

History 150

American Histories: The Nineteenth Century

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of History
Fall 2015
MWF, 8:50 – 9:40
Ingraham 22

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This is the course syllabus. It explains the expectations, requirements, and schedule of lectures, section meetings, and assignments that together constitute the semester's work. It should be the first place you look for answers to your questions about the course. We've put this hardcopy in your hands to emphasize its importance; it is also available as a .pdf at Learn@UW.

Course Topic and Themes

This course will introduce you to some of the major themes, problems, and questions of U.S. history between the ratification of the Constitution in the late 1780s and the domestic and international upheavals of the 1910s. I say "some of" because no course can cover everything: a perfect map of the world would be the same size of the world, and what use would that have? One important area of focus will be the history of **citizenship**, a concept whose meaning and significance changed dramatically during this period. Many of our readings and assignments engage questions related to citizenship, sometimes head on, sometimes more indirectly. We'll also be thinking about the relationship of this history to our own ideas and practices of citizenship, aided by the members of our class who are taking part in a FIG (first-year interest group) on "Citizenship and Social Change in the Contemporary U.S."

Studying History at the College Level

Studying history is not about memorizing names and dates, but about crafting those specifics into verifiable stories (narratives) that help make sense of broader patterns of continuity and change (analyses). Every story should convey meaning. Every story will be incomplete. (For more on what History Department courses are designed to teach you, see "Goals of the Major" on the last page of this document.)

This understanding of history as narrative and analysis shapes many aspects of the course. Most of all, it means that when you come to lecture, or when you sit down to do the reading, your undivided attention should be on the big picture. Course assignments and course policies are designed to promote that focus:

Open-book, open-note assignments

All course assignments will be open-book and open-note. We're much less interested in what you don't know than in how well you can make sense of what you've read and learned. Unless we specifically tell you otherwise, however, you must complete assignments by yourself, and all the work in them must be your own (for more on this, see the academic misconduct policy, below).

No laptops or other electronics in lecture or section

You don't need to transcribe the lecture to understand it; in fact, some [evidence](#) suggests that it is counter-productive, even when you're not multi-tasking. We will provide outlines and lists of keywords for each lecture; we'll then post all of these in pdf on learn@UW. **Your job during lecture is to make sure you understand the main arguments and topics, to respond to questions and documents, and to think about what you're hearing and saying.** You'll do this better by thoughtfully listening, taking selective notes, and asking questions than by trying to catch every word I say.

Beyond this, we all know what happens when we have both a screen and a wireless connection available. Non-classroom activities not only take you away from the course, but create a cone of

distraction around and behind you. I'm not up on a high horse here: this policy reflects awareness of my own frailty.

The no-electronics policy is course-wide and includes discussion sections. This means that **you must have readings available for discussion on paper, not e-book or pdf**. Do whatever else you need to do to make this affordable and efficient: print two pages per page, print double-sided, and/or buddy up with classmates in your section or another section to share printed copies.

Finally, **this policy applies to all electronics**, not just laptops. You must turn your phone off (not leave it on vibrate or silent) and keep it out of sight during the entire course period. If the message you are waiting for is so important that it can't remain unread or unanswered for fifty minutes, don't come to class that day. The same goes for tablets, watches, glasses, toasters, or anything else with an internet connection.

Attendance

Some say that 80% of success is just showing up, but in this course the figure is a bit lower: attendance in lecture will determine 10% of your course grade. This is not because we don't respect your adulthood (although it's worth remembering that employers and supervisors out in the world beyond college do, in fact, take attendance) but because lectures make up the analytical spine of the course.

We do not provide class notes beyond the outlines, keywords, and images provided to everyone via learn@UW. If you do have to miss a lecture, you should make sure to obtain a classmate's notes. **Do not ask the professor or teaching assistant to give you a recap of what you missed.**

Attendance in section is also required, and more than one unexcused absence will significantly affect your section grade, which makes up 20% of your final grade.

Communication and Office Hours

To see Prof. Kantrowitz during office hours, sign up through the scheduling assistant on the course learn@UW page. I may be available at other times for those who cannot make these hours: [email](#) me with a list of times you are available on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

I will make every effort to respond to emails within 24 hours, but messages received after Friday afternoon may not receive a response until Sunday evening. If you do not receive a reply at all, it is probably because your question can be answered by reading this syllabus.

Teaching Assistant office hours will be announced in class and posted on the course learn@uw page.

Accommodation

We will make every effort to accommodate students' needs. Students requiring accommodation must work through the McBurney Center and must alert the professor and TA well before the first time they require such accommodation, ideally in the first two weeks of the semester.

Assignments and Assessment

All reading assignments should be completed before your section meets. Bring paper copies of that week's reading with you to section. You may arrange to share books and printouts with classmates, but make sure there is at least one copy for every two members of a discussion section.

Except where otherwise indicated, assignments must be submitted to the appropriate learn@UW dropbox no later than 10pm on Monday (the night before the weekly section meeting). **50-word assignments must be brought to section in hardcopy.**

Written work must be submitted:

- with your name and section day/time *at the top left of the first page*.
- in a 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1-inch left and right margins.
- with an accurate word-count *at the end of the text*.
- only after having been carefully proofread, not just spell-checked. Don't turn in a paper arguing that "White women who lived on plantains were usually proslavery." (The writer meant "plantations." I hope.)
- to the appropriate learn@UW dropbox in a Word or Word-compatible document, or (in the case of the 50-word assignments) in a hardcopy version that meets the above specifications.

All students are encouraged to make use of **The History Lab**, available to undergraduates working on papers or research projects about the past. The Lab focuses on honing the student's ability to form suitable

topics, conduct research, develop arguments and thesis statements, cite evidence properly, and write using an effective process. In the spirit of helping all students, the Lab offers support to native English speakers and English-language learners. The History Lab is located in 4255, just around the corner from the TA offices, and will be open Sundays-Thursdays, usually in the evenings. Students are welcome to drop in, but we strongly encouraged them to make an appointment, either by visiting <http://go.wisc.edu/hlab> or calling (608) 890-3309.

Late Work and Missed Exercises

Absences or missed deadlines are only considered "excused" if the student provides a note from a medical professional or dean. In the absence of such a note, your work will be marked down by 10% of its maximum possible grade each day that it is late.

Academic Responsibility

Everything you submit to us must be your own work. Appropriation of another person's work or ideas without citation always constitutes plagiarism, whether or not you reproduce their words exactly. If you do repeat someone else's words, you must use quotation marks and must cite the relevant author, work, and page numbers (either in parentheses or in a footnote). If you closely paraphrase another writer or rely on his or her ideas, you must similarly acknowledge your debt with an appropriate citation. Clear guidelines for the use and citation of sources are available on the UW-Madison Writing Center's website [here](#) and [here](#). If you remain uncertain about these rules and responsibilities, ask!

We will refer **every case** of suspected plagiarism or other academic misconduct to the Office of the Dean of Students. Help us make this one of the special semesters when we don't have to do that.

Grades

Your final grade will be determined according to this formula:

Discussion section attendance and participation	20%
Lecture attendance	10%
7 fifty-word assignments @3%	21%
weeks 1 and 3 are required	
submit four during weeks 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, and 14	
Assignment #1 (Week 4)	10%
Assignment #2 (Week 8)	12%
Assignment #3 (Week 11)	12%
Final Take-Home Essay	15%

Where to find the readings and other course materials

The four **books** are available at A Room of One's Own Bookstore, 315 W. Gorham St. and are on reserve at College Library.

Paul E. Johnson, *Sam Patch, the Famous Jumper* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2004)

Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1999)

Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward, 2000-1887* (Signet)

Brett Flehinger, *The 1912 Election and the Power of Progressivism* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2002)

The **other course readings**, marked below with an "•", are available in pdf under "Content" on the Learn@UW site.

Nat Turner: A Troublesome Property is available at the "History 150" channel at <https://mediaspace.wisc.edu/> and may also be available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/vhC-QPiViV0>.

Schedule of Lectures, Readings, and Assignments

Our "week" will begin with Wednesday's lecture, continue through Friday's and Monday's lectures, and conclude with sections on Tuesday. **Sections begin meeting Tuesday, 9/7.**

Week 1

9/2 Weds Introduction
 9/4 Fri Struggles
 9/6 Mon **No Lecture** (Memorial Day)

Note that there is an assignment due in section on Tuesday 9/7. Make sure to submit it according to the guidelines in "Assignments and Assessment," above.

Reading: • The Constitution of the United States and Amendments 1 through 10
 Assignment: In one paragraph of no more than 50 words, answer the following question: As best you can tell by reading the Constitution and Bill of Rights (the first ten amendments), who was and who was not part of what the document refers to as "the people"? Be sure to begin with a strong, one-sentence statement of your argument. **Required. 3%**

Week 2

9/9 Weds Boundaries and Empires, pt. 1
 9/11 Fri **No lecture - instead, complete Assignment 2, below**
 9/14 Mon Boundaries and Empires, p.t 2

Reading: • Egerton, "Gabriel's Conspiracy and the Election of 1800"
 Assignment 1: In one paragraph of no more than 50 words, answer the following question: Why did Gabriel believe a revolt could succeed? Begin the paragraph with a clearly worded thesis statement and support that thesis with evidence drawn from the article. Do not use quotations. No citations are required. **Required. 3%**
 Assignment 2: Watch the film *Nat Turner: A Troublesome Property*, (available at <https://youtu.be/vhC-QPiVIV0> and on the "History 150" channel at UW-Madison's mediaspace,) which explores how various generations of historians have interpreted the 1831 slave revolt in Southampton, Virginia. Come to section prepared to compare this actual revolt with what we know about Gabriel's plans. **Required.**

Week 3

9/16 Wed The "Great Revival"
 9/18 Fri The Market Revolution and Urbanizing America
 9/21 Mon Jacksonian Democracy

Reading: P. Johnson, *Sam Patch*, ix-47
 • Klinghoffer and Elkis, "The Petticoat Electors"
 Assignment: An argument of approximately 50 words in response to the following question: What aspect of the changing economy was most challenging for free workers in the early nineteenth-century North? **Required. 3%**

Week 4

9/23 Weds **No lecture** (religious holidays of Yom Kippur and Eid al-Adha)
 9/25 Fri Removal and Resettlement
 9/28 Mon The Regionalization of Slavery

Reading: P. Johnson, *Sam Patch*, 49-end
 Assignment: In a short essay (125-150 words), explain how one aspect of Sam Patch's life reflects one important broader current in his world. **Required. 10%**

Week 5

9/30 Weds Abolitionism
 10/2 Fri Free Labor and Proslavery
 10/5 Mon Women, Dependents, and Independence

Reading: W. Johnson, *Soul by Soul*, 1-134

Assignment: • "Declaration of Sentiments," Seneca Falls, N.Y., 1848
An argument of approximately 50 words in response to the following question: How is "the chattel principle" important to the argument of *Soul By Soul*? **3%**

Week 6

10/7 Weds "Manifest Destiny"
10/9 Fri International Currents
10/12 Mon Catch-up

Reading: W. Johnson, *Soul By Soul*, 135-end
Assignment: An argument of approximately 50 words in response to the following question: How do cases brought under redhibition laws help us understand how slave buyers, slave traders, or enslaved people (pick one) acted in the slave market? **3%**

Week 7

10/14 Weds The Political Crisis of the 1850s
10/16 Fri The Endgame
10/19 Mon Secession and War

Reading: Frederick Douglass, "Oration Delivered in Corinthian Hall, Rochester, July 5th, 1852"
Assignment: An argument of approximately 50 words in response to the following question: In this address, does Frederick Douglass represent himself as an American citizen? **3%**

Week 8

10/21 Weds Union Transformations
10/23 Fri Confederate Transformations
10/26 Mon Wartime Emancipation

Reading: • "Attorney General Bates on Citizenship" (1862)
Assignment: **An essay of 400-500 words** making an argument about one or two similarities or differences between Douglass's arguments in the 1852 oration and Bates's 1862 letter. An "argument about the similarities and differences" does not mean "identify one way they are similar and one way they are different"; it means identifying important similarities and/or differences and making an argument about what those mean. You may organize this in any way that makes sense, but your argument must take some account of the events and transformations that took place between 1852 and 1862. **Required. 12%**

Week 9

10/28 Weds The Meanings of Freedom
10/30 Fri Reconstruction as a Revolutionary Moment
11/2 Mon Reconstruction as a Conservative Moment

Reading: • Brown and Kimball, "Mapping the Terrain of Black Richmond"
• Beckert, "Democracy and its Discontents"
• U.S. Constitution: 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments (see readings for Week 1)
Assignment: During the 1870s, how did urban residents make use of *or* thwart the intent of the Reconstruction amendments? Respond to this question with 1) an argument of approximately 50 words, immediately followed by 2) a bullet-point list of three key pieces of evidence you would use to support that argument in a longer essay. **3%**

Week 10

11/4 Wed Native Citizens
11/6 Fri Reconstruction Defeated
11/9 Mon The Postwar Economy

Reading: • "Douglass on Lincoln," *New York Times*, April 22, 1876
Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, first half
• Carnegie, "Wealth"

Assignment: An argument of approximately 50 words in response to *one* of the following questions:
How would the inhabitants of Bellamy's future society respond to Carnegie's essay? What would Carnegie say about Bellamy's vision? **3%**

Week 11

11/11 Weds New Labor, New Laborers
11/13 Fri Revolt of the Debtors
11/16 Mon Populism

Reading: Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, second half

Assignment: Imagine that in 1894 a Populist from rural Georgia and an urban Northern adherent of the Bellamyite "Nationalist" movement sought to make an alliance. In the voice of one of these two characters, write **an essay of 400-500 words** that aims to recruit the other character into a political alliance. One paragraph should explain the mutual benefits of such an alliance; the other paragraph should attempt to address the most pressing worry that, in your judgment, the other character would have about such an alliance. **Required. 12%**

Week 12

11/18 Weds Jim Crow Rising
11/20 Fri The Indians' New West
11/23 Mon Catch-up Lecture

note: sections will meet on Tuesday 11/24

Reading: • Dawes Severalty Act (1887)
• *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) - selections

Assignment: In no more than 100 words, make an argument comparing the citizenship that the Dawes Act imagined for Native Americans with the citizenship that the majority opinion in *Plessy* imagined for African Americans. **3%**

Week 13

11/25 Weds **No lecture** (Thanksgiving recess)
11/27 Fri **No lecture** (Thanksgiving recess)
11/30 Mon Empire

Reading: • Gilmore, "Murder, Memory, and the Flight of the Incubus"

Week 14

12/2 Weds Big Business and the New Paternalism
12/4 Fri Progressivism, pt. 1
12/7 Mon Progressivism, pt. 2

Reading: Flehinger, *The 1912 Election and the Power of Progressivism*, selections

Assignment: Write two possible essay questions for the final take-home assignment. These should raise issues that cover the entire span of the course. **3%**

Week 15

12/9 Weds Citizens All?
12/11 Fri Preparing for the Final Assignment
12/14 Mon Making History

Final section meetings on Tuesday, 12/15

Final Take-Home Assignment

This open-book, open-note essay assignment will cover material from the entire course and will ask you to synthesize what you have learned. You may confer with classmates as you prepare to write, but once you begin writing all work must be entirely your own. It will be due in the dropbox no later than the end of the scheduled exam block for the course. **15%**

Guidelines for Writing History Papers

I: Clarity of Argument

Thesis statements: Begin with a clear statement of your argument. Your first paragraph should inform your readers what the paper is going to tell them, and in what general order. As you revise, ask yourself how your opening lines might be improved in order to give the reader a better idea of what to expect.

Advancing the argument: The first sentence of each paragraph in the main body of your paper should make a claim that helps support your overall argument; the rest of the paragraph should offer evidence supporting that particular claim. Each sentence should advance your argument; if you can't explain how it accomplishes that, it can probably be cut. As you move through the paper, make sure the major transitions from section to section are obvious.

Revision: The essence of writing is revising, and very few writers write effective first drafts. Leave yourself plenty of time for this process. If you're in the middle of writing your final paragraph when you finally figure out what you're arguing, then it's time to revise again. Incorporate that new understanding into your first paragraph and re-write the paper with that stronger version of your argument as your new starting place.

II: Clarity of Presentation

Style: Avoid the passive voice. Write strong, clear sentences that make your meaning plain.

Accuracy: Your dates, names, quotations, page references, and citations must be crystal clear. In this area of history writing, there's no room for negotiation. You get it right or you don't; if you don't, you quickly lose all credibility as an historian. That said, I don't care what system of citation you use (MLA, Chicago, etc.) so long as your references are *complete* and *consistent*.

Citations: In a short paper based on one or two sources, list the source(s) at the top of the first page and identify quotations with a parenthetical page reference in the text; in a longer paper or one with more than a few sources, use footnotes or endnotes. In either case, be consistent, complete, and above all accurate. Where you are quoting or paraphrasing another writer, you must indicate your debt, down to the relevant page number(s). If you are paraphrasing other writers or using their arguments, you should indicate that. Err on the side of too much acknowledgment rather than too little.

Proofreading for spelling and grammar: Your papers should contain no spelling errors, sentence fragments, or run-ons. The spell-checking feature in your word processing program is not sufficient and may hurt you unless you also check the paper by hand.

Whose paper is this? Put your full name at the top of the first page.

A title, please: Show pride in your work by giving it a real title, one that captures its theme or argument and (if possible) has some poetry to it as well. "Gabriel's Conspiracy and the Election of 1800" is clear; "Soul by Soul: Life inside the Antebellum Slave Market" is both clear and poetic. "History Assignment #2" is neither.

III: More Things to Read about Writing

Two oldies but goodies:

Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*

William Zinsser, *On Writing Well*

And some wise advice about writing from two working (fiction) writers:

Zadie Smith: <http://www.brainpickings.org/index.php/2012/09/19/zadie-smith-10-rules-of-writing/>

Neil Gaiman: <http://www.brainpickings.org/index.php/2012/09/28/neil-gaiman-8-rules-of-writing/>

Goals of the History Major at UW-Madison

The goal of the history major is to offer students the knowledge and skills they need to gain a critical perspective on the past. Students will learn to define important historical questions, analyze relevant evidence with rigor and creativity, and present convincing arguments and conclusions based on original research in a manner that contributes to academic and public discussions. In History, as in other humanistic disciplines, students will practice resourceful inquiry and careful reading. They will advance their writing and public speaking skills to engage historical and contemporary issues.

To ensure that students gain exposure to some of the great diversity of topics, methodologies, and philosophical concerns that inform the study of history, the department requires a combination of courses that offers breadth, depth, and variety of exposition. Through those courses, students should develop:

1. Broad acquaintance with several geographic areas of the world and with both the pre-modern and modern eras.
2. Familiarity with the range of sources and modes through which historical information can be found and expressed. Sources may include textual, oral, physical, and visual materials. The data within them may be qualitative or quantitative, and they may be available in printed, digital, or other formats. Modes of expression may include textbooks, monographs, scholarly articles, essays, literary works, or digital presentations.
3. In-depth understanding of a topic of their choice through original or creative research.
4. The ability to identify the skills developed in the history major and to articulate the applicability of those skills to a variety of endeavors and career paths beyond the professional practice of history.

Skills Developed in the Major

Define Important Historical Questions

1. Pose a historical question and explain its academic and public implications.
2. Using appropriate research procedures and aids, find the secondary resources in history and other disciplines available to answer a historical question.
3. Evaluate the evidentiary and theoretical bases of pertinent historical conversations in order to highlight opportunities for further investigation.

Collect and Analyze Evidence

1. Identify the range and limitations of primary sources available to engage the historical problem under investigation.
2. Examine the context in which sources were created, search for chronological and other relationships among them, and assess the sources in light of that knowledge.
3. Employ and, if necessary, modify appropriate theoretical frameworks to examine sources and develop arguments.

Present Original Conclusions

1. Present original and coherent findings through clearly written, persuasive arguments and narratives.
2. Orally convey persuasive arguments, whether in formal presentations or informal discussions.
3. Use appropriate presentation formats and platforms to share information with academic and public audiences.

Contribute to Ongoing Discussions

1. Extend insights from research to analysis of other historical problems.
2. Demonstrate the relevance of a historical perspective to contemporary issues.
3. Recognize, challenge, and avoid false analogies, overgeneralizations, anachronisms, and other logical fallacies.