

History 603: Modern American Historiography

Spring 2005
Herter
Tuesdays, 2:30-5:30

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W/Th 1:30-3:30 & by appt
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This course is an introduction to the historiography of the United States since 1877. There are two objectives to the course: 1) to familiarize you with the idea of historiography --the discourse of the historical profession-- and various approaches to the study of American history; 2) to solidify your background in American history of the past 130 years.

To that end, the course combines a methodological and chronological organization. The first part of the course discusses American history up through World War I, while introducing you to the principal ways that primarily political historians have interpreted the period (such as the Progressive, Consensus, New Left, and Organizational syntheses). The second half of the course continues a chronological sweep up to the present (more or less), while discussing the methodological and historiographical development of social, cultural, political, diplomatic, environmental, and women's history. We will conclude with a discussion of American history in a global context, and whether or not the development of new historical syntheses integrating these various sub-specialties is desirable, or even possible.

You will be expected to read at least one book each week. Three students each week will serve as discussion leaders--their job is to do extra reading to help place the book in context for their classmates. They will also write historiographical essays (7-8 pgs) due one week after their oral presentations. Over the course of the semester each student will have this role three times. Students also will write a fourth essay on a book of their choice. This book may be in one of the fields mentioned above, or else in another subspecialty not covered in the course, such as Urban, Labor, Religious, Legal, or Military History, or the History of Science and Technology.

All required books and articles are on Reserve (3rd floor, Tower Library). Those marked with a * are the common readings for each week, and available for purchase at Albion Books, 8 Main Street, Amherst. Those marked with a + are alternative readings, usually a "classic," also on Reserve. Most of the extra reading you will do for your presentations and papers will be in the following journals:

Reviews in American History (RAH) Z1236.R47 (your best friend)
Journal of American History (JAH) E171.J861
American Historical Review (AHR) E171.A57
American Quarterly (AQ) AP2.A3985
Journal of Social History (JSH) HN1.J6
Jrnl of Interdisc. History (JIH) CP3.J6
Labor History (LH) HD4802.L435
Diplomatic History (DH) E183.7.D48
Radical History Review (RHR) HX1 R33
Signs (Signs) HQ1101.S5 (women's history)
Public Historian (PH) HN1.P8

Note: issues of these journals since 2004 are on the Main floor of the Tower Library; issues before 2004 are in the stacks. Many of these journals are also available on-line via JSTOR, accessible through the Library's website.

Schedule of Topics and Readings:

2/1 Introduction: What is historiography? or How the discourse of professional historians affects the way we understand history.

2/8 The Historical Profession

*P. Novick, That Noble Dream: The Objectivity Question and the American Historical Profession

D. Thelen, "The Practice of American History," JAH 81 (Dec 1994): 933-60.

T. Haskell, "Objectivity is not Neutrality: Rhetoric versus Practice in Peter Novick's *That Noble Dream*" History & Theory 29 (1990): 129-57.

2/15 After Reconstruction

*G. Gilmore, Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina 1896-1920

+C.V. Woodward, The Strange Career of Jim Crow

"Perspectives: The Strange Career of Jim Crow," JAH 75 (December 1988): 841-68.

"What We See & Can't See in the Past," JAH 83 (March 1997): 1217-72; and

"Responses," JAH 84 (Sept 1997): 748-65.

2/22 From Populism to Progressivism

*R. Hofstadter, The Age of Reform

P. Baker, "The Domestication of Politics: Women and American Political Society, 1780-1920," AHR 89 (June 1984):620-47.

J. Hicks, The Populist Revolt, ch. 15.

H. Faulkner, The Quest for Social Justice, ch. 1-5.

L. Goodwyn, The Populist Moment, ch. 9

D. Thelen, "Social Tensions and the Origins of Progressivism," JAH 56 (1969): 323-41.

M. Kazin, "Hofstadter Lives: Political Culture and Temperament in the Work of an American Historian," RAH 27 (June 1999): 334-48.

+E. Sanders, Roots of Reform: Farmers, Workers, and the American State 1877-1917

3/1 Progressivism Reconsidered

*D. Rodgers, Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age

G. Kolko, The Triumph of Conservatism

R. Wiebe, The Search for Order

+J. Weinstein, Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State

M. Sklar, "Studying Political Development in the Progressive Era, 1890s-1916," in Sklar, The United States as a Developing Country, pp. 37-77.

L. Galambos, "Technology, Political Economy, and Professionalization: Central Themes in the Organizational Synthesis," Business History Review 57 (Winter 1983): 471-93.

3/8 Immigration, Race, and Labor

*Erika Lee, At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943

+Matthew Frye Jacobson, Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race

P. Kolchin, "Whiteness Studies: The New History of Race in America," JAH 89 (June 2002): 154-73.

E. Arnesen, "Up from Exclusion: Black and White Workers, Race, and the State of Labor History," RAH 26 (March 1998): 146-74.

P. Gleason, "Crevecoeur's Question: Historical Writing on Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity," in A. Molho and G. Wood, eds. Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past (1998), pp. 120-43.

D. Gabaccia, "Is Everywhere Nowhere? Nomads, Nations, and the Immigrant Paradigm of U.S. History," JAH (December 1999): 1115-34.

3/15 No class (Spring Break)

3/22 Culture and Consumption

+K. Peiss, Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture

T.J. Lears, "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities," AHR 90 (June 1985): 567-94.

W. Leach, "Transformations in a Culture of Consumption: Women and Department Stores, 1890-1925" JAH 71 (Sept 1984): 319-42.

+D. Potter, People of Plenty

G. Lipsitz, "Listening to Learn and Learning to Listen: Popular Culture, Cultural Theory, and American Studies," AQ 42 (December 1990): 615-36.

J. Toews, "Intellectual History After the Linguistic Turn," AHR 92 (Oct 1987): 879-907.

A. Biersack, "Local Knowledge, Local History: Geertz and Beyond," in L. Hunt, ed. The New Cultural History (1989), pp. 72-96.

Examine recent issues of American Quarterly

3/29 Sexuality and History

*G. Chauncey, Gay New York : Gender, Urban Culture, And The Making Of The Gay Male World, 1890-1940

K. Peiss, "Contents," Preface," and "Sexuality in History," Major Problems in the History of American Sexuality (2002), pp. vii-xvii, 1-25.

J. D'Emilio & E. Freedman, "Introduction," Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America (1988), pp, xi-xx.

J. D'Emilio, "Not a Simple Matter: Gay History and Gay Historians," JAH 76 (Sept, 1989): 435-442.

L. Faderman, Odd Girls & Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in 20C America

+A. Douglas, Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s

4/5 Race, Religion, and Civil Rights

*Kevin Boyle, Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age

Jon Butler, "Jack in the Box Faith: The Religion Problem in Modern American History," JAH 90 (March 2004): 1357-78.

+John T. McGreevy, Parish Boundaries : The Catholic Encounter With Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North

Thomas Sugrue, "Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and Reaction Against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940-64," JAH 82 (Sept 1995): 551-78.

Thomas Sugrue, "Affirmative Action from Below: Civil Rights, the Building Trades, and the Politics of Racial Equality in the Urban North, 1945-69," JAH 91 (June 2004):145-73.

Examine recent issues of the Journal of Social History

4/12 New Deal Politics

*Lizabeth Cohen, Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-39

+S. Fraser & G. Gerstle, ed. Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order

A. Kessler-Harris, "In the Nation's Image: The Gendered Limits of Social Citizenship in the Depression Era," JAH 86 (December 1999): 1251-79.

B. Bernstein, "The New Deal: The Conservative Achievements of Liberal Reform," in Bernstein, Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History, pp. 263-88.

W. Leuchtenburg, "The Pertinence of Political History," JAH 73 (Dec 1986): 585-600.

B. Balough, "The State of the State Among Historians," Social Science History 27 (Fall 2003): 455-63.

Examine recent issues of Journal of Interdisciplinary History

4/19 Diplomatic History

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

M. Leffler, "The Cold War" What Do We Know Now?" AHR 104 (April 1999): 501-24.

T. McCormick, "Drift or Mastery? A Corporatist Synthesis for American Diplomatic History," RAH 10 (Dec 1982): 18-30.

A. Iriye, "Internationalizing International History," in T. Bender, ed. Rethinking American History in a Global Age, pp. 47-62.

+W.A. Williams, The Tragedy of American Diplomacy

Examine recent issues of Diplomatic History

4/26 Environmental History

*A. Hurley, Environmental Inequalities: Class, Race, and Industrial Pollution in Gary Indiana, 1945-80

T. Steinberg, "Down to Earth: Nature, Agency, and Power in History," AHR (June 2002): 798-820.

D. Worster, "Transformations of the Earth: Toward an Agroecological Perspective in History," and W. Cronon, "Modes of Prophecy and Production: Placing Nature in History," JAH 76 (March 1990): 1087-1106, 1122-31.

R. White, "American Environmental History: The Development of a New Historical Field," Pacific Historical Review 54 (1985):297-335.

+T. Steinberg, Down to Earth: Nature's Role in American History

Examine recent issues of Environmental History

5/3 Women's History

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

D. Horowitz, "Rethinking Betty Friedan and The Feminine Mystique: Labor, Union Radicalism, and Feminism in Cold War America," AQ 48 (March 1996): 1-42.

L. Kerber, "Gender," in A. Molho and G. Wood, eds. Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret The Past (1998), pp. 41-58.

J. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," AHR 91 (Dec 1986):1053-75.

N. Hewitt, "Beyond the Search for Sisterhood: American Women's History in the 1980s," Social History 10 (October 1985): 299-321.

N. Cott & E. Pleck, "Introduction," to A Heritage of Her Own (1979), pp. 9-24.

+S. Evans, Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left

Examine recent issues of Signs or Feminist Studies

5/10 Syntheses: Local, National, Global

*T. Bender, ed. Rethinking American History in a Global Age

D. Glassberg, Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life, pp. 3-22, 205-11.

D. Thelen, "The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on U.S. History," JAH 86 (December 1999): 965-75.

I. Tyrrell, "Making Nations/Making States: American Historians in the Context of Empire," JAH 86 (December 1999): 1015-44.

J. Higham, "The Future of American History," JAH 80 (March 1994): 1289-1307.

5/17 Final essays due

Some Supplementary Books on American Historiography

J. Combs, American Diplomatic History

R. Hofstadter, The Progressive Historians

O. Graham, Kolko and his Critics

E. Foner, ed. The New American History (1997 edition)

H. Gutman, Power and Culture: Essays on the American Working Class

M. Kammen, The Past Before Us

M. Kraus & D. Joyce, The Writing of American History

R. Maddox, The New Left and the Origins of the Cold War

MARHO, Visions of History (interviews with historians)

B. Palmer, Descent Into Discourse

R. Skotheim, The Historian and the Climate of Opinion

I. Tyrrell, The Absent Marx

G. Wise, American Historical Explanations

H. Zinn, The Politics of History