

History 702-02: Colloquium in American History (Spring 2021)
Time and Place: T 2:00-4:50pm, Online

Professor David M. Wight (dmwight@uncg.edu)
Office Hours: By appointment via Zoom

STRUCTURE & SCOPE

Welcome! This course examines issues of historical interpretation for the United States from Reconstruction to the beginning of the twenty-first century. The emphasis of the course will be on recent scholarship and the historiographies they are building upon.

REQUIRED READINGS

There are thirteen books assigned for the course, listed below. Books with a “****” after them are available for free as ebooks through the UNCG library. The books can also be purchased at the University Bookstore. Additional articles/excerpts will be provided on Canvas.

Stephen E. Nash, *Reconstruction’s Ragged Edge: The Politics of Postwar Life in the Southern Mountains* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016) ****

Kenyon Zimmer, *Immigrants Against the State: Yiddish and Italian Anarchism in America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015) ****

David W. Grua, *Surviving Wounded Knee: The Lakotas and the Politics of Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) ****

Sarah Haley, *No Mercy Here: Gender, Punishment, and the Making of Jim Crow Modernity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016) ****

Jason Colby, *The Business of Empire: United Fruit, Race, and U.S. Expansion in Central America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011) ****

Lisa McGirr, *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2016)

Steven Ross, *Hitler in Los Angeles: How Jews Foiled Nazi Plots Against Hollywood and America* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017)

Wendy L. Wall, *Inventing the “American Way”: The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) ****

Kate Brown, *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) ***

Teishan A. Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America: Havana and the Making of a United States Left, 1968–1992* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018) ***

Michael Koncewicz, *They Said No to Nixon: Republicans Who Stood Up to the President's Abuses of Power* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018) ***

Anne E. Parsons, *From Asylum to Prison: Deinstitutionalization and the Rise of Mass Incarceration after 1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018) ***

Lisa Levenstein, *They Didn't See Us Coming: The Hidden History of Feminism in the Nineties* (New York: Basic Books, 2020)

GRADING

Your final grade will be comprised of the following:

Participation	30%
Papers	60%
Presentation	10%

Grading will be on the following scale: A = 93 and up; A- = 90-92; B+ = 87 to 89; B = 83-86; B- = 80-82; C+ = 77-79; C = 73-76; F = <73

PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

Class will be held via Zoom each Tuesday. Weekly class attendance and participation is mandatory. If you arrive late, leave early, or are absent, your participation grade for that day may be half or zero credit. You will be given one excused absence for any reason (i.e. your lowest participation score will be dropped), but no more, so plan accordingly.

You are required to complete the readings listed below each week **before** arriving to class on Tuesday. Weekly readings will consist of a book and one or two articles. The “supplemental readings” are NOT part of the weekly readings (those will be used for presentations, see below).

The class will primarily consist of discussing the readings, with minimal guidance from my part. Discussions should cover the following four points, roughly sequentially: First, what are the main arguments of the book. Second, how does the arguments of the book fit within the historiographies of the historical subfields to which it pertains, particularly as discussed in the articles assigned for that week? Third, what evidence, sources, methods, theories, and/or logics are utilized in the book to defend its arguments? Fourth, what critiques do you have of the book, and where might the field further advance after this work?

PAPERS

You will submit nine papers, each 2 ½ to 3 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, on the readings for that week (thus you have five “free” weeks) on Canvas. The papers should focus on the book for that week, and also incorporate a discussion of the assigned articles for that week as they pertain to the book and the historiography it is situated within, addressing the four points outlined for class discussion. These papers will serve as a useful summarization of books and themes that you can use in your qualifying examinations and future research and teaching.

I require that you submit your paper before the start of class. Late papers will generally not be accepted.

PRESENTATION

Each student will read ONE of the “supplementary readings” books and give a twelve to fifteen-minute oral presentation in class, covering the four points outlined for class discussions as they pertain to this book. Email me your top three or so picks for a supplementary reading, and I will assign supplementary readings on a first-emailed first-served basis, so as to ensure everyone presents on a different work and there are not too many presentations for any given week.

ETIQUETTE

Throughout the course, whether in video meetings, online discussion boards, or assignments, you are required to be respectful of other people and their arguments. Critiques and disagreements over the ideas we discuss are expected and even encouraged, but this does not permit anyone to be offensive or abusive toward others. I reserve the right to remove anyone from class for disrespectful behavior.

General behaviors to avoid include (but are not limited to): flaming, doxing, using or posting offensive images or language that is outside the scope of course materials, posting suspicious websites, and advertising yours or others’ businesses or products.

TECHNOLOGY

This course requires the capability of the student to use and regularly access a computer, a word processor, pdf files, the internet (including videos), and a webcam. The UNCG library is a resource for technology access.

On protecting your personal data and privacy, see https://policy.uncg.edu/university-policies/acceptable_use/.

If you encounter a technology problem, contact UNCG Information Technology Services as soon as possible. They have online, phone and walk-in options for technical support, all listed here: <https://its.uncg.edu/Help/>. If a technology problem poses the possibility of preventing you from completing coursework, communicate this to myself as soon as possible, too, so we can see if we can mitigate any negative impacts on your learning and grade.

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

UNCG provides a variety of useful services for you, the student. Check them out!

The UNCG Library (<https://library.uncg.edu/>) has a wealth of books, articles, archival materials, and other media resources, computers, inter-library loan services, and knowledgeable staff.

The UNCG Writing Center (<https://writingcenter.uncg.edu/>) provides assistance with writing assignments; contact staff members to set an appointment either in person or via instant-messaging.

The UNCG Speaking Center (<https://speakingcenter.uncg.edu/>) provides assistance in improving your skill and confidence in public, group, and individual speaking.

If you have any needs or questions related to disability issues, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) (<https://ods.uncg.edu/>). I prioritize making this course accessible to all of the students in it, and I will work with OARS to accommodate students' requests. You do not need to disclose details about your disability to me to receive accommodations.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro prohibits any and all forms of academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsible to know what constitutes academic integrity and academic dishonesty, and to be familiar with UNCG policies on academic integrity laid out here: <https://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>. Students who engage in an academically dishonest act (such as plagiarizing part of a paper or cheating during an exam) will receive a grade of "F" in the course and be reported to the Academic Dean for possible additional disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion from the university. Do not attempt it.

COMMUNICATION

I will make periodic announcements regarding important information about the course, accessible in the "Announcements" tab. Likewise, I will provide feedback on assignments under comments. I might also send you a message via Canvas or an email to your UNCG email address

if needed. It is your responsibility to monitor and read all of these communications in a timely manner.

I am happy to answer your questions by email or message in Canvas. Please allow me a full day to respond (or two on weekends and holidays), but I'll usually reply sooner.

You can also schedule a Zoom meeting with me.

USEFUL WEBSITES

History Department Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/UNCGDepartmentofHistory/>

History Department Website: <https://his.uncg.edu/>

SYLLABUS MODIFICATIONS

I reserve the right to modify or alter any part of the syllabus as the course progresses. It is your responsibility to keep up with class announcements regarding any alterations.

CLASS TOPICS

Week 1 – 1/19 – Introduction to the Course

Week 2 – 1/26 – The Battle Over Reconstruction

Stephen E. Nash, *Reconstruction's Ragged Edge: The Politics of Postwar Life in the Southern Mountains* (2016)

“The Reconstruction Era: How Large Its Scope?,” in Francis G. Couvares et al., eds., *Interpretations of American History: From Reconstruction, Eighth Edition* (2008)

Supplemental Readings:

Kenneth M. Stamp, *The Era of Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (1965)

David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (2001)

Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (2002)

Bruce Baker, *What Reconstruction Meant: Historical Memory in the American South* (2007)

Week 3 – 2/2 – Immigrants and Industrial Capitalism

Kenyon Zimmer, *Immigrants Against the State: Yiddish and Italian Anarchism in America* (2015)

Mae M. Ngai, “Immigration and Ethnic History,” in Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr, eds., *American History Now* (2011)

Supplemental Readings:

Vicki Ruiz, *Cannery Women, Cannery Lives: Mexican Women, Unionization, and the California Food Processing Industry, 1930-1950* (1987)

David R. Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs* (2005)

Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (1999)

Sarah Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White: Race and Ethnicity in the Early Syrian American Diaspora* (2009)

Week 4 – 2/9 – American Indians and Historical Memory

David W. Grua, *Surviving Wounded Knee: The Lakotas and the Politics of Memory* (2016)

James T. Campbell, “Settling Accounts? An Americanist Perspective on Historical Reconciliation,” *American Historical Review* (2009)

Ned Blackhawk, “American Indians and the Study of U.S. History,” in Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr, eds., *American History Now* (2011)

Supplemental Readings:

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

Patricia Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (1987)

Pekka Hamalainen, *The Comanche Empire* (2008)

Elliott West, *The Last Indian War: The Nez Perce Story* (2009)

Week 5 – 2/16 – Jim Crow, Gender, and the Modern State

Sarah Haley, *No Mercy Here: Gender, Punishment, and the Making of Jim Crow Modernity* (2016)

Joan Wallach Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” *American Historical Review* (1986)

Rebecca Edwards, “Women’s and Gender History,” in Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr, eds., *American History Now* (2011)

Supplemental Readings:

Glenda Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (1992)

Daniel Hurewitz, *Bohemian Los Angeles and the Making of Modern Politics* (2008)

Allison L. Sneider, *Suffragists in an Imperial Age: U.S. Expansion and the Woman Question, 1870-1929* (2008)

Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (2009)

Week 6 – 2/23 – The United States as Overseas Empire

Jason Colby, *The Business of Empire: United Fruit, Race, and U.S. Expansion in Central America* (2011)

Emily S. Rosenberg, “America and the World: From National to Global,” *OAH Magazine of History* (2007)

Paul A. Kramer, “Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World,” *American Historical Review* (2011)

Supplemental Readings:

Kristin Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American War* (1998)

Julie Greene, *The Canal Builders: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal* (2009)

Bruce Cumings, *Dominion from Sea to Sea: Pacific Ascendancy and American Power* (2009)

Victor Román Mendoza, *Metroimperial Intimacies: Fantasy, Racial-Sexual Governance, and the Philippines in U.S. Imperialism, 1899-1913* (2015)

Week 7 – 3/2 – Progressivism and Its Legacies

Lisa McGirr, *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State* (2016)

“The Progressive Movement: Elitist or Democratic?,” in Francis G. Couvares et al., eds., *Interpretations of American History: From Reconstruction, Eighth Edition* (2008)

Supplemental Readings:

Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (1967)

Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (1982)

Thomas Knock, *To End All Wars: Woodrow Wilson and the Quest for a New World Order* (1992)

Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920* (2003)

Week 8 – 3/9 – Political and Cultural Battles of the 1930s

Steven Ross, *Hitler in Los Angeles: How Jews Foiled Nazi Plots Against Hollywood and America* (2017)

Richard Steigmann-Gall, “Star-Spangled Fascism: American Interwar Political Extremism in Comparative Perspective,” *Journal of Social History* (2017)

Supplemental Readings:

Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America’s Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (2005)

Ira Katznelson, *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time* (2013)

Kathryn Olmsted, *Right Out of California: The 1930s and the Big Business Roots of Modern Conservatism* (2015)

Adam Hochschild, *Spain in Our Hearts: Americans in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (2016)

Week 9 – 3/16 – New Deal Liberalism

Wendy L. Wall, *Inventing the “American Way”: The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement* (2008)

Lisa McGirr, “The Interwar Years,” in Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr, eds., *American History Now* (2011)

Meg Jacobs, “The Uncertain Future of American Politics, 1940 to 1973,” in Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr, eds., *American History Now* (2011)

Supplemental Readings:

Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (1988)

George Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight: Labor and Culture in the 1940s* (1994)

Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers’ Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (2003)

Dorothy Sue Cobble, *The Other Women’s Movement: Workplace Justice and Social Rights in Modern America* (2004)

Week 10 – 3/23 – World War II, the Cold War, and Science and the Environment

Kate Brown, *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters* (2013)

Seymour Mauskopf and Alex Roland, “The Historiography of Science and Technology,” *The Oxford History of Historical Writing* (2011)

Sarah T. Phillips, “Environmental History,” in Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr, eds., *American History Now* (2011)

Supplemental Readings:

Robert A. Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge: Eisenhower’s Response to the Soviet Satellite* (1993)

Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World: America’s Cold War Battle Against Poverty in Asia* (2010)

David Zierler, *The Invention of Ecocide: Agent Orange, Vietnam, and the Scientists Who Changed the Way We Think About the Environment* (2011)

Connie Y. Chiang, *Nature Behind Barbed Wire: An Environmental History of the Japanese American Incarceration* (2018)

Week 11 – 3/30 – The New Left

Teishan A. Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America: Havana and the Making of a United States Left, 1968–1992* (2018)

Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,” *Journal of American History*, Volume 91, Issue 4, March 2005

Supplemental Readings:

Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (1999)

Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution in the Age of Détente* (2003)

Thomas F. Jackson, *From Civil Rights to Human Rights: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Struggle for Economic Justice* (2006)

Sean Malloy, *Out of Oakland: Black Panther Party Internationalism during the Cold War* (2017)

Week 12 – 4/6 – The New Right

Michael Koncewicz, *They Said No to Nixon: Republicans Who Stood Up to the President’s Abuses of Power* (2018)

Julian E. Zelizer, “Rethinking the History of American Conservatism,” *Reviews in American History* (2010)

Supplemental Readings:

Alan J. Matusow, *Nixon’s Economy: Booms, Busts, Dollars, and Votes* (1998)

Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (2001)

Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Businessmen’s Crusade Against the New Deal* (2009)

Laura Kalman, *Right Star Rising: A New Politics, 1974-1980* (2010)

Week 13 – 4/13 – Neoliberalism

Anne E. Parsons, *From Asylum to Prison: Deinstitutionalization and the Rise of Mass Incarceration after 1945* (2018)

Henry A. Giroux, “Neoliberalism and the Death of the Social State: Remembering Walter Benjamin’s Angel of History” (2011)

Supplemental Readings:

Nelson Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution: How Wal-Mart Created a Brave New World of Business* (2009)

Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (2010)

Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson, *Winner-Take-All Politics: How Washington Made the Rich Richer--and Turned Its Back on the Middle Class* (2010)

Daniel T. Rodger, *Age of Fracture* (2011)

Week 14 – 4/20 – The Recent Past

Lisa Levenstein, *They Didn't See Us Coming: The Hidden History of Feminism in the Nineties* (2020)

Kim Phillips-Fein, “1973 to the Present,” in Foner, *American History Now* (2011)

Supplemental Readings:

Natasha Zaretsky, *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline, 1968–1980* (2007)

Sean Wilentz, *The Age of Reagan: A History, 1974-2008* (2008)

Lawrence J. McAndrews, *Refuge in the Lord: Catholics, Presidents, and the Politics of Immigration, 1981-2013* (2015)

Salim Yaqub, *Imperfect Strangers: Americans, Arabs, and U.S.-Middle East Relations in the 1970s* (2016)