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HIST 630
12 May 2021

Final Reflection – *History*

History is not just dates, people, and events from the past. History includes those things, but it is more complex than that. The history of history has shown that history was a retelling of events and of great men from the past. When more people were allowed into the field of history, more areas of interest developed by new historians expanding the scope of history. It is the doing of history that separates the historian from the fiction writer and other fields. Historiography reshaped my concept of history.

History is separate from the past. The past is everything that has just happened a second ago to the beginning of the space-time continuum. History is taking people and events from the past to explain to the present and future an interpretation of past events based on evidence. Evidence other historians can verify. History is a narrative of the past. Historians write about moments or facts from the past. Those moments or facts are selected by the historian and turned into historical facts. E.H. Carr, author of *The Historian's Craft?*, wrote about how historians make Julius Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon a historical fact compared to the other factual moments from throughout time of other people crossing the same river. However, another historian will be able to write a history of one of the many other people crossing the Rubicon from any moment in time or even write about groups of people crossing the river throughout time. History can be more than just great men like Julius Caesar. It can be very localized to the home street or even home, but even then, you can connect that to planetary level history of nation-states. The historian crafts the factual moments from the past into a historical fact when

the historian situates the fact in a narrative explanation whether written, drawn, recorded, filmed, or orally passed on.

The reason historians do history is to inform the present of the past to educate people on how to better progress into the future. Doing history is preserving the past. The historian selects moments and/or people from the past and writes a narrative about the moment and/or the people. History is not an exact thing. History retells the past through a historian who has their own bias and background which guides them in what they study from the past and turn into history. Other historians can research the same past events and tell their interpretation of events and it is also history. Comparing the two histories by different historians on the same topic, a reader should see the same beginning, middle, and end of a factual moment from the past but learn different things based on the focus which could have been economical, societal, cultural, ethnical, national, etc. Doing history is to help improve human knowledge.

To do history means to research something from the past, write about it, draw/paint about it, film something on it whether scripted or in documentary format, and/or present on it. A historian will search for an interest from the past, grand or localized. Find facts. Interpret those facts through a human narrative to become a historical fact. The presentation of that historical fact or moment can be done in any medium by the historian who has done the research on a topic using primary and secondary sources. There is a scientific approach to history. Other historians can verify evidence using language or other means to determine the validity of a historical fact or moment. Taking that historical fact and contextualizing it within a narrative, historians can explain the fact. History utilizes methods from science and the creative use of prose or other mediums of expression from the arts. History, though, is its own field. Even though it can be seen as a science no different than astronomy or geology, as John Lewis Gaddis writes about in

The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past, history is separate. Even though it can be poetic, history is crafted from source material not the creative mind of an author. History is a running narrative over time supported by evidence, other fields exist in the narrative like astronomy and geology, whether if it is about the history of those sciences or the history revealed in practicing those sciences. Arts and literature represent primary sources of the times for historians. To do history, is to preserve the past for consumption in the present to help move to a better future.

Historiography has reaffirmed and made me reconceptualize my view and understanding of history as well as requestion how history is taught at the secondary level. History is a narrative of the past rooted in verifiable evidence. History is written by people on a wide range of topics stretching from prehistoric times to yesterday. History can be expressed in other mediums. History relies on and is similar to science and the arts, but it is its own field. Students in secondary school study history as a separate course but need to do more history than simply read or be told the narrative. History informs a person's life on how they got to that point and while it cannot predict the future, it can be a guide to a better tomorrow for all humankind.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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