

HIST 3635

BOOK DISCUSSION PAPER 2

The graphic novel *Laika* by Nick Abadzis is a visual treatment of an actual historical event, the mission of the first dog-in-space, launched by the Soviet Union in 1957. In reading the book, write a paper on one of the following two themes:

1. A biography of the dog itself
2. A biography of the Soviet “chief designer”

If you choose Topic 1, then summarize key aspects of the life of the dog that are described in the book (1.5 pages). Then contrast that information with what is in the article posted online (Nelson, “Cold War Celebrity and the Courageous Canine Scout”) (1.5 pages). In this second section, draw some conclusions about the value of the graphic novel as a historical source, but one that is clearly in the medium of popular culture. I would like you to critically evaluate the graphic novel as historical source in comparison to the essay by Nelson. In concluding your paper, say a few words (1 page) on *which* source you would recommend as a historical source to introduce someone to the history of Laika’s voyage into space in 1957. Explain why.

If you choose Topic 2, then summarize key aspects of the life of Korolev that are described in the book (2 pages). Then contrast that information with what is in the article posted online (Harford, “Korolev: A Western Perspective”) (2 pages). In this second section, draw some conclusions about the value of the graphic novel as a historical source, but one that is clearly in the medium of popular culture. I would like you to critically evaluate the graphic novel as historical source in comparison to the essay by Harford. In concluding your paper, say a few words (1 page) on *which* source you would recommend as a historical source to introduce someone to understanding Korolev’s motivations and personality. Explain why.

Refer to at least 1) two separate passages in *Laika*, and 2) two separate passages from the essay you pick (either Nelson or Harford).

You are also required to find at least one other academic secondary source for your paper. For secondary sources, go to the “Useful Websites” section of the course website and go to “Online Secondary Sources.” Use the two links there to search for academic journal articles on your topic. You can also use books. You are free to use as many secondary sources as you want, but please use *at least one* (besides Nelson or Harford). I do not accept Wikipedia as a legitimate source for your paper, or for that matter, random websites, blogs, or other professor’s lectures.

The length of the paper should be about 1,000 words (i.e., about 4 pages). All papers should be on 8” X 11” paper, double-spaced, in 12 pt font, with 1” X 1” margins. Please also include a bibliography. The paper is due in class on March 6 (Friday).