

You will see that I have not listed Walker or Petry, the class texts noted on the assignment sheet. Just and oversight, gang, and one not likely to be corrected in the near future.

I.6 What  
must the  
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What Must the Student Know?

The study of history is increased in formidability due to the mass of assorted facts, people, movements, etc. The sheer weight of the material is bewildering.

Consequently it is not easy to tell the student how to study for the mastery of the course. One might know all the dates and places and still not understand history. My suggestion is that one masters the things that characterize a period; that one seeks to understand movements and trends and identify them with responsible people in history; that one looks for the development of the institutions and organizations and that one tries to understand the overall progress of how the church today has come to be what it is from the setting in history of what it was.

Some students, because of whom they are and their particular proclivities, will know almost everything. Their minds absorb facts, dates, persons, etc., like a blotter takes up ink. Others will find this clearly impossible. The most important item is a philosophy of study that suggests one will use the most of one's abilities to gain relevant mastery of a field and then be content with the results. Almost anyone can absorb enough history to do well in a course if that person can adopt a philosophy such as this.

The key to this mastery is reading...more and more of it. Along with the reading there must be an involuntary synthesis when the student realizes that the content of a particular paragraph has been heard or read before. Now, with a different vantage point, the student can compare and contrast ideologies.

My advice is to read a lot of history...not because it is assigned but because it is literature and therefore is the stuff of which living experience is made. The student who develops the reading habit and works with it will soon know a great deal of history and have a great advantage in the total academic medium.