

# COLLOQUIUM IN AMERICAN HISTORY

## 1865-PRESENT

**History 702-02**  
**W 6:30-9:20**  
**MHRA 3209**  
**Spring 2010**

**Dr. Mark Elliott**  
**Office: MHRA 2125**  
**Office Hours:**  
**TH 3:00-4:00**

### **DESCRIPTION:**

This course examines the main currents of scholarship on the history of the United States from 1865 to the present. The purpose of this reading-intensive course is to introduce graduate students to some of the major historiographic debates in this field, and larger trends in scholarship. Because the scholarship on this period is vast, it is impossible to address all of the important debates in the field. By training students how to familiarize themselves with the historiography of these selected topics, however, the course will enable students to engage historiographical controversies on their own and introduce them to the skills necessary to prepare for comprehensive exams.

Each class meeting is organized around the discussion of one book as the main reading for the week. Each of the main books have been carefully chosen to represent the latest scholarship on a topic of broad interest among scholars and to introduce students to a particular approach to writing history. Political, social, cultural, legal, and intellectual topics are represented; regional, national and transnational approaches are sampled; categories of analysis and perspectives on the past that include labor and class, economics and consumerism, built and natural environments, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and other important themes are explored. For each main reading, students must be able to identify its main arguments, to critically evaluate its logic and methodology, and to assess its historiographic contribution. To assist in the process of placing a book in dialogue with the historiography, students will also read short companion articles and make presentations from the supplementary reading lists. Students will share book reviews and summaries with each other and work collectively to broaden their base of knowledge. All students will be expected to treat opposing viewpoints fairly without distortion or oversimplification and engage in historiographic debates with professionalism. Students should strive not only to grasp the major debates accurately, but also to figure out where they stand personally within these debates.

There will be a cumulative final exam to mimic the conditions of the qualifying exams for MA and Ph.D students. This exam will be made up of two essay questions on which students will write for 90 minutes each.

## **GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Reading secondary sources efficiently, with an ability to identify main arguments, critically evaluate methodology, and assess historiographic contributions.
- Participating with professionalism in sophisticated academic debates and intellectual exchanges.
- Delivering informative and useful oral presentations to peers.
- Formal writing in specific genres of the profession, including book reviews and historiographic essays.
- Establish a foundation for scholarly expertise on post-1865 American historiography.
- Preparation for qualifying exams on American history post-1865.

## **COURSE POLICIES:**

### **Participation:**

Attendance is mandatory. Absence from class may have an adverse impact on your participation grade. You are expected to complete each week's reading before class so that you can participate constructively in a class discussion. Your participation grade will be based on the overall *quality* of your contributions to the class—not the quantity of contributions you make—and the professionalism with which you conduct yourself in scholarly discussion and debate.

### **Presentations:**

Each student will be assigned two presentations over the course of the semester. Presentations will last from 12-15 minutes (speakers will be asked to conclude at 15 minutes). One of these will be a presentation of the main reading for the week. The presenter will be responsible to introduce the author, **concisely** summarize the argument, discuss the scholarly reception of the book, and assesses its historiographical significance. The student must also craft 3-5 questions for discussion arising from the reading. The second presentation will be based on one of the books from the supplementary reading list. In this presentation, the student will summarize the book in more detail for the other students in the class who have not read it, and make comparisons and connections between the book and the main reading for the week. See "Presentation Guidelines" on the "Assignments" page of the Blackboard website for a full description of the assignment.

### **Blackboard Discussion Forum**

The Blackboard site for the course will allow for class discussion to continue beyond the normal time/place constraints of the classroom. You are required to make at least ONE substantial comment, and ONE constructive/observational reply to another student's posting each week. A "week," for our purposes, begins and ends at 12:00 midnight on Tuesday. Your forum postings will be read by the entire class, and you will receive a grade for the quality of your postings at the end of the semester.

Your "substantial comment" must address the course material in some way. It may address the upcoming week's reading. It may simply be a comment you wanted to make in class, but did not have the opportunity to make. Otherwise, it may be a reflection on an issue discussed in class, on something you read for this class, or another class, or on your own that relates to the course material in some way. Your response to another student's posting must be a thoughtful and constructive response (such as if you were having a conversation with them). The rules for use of the forum is as follows:

1. Your grade will be based on the substance of your posting which includes the thought and effort you put into it as well as the length. You can post more than twice a week, but make sure that you have at least *one substantial posting each week of at least 200 words*, and one reply.
2. You will receive a zero for the week if you fail to post before 12:00 midnight on Tuesday of each week. Therefore, you have a full week, including the weekend, to read the forum comments and respond to them or create new postings (Note: you do not have to be finished with your reading to make a substantial post. A reflection on any aspect or part of the reading will do fine). I will check the forum each Wed. morning to record who posted an entry for that week and I will monitor the board all week.
3. Maintain academic civility, use respectful language and avoid rude remarks. Even *more* than in face-to-face debate, caution must be exercised in "virtual" debate to avoid insulting or offending others. Nothing derogatory may be said about any student or faculty member on the forum. Misuse of the forum will result in the removal of the offender from the forum discussion list, and a Failing grade for the assignment.
4. Do not use the forum to communicate private questions to me, or anyone else in the class (such as "When is the paper due?"). Send me a private e-mail for that.

### **Written Work:**

There will be two significant papers over the course of the semester. Each paper will be a detailed review of two or more books that assesses their contributions to the larger historiographic issues to which they speak. One book must be one of the main readings of the week on the syllabus, and the other(s) must come from the supplementary reading list from the same week as the main reading chosen. Detailed assignment sheets describing the expectations,

length, and due dates for the writings assignment will be given out in class and posted on blackboard. Late papers will be penalized 1/3 of a grade for each day the paper is late. All written assignments must be completed and turned in to the professor in order to pass the class.

### **Final Grade:**

- 40% Class participation (including presentations).
- 15% Blackboard Discussion
- 15% Historiographic Paper #1
- 15% Historiographic Paper #2
- 15% Final Exam

### **Readings:**

- Couvares, Francis, et al. *Interpretations of American History: Patterns & Perspectives, Volume 2: From Reconstruction to the Present.*
- Edwards, Rebecca, *New Spirits: Americans in the Gilded Age*
- Hahn, Stephen, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration.*
- Andrews, Thomas, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War*
- Kramer, Paul, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States and the Philippines*
- Rodgers, Dan T. *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age*
- Gilmore, Glenda, *Gender and Jim Crow*
- Leach, William, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power and the Rise of a New American Culture*
- Kennedy, David M., *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945.*
- Cohen, Lizabeth, *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America.*
- Melvyn Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War.*
- Pascoe, Peggy. *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America*
- Ngai, Mae, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*
- Gerhard, Jane. *Desiring Revolution: Second-wave Feminism and the Rewriting of American Sexual Thought, 1920 to 1982*
- McGirr, Lisa. *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*

### **Week 1. INTRODUCTION**

**Jan. 20. Main Reading:** Couvares, *Interpretations of American History*, 1-24.

### **Week 2. POST CIVIL WAR AMERICA**

**Jan. 27 Main Reading:** Edwards, Rebecca, *New Spirits: Americans in the Gilded Age*  
Couvares, *Interpretations of American History*, 55-95.

### Supplementary Reading:

Blum, Edward. *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism*  
Calhoun, Charles, ed. *The Gilded Age: Perspectives on the Origins of Modern America*  
Cohen, Nancy. *The Reconstruction of American Liberalism, 1865-1914*.  
Hahn, Stephen. *The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeomen Farmers and the Transformation of the Southern Upcountry, 1850-1890*.  
Goodwyn, Lawrence. *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America*  
Luker, Ralph. *The Social Gospel in Black and White*  
Postel, Charles. *The Populist Vision*  
Richardson, Heather. *West from Appomattox*.  
Trachtenberg, Alan. *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*  
Wiebe, Robert. *The Search for Order 1877-1920*.

### Week 3. RECONSTRUCTION AND ITS AFTERMATH

**Feb. 3**      **Main Reading:**      Hahn, Stephen, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration*.  
  
Couvares, *Interpretations of American History*, 25-54.

### Supplementary Reading:

Blight, David. *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (2001).  
Blackmon, Douglas. *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* (2008).  
Brown, Thomas, ed. *Reconstructions: New Perspectives on the Postbellum United States*  
Dailey, Jane. *Before Jim Crow: The Politics of Race in Postemancipation Virginia*(2000).  
Fitzgerald, Mike. *Splendid Failure: Postwar Reconstruction in the American South* (2007).  
Foner, Eric. *A Short History of Reconstruction* (1988)  
Higginbotham, Evelyn Brooks, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920*  
Hunter, Tera. *To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors after the Civil War* (1998)

### Week 4. LABOR HISTORY AND THE WEST

**Feb. 10**      **Main Reading:**      Andrews, Thomas, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War*  
  
Worster, Donald, "Rise of Environmental History," and Wrobel, David. "Regionalism and Sectionalism in American Historical Writing" in *A Century of American Historiography*

### Supplementary Reading:

Cronon, William, *Nature's Metropolis*  
Fink, Leon. *Workingmen's Democracy: The Knights of Labor and American Politics*.

Green, James. *Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement and the Bombing that Divided Gilded Age America*  
Hine, Robert V. and John Mack Faragher, *The American West: A New Interpretive History*  
Montgomery, David, *The Fall of the House of Labor*  
Rosenzweig, Roy, *Eight Hours for What We Will*  
Worster, Donald, *Rivers of Empire*

**Week 5. AMERICAN IMPERIALISM**

**Feb. 17 Main Reading:** Kramer, Paul, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States and the Philippines*

Couvares, *Interpretations of American History*, 96-126.

**Supplementary Reading:**

Bederman, Gail, *Manliness and Civilization* (1995).  
Jacobson, Matthew Frye. *Barbarian Virtues*  
Kaplan, Amy. *The Anarchy of Empire and the Making of U.S. Culture* (2002).  
LaFeber, Walter. *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898*.  
Love, Eric T. *Race Over Empire: Racism & U.S. Imperialism, 1865-1900* (2004)  
Newman, Louise. *White Women's Rights: The Racial Origin of Feminism in the United States* (1999).  
Rosenberg, Emily, *Spreading the American Dream*  
Sneider, Allison, *Suffragists in an Imperial Age: U.S. Expansion and the Woman Question*  
Williams, William Appleman, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*

**Week 6. PROGRESSIVISM**

**Feb. 24 Main Reading:** Rodgers, Dan T. *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age*

Couvares, *Interpretations of American History*, 165-187.

**Supplementary Reading:**

Capozzola, Christopher. *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern Citizen*  
Dawley, Alan, *Changing the World*  
Dawley, Alan. *Struggles for Justice: Social Responsibility and the Liberal State*  
Hawley, Ellis. *The Great War and the Search for a Modern Order: A History of the American People and Their Institutions 1917-1933*.  
Hofstadter, Richard. *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.*  
Kloppenber, James T. *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870-1920*  
Kolko, Gabriel, *The Triumph of Conservatism*  
Menand, Louis. *The Metaphysical Club*.  
McGerr, Michael. *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement America, 1870-1920*  
Sanders, Elizabeth, *Roots of Reform: Farmers, Workers and the American State, 1877-1919*

**Week 7. THE ERA OF JIM CROW**

**March 3 Main Reading:** Gilmore, Glenda, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920.*

Brown, Elsa Barkley, "What Has Happened Here? The Politics of Difference in Women's History and Feminist Politics."

**Supplementary Reading:**

Ayers, Edward. *The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction.*

Glenn, Evelyn Nakano, *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor*

Hale, Grace Elizabeth. *Making Whiteness*

Kraditor, Aileen, *Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement*

Kantrowitz, Stephen, *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy*

Litwack, Leon, *Trouble in Mind*

Woodward, C. Vann, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*

**SPRING BREAK MARCH 8-14**

**Week 8. CONSUMER CULTURE**

**March 17 Main Reading:** Leach, William, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power and the Rise of a New American Culture*

Jean-Christophe Agnew, "Coming Up for Air: Consumer Culture in Historical Perspective"

**Supplementary Reading:**

Beckert, Sven. *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie*

Hoganson, Kristin L. *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920* (2007).

Lears, T.J. Jackson. *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America.*

Lears, T.J. Jackson. *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920.*

Marchand, Roland, *Advertising the American Dream*(1986)

Peiss, Kathy. *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York*

**Week 9. THE NEW DEAL**

**March 24 Main Reading:** Kennedy, David M., *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*, 1-380, 615-668, 746-797.

Couvares, *Interpretations of American History*, 207-245.

**Supplementary Reading:**

Brinkley, Alan, *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War*.

Brinkley, Alan. *Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin, and the Great Depression*.

Cohen, Lizabeth. *Making a New Deal*

Gordon, Colin. *New Deals: Business, Labor, and Politics in America 1920-1935*.

Gordon, Linda. *Pitied But Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare 1890-1935*.

Pells, Richard. *Radical Visions and American Dreams: Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years*.

Skocpol, Theda. *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States*.

Sullivan, Patricia, *Days of Hope: Race and Democracy in the New Deal Era*

**Week 10. POST WWII AMERICA**

**March 31 Main Reading:** Cohen, Lizabeth, *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*.

Kroen, "A Political History of the Consumer."

**Supplementary Reading:**

Baxandall, Roslayn Fraad and Elizabeth Ewen, *Picture Windows: How the Suburbs Happened*

Coontz, Stephanie, *The Way We Never Were*

Jackson, Kenneth. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*.

Sugrue, Thomas J., *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*

**Week 11. IMMIGRATION AND AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP**

**April 7 Main Reading:** Ngai, Mae, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*

Couvares, *Interpretations of American History*, 127-164.

**Supplementary Reading:**

Bodnar, John. *The Transplanted*

Daniels, Roger, *Guarding the Golden Door (2004)*

Higham, John, *Strangers in the Land*

Jacobson, Matthew Frye. *Whiteness of a Different Color*



King, Desmond, *Making Americans: Immigration, Race, and the Origins of Diverse Democracy*  
Roediger, David. *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White*  
Sanchez, George. *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945.*  
Zaragoza Vargas, *Labor Rights are Civil Rights: Mexican- American Workers in Twentieth-Century America*

**Week 12. CIVIL RIGHTS STRUGGLES**

**April 14 Main Reading:** Pascoe, Peggy. *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America*  
  
Couvares, *Interpretations of American History*, 287-315.  
  
Tomlins, Christopher. "Expanding Boundaries: A Century of Legal History."

**Supplementary Reading:**

Bolton, Charles, *The Hardest Deal of All: The Battle of School Integration in Mississippi, 1870-1980*  
Dudziak, Mary. *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*  
Gerstle, Gary, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century*  
Gilmore, Glenda, *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919-1950*  
Goluboff, Risa. *The Lost Promise of Civil Rights*  
Jackson, Thomas, *From Civil Rights to Human Rights*  
Kelley, Robin D.G., *Race Rebels : Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class*  
Klarman, Michael. *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights: The Supreme Court and the Struggle for Racial Equality*  
Levenstein, Lisa. *A Movement Without Marches: African American Women and the Politics of Poverty in Postwar Philadelphia*  
Sokol, Jason. *There Goes My Everything: White Southerners in the Age of Civil Rights, 1945-1975*  
Sugrue, Thomas, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North*

**Week 13. THE COLD WAR**

**April 21 Main Reading:** Melvyn Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War.*  
  
Couvares, *Interpretations of American History*, 246-286.

**Supplementary Reading:**

Borgwardt, Elizabeth. *A New Deal for the World*  
Fousek, John, *To Lead the Free World*  
Gaddis, John Lewis, *The Cold War: A New History*  
Hunt, Michael, *Lyndon Johnson's War*  
Jeffries, John W., *Wartime America: The World War II Home Front*

Kaiser, David E., *American Tragedy: Kennedy, Johnson, and the Origins of the Vietnam War*  
LaFeber, Walter, *Inevitable Revolutions*  
Leffler, Melvyn P., *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (2007)  
Osgood, Kenneth, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad*  
Schrecker, Ellen, *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America*  
Smith, Tony, *America's Mission* (1994).  
Whitfield, Stephen, *Culture of the Cold War*

#### **Week 14. SEXUALITY, FEMINISM, AND THE SIXTIES REVOLUTION**

**April 28 Main Reading:** Gerhard, Jane. *Desiring Revolution: Second-wave Feminism and the Rewriting of American Sexual Thought, 1920 to 1982.*  
Couvares, *Interpretations of American History*, 325-365.

##### **Supplementary Reading:**

Carter, David. *Stonewall: The Riots that Sparked the Gay Revolution*  
Chauncey, George. *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940*  
Cott, Nancy. *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*  
Kessler-Harris, Alice. *In Pursuit of Equity: Women, Men, and the Quest for Economic Citizenship in 20th Century America.*  
Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*  
Matusow, Alan, *The Unraveling of America*  
Rosen, Ruth, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America*  
Schulman, Bruce J., *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics*

#### **Week 15. THE CONSERVATIVE MOVEMENT**

**May 5 Main Reading:** McGirr, Lisa. *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*  
Couvares, *Interpretations of American History*, 366-408.

##### **Supplementary Reading:**

Carter, Dan, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics*  
Kruse, Kevin M., *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*  
Lassiter, Matthew, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*  
Patterson, James T. *Restless Giant: The United States from Watergate to Bush vs. Gore* (2005).  
Sokol, Jason, *There Goes My Everything: White Southerners in the Age of Civil Rights, 1945-75*  
Wilentz, Sean. *The Age of Reagan*

#### **Week 16. FINAL EXAM**

**May 12**

**Final Exam, 6:30-9:20 pm.**