

History Suggested Reading

It is famously said that “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” But how can we ‘remember’ experiences that are not our own? The word ‘history’ comes from a Greek word meaning ‘inquiry’. To study History is to inquire into the ideas and events of the past that still influence us and how we live today. It also requires students to develop awareness of the tools we use to make this inquiry. How do we access the past? What limitations are we bound by? History offers a huge breadth but our advice at this stage would be to start exploring the subject to see what it has to offer *you*. Below are some suggestions of where you might want to start but the key to enjoying a subject and getting the most out of it is to follow your nose and look into what interests you. Starting with something more general and then asking yourself ‘What do I want to know more about?’ will help guide you towards reading which you will find interesting.

1. **The Last Days of Anne Boleyn**

This documentary on the last days of Henry VIII’s second wife, Anne Boleyn, is a fascinating demonstration of historical debate. It should give you interesting insight into how historians argue over evidence.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hbYPa7oidU>

Given that these eminent historians disagree with each other, does this make you think differently about their books when you read them? Who do you think is right? Why?

2. **History and Social Theory, a book by Peter Burke**

A great starting point to thinking about how we use History and what is its relationship to the social sciences is

3. **The Cheese and the Worms, Carlo Ginzburg**

A book that looks at history in a way you might not have come across before.

4. **The Swerve: How the Renaissance Began by Stephen Greenblatt**

A vivid introduction to the Renaissance, a key period in our history.

5. **Yo' Mama's Disfunktional!: Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America by Robin D.G. Kelley**

A great example of cultural history that asks some important questions about identity.