

**History 702-02: Colloquium in American History (Spring 2023)**  
**Time and Place: R 5:30-8:20pm, MHRA 1213**

Professor David M. Wight ([dmwight@uncg.edu](mailto:dmwight@uncg.edu))  
Office Hours: By appointment

**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 twelve 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) \*\*\*\*

Shanon Fitzpatrick, *True Story: How a Pulp Empire Remade Mass Media* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2022) \*\*\*\*

Kyle E. Ciani, *Choosing to Care: A Century of Childcare and Social Reform in San Diego, 1850–1950* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2019) \*\*\*\*

Travis Sutton Byrd, *Tangled: Organizing the Southern Textile Industry, 1930–1934* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2018)

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

Virginia L. Summey, *The Life of Elreta Melton Alexander: Activism within the Courts*  
(Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2022) \*\*\*

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) \*\*\*

Kristina Shull, *Detention Empire: Reagan's War on Immigrants and the Seeds of Resistance*  
(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2022) \*\*\*

[if purchased at <https://uncpress.org/book/9781469669861/detention-empire/> use promo  
code 01DAH40 for 40% discount]

## GRADING

Your final grade will be comprised of the following:

Participation	40%
Papers	50%
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

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). If extreme circumstances arise, at my discretion alternative assignments can be submitted for additional absences.

You are required to complete the readings listed below each week **before** arriving to class on Thursday. 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 three weeks where we meet but you do not submit a paper). 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 a hard copy of your paper at 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 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.

## TECHNOLOGY

This course requires the capability of the student to use and regularly access a computer, a word processor, pdf files, and the internet. 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/](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 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.

## HEALTH INFORMATION

Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in the university, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336-334-5874, visiting the website at <https://shs.uncg.edu/> or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, The Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting <https://shs.uncg.edu/srp> or reaching out to [recovery@uncg.edu](mailto:recovery@uncg.edu)

## CLASS TOPICS

### **Week 1 – 1/12 – Introduction to the Course**

### **Week 2 – 1/19 – 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 – 1/26 – 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 – 2/2 – 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 – 2/9 – Jim Crow, Gender, and the Modern State**

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

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 – 2/16 – The Empires of the United States**

Shanon Fitzpatrick, *True Story: How a Pulp Empire Remade Mass Media* (2022)

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

#### **Supplemental Readings:**

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

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

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

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

## **Week 7 – 2/23 – Progressivism and Its Legacies**

Kyle E. Ciani, *Choosing to Care: A Century of Childcare and Social Reform in San Diego, 1850–1950* (2019)

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

### **Supplemental Readings:**

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)

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

## **Week 8 – 3/2 – The Great Depression and Political Radicalism**

Travis Sutton Byrd, *Tangled: Organizing the Southern Textile Industry, 1930–1934* (2018)

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

### **Supplemental Readings:**

Alan Brinkley, *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (1995)

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

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

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

## **Week 9 – 3/9 – Spring Break**



## **Week 10 – 3/16 – 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 – 3/23 – No Class**

## **Week 12 – 3/30 – Consensus and Division in Mid-Century American Politics**

Virginia L. Summey, *The Life of Elreta Melton Alexander: Activism within the Courts* (2022)

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)

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

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

Blake Scott Ball, *Charlie Brown’s America: The Popular Politics of Peanuts* (2021)

### **Week 13 – 4/6 – 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)

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

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

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

### **Week 14 – 4/13 – 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)

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)

Daniel Robert McClure, *Winter in America: A Cultural History of Neoliberalism, from the Sixties to the Reagan Revolution* (2021)

### **Week 15 – 4/20 – The Recent Past**

Kristina Shull, *Detention Empire: Reagan’s War on Immigrants and the Seeds of Resistance* (2022)

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

**Supplemental Readings:**

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)

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

David M. Wight, *Oil Money: Middle East Petrodollars and the Transformation of US Empire, 1967–1988* (2021)