

HISTORY

...OGRAPHY?

Rebekah Dyar, Jaden Cobb, Anh Ho, Ashline Saintilien



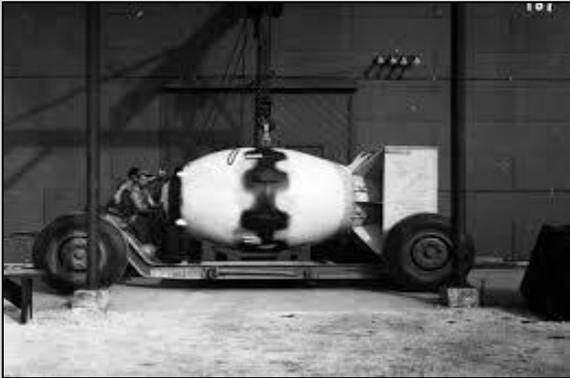
WHAT IS HISTORY?

Society is influenced by things that happen every day. The occurrence of significant events, dates, people and other significant entities mark history. History is the study of the past, therefore historians study and try to make sense of the past. They use evidence and other arguments to create their own argument, whilst studying every perspective and piece of evidence to come to a conclusion about what occurred and why it occurred. They create and answer “why” questions built on “who”, “what”, “when”, and “where” questions. They try to make sense of the past by utilizing abstract ideas and applying them using seven key concepts: change, continuity, cause, consequence, significance, and perspective. They want to know what changed or what continued and what caused that change/continuity and then discuss the consequences of those. They interpret the significance of those ideas and if any of the answers would flux when the perspective is changed. Historians are detectives of the past.

WHAT IS HISTORIOGRAPHY?

Historiography is the study of historical arguments and how those arguments have changed over time. Historians will use other documents throughout the past and examine the arguments given at that time and compare it to a more modern argument. An example of historiography is the differing opinions behind whether the atomic bombs were justified. Some historians, such as Howard Zinn in *A People's History of the United States*, have utilized the results from the United States Strategic Bombing Survey in 1944 to justify their argument that dropping the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was more of a power move than a way to end the war. The results from the survey found that the Japanese would have possibly surrendered before the dropping of the atomic bombs, and that the United States knew that the Japanese would have surrendered. Zinn argues that they only dropped the bombs to show off what they had created. However, some historians, like Larry Schweikart and Michael Allen, the authors of *A Patriot's History of the United States*, have argued that there was no proof that the Japanese would have surrendered. Schweikart and Allen interpreted quotes from President Harry Truman to prove that there was no evidence, and the bombings were justified and needed to save the lives of the Americans and Japanese. Historians use evidence that they interpreted to form and explain their argument.

FUN FACT!



The Manhattan Project was the project to develop the first atomic bomb. Most of the testing was done in Los Alamos, New Mexico, and was originally created in response to rumors that the Germans had a weapon, and were ready to use it. The project was started in 1942 by Franklin D. Roosevelt with the goal of weaponized nuclear energy. The first successful atomic bomb was detonated on July 16, 1945.

SO... WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

History is the study of the past as a whole while historiography focuses on the arguments of the events studied in history. History is the addition to historiography by means of creating a new argument based on other arguments that were used in the study of historiography. Contrarily, historiography is the study of existing sources, more specifically secondary sources, and how arguments have changed over time. For example, a historian might focus on artifacts, while a historiographer will study all arguments about the artifacts.

KEY CONCEPTS OF HISTORY

History is a complex area of study. Therefore, there are some key concepts of history that help a historian see the bigger picture and help the historian think analytically about the past. This helps them form their own arguments or thesis. The concepts are change, continuity, causation, consequence, significance, and perspective. Most of the concepts are related to each other, such as causation and change. Something that changes must have a cause for it to change. Each concept can then be separated into smaller, more specific concepts. These sub concepts include social, historical, economic, political, technological, etc. A historian must understand the seven key concepts and some of the sub concepts to form their own thesis. In order to have a well-developed thesis, the historian must understand each of the concepts and sub concepts for whatever they are studying.



FUN FACT!

The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were only bombs that made landfall in Japan during World War 2. However, there were other bombs developed by the US. On August 15, 1945 if Japan had not surrendered, the U.S military would have dropped another bomb on Japan called the "Third Shot". The Manhattan Project created a dozen bombs because they did not think that two bombs would end the war. The US was prepared to drop another bomb, if needed. They had even more bombs ready, just as powerful as the first two.

