

History 3000, Spring 2017

There were 18 students, all History majors.

The first assignment in the course was to write on "Why History?" Here is the prompt:

Begin your course with a very short reflection on why you are majoring in history. There are no "bad" reasons, but you need to ask yourself what has drawn you to the subject. If you "just love it," ask what there is about studying the past that makes you feel that way.

Each student was asked to write a reflection on the course. Here is the prompt:

Take what you wrote in "Why History?" assignment at the beginning of class and update it. Has your understanding of the discipline changed over the length of this course? Do you have a stronger sense of what it means to study history? Can you make that "elevator speech" about the major? What questions could the class have addressed that it did not?

Here are the responses.

1. "Why History?"

I've been fascinated by History since I was about 6-7 years old. It started with World War 2 history books that intrigued me, especially for some reason looking at the maps. As I got older the colonial era (19th century) peaked my interest. I romanticized it in my mind as the era when European powers ruled the world for good, although that wasn't always the case, but it was my mind set when I was younger.

And to simplify it all, I love the stories I learn from history. The stories of history to me are more fascinating than any novel out in the world today. My friends think its boring but I love it.

1. "End of Course Reflections"

This course has shown me what I want to focus on historically, but also shown me that there are several topics of study/interest in history. In reality I had a small mind when it came to history but something that I've learned to appreciate was classical historians (the daily historians you gave us in the first half of the course). The daily historians have shown both a

new perspective/field in history, but also have solidified that I want to stay focused on conflict history, mostly from the 19th to the 21st century. I still romanticize history and that's alright in my opinion.

I do have a stronger sense of what it means to study history. In the sense of an "elevator speech" about the major I'd probably say: This is a great major where you will learn skills that will greatly develop your ability to critically think. Skills like researching, oral presentation, writing and reading skills, etc. It's a demanding major, but a fun one with a great staff.

My favorite thing about this course is that it definitely helped prepare me for the Capstone project. I can compare this to POLS 3000 which is supposed to do the same thing as this course, but when I compare it lacks in preparation for the final project and helping in other political science courses. HIST 3000 on the other hand really helped me develop my skills and prepare myself for the final project, something I really appreciate.

Overall this course was excellent and has solidified my choice in double-majoring in History and Political Science.

2. "Why History"

I have always been drawn to history because it has always been a part of my life. I was fortunate enough to know my paternal grandfather and great-grandfather and my maternal grandfather all of which were WWII, Vietnam war and Korean war veterans respectively. I loved listening to their experiences and often asked for their help when doing school history projects. My interest peaked when I joined the Marine Corps and learned more about military history during my time of service. I would like to eventually become a military historian so I can advise future military leaders based on similar situations that have happened in the past.

2. "End of Course Reflections"

At the beginning of this course, I had an active interest in history but didn't really know what a historian did. After taking the class I have a much greater respect for the study of history, and the importance of archives and the information in them. This major and eventual profession requires a lot of work and research but the pay-off and feelings of accomplishment are worth the effort.

3. "Why History?"

I believe history was the first subject that really motivated me to go to school. Of course, at a younger age your motivations are other than just interest, whereas we live in a country where attendance to grade school is mandatory. All the same, a fifth grade teacher had us reenact a civil war battle scene, but more importantly put on an entire play with a general overview of the war. It wasn't the most historically accurate project I've worked on, but for fifth grade, it definitely peaked my interest. Sometime in high school I realized history was the only subject I really enjoyed. English could also be interesting (which is why it's my other major) but it surely wasn't the class I looked forward to. Part of it was the films, and the books, history has a lot of good media to accompany it, but that's because of how interesting it is. I'm excited to move on to a point where I get to pass that on to others. I'm pursuing history so that I can be a teacher, and show other student's why the past will affect their future, why knowing about the great depression can hopefully prevent another one. That alone is enough to give me my why, but I think in another way history is a gateway for me to be a teacher generally, it was never going to work out with math, and I'd love to influence our next generation to have a firm grasp on reality.

3. "End of Course Reflections"

I mentioned in "Why History" what it was that initially peaked my interest, a project in fifth grade. That of course hasn't changed but over the semester I've had a phenomenal experience between my different classes. I'm a Dual History/English Major and I've been taking classes for both this semester, the juxtaposition has been interesting.

While I enjoy both subjects greatly, their differences were more stark to my experience this semester. My history classes tend to be... libertarian if I might say? Possibly leaning right on the political spectrum, while my English classes are patently leaning left. With that, my history classes have this sense of professionalism and pride in being right, while my English classes seem to challenge morality and have no problem with open vulgarity and grotesque language.

It's not that I really hate either framework, but I do prefer the intellectual conversation of the History classroom vs the hypothetical free spirit in the English world. What hasn't changed is that I'm excited still, to move on to a point where I get to pass that on to others. I'm pursuing history so that I can be a teacher, and show other student's why the past will affect their future, why knowing about the great depression can hopefully prevent another one. That alone is enough to give me my why, but I think in another way history is a gateway for me to be a teacher generally, it was never going to work out with math, and I'd love to influence our next generation to have a firm grasp on reality.

Student's need a good role model and I hope to be that in even one teenager's life. Studying history is an opportunity for students to see something more than themselves and become something better. That's why I study history. Historians can explore the world, they see better models and try to analyze them, they see patterns, they see changes. They're curious.

4. "Why History?"

I was first attracted to history through historical fiction writing, in the form of children's books, such as the Magic Tree House series. Those books were definite time-travel, but the main concept of going back in time, by means of books themselves, and exploring and learning from ancient figures, or rather characters representing those figures, always entertained me. I suppose in that way, even from the age of seven, I had a real itch for the historical and ancient. Now, naturally, one can not go back in time and learn from great men and women directly. However, therein lies the brilliance of written documents and other primary sources, which I have always been attracted to in my study. Despite being unable to time travel, as my seven year old self would have loved, I am still able to read to opinions and accounts of history from the people who witnessed it. It is for that reason that I study history, in order to read, analyze, and understand the past through the people who lived it, as much as possible. The connection to the past thrills me, and through I learn more about myself, those around me, and society itself.

4. "End of Course Reflections"

I went into this course with a rough idea of what "history" really was. This was in retrospect an interesting place to be two-thirds of the way through the program. Not only was my understanding of history loose, but I could not truly define what I wanted to do with this degree. Although I set out in 2014 with the intention of teaching, by 2017 that idea seemed repulsive. For whatever reason I had lost my passion for education, for history even. Needless to say my future was unclear to me. Even throughout our first assignments in this course I felt like I was "phoning it in," for lack of a better term. I would say what I thought a historian would say.

At some point in the semester, and due in no small part to this course, that view turned around. Once I grasped the true meaning of practicing history, the analysis, the writing, the comprehension, the interpretation of sources, I finally saw a historian in myself. I think that's what I was missing at the beginning of this semester. At the risk of sounding hokey, I truly can

say I developed quite a bit of identity as a historian, and possibly for the first time I feel a real passion for the discipline. All of this comes from a better understanding of history.

Another element of the course that pulled me forward was class discussion. I can honestly say I have never had a class with such intimate discussion, and it helped me understand the stage on which I stand within the discipline. I believe I had been too hard on myself for feeling lost, but after this course, it is clear that most felt this lost at the beginning of the semester. How could we not have been? It is almost impossible to not feel lost without a basic clear understanding of what exactly one does as historians.

Finally, if asked in an elevator, I would say that my history degree gives me the ability to analyze and interpret sources, be they historical or modern, for their significance and context. At least, that's the best words I can put it into. If anything I wish I had developed a better way to articulate that element of history.

I do believe that, with experience, I will come to be able to define myself to others in a far clearer manner. This class did something far more significant however. I felt like I was lost coming in. Now, leaving, I feel like I have some direction in which to move forward.

5. "Why History?"

History has been an important part of my life since I was about 7 years old. My parents had a set of US Civil War coffee table books that I loved to flip through, look at the pictures, drawings, and read about the different battles and tactics. My mother later bought me many of the Cobblestone books for me to read. From then on, I always had an eye towards history. Growing up, I was surrounded by history in both my family and my hometown. My grandfathers fought in WWII, one with Patton in North Africa and Italy; the other in the Pacific at Iwo Jima, Okinawa and finally at the surrender in Tokyo Bay. My hometown of Green River was also the site for the missile base that tested the Pershing missiles during the 60's.

5. "End of Course Reflections"

When I started the class I was unsure if I wanted to continue in the subject, or if I wanted to just teach high school. The thought of all the research I would have to do to maintain my status and position scared me, and I was worried I would not like it. However, I am more determined than ever to continue my education in history.

Study history, to me, is the study of sources. Historians really just compare, and critique sources to try and find the truth in a matter. We must find out which sources are more honest, or what biases they may contain, whether intentional or not. This may sound dull, but it really is fascinating and addicting. Research sounds like a chore until you are searching through old documents to find information that could make or break your thesis.

If somebody asked me what a history major has given me, I would say research. You give a history major a question and they will find the sources necessary to answer the question with detail and strength. History majors don't just take somebody else's article write a research paper. They take that article and build off it using other secondary and primary sources.

History majors try to find the most primary of sources to answer the question, list the limits of those sources, and then tell you the other possible answers that could exist.

6. "Why History?"

My fascination with history started when I was six years old when I was first introduced to the epic which was the hunt for the *Bismarck*. I was fascinated by the story and later was given my first book on the attack on Pearl Harbor. At first it was the illustrations and photos of the ships and the combat that intrigued me, but later as I matured it was the individual stories of the men who served and their lives before and after conflict. Now I have found that this passion of history has me asking the question "why" to find the context of past events and why certain events transpired and what molded individuals into who they were. My current time of interest are the events of European imperialism that led to the First World War.

6. "End of Course Reflections"

In the previous prompt: "Why History?" I wrote a short sentence that for me described the drive I have for the pursuit of historical understanding, the question of "why" itself. Now, looking back on the past semester of learning new tools in researching a topic I never knew I was so interested in my answer has only slightly changed. The "why" factor is still a big part of my drive, as one day I hope to be as well read in historical works as the faculty at USU. The why for history has grown into an almost romanticized pursuit of understanding the stories of years past of people who have shaped the current world I happen to reside in. And the past semester has given the necessary tools for me personally to continue my study of the field long after I leave University. My favorite moments of class were when we could hear and talk about each peers progress on their research, I felt invested in what they were writing about. In the future, if I was to take the class again, I would hope that there were more time devoted to the sharing and encouraging of our cohorts research. All in all I would say that any questions I did have

about the major were answered, for the better. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to study and learn in an amazing environment.

7. "Why History?"

I have always had a passion for history ever since I could remember. I would always read and it seemed that the novels I would pick up were historical fiction. But it wasn't until recently that I decided I wanted to study history. As I have studied more about history I have realized that I enjoy learning about people of the past. I love learning about what people went through. Particularly I enjoy learning about the political issues during those time periods and how it impacted the civilians and how they reacted to those issues. In my opinion we can learn a lot about our own lives by how the people of the past lived and how they navigated their own lives.

7. "End of Course Reflections"

As I have learned more about history over the course of this semester, I have realized how much actually goes into the study of this field. I wrote in my why history paper that I love learning about the people of the past. However with this course I have fallen even more in love with the people of the past and the process of discovering who they were. I have especially fallen in love with the research aspect. This course has taught me how to think more like a historian and how to ask the right questions to be able to learn what I am really looking for. Overall I really enjoyed this course, it has become one of my favorite courses I have ever taken and I am really sad it is ending.

8. "Why History?"

One thing I've always found appealing to me about the study of history is how broad of a topic it can be. While I might be able to focus on writing about Buddhism for one assignment, I can also study modern French history, or historical perspectives from writers like Foucault. Unlike this, I've always found the rigidity of STEM fields, especially in terms of repeatability and exclusive objectivity, to be constraining and dull. History as such has served as an outlet for my intellectual short-attention span, letting me gain a broader understanding of the world while still studying primarily whatever interests me.

8. "End of Course Reflections"

A strong curiosity of the world was the reason I decided to study history, and this course has certainly fostered it. A university student studying languages, then politics, and then the environment, might usually be an indicator of laziness, but the discipline of history is noteworthy for actually seeing this broader scope as valuable.

I've never been very interested in the "Great Men" sorts of history. The kind routinely shoved down learners' throats, where history was driven by people like Abraham Lincoln or Stalin, and the sort that is only driven by money and power. Previously this had left me feeling as the odd one out, thinking "How can I ever be good at this if I just don't care in the first place?!" Instead, I found myself drawn to random peculiarities, anything from Canadian First Nations feminist movement to the spread of Asian religions to France.

History is a rather interesting subject in that it manages to study nearly any topic one might think of, but through the lens of a very skeptical discipline. As a result, one can study social history, intellectual history, environmental history, and so on, while still critically analyzing all relevant evidence.

One thing I wish this class did was go more into the major theories or philosophies of history. I'm sure others might hate this, but learning about figures like Marx, Foucault, and Wittgenstein has greatly improved my understanding of history, so I would love to utilize more thinker like these. I also think it might be helpful for this class to address what makes history a distinct discipline, especially from other humanities or social sciences like anthropology, philosophy, sociology, literature, and the like. Beyond simply learning about the differences, though, I think it would be useful to learn how a historian might utilize these sources.

9. "Why History?"

I do love history. It is an incredible way to learn about where we come from and I like to use it also to learn about who we are. My favorite aspect of history is studying personal histories. I remember years ago being at my grandmother's house and sitting with her and just listening to story after story of her childhood and what it was like for her to grow up during the depression. This is one of the first sparks of interest in history that I ever had, and since then I've enjoyed discovering other avenues within this subject that I have come to love so greatly!

Another part of this field that is fascinating to me is that no matter how much we think we know everything, there is ALWAYS something new to learn. Whether it comes from a new breakthrough in technology that helps us understand the past in a new perspective or if it's just from looking at the same story from a new angle, history is always changing and I love it!! I want to help find more angles and perspectives in my research and studies.

9. "End of Course Reflections"

I just finished reading my response to the "Why History?" assignment from the beginning of the semester. So much has changed in three and a half months. I have changed so much, or my understanding rather, in the last three and a half months. Attending and participating in Research Methods has widened my understanding and increased my comprehension of what history is and how historians do their work.

In the previous assignment, I mentioned how my desire and passion for history has grown. This is still my story, but I will be honest in saying that taking this course has opened my eyes to the "how" of history in a very real way. At times, I have felt overwhelmed and a little inadequate but through patience and being teachable I have learned and accomplished tasks that I had no idea I could do them. This experience has really given me hope for future classes,

research assignments and opportunities in real life situations. This class has made a big difference to me in regards to my major and career choice, but it has been a good difference.

10. "Why History?"

With all our knowledge today, from space exploration to advances in genetics, it is surprising how much of our own human experience still remains a mystery. Studying history allows one to peel back the layers of time and analyze the lives of those who came before us. When studying history, one identifies and connects with the stories of the past. Regardless if a tale is heroic, such as Washington crossing the Delaware, or a tragedy like the Holocaust, history encourages thought on what it is to be human. The stories of past triumphs and follies captivate audiences, but also warrant academic study because of the insights they provide. I am pursuing an education in history to further explore the human experience by discovering stories that time and overarching historical narratives have forgotten.

10. "End of Course Reflections"

After taking History 3000, many of my ideas and perceptions of history remain. I still believe that History helps us to better understand the present and also the future. However, the History 3000 class expanded upon my ideas of what it means to be a historian. A historian is not only someone who writes about the past. Being a historian is a state of mind rather than an occupation or career. Historians use critical thinking skills to find answers to difficult questions. When those answers prove elusive, historians use their research skills develop alternative methods to find answers.

Historians also engage in finding the truth. They use their intellectual toolbox to evaluate the claims and assertions of others. This applies to narratives of the past, but also contemporary problems. Historians need evidence to validate information before they believe it. This makes them critical thinkers with a passion for evaluating all manner of information. The greatest asset available to a historian is not a wealth of dates and facts, but their ability to use flexible and creative thinking to synthesize the truth from a tangled world of documents and

conflicting stories. Historians possess a unique brand of thinking which sets them apart from others and makes the skills of a historian useful in almost every situation that requires critical thinking and evaluation.

11. "Why History?"

I think that I loved history before I realized it. It just so happened that I was extra happy to listen to history lessons in elementary school and even church. It was probably the sixth grade when I realized how much I loved to learn about history, and recognized it as my favorite subject. In seventh grade I was able to participate in one of the greatest academic opportunities I had until coming to college, which was competing in the Kenneth E. Behring National History Day competition. I am a competitive soul, so this program was a perfect way to combine my competitive edge with my favorite subject. For the competition, we students were given a theme and had to pick a topic and create a project which explained the topic and its relation to the theme. I still remember that the first year I competed, the theme was "Innovation in History: Impact and Change." My best friend and I created a documentary about the Apollo Program, and we placed first in the regional competition held here at Utah State, second place in the state competition, and had the opportunity to travel to the University of Maryland to compete in the national competition and experience Washington D.C. That experience taught me so much. I not only learned what a thesis was, but how to formulate one. I created a nineteen page long annotated bibliography, with no previous knowledge of formal citations. I learned how to wake up early to work on a project with a deadline. I learned how to prioritize my writing in order to communicate ideas effectively within a word limit. I learned that cake is an excellent way to raise blood sugar if you are running on very little sleep. Most of all, I learned how much I loved discovering the past for myself. I loved the opportunity to choose the way to portray historical events. I decided at that point that I wanted to make historical documentaries for a living when I grew up. I've changed my mind about my future many many times since then, but my love for history and the ability to share it with others has never changed. I competed in the History Day competition twice more, with a paper on the Nuremberg Trials and a documentary about a Soviet submariner in the midst of the Cuban Missile Crisis, and returned to the national level once more. I loved every opportunity I had to explore history for myself in this way, and when it came time to choose a major I couldn't imagine choosing anything other than history.

11. "End of Course Reflections"

As I entered this class, I knew that I loved history because I loved the ability to learn and retell stories about the past. I had already had many opportunities to do so through National History Day and other high school experiences before coming to college, but after taking this class I

have learned how to better learn and retell stories. If there is one thing about history that I have really taken away from this class, it is the importance of presenting your own personal interpretation of the past. It is very easy to retell a story in a way that it has already been told, but to look at primary sources and come up with a new story based on those sources takes a lot more talent and effort. I love that this class helped me validate my own opinions, and helped me to realize that I personally can have something to contribute when it comes to how we as humans look at the past.

12. "Why History?"

There has always been something about history that has continued to draw me in, time after time. I remember sitting in elementary school and being fascinated by stories, people, and places of the past. I owe my deep love and passion for history to my sixth grade teacher, Mrs. Long. She really aided my class to dig deep into the past and learn to appreciate all eras of time. In fact, she was infamous for her "History Fair" in which each student chose a person from the past and wrote a large paper, found pictures, graphs, and primary documents, and even dressed up as the historical figure for their presentation. As a young twelve-year-old I really loved learning about the great Eleanor of Aquitaine, and because of her, and Mrs. Long, I eventually decided to major in history.

Learning about the past helps me feel like I am a part of something greater than myself. I feel connected to those who came before me. Learning from the mistakes and triumphs help me become a better person, and hopefully others feel the same. Studying history also makes me feel empowered because of the substantial life skills it has taught me. I like to believe I'm somewhat good at trivia games because of my historical knowledge. History has also helped me become a better communicator and writer and I have used those skills in every one of my other classes. Often times when I tell people my major, they reply with, "What are you going to do with that?" or "Wow, that sounds boring!" However, history has so many different pathways, and I've changed my plans for the future multiple times while attending school. I've contemplated teaching, museum work, business, and law school. I love that the possibilities are limitless. I find so much joy in studying the past. It's so exhilarating because there is so much to learn, that not even a fraction could be covered during one's lifetime. There is always more out there to be discovered, read, and brought forth from the past.

12. "End of Course Reflections"

As the semester comes to a close, I find it useful to reflect back upon the knowledge and insights I have gained over the past four months. At the beginning of the semester, I believed that a degree in history meant either teaching or museum work. However, my eyes have been opened to the vast range of the uses of a history degree. In our class alone, students' plans differ quite immensely. For myself, I plan to attend law school and see what path that leads me on. Some students want to work in academia, others in a library, and some don't plan to

practice history whatsoever, but find the skills beneficial to their success. I love that studying history creates limitless opportunities and possibilities.

Some things have not changed, learning about the past still helps me feel like I belong in the world and am connected to those who came before me. It may be cliché to say, but History 3000 has assisted me in countless ways. My writing skills have notably improved, and I am more comfortable writing like a historian. This class has given me the confidence to keep moving forward in my academic career. History 3000 has been one of the most influential courses I have attended. It has given history a new meaning, and refreshed the purpose behind my education.

13. "Why History?"

As a child I grew up with history and political discussions at the dinner table. My father taught history at the high school level, and he brought his passion into our home. This early exposure caused a passion for history to begin to grow and flourish in me. In high school I competed in the Utah History Fair with a paper on the Cuban Missile Crisis. I was then privileged to represent Utah at the National History Day in Washington D.C. This project was the beginning of my fascination with Russian and Soviet Union history, and as I have studied Economics at USU I have wanted to expand my understanding of the economic history of the USSR and the United States. I find the aspects of socialism, communism, and capitalism as portrayed by historical and economic actors fascinating. I know that a degree in history will help me develop research and writing skills that will be essential as I continue my education.

13. "End of Course Reflections"

My original interest in history stemmed from constant learning as a child and from my experiences with National History Day in high school. I wanted to study history to increase my understanding of the world around me and to develop my research and writing skills.

After the semester in HIST 3000, I have a greater appreciation for the discipline. The class has helped me to perform an introspection of what I enjoy and what I want to do. I have realized that I enjoy digging for information, finding the difficult to find, solving mysteries, and teaching the people around me. I have discovered that my passion is in solving these mysteries—be it historical, genealogical, or archival I get an immense amount of satisfaction from "cracking the case."

One concern I had with becoming a history major was that I do not like all of history. I understand that knowing about war and bloodshed is an important part of history, but reading

detailed encounters, especially of the holocaust, makes me physically ill. The course helped me to understand that there is an entire breadth of history to study that I do love and enjoy. I feel confident that if asked I could explain what I have gained from being a history major and apply it to my interests and disciplines in the future. As discussed in class, this discipline helps graduates to communicate complex events and ideas in a concise and understandable way.

I do wish that the class had spent a bit more time looking at various applications of the major in the job market. I also wish that the class had addressed how to make a better thesis statement because this is something all the students seem to struggle with. We all know what it is, but making it stand out is the difficulty.

14. "Why History?"

I was drawn to history at an early age. My parents came to this country with only a few changes of clothing and nothing else. My father came from Mexico and my mother from Guatemala. As a little girl both my father and mother told me stories of their countries. They didn't have pictures or documents for many years. I always had questions about where they went to school, who their family was, and why they decided to come to America. I wanted to learn about how they lived and who my ancestors were. My curiosity regarding these questions led me to wonder about other people and events in the world. I've traveled with my parents to their counties and have seen Spanish colonial buildings, which awoke my interest in colonialism as well as early American history. These experiences made me ask why certain events happened in history, such as colonialism and its effects on people and the environment. The inquisitiveness I had about my parent's lives has led me to enjoy learning about history. The more I've learned about people in history, the more I want to read more the lives of these historic figures. By studying history, I discover more about myself.

14. "End of Course Reflections"

I was drawn to history at an early age. My parents came to America with only a few changes of clothing and nothing else. Over the years, I've traveled with my parents to their counties and saw Spanish colonial buildings, which awoke my interest in colonialism as well as early American history. These experiences made me ask why certain events, such as colonialism, happened in history. I became interested in how past events have shaped our lives and the environment around us. The inquisitiveness I had about my parent's lives has led me to enjoy learning about history. As I've gone through this course, history 3000, my understanding of the discipline has changed. This course has expanded my mind. It has given me the tools and skills I needed to expand my knowledge of history. I've learned how to find information, in order to have a better understanding of historical events. Using the research skills taught in this class, I can now find secondary and primary sources and analyze them. I've come to see that history

has many angles, and that the same events look very different, depending on one's point of view. In the beginning of class I tended to paint historical events with a wide brush. After the research I've done, I learned there is a wide range of topics one can concentrate on. Finding pieces of information and learning how to see events through other people's eyes has made me a discriminating connoisseur of the past.

During the course, Dr. Jones talked about his current research project and the different places he finds information and inspiration. I think a closer step by step look at this process would have been interesting to learn about. Although this class was excellent, I believe it could have been made even better by incorporating cooperative learning experiences with working historians. Transitioning from a student, reading papers and taking tests, to a working professional is not an easy prospect. I want to be someone who can contribute to the field, and produce interesting original research. This class has been extremely helpful in giving me tools I can use to reach this goal.

15. "Why History?"

My friends and I are planning a trip to Vancouver, Canada this Spring Break. One of them wants to take his dad's gasoline-powered Ford F-250 to get there. He said it will be a nice, cushy ride there, and the seats have seat warmers so that our buns can be nice-n-toasty on our way up. Ian, my friend with the Dad who has the truck, will probably hold the speed of a Major League Baseball pitcher on the way to Vancouver because he wants to get there fast.

I would love to take turns laying down for a snooze in the backseat. My feet would enjoy being able to move freely as I sit in the driver's seat because the truck has something foreign to me: cruise control. The bed of the truck would be a great thing to have because we would all have a little bit more room in the cabin. That big V8 wouldn't budge going up any hill. Oh! That's right! It's going to cost each of us immensely more to get to Canada!

My idea is to drive my '96 Geo Metro with a 1.3L I3 engine. There aren't any seat heaters, and nobody is going to be able to lay down anywhere in the car at any time. All three of us will have to be smarter about how we pack because space will be tight. My car, the Battle Wagon, will move more like a baseball out of the hand of an eleven-year-old Little Leaguer than one out of the hand of Madison Bumgarner. Whoever is driving will soon have a calf that cramps up fairly tight because our feet will have to hold steady on the accelerator, and we'll have to pay attention going up hills because the Battle Wagon doesn't have the power to hold speed. Sounds way worse than the massive F-250, right? Let us go back to 1974, when Bill Schraegle would drive a 1965 Volkswagen Bus from Logan to Newport Beach, CA and back with all of his buddies. That body design was like a piece of plywood standing straight up and going through the air. Top speed was 55 mph, but that was absolutely not what that car averaged.

Sometimes the temperature was below zero coming back into Logan, and the windchill would bring the inside of the car down even further. Did I mention that my dad's VW Bus didn't have any heat? My dad drove it with an ice scraper in his hand because his breath would freeze on the inside of the windshield. Almost forgot; no seat heaters.

One reason why I chose history is to learn about how good I have it. My car is aerodynamic, has heat, and gets great gas mileage, but I know it's possible to do that trip to Vancouver in January with a VW Bus that is thirty years older than my car. I also know that it is possible to go cross country with a handcart. I bet we might even be able to save money if we just went on horseback to Canada.

Knowing history gives us the understanding that we have almost no excuses. Today people make so many excuses for why they can't do something. It's always that their machine broke or that my car isn't fast enough. They couldn't communicate without their phones, or it was too hard to do a task that way. What people will find is that if they look back a couple

hundred years, they will see that people were doing the same things we do with machines now with their hands. They'll see that people went a lot farther than Vancouver by horseback, sea, and their own feet. We live in a world of convenience today. That's good for our comfort, but we should all understand history just a little bit more to see that we shouldn't make excuses. Maybe, we should all understand history just a little bit more to believe in more in ourselves.

15. "End of Course Reflections" Schraegle

No submission

16. "Why History?"

My love for history began my sophomore year of high school. I took contemporary World history (the required sophomore history class) and had one of the best teachers in my whole high school career. She made it interesting and fun. We had a specific project where we had to research and create a 3-fold board about a specific topic in U.S. history. I had just gone to Alcatraz Island in San Francisco a few months prior to this assignment and I absolutely loved it so I chose it as my topic. This was the first history assignment that I actually liked doing and I realized that the more I enjoyed learning about something, the better I did on the assignment. As the semester went on, we talked about WWII and the Holocaust. These topics stood out to me, as well, and found myself doing research about them outside of our regular assignments. Ever since then History has been a passion of mine. I am emphasizing in WWII and the Holocaust and minoring in Sociology and Political Science. I love how interdisciplinary this field is. In my mind, Historians analyze the past using a bunch of different tools and disciplines (ex. Sociology and Political Science). I like using different clues to figure out why certain people acted the way they did and then applying that knowledge to the present and future. Eventually I want to receive my Master's in Library Science. I am currently interning at the Merrill-Cazier Library in the Digital Initiatives department. I want to work with old documents and manuscripts because those are our gateway into the past. I am a "whole picture" type of thinker so studying History gives me a good idea of where we came from and why, and where we could potentially be going.

16. "End of Course Reflection"

When looking back at my "Why History?" assignment, I don't see much that I would change about it. But, when I reflect on this course and what I have learned, a few things come to mind.

One of the biggest things I have learned is the importance of quality research. The discipline of historian can take many forms but a very big part of being a historian is doing research. I didn't realize just how important research is as a historian, which may sound kind of dumb, but I never thought of it. When people hear "history major" the first thing they think of is a teacher. But a historian does a lot more than just teach. While being a history professor is

a very respectable profession, it is not the only one that historians can do to make a contribution to the world. Their research is imperative and can span through many different fields.

I have also learned that historians can write for different purposes and that there are different types of historical writing. When we would have our exercises on the different historians, I learned a lot about the difference between straight chronological history and history with more purpose than just names and dates. This is nice to know when doing research and reading articles.

I am very glad that I took this course, even though it is required. The way it was taught was perfectly handled and I learned a lot every day.

17. "Why History?"

My desire to study history can be traced to a singular moment during my formative years. It was the seventh grade. I found myself being taught Ancient World History by a wildly eccentric man. I forget his name now. As wildly eccentric as he was, this was but a footnote to his passion for educating. After finishing our survey of Egypt, we moved into the Greek section of the course. Upon walking into class, I found myself awaited by my teacher, clad fully in a toga with a wreath upon his head, and fake white beard and hair. He dressed as Zeus, and proceeded to recite the story of Homer's Iliad and Odyssey over the course of a week, all the while, dressed as Zeus. It was truly a sight to behold, and I subsequently found myself enamored by the past, and the people therein. The exotic and foreign nature of their religions, political structures, and military exploits captivated me. I like to think of history as the stories of our heroes. To paraphrase Livy, the study of history allows me to cherry pick ideas and lessons at my leisure. Furthermore, there's a certain satisfaction I derive from reading and analyzing primary sources. It's thrilling to engage my brain in such a way. To close, it must also be stated that the real world applications of the study of history are numerous, and varied. I am the life of the party as my training has equipped me with a robust arsenal of fun facts, amusing tales, and anecdotes.

17. "End of Course Reflections"

I can honestly say that this semester has been one of my favorites. I loved 3000! I have loved getting to know all of the people in the program. We have so many smart kids. I feel like they make me smarter just being around them. Seeing how disciplined they are, and how passionate they are has inspired me to be more diligent on this path that I am determined to commit my life to. Before 3000, I had no idea what it was my degree entailed, or what it is I would "do" as a historian. I thought that all a historian does is read cool stuff and talk about it with cool people; however, now that I have done 3000, I see that is absolutely true. But, there are many other technical aspects of the trade. I have learned that as a historian, I am morally responsible for giving the truth to people to the best of my ability. To me, that instills a sort of

pride for what I do, and makes me more passionate about what I do. Furthermore, doing things such as designing rubrics, learning about the various professions under the discipline of History and the nitty gritty mechanics has painted a wider picture of what it is a historian does.

Constructing a coherent, understandable narrative of the past, in order to impart truth, and instill lessons into the future generations is what I wish to fully devote my life to. Studying history has helped me be a better person, helped me grow, and given me direction, where I could never have found it otherwise. I want to share that with the world. After all this, my dreams have grown larger, but are more refined. My dream is to be the foremost academic authority on German History and Culture. Even though my writing is not the best, and I have a lot of trouble focusing, and I'm not the best student, and it's hard to believe in myself sometimes. I intend to "go like hell and act like I know what I'm doing", and maybe make my late father proud while I'm at it, because I promised him I would do my best, and I don't want to break that.

Throughout the semester, I have received and enjoyed personalized feedback on all my assignments from Dr. Jones. I really appreciated that, because it makes me feel as though I am being mentored, rather than just taught. Having someone actively taking part in my development as a student and historian keeps me motivated, and has humbled me. I realize that I have a long way to go, and I need to do a lot of work in order to make my dreams come true. I see now why you're as successful as you are. I look up to you, old man.

I'm so grateful.

18. "Why History?"

Why History? I should start by saying that I am not actually technically a history major, but an interdisciplinary American Studies major with a minor in Religious Studies. However, because historical research is so imperative in just about every avenue of my studies, I'm taking this course.

History has always been an integral part of my life, not just for the same old reasons that it is for everyone, but because my family -- parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc-- have always expressed its crucial importance. I'm originally from Oakley, UT (about 15-20 minutes east of Park City), and history is everything there. Growing up, my parents made sure that my superheroes were not those from fiction or fantasy. No comic books could be found in my home, nor were superhero shows every watched on the television. Instead, my parents constantly had the History channel going on in the background. My childhood heroes were historical figures-- Marie Curie, Joan of Arc, Mary Shelley, FDR. They were my parents and grandparents heroes and I remember as a child seeing biographies by the dozens on my dad's nightstand.

History has always been a foundation of my learning. Even though I'm a lover of literature, it was always the real historical figures that were the most fascinating. They were the most complex. Their lives and the myths surrounding them shaping literature to follow. I think that's the thing that I love the most about history. I love looking at people and analyzing the complex situations that they found themselves in and the different ways they reacted to conflict and challenges. History is challenging because you can't really ever answer the question of why people react the way they do. Historical research is the only way that we have the opportunity to come close to understanding people in the past, as well as understanding how we got where we are presently.

I'm very excited for the semester. I think that it will be challenging, but that's just history for you.

18. "End of Course Reflections"

Looking at my essay at the end of the semester, I feel like everything I talked about held true. My interest in history still stems from my family and my past. I am still fascinated with the humanity you see in history and the study of the complex situations that people have been placed in.

However, I suppose that my views have changed somewhat. I think an argument that I now have to defend my interests have to do with the historical process in and of itself. I think that people have a certain picture of the "historian", and it's not necessarily good. In many ways, it's demeaned as a profession or major, but I think that that's because people fail to realize all of the different skills that it takes to produce something of any worth. For example, my project has required a great deal of data analysis and searching. Why is that so different, to people, then what a physicist does? The only thing that's different, I think, is that we are working with people, but that's not what other people see.

I think that this class has been extremely valuable to my education. I felt that I learned a lot and it was still based around each student's specific passions. I can't really think of anything to change, except it would have been nice if a few of our class periods were designated for the library to research (maybe if we'd rented one of the labs or something).