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Introduction

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What is History

What is History?

- Why does history matter?
 - State Requirement
 - Our understanding of the present / future concerns
- A representation of the past constructed by interpreting information :
 - Facts? True?
 - Myth, Legend, History
- Basis of our understanding of the present
 - Does History change?
 - Revisionist History – Looking at different facts, differently
 - “Publish or Perish”
 - New research
 - New analysis – balancing and sifting – interpretation
 - New morals
- How is history made?
 - Mosaic
 - understanding small events in small areas to fill a pattern
 - fit small patterns together to get “bigger picture”
 - Grand Sweep of Events
 - Social movements
 - Political events
 - Wars
 - Economics
 - Technology changes and uses
 - Zeitgeist
 - Philosophic views of human behavior
 - Hegel’s Dialectic
 - Thesis / Antithesis / Synthesis
 - “Deuteronomic”
 - Progress / Purpose

How should we look at history?

- Where does it come from?
 - Documents
 - Letters
 - Public / Private documents
 - Public / Private statistics
 - 1st Person accounts
 - Family Stories
 - Observers / Reporters
 - Pictures
- Who does it?
 - Professional historians
 - Journalists
 - Politicians
 - Religious organizations
 - Families
 - Movies / TV / Media
 - Amateurs

Events

- Basic building blocks of history
 - Evidence: “See through the eyes of the beholder”
 - Players & motivation
 - Religion /Philosophy
 - Motivation (Maslow’s Pyramid)
 - Social systems
 - Individuals v Groups
 - Point of view of sources
 - Technology employed
 - Geography
 - Barriers
 - Facilitators
 - Ecosystem
 - Economy
 - Method
 - Value
 - Results
 - Winners and Losers
 - Fruits and seeds
- Respect for the past
 - History is the story of people
 - Ever increasing and sharpening focus
 - Understand one’s own filters
 - Understanding is knowledge
 - Judgment is a personal decision