

COLLOQUIUM IN AMERICAN HISTORY

1865-PRESENT

**History 702-02
M 6:30-9:20
MHRA 3207
Spring 2014**

**Dr. Mark Elliott
Office: MHRA 2125
Office Hours:
T 2:00-3:00**

DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this reading-intensive course is to introduce graduate students to some of the major historiographical debates and the latest trends in scholarship in this period. Because the scholarship is vast, it is impossible to address all of the important debates that exist in the field of American history from 1865 to the present. Rather than attempt to be comprehensive, this class offers a sampling of some of the most recent developments in American historiography. Students should approach this course as an opportunity to work on the skills of reading a book for its thesis/argument, grasping the historiographical debates that each book engages, and figuring out one's own position in the major debates that shape the field. In order to pass their comprehensive exams, Master's and Ph.D students will need to employ the techniques learned in this class to explore many more historiographical controversies beyond what is covered in this foundational course and master other important works of scholarship on their own.

Each class meeting is organized around the discussion of one book as the main reading for the week. Each of the main books has 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, economic, and intellectual history approaches are represented; regional, national and transnational approaches are sampled; categories of analysis and perspectives on the past that include labor and class, 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 thesis, 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 three presentations over the course of the semester. Presentations will last from 12-15 minutes (speakers will be asked to conclude at 15 minutes). Two 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 third 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.

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 assessing 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 through Blackboard in order to pass the class.

Grading Breakdown:

- 100 Points: Participation in class discussion (You can earn up to 8 points per class. We meet 13 times. No constructive contributions to discussion = 0 points. Minimal participation = 3-4 points. Strong participation = 5-6 points. Outstanding participation = 7-8 points).
- 100 Points: Class Presentations. Graduate students will do 3 presentations worth 34 points each.
- 100 Points: First Paper
- 100 Points: Second Paper
- 100 Points: Final Exam.

Final Grade Scale:

A 465-500; **A-** 450-464; **B+** 435-449; **B** 415-434; **B-** 400-414; **C+** 385-399; **C** 365-384; **C-** 350-364; **D+** 335-349; **D** 315-334; **D-** 300-314; **F** 299 or less.

REQUIRED READING (available at UNCG's Bookstore):

Readings:

The books listed below are available for purchase at the bookstore. Other readings and films can be accessed through the class blackboard site under the "Course Documents" heading.

Recommended Reading on American Historiography:

Foner, Eric and McGerr, Lisa. *American History Now*. (2011).

Required Readings:

1. Faulkner, Carol. *Women's Radical Reconstruction*
- *2. Genetin-Pilawa, *Crooked Paths to Allotment: The Fight over Federal Indian Policy after the Civil War*
3. Richard White, *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of America*
4. Andrews, Thomas, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War*.
5. Menand, Louis. *The Metaphysical Club*
- *6. Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism*
7. Feimster, Crystal. *Southern Horrors: Women and the Politics of Rape and Lynching*
- *8. Katznelson, Ira. *Fear Itself: the New Deal and the Origin of Our Time*, or Kennedy, David, *The American People in the Great Depression: Freedom From Fear*
- *9 Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*
- *10. Osgood, Kenneth, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad*
11. Gerstle, Gary, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century*
12. Rosen, Ruth, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America*
13. Rodgers, Daniel T. *The Age of Fracture*

Additional readings can be found on Blackboard under "Course Documents."

Week 1. INTRODUCTION

Jan. 13 Main Reading: Cronon, "Why the Past Matters" (2000)
"Introduction to American Historiography" from
Couvares, et al. *Interpretations in American History*

Week 2. MLK HOLIDAY. NO CLASS.

Week 3. RECONSTRUCTION IN THE SOUTH

Jan. 27 Main Reading: Faulkner, Carol. *Women's Radical Reconstruction*
Thomas Brown from *Reconstructions: New Perspectives on the Postbellum United States*

Supplementary Reading:

Blum, Edward. *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism*

Brown, Thomas, ed. *Reconstructions: New Perspectives on the Postbellum United States*
Farmer-Kaiser, Mary. *Freedwomen and the Freedmen's Bureau: Race, Gender & Public Policy in the Age of Emancipation.*
Fitzgerald, Michael. *Splendid Failure: Postwar Reconstruction of the South*
Foner, Eric. *A Short History of Reconstruction.*

Week 4. THE CONQUEST OF THE WEST

Feb. 3 Main Reading: Genetin-Pilawa, *Crooked Paths to Allotment: The Fight over Federal Indian Policy after the Civil War*

Ned Blackhawk, "American Indians and the Study of U. S. History" from *American History Now*

Supplementary Reading:

Cahill, Cathleen. *Federal Fathers and Mothers: A Social History of the United States Indian Service 1869-1933.*

Hoxie, Frederick. *A Final Promise: the Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (1984)

Limerick, Patricia, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*

Richardson, Heather. *West from Appomattox*

Week 5. THE GILDED AGE AND CORPORATE AMERICA

Feb. 10 Main Reading: White, Richard, *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of America*

Beckert, Sven, "History of American Capitalism" and Johnson, "the Possibilities of Politics" from *American History Now*

Supplementary Reading:

Beckert, Sven. *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie 1850-1896.*

Calhoun, Charles, ed. *The Gilded Age: Perspectives on the Origins of Modern America*

Edwards, Rebecca, *New Spirits: Americans in the Gilded Age* (2nd Edition).

Lears, Jackson, *Rebirth of Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920*

Trachtenberg, Alan. *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*

Wiebe, Robert. *The Search for Order 1877-1920.*

Week 6. LABOR AND ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY

Feb. 17 Main Reading: Andrews, Thomas, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War*

Phillips, "Environmental History" in *American History Now*.

Supplementary Reading:

Cronon, William, *Nature's Metropolis*

Fink, Leon. *Workingmen's Democracy: The Knights of Labor and American Politics*.
Goodwyn, Lawrence. *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America*
Montgomery, David, *The Fall of the House of Labor*
Rosenzweig, Roy, *Eight Hours for What We Will*
Worster, Donald, *Rivers of Empire*

Week 7. THE PHILOSOPHY OF PROGRESSIVISM

Feb. 24 Main Reading: Menand, Louis. *The Metaphysical Club*

Robert Johnson, "Re-Democratizing the Progressive Era: the Politics of Progressive Era Political Historiography."

Supplementary Reading:

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*
Knight, Louise. *Citizen: Jane Addams and the Struggle for Democracy*
Lears, T.J. Jackson. *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920*.
Mattson, Kevin. *Creating a Democratic Republic: The Struggle for Urban Participatory Democracy During the Progressive Era*.
McGerr, Michael. *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement America, 1870-1920*
Muncy, Robyn. *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1895-1930*.

Week 8. THE ERA OF JIM CROW

Mar 3. Main Reading: Feimster, Crystal. *Southern Horrors: Women and the Politics of Rape and Lynching*

Robin D.G. Kelley, "We are Not What We Seem"

Supplementary Reading:

Ayers, Edward. *The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction*.
Blackmon, Douglas. *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II*.
Gilmore, Glenda, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920*.
Higginbotham, Evelyn Brooks, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920*
Hale, Grace Elizabeth. *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940*.
Kantrowitz, Stephen, *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy*
Kelley, Robin D.G., *Race Rebels : Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class*
Smith, Mark M. *How Race is Made: Slavery, Segregation and the Senses*
Woodward, C. Vann, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*

***Mar. 8 (Thursday) PAPERS DUE no later than 9:30 pm on Blackboard.**

SPRING BREAK MARCH 10-15

Week 9. TRANSNATIONAL HISTORY AND AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

Mar. 17 Main Reading: Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism*

Erez Manela in "The United States in the World" in *American History Now*.

Supplementary Reading:

Bederman, Gail, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Race and Gender, 1880-1917*.
Kramer, Paul, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States and the Philippines*
Rosenberg, Emily, *Spreading the American Dream*
Smith, Tony, *America's Mission*
Tyrrell, Ian. *Reforming the World: the Creation of America's Global Empire*
Williams, William Appleman, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*

Week 10. THE NEW DEAL

March 24 Main Reading: Katznelson, Ira. *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of our Time*

Lisa McGirr in "The Interwar Years" in *American History Now*.

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, Elizabeth. *Making a New Deal*
Dawley, Alan. *Struggles for Justice: Social Responsibility and the Liberal State*
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*.
Kennedy, David M., *The American People in the Great Depression: Freedom From Fear*.
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 11. THE SECOND WORLD WAR

March 31 Main Reading: Kenneth Rose. *Myth and the Greatest Generation*

Article TBA

Supplementary Reading:

Adams, Michael. *The Best War Ever: American and World War II*
Jeffries, John W., *Wartime America: The World War II Home Front*
Kennedy, David M., *The American People in World War II: Freedom From Fear, part II*.

Week 12. THE COLD WAR

April 7 Main Reading: Osgood, Kenneth, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad*

Article TBA

Supplementary Reading:

Fousek, John, *To Lead the Free World*

Gaddis, John Lewis, *The Cold War: A New History*

Dudziak, Mary. *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*

Little, Douglas, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East Since 1945*

Melvyn Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War.*

Schrecker, Ellen, *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America*

Von Eschen, Penny. *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957*

Week 13. CIVIL RIGHTS STRUGGLES

April 14 Main Reading: Gerstle, Gary, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century*

Jacqueline Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past."

Supplementary Reading:

Gilmore, Glenda, *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919-1950*

Klarman, Michael. *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights: The Supreme Court and the Struggle for Racial Equality*

Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*

Pascoe, Peggy. *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America*

Sugrue, Thomas, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North*

Tyson, Timothy, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power*

Zaragoza Vargas, *Labor Rights are Civil Rights: Mexican-American Workers in Twentieth-Century America*

Week 14. GENDER AND FEMINISM

April 21 Main Reading: Rosen, Ruth, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America*

Rebecca Edwards, "Women's and Gender History" in *American History Now*.

Supplementary Reading:

Cott, Nancy. *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*
Sara Evans, *Tidal Wave: How Women Changed America at Century's End*
Gerhard, Jane. *Desiring Revolution: Second-wave Feminism and the Rewriting of American Sexual Thought, 1920 to 1982.*
Kessler-Harris, Alice. *In Pursuit of Equity: Women, Men, and the Quest for Economic Citizenship in 20th Century America.*
Levenstein, Lisa. *A Movement Without Marches: African American Women and the Politics of Poverty in Postwar Philadelphia* (2009)

Week 15. The CONSERVATIVE COUNTER-REVOLUTION

April 28 Main Reading: Rodgers, Daniel T. *The Age of Fracture*
Kim Phillips-Fein, "1973 to the Present," *American History Now*

Supplementary Reading:

Carter, Dan, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics*
Dochuk, Darren, *From Bible Belt to Sun Belt: Plain Folk Religion, Grass-Roots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism*
Kruse, Kevin M., *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*
McGirr, Lisa. *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*
Lassiter, Matthew, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*
Sokol, Jason, *There Goes My Everything: White Southerners in the Age of Civil Rights, 1945-75*

***April 30 (Wednesday) PAPERS DUE no later than 9:30 pm on Blackboard.**

Week 16. FINAL EXAM

May 5 (Monday) Final Exam 6:30-9:30