



U N I V E R S I T Y of H O U S T O N

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
OFFICE OF THE DEAN

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am very pleased to recommend Jacques Weber, a former student of mine at the University of Houston. In 2007 Mr. Weber took my graduate seminar, History 3395: Readings in Modern French History. In over twenty years of teaching graduate seminars French history, Mr. Weber was the first student from France to take it, and it was a wonderful experience for me. His deep knowledge of France, sharp intelligence and keen analytical abilities, combined with an engaging personality and sense of humor contributed to making this one of my best seminar experiences.

The class of eight students read at least one, and often more than one book, for each class meeting and met weekly to discuss the readings. Each student led the class discussion twice during the semester and wrote a short summary paper of the readings for those weeks. Mr. Weber led our discussion of *fin-de-siècle* French feminism based on Mary Louise Robert's book *Disruptive Acts: The New Woman in Fin-de-Siècle France*. He also led our discussion of French peasantry, regional identity and national assimilation during the Third Republic through books by Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*, and Robert Zaretsky, *Cock and Bull Stories: Folco de Baroncelli and the Invention of the Camargue*. Mr. Weber's personal background, coming from the old province of Alsace which retains a strong regional identity and its own language, gave him outstanding insights into this subject. The class benefited immensely from his contributions. He earned an A on both short essays and as discussion leader.

Students also write a final paper exploring a topic in greater depth. Mr. Weber, building on his personal interests, wrote a fascinating final paper exploring the treatment of Alsace-Lorraine during World War II, when the region was amputated from France and annexed to Nazi Germany. My research focuses on the German occupation of France during the war, and I learned a great deal about this topic from reading Mr. Weber's paper. He earned an A on the paper.

Mr. Weber's classroom performance highlighted his critical, analytical and intellectual abilities. His papers were well-written, clear and perceptive. Given his intelligence and personal qualities, I would recommend him highly for admission to our doctoral program in history and do recommend him highly for other educational or professional endeavors.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fishman

Professor, History

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies