martin, *Leisure and Society in Colonial Brazzaville* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 45-126  
 Ramachandra Guha, "Cricket and Politics in Colonial India," *Past and Present* 161 (1998): 155-190

### **Schedule of Readings and Assignments**

#### **Week 1: Introduction**

- January 21 Koshar, *Histories of Leisure*, 1-24; Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, 195-213  
 January 23 Humphrey, *The Politics of Carnival*, 1-62, 83-100; Burke, "The Invention of Leisure in Early-Modern Europe," 136-150

#### **Week 2: Leisure in Transition?**

- January 28 Arcangeli, *Recreation in the Renaissance*, 1-127  
 January 30 Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution*, 9-55, 76-139; Elias and Dunning, *The Quest for Excitement*, 19-62

#### **Week 3 Spectatorship as Leisure**

- February 4 Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities*, 1-148\*  
 February 6 Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities*, 177-204; Koshar, *Histories of Leisure*, 61-101

#### **Week 4: Traveling**

- February 11 Koshar, *Histories of Leisure*, 105-130, 147-230\*  
 February 13 Tourist Guidebook Primary Source discussion; Koshar, *German Travel Cultures*, 65-114

### **PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS DUE FEB. 13 IN CLASS**

#### **Week 5: Consuming**

- February 18 Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, 60-80; Koshar, *Histories of Leisure*, 233-52, 299-359\*  
 February 20 Roberts, "Gender, Consumption, and Commodity Culture," 817-844; O'Connell, *The car in British society*, 43-111

#### **Week 6: Sports**

- February 25 Thompson, *The Tour de France*, 1-140\*  
 February 27 Thompson, *The Tour de France*, 141-265

### **PAPER PROPOSAL DUE FEBRUARY 29, MEARS 212, 12 P.M.**

#### **Week 7: Politics, Empire and Leisure**

- March 3 De Grazia, *The Culture of Consent*, 1-93; Coubertin, *Olympism*, 531-584, 635-638\*  
 March 5 Martin, *Leisure and Society in Colonial Brazzaville*, 45-126; Guha, "Cricket and Politics in Colonial India," 155-90\*

**Week 8: Leisure, Violence, and Community in 20<sup>th</sup>-century Europe**

March 10 Buford, *Among the Thugs*, 1-158\*

March 12 Buford, *Among the Thugs*, 159-313

**SPRING BREAK!**

**Weeks 9-14: Research, Writing and Independent Meetings** (a more complete weekly schedule will be distributed as we get closer to this part of the course)

**April 4 ARGUMENT/PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENT DUE, MEARS 212, 12 P.M.**

April 7- April 9 **In-Class Presentations**

**April 21 ROUGH DRAFT 10-PAGE SECTION DUE, MEARS 212, 12 P.M.**

April 21- April 23 **In-Class Small-Group Discussions of Draft Sections**

**May 2 ROUGH DRAFT DUE, MEARS 212, 5 P.M.**

**May 13 FINAL DRAFT DUE, MEARS 212, 12 P.M.**

**Additional Ground Rules:**

1. Papers must be double-spaced and have one-inch margins, and should not employ anything larger than 12-point font. E-mailed papers will not be accepted.
2. All written work at Grinnell College is subject to the Student Handbook. If you have questions as to how a particular assignment relates to the Student Handbook, please consult with me in advance of that assignment's due date.
3. All written work submitted for a grade must be completed in order to pass the course. Most critically, **you cannot pass the course without turning in a final draft of the research paper.** In addition, any student who misses more than six classes (again, barring exceptional emergency circumstances) will not receiving a passing grade.
4. If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Dean for Student Academic Support and Advising, Joyce Stern, located on the third floor of the Rosenfield Center (x3702).