

HIST201: THE HISTORIAN'S CRAFT

ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY

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Course description

The "Historian's Craft" courses offer an opportunity to experience the excitement and rewards of doing original historical research and conveying the results of that work to others. Through engagement with varying source materials, the courses encourage undergraduates to become historical detectives who can define important historical questions, collect and analyze evidence, present original conclusions, and contribute to ongoing discussions. These are the skills we have defined as central to the history major.

With that in mind, this course explores some key issues in the ancient practice and modern discussion of Athenian democracy. It will examine democratic values, institutions, rhetoric, and sociology in order to provide students with the basic tools to understand democracy in both its ancient and modern context. It will engage with a variety of source material (literary, archaeological, epigraphic) in order to develop multiple skills of interpretation.

Some key questions we will seek to answer here: What are the key features of Athenian democracy and how did it differ from modern democracy? Why did the Athenians think voting was undemocratic? How did they reconcile citizen egalitarianism with social inequalities? (or, why were women and slaves excluded from political power?) To what extent did the wealthy elite support democracy? Were there social tensions between the rich and the poor?

Goals

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be prepared to undertake substantial historical research and writing in a variety of courses, including the HIST600 seminar. You will develop your ability to:

- Ask questions
- Find sources
- Evaluate sources

- Develop and present an argument
- Identify the contribution of an argument to existing scholarship and plan further research
- Communicate findings effectively

Reading

You will need a copy of:

Robinson, E.W. *Ancient Greek Democracy: Readings and Sources*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004.

Rampolla, M.L. *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. 7th edition. Boston: Bedford/St Martins, 2012

Not compulsory, but recommended as **quick introductions** to the topic:

Carey, C. *Democracy in Classical Athens*. Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 2000.

Thorley, J. *Athenian Democracy*. 2nd edition. London: Routledge, 2004.

An indispensable guide to writing:

Strunk, W. and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999.

And in a bit more depth:

Hansen, M.H. *The Athenian Democracy in the Age of Demosthenes: Structures, Principles and Ideology*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1991.

Ober, J. *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens: Rhetoric, Ideology, and the Power of the People*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989.

Your responsibilities

All classes are compulsory and will include lectures, discussions, and student-led group activity. The aim of classes are for you to learn, therefore you need to be **active in your own learning**. This means you need to come to class, do the assigned readings, and participate in class activities. If you do this, you will get much more out of the course.

In summary, your responsibilities are to:

- Attend all sessions (or email the professor in advance of any absence)
- Take notes in class and participate in class activities
- Prepare for class by doing the assigned readings
- Prepare the assignments to the best of your ability and submit them by the deadline

Class topics

Week 1: Introduction

Wed 3 Sept: Introduction

Fri 5 Sept: Athens in the classical period

Reading

Robinson 2004: introduction

Week 2: Democratic theory

Mon 8 Sept: What is democracy?

Wed 10 Sept: Democratic values and ideology

Fri 11 Sept: Seminar group 1: Pericles' funerary speech

Seminar reading

Regardless of which seminar group you are in, you need to do the seminar reading by the Wednesday skills section of the first week in the cycle

Thucydides 2.34-46: Pericles' funeral speech (on Learn@UW)

Weekly reading

Robinson 2004, 45-75 = Morris, I. "The Strong Principle of Equality and the Archaic Origins of Greek Democracy." In *Demokratia: A Conversation on Democracies Ancient and Modern*, edited by J. Ober and C. Hedrick. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996, 19-48.

Liddel, P. "Democracy ancient and modern." In *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought*, edited by R. K. Balot. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, 133-48.

Week 3: Democratic practice

Mon 15 Sept: Decision making in a direct democracy: the Assembly

Wed 16 Sept: Other democratic institutions

Fri 18 Sept: Seminar group 2: Pericles' funerary speech

Weekly reading

Hansen, M.H. *The Athenian Democracy in the Age of Demosthenes: Structures, Principles and Ideology*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1991, ch. 6, 10, 11.

Week 4: Democratic beginnings

Deadlines: Assignment 1 (Mon 22 Sept, 4pm)

Mon 22 Sept: Solon, Cleisthenes, Ephialtes

Wed 24 Sept: The wider Greek context

Fri 26 Sept: Seminar group 1: Cleisthenes and the beginnings of democracy

Seminar reading

Robinson 2004, ch. 2

Weekly reading

Andrewes, A. "Kleisthenes' reform bill." *Classical Quarterly* 27.2 (1977): 241-8.

Lewis, D.M. "Cleisthenes and Attica." *Historia* 12 (1963): 22-40.

Week 5: Peoples and places

Mon 29 Sept: Demes and local democracy

Wed 1 Oct: Demagogues and leaders

Fri 3 Oct: Seminar group 2: Cleisthenes and the beginnings of democracy

Weekly reading

Aristophanes, *Knights* [I recommend either the Penguin edition: Aristophanes *The Birds and Other Plays*, translated by D. Barrett and A.H. Sommerstein or the most recent Loeb edition Aristophanes: *Acharnians & Knights*, translated by J. Henderson]

Finley, M.I. "Athenian Demagogues." *Past & Present* 21 (1962): 3-24.

Week 6: Anti-democratic dissent

Deadlines: Assignment 2 (Mon 6 Oct, 4pm)

Mon 6 Oct: Critics and criticism

Wed 8 Oct: Opposition in action

Fri 10 Oct: Seminar group 1: Ideals

Seminar reading

Robinson 2004, ch.4

Weekly reading

Roberts, J.T. *Athens on Trial: The Antidemocratic Tradition in Western Thought*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994, ch. 3

Ober, J. *Political Dissent in Democratic Athens. Intellectual Critics of Popular Rule*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998, introduction and ch. 1 (pay particular attention to pp. 27-51)

Week 7: A robust democracy? A system in crisis?

Mon 13 Oct: Arginousai, Herms

Wed 15 Oct: Socrates

Fri 17 Oct: Seminar group 2: Ideals

Weekly reading

Xenophon, *Hellenica* 1.6.19-7.35

Plato, *Apology*

Thucydides 6.24-32, 60-1

Week 8: Laws, the law-courts and the power of persuasion

Deadlines: Draft of assignment 3 (Mon 20 Oct, 4pm)

Mon 20 Oct: The Athenian legal system

Wed 21 Oct: Approaching forensic evidence

Fri 24 Oct: Seminar group 1: Who ran democratic Athens?

Seminar reading

Robinson 2004: ch. 5

Weekly reading

Ober, J. *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens: Rhetoric, Ideology, and the Power of the People*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989, ch 3, 7.

Todd, S.C. "The Use and Abuse of the Attic Orators." *Greece and Rome* 37 (1990): 159-78.

Week 9: No classes

Mon 27-Fri 31 Oct: Individual meetings with instructors

Week 10: Democratic participation

Deadlines: Revised assignment 3 (Mon 3 Nov, 4pm)

Mon 3 Nov: The demos

Wed 5 Nov: The wealthy

Fri 7 Nov: Seminar group 2: Who ran democratic Athens?

Weekly reading

Sinclair, R.K. *Democracy and Participation in Athens*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, ch. 5.

Ober, J. *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens: Rhetoric, Ideology, and the Power of the People*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989, ch. 4-6

Ober, J. *Democracy and Knowledge. Innovation and Learning in Classical Athens*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008, ch. 4

Week 11: Equality and inequality

Deadlines: Assignment 4 (Wed 12 Nov, 4pm)

Mon 10 Nov: Democracy and slavery

Wed 12 Nov: Free non-citizens

Fri 14 Nov: Seminar group 1: Inclusion and exclusion

Seminar reading

Robinson 2004, ch. 6

Weekly reading

Patterson, C. "Other Sorts: Slaves, Foreigners, and Women in Periclean Athens." In *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Pericles*, edited by L.J. Samons. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 153–78.

Vlassopoulos, K. "Free Spaces: Identity, Experience, and Democracy in Classical Athens." *Classical Quarterly* 57 (2007): 33–52.

Blok, J. "Citizenship, the Citizen Body, and its Assemblies." In *A Companion to Ancient Greek Government*, edited by Hans Beck. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013, 159–75.

Week 12: Democracy evolving

Mon 17 Nov: Fifth- and fourth-century democracy compared

Wed 19 Nov: Fifth- and fourth-century democracy compared

Fri 21 Nov: Seminar group 2: Inclusion and exclusion

Weekly reading

Davies, J.K. "The fourth-century crisis: what crisis?" In *Die athenische Demokratie im 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr. Vollendung oder Verfall einer Verfassungsform?*, edited by W. Eder. Stuttgart: Steiner, 1995, 29-39.

Rhodes, P.J. "Political activity in classical Athens." *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 106 (1986): 132-44.

Taylor, C. "A new political world." In *Debating the Athenian Cultural Revolution*, edited by R. Osborne. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 72–90.

Week 13: The archaeology of democracy

Mon 24 Nov: Democracy and material culture

Wed 26 Nov: No class: work on essays

Fri 28 Nov: Thanksgiving break: no class

Week 14: Evaluating ancient democracy

Deadlines: Assignment 5 draft (Mon 1 Dec, 4pm)

Mon 1 Dec: Hellenistic democracy

Wed 3 Dec: The reception of Athenian democracy

Fri 5 Dec: Democracy: good or bad?

Weekly reading

Knox, R.A. "So mischievous a beast: the Athenian demos and its treatment of its politicians." *Greece and Rome* 32 (1985): 132-61

Ober, J. *Democracy and Knowledge. Innovation and Learning in Classical Athens*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008, ch. 7

Rhodes, P.J. *Ancient Democracy and Modern Ideology*. London: Duckworth, 2003

Week 15: No class

Deadlines: Revised assignment 5 (Fri 12 Dec)

Mon 8 Dec-Fri 12 Dec: Individual meetings with instructors

Lectures, sections and seminars

Each week you will have two lectures (Mon, Wed) followed by your section (Wed) which will focus on research skills and, depending on the week, a Friday seminar. (The class will be split into two groups for the Friday seminar – you only need attend your group's session).

What is a seminar?

It is an advanced discussion section focussed on a specific collection of sources. In your weekly research skills classes you will, among other things, brainstorm ideas about how to research the week's sources, think about questions and themes they raise, find bibliography for and prepare as a group for the following seminar. Together the skills section and seminar are designed to advance your research, discussion, and historical skills in order to prepare you for more advanced history courses.

Together the skills sections and seminars help you to:

- Develop your active reading skills
- Distinguish between different types of historical writing
- Identify questions, themes and problems with source material, scholarly literature and historical topics in order to evaluate them effectively
- Synthesize different viewpoints and arguments

Laptops etc

Writing emails, online shopping, checking football stats: all necessary parts of the day, but not in class. Unfortunately, too many students cannot distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate use of laptops which leads me, regrettably, to ban them from the classroom.

Please also silence phones in the classroom: it is a distraction for everyone when they ring, beep, buzz or light up.