

HIST 391: La Famiglia: Medieval and Renaissance Social History

Course Content: A thematic course covering medieval and renaissance social history of western Europe, *circa* 1100-1500, with an emphasis on northern Italy, through the lens of the family. Topics will include identity, gender, the life-cycle, urban and rural life, class, categories of “the Other” (i.e., race, sexuality, religion, outlawry), feudalism, popular piety, festivals, orphanages, etc. As social history does not exist in a vacuum, there will be some discussion of political, religious, cultural, economic, and technological developments of this period.

Required Books:

Leon Baptista Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence, Book Three* (pb, 978-0881338218)

G. Brucker, *Giovanni and Lusanna, Love and Marriage in Renaissance Florence* (pb, 978-0520244955)

N. Z. Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (pb, 978-0674766914)

E. Jager, *The Last Duel: A True Story of Crime, Scandal, and Trial by Combat in Medieval France* (pb, 978-0767914178)

and

a photocopied selection of short documents from a variety of medieval and renaissance authors.

Course Assignments and Tests:

The term will be divided into two three-week segments, with the first part focused on an examination of general topics, the second focused on case studies to illustrate those topics. There will be an essay exam at the end of each section. In addition, students are to prepare and present a mock trial on the case of Giovanni and Lusanna in class and are to write one paper.

Class meetings will be both lecture and discussion in format. The professor will distribute study questions for discussion and study guides for exams. There is one class excursion planned to tour a late medieval Florentine merchant palazzo.