

# COLLOQUIUM IN AMERICAN HISTORY

## 1865-PRESENT

**History 702-02**  
**M 6:30-9:20**  
**MHRA 3207**  
**Spring 2016**

**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 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 cover a “greatest hits” of historical works, this class highlights 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 within 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, and supplementary articles. 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. One missed class will not affect your grade, other than lost participation points (see below). Each class missed after the first one will lower your final grade by 10 points. 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). One of these will be a presentation on the main reading for the week, and a second one will be on book chosen from the supplementary reading list. For these presentations, 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. . In the supplementary book 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 supplementary reading and the main reading for the week. The third presentation will be based on one of the articles assigned for the week. This presentation will be shorter, 5-8 minutes, and will not require a discussion of the author or the article's reception.

### **Written Work:**

There will be two significant papers over the course of the semester. Each paper will be a comparative review of two 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 for each day the paper is late. All written assignments must be completed and turned in through Canvas 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 (40 points for each book; 20 points for one article).
- 100 Points: First Paper
- 100 Points: Second Paper
- 100 Points: Final Exam.
- 10 Points: Each absence after the first one will cause a ten point deduction.

### **Final Grade Scale:**

A+ 485-500; A 465-484; A- 450-464; B+ 435-449; B 415-434; B- 400-414; C+ 385-399; C 365-384; F 364 or less.

### **REQUIRED READING (available at UNCG's Bookstore):**

#### **Readings:**

The books listed below are available for purchase at the bookstore. Some of them are available as free e-books through the Jackson Library. The articles can be accessed through the class Canvas site under the "Course Modules" heading.

## Required Readings:

Bruce Baker, *What Reconstruction Meant: Historical Memory in the American South*

\*Elliott West, *The Last Indian War: The Nez Perce Story*

Andrews, Thomas, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War.*

\*Charles Postel, *The Populist Vision*

Hoganson, Kristin. *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American War*

Irwin, Julia F., *Making the World Safe: The American Red Cross and a Nation's Humanitarian Awakening*

Sutton, Matthew Avery, *American Apocalypse: A History of Modern Evangelicalism*

\*Lawson, R.A. *Jim Crow's Counterculture: The Blues and Black Southerners 1890-1945*

Katznelson, Ira. *Fear Itself: the New Deal and the Origin of Our Time*

\*Kennedy, David M., *The American People in World War II: Freedom From Fear, part I*

\*Borstelmann, Thomas. *Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena*

Robert O. Self, *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy since the 1960s*

\*Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*

\*Available as e-books through the Jackson Library.

### Week 1. INTRODUCTION

**Jan. 11 Main Reading:** Cronon, "Why the Past Matters"  
Introduction from *Interpretations of American History*

### Week 2. Jan. 18 MLK HOLIDAY. NO CLASS.

### Week 3. RECONSTRUCTION IN THE SOUTH

**Jan. 25 Main Reading:** Baker, Bruce, *What Reconstruction Meant*  
Amy Dru Stanley, "Emancipation and the Revolutionizing of Human Rights."

#### Supplementary Reading:

Blight, David. *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*

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

Fitzgerald, Michael. *Splendid Failure: Postwar Reconstruction of the South*

Foner, Eric. *A Short History of Reconstruction.*

Janney, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation*

### Week 4. THE CONQUEST OF THE WEST

**Feb. 1 Main Reading:** Elliott West, *The Last Indian War*

Genetin-Pilawa, "Ely S. Parker and the Paradox of Reconstruction Politics in Indian Country."

**Supplementary Reading:**

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

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

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. POPULISM AND INDUSTRIALIZING AMERICA**

**Feb. 8 Main Reading:** Charles Postel, *The Populist Vision*

Quentin Taylor, "Money and Politics in the Land of Oz."

**Supplementary Reading:**

Goodwyn, Lawrence. *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America*

Hofstadter, Richard. *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.*

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

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

**Week 6. LABOR AND ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY**

**Feb. 15 Main Reading:** Andrews, Thomas, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War*

Rome, "What Matters in History."

**Supplementary Reading:**

Byrd, Travis. *Unraveled: Labor Strife and Carolina Folk during the Marion Textile Strikes of 1929*

Cronon, William. *Nature's Metropolis*

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

Montgomery, David, *The Fall of the House of Labor*

Rosenzweig, Roy, *Eight Hours for What We Will*

Worster, Donald, *Rivers of Empire*

**Week 7. GENDER AND IMPERIALISM**

**Feb. 22 Main Reading:** Hoganson, Kristin. *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American War*

Article TBA

**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*  
Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism*  
Rosenberg, Emily, *Spreading the American Dream*  
Williams, William Appleman, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*

**Week 8. PROGRESSIVISM AND WAR**

**Feb. 29. Main Reading:** Irwin, Julia F., *Making the World Safe: The American Red Cross and a Nation's Humanitarian Awakening*

Wilson, Anne Marie, "In the Name of God, Civilization and Humanity."

**Supplementary Reading:**

Capozzola, Christopher. *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern Citizen*  
Dawley, Alan, *Changing the World: American Progressives in War and Revolution*  
Muncy, Robyn. *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1895-1930*.  
Zieger, Robert. *America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience*

**\*Mar. 3 (Thursday) PAPERS DUE no later than 9:30 pm on Canvas.**

**Week 9. SPRING BREAK MARCH 7-11**

**Week 10. THE NEW DEAL**

**March 14 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*.  
Byrd, Travis. *Unraveled: Labor Strife and Carolina Folk during the Marion Textile Strikes of 1929*  
Cohen, Lizabeth. *Making a New Deal*  
Dawley, Alan. *Struggles for Justice: Social Responsibility and the Liberal State*  
Kennedy, David M., *The American People in the Great Depression: Freedom From Fear*.  
Sullivan, Patricia. *Days of Hope: Race and Democracy in the New Deal Era*

**Week 11. THE ERA OF JIM CROW**

**March 21. Main Reading:** R.A. Lawson, *Jim Crow's Counterculture*  
Robin D.G. Kelley, "We are Not What We Seem"

**Supplementary Reading:**

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*  
Feimster, Crystal. *Southern Horrors: Women and the Politics of Rape and Lynching*  
Smith, Mark M. *How Race is Made: Slavery, Segregation and the Senses*  
Woodward, C. Vann, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*

**Week 12. THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

**March 28 Main Reading:** Kennedy, David M., *The American People in World War II: Freedom From Fear, part II.*  
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*  
Kenneth Rose. *Myth and the Greatest Generation*

**Week 13. CIVIL RIGHTS AND THE COLD WAR**

**April 4 Main Reading:** Borstelmann, Thomas. *Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena*

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

**Supplementary Reading:**

Dudziak, Mary. *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*  
Von Eschen, Penny. *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957*  
Gilmore, Glenda, *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919-1950*  
Sugrue, Thomas, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North*

**Week 14. CONSERVATISM AND RELIGION**

**April 11**      **Main Reading:**      Sutton, Matthew Avery, *American Apocalypse: A History of Modern Evangelicalism*

Article TBA

**Supplementary Reading:**

Dochuk, Darren, *From Bible Belt to Sun Belt: Plain Folk Religion, Grass-Roots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism*

Kruse, Kevin. *One Nation Under God: How Corporate America Invented Christian America*

McGirr, Lisa. *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State*

Okrent, Daniel, *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*

**Week 15.      POLITICS AND THE CULTURE WARS**

**April 18**      **Main Reading:**      Robert O. Self, *All in the Family*.

**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*

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 21      (Thursday)      PAPERS DUE no later than 9:30 pm on Canvas**

**Week 16.      THE CARCERAL STATE**

**April 25**      **Main Reading:**      Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*

**Supplementary Reading:**

Blackmon, Douglas. *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II.*

**Week 16.      FINAL EXAM**

**May 2**      **(Monday)**      Final Exam 6:30-9:30