

**History 462**  
**Chican@ & Latin@ Studies 462**  
Spring Semester 2008  
Lecture: Tues.-Thurs. 2:30-3:45  
1121 Humanities

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### **The American West since 1850**

This course explores the history of places that have been called the American West, focusing on the period since 1850. We start in an era of consolidation and incorporation, when the U.S. surveyed a West that had only recently become American in name and worked to make it a West that was American in fact. This process had political, economic, diplomatic, military, social, and cultural dimensions, and it was one that westerners resisted as often as they welcomed it. By the end of the nineteenth century, the West had emerged as an identifiable region of the U.S., with characteristic economic features, peculiar ties to the federal government, distinctive patterns of race relations, and a unique place in U.S. cultural memory. As the twentieth century progressed, certain aspects of western regional distinctiveness faded, while others persisted and new peculiarities arose. And some of the key trends and concerns of the twentieth-century U.S. had crucial regional variants in the West: the impact of the world wars, the Cold War, and the Vietnam War; suburbanization and the rise of the New Right; the pursuit of civil rights; the emergence of environmental consciousness; the legacy of colonialism; the threat and promise of globalization. We study all of this from a number of perspectives, using styles of analysis developed by environmental, economic, political, cultural, social, ethnic, and gender historians. Throughout, we attend to the aspirations of a variety of western peoples: women and men; working people and captains of industry; sexual majorities and sexual minorities; people of North American, Latin American, European, African, and Asian origin or descent. We look at how the varied aspirations of such peoples both clashed and coalesced, sometimes producing dissension and even violence, sometimes producing new social movements, new cultural forms, new spaces of hope and possibility. We study all of this by means of lectures, discussions, scholarly books, and primary documents, as well as through documentary and feature films.

#### **Course requirements**

1. General: Faithful attendance in lecture and discussion sections; prompt completion of weekly readings; respectful participation in class discussions. Films shown both in and outside of class also require attendance; you'll be responsible for their contents in exams, and there is also a written assignment based on films screened (see below).
2. Film Journals: Each of you will keep a journal about your intellectual reactions to the documentary and feature films that will be screened for this class. You'll have two opportunities to turn in a 1-2 page journal entry that discusses selected films and their *relationship to readings and lectures*. You may choose *either of the two opportunities* offered. Here are the two options:
  - 1) Write a 1-2 page journal entry in which you discuss the three episodes of the film *The West* screened in class and their relationship to other course materials (readings and lectures). If you choose this option, your film journal entry is due at the beginning of lecture on Tues. March 4.

2) Write a 1-2 page journal entry in which you discuss the three documentary films *Forbidden City, U.S.A.*; *Goin' Back to T-Town*; and *The Times of Harvey Milk* and their relationship to other course materials (readings, lectures, and other films). If you choose this option, your film journal entry is due at the beginning of lecture on Tues. April 29.

Remember, you need to *turn in only one of these two journal entries*. You will receive extra credit toward your course participation grade if you turn in more than one. These journal entries can be word-processed or handwritten. They won't be graded, but they will be marked using a +, ✓, - system, and these marks will be used to help determine your course participation grade.

3. Papers: You will write two papers for this class, a brief 2-page paper on assigned primary sources, and a longer 5-page paper on one of the three single-author books assigned to the class as a whole. Both papers are designed to give you hands-on experience with the building blocks of history, that is, original primary source materials.

a. First paper: Two pages, double-spaced. This paper will give you a chance to consider in depth one week's primary source readings from The West in the History of the Nation. Please note that the chapters for this paper appear *not* in volume 2 of this book, which you have purchased, but in volume 1, which is not assigned in this class. Instead, you will be purchasing a photocopy of these chapters at Bob's Copy Shop at 1401 University Avenue, or else reading them on reserve at College Library or online on the Learn@UW site for this class. The assigned chapters are: Chapter 13, "The Sectional Crisis: The West Divides the Nation," and Chapter 14, "The Civil War: Bringing the Battlefield to the West." You'll choose at least two of the primary sources in these chapters and analyze the different points of view of the sectional conflict in the West represented by each. Your paper will be due at the beginning of lecture Tues. Feb. 5. Papers must be word-processed, double-spaced, with standard one-inch margins. Late papers will be accepted without penalty only if you negotiate an alternative due date with your teaching assistant at least *48 hours prior to the due date* specified here. Otherwise, late papers will drop by one-half of a grade for each day that they are late.

b. Second paper: Five pages, double-spaced. You'll receive detailed guidelines for this paper early in the semester. This paper will be written individually, but there will be teamwork involved in your initial research. For this paper, you'll use as your starting point one of the three single-author books assigned to the class as a whole: Cronon, Nature's Metropolis; Molina, Fit to Be Citizens; and Self, American Babylon. We'd like to have roughly equal numbers of students writing on each of these books. So during the first week of class, we'll ask you to designate your top two book choices, and then we'll divide the class into three similarly sized groups, each one assigned to a different book. We'll make every effort to assign you one of the two books you've chosen. The three mega-groups (each assigned one of the three books) will have time in class to organize themselves into smaller research teams (we suggest 2-4 students on each team). Each research team will then plan a research strategy for identifying primary source materials relevant to the book assigned. These primary sources should be found in libraries on campus. The research teams from each mega-group will report on the primary sources they've found during the class period in which we'll be discussing the book assigned to that mega-group (Nature's Metropolis, Thurs. Feb. 21; Fit to Be Citizens, Thurs. April 10; American Babylon, Thurs. May 1). Meanwhile, each individual should be deciding on one or two of the primary sources identified to use in the preparation of his or her individual paper. The actual paper, then, will be both a review of the book and an exploration of how the author uses primary sources to make a historical argument. You'll use the source(s) you've chosen to demonstrate in detail how the author makes use of primary materials. Your paper will be due at the beginning of lecture a week after the book you've read is discussed in class (Nature's Metropolis, Thurs. Feb. 28; Fit to Be Citizens, Thurs. April 17; American Babylon, Thurs. May 8). Papers must be word-processed, double-spaced, with standard one-inch margins. Late papers will be accepted without penalty only if you negotiate an alternative due date with your teaching assistant at least *48 hours prior to the due date* specified here. Otherwise, late papers will drop by one-half of a grade for each day that they are late.

4. Exams: There will be two take-home essay exams, a Midterm and a Final. We will not give out exam questions prior to the dates specified here under any circumstances. The Midterm questions will be handed out at the end of lecture on Thurs. March 6, and your answers must be handed in at the beginning of lecture on Thurs. March 13. There will be no formal lecture on Tues. March 11, but the professor and teaching assistants will be available in the classroom to answer any questions you have about the midterm. The Final questions will be handed out at the end of lecture on Thurs. May 8, and your answers must be handed in between 7:45 a.m. and 9:45 p.m. on Mon. May 12--that is, during the regularly scheduled final exam period for this course. Midterm and Final exams must be word-processed, double-spaced, with standard one-inch margins, and they may not exceed the page limits established. You are to work individually and independently on these exams; evidence of collaboration will result in automatic failure. Late exams will not be accepted (no exceptions made for computer difficulties or transportation problems).

## Grades

Your final grade will be determined using the following formula:

Course participation	20%
First paper	10%
Second paper	25%
Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	25%

From time to time, you may be given the chance to enhance your course participation grade by attending a campus event relevant to the history of the American West and writing up a one-page response paper that relates that event to course content. Please check with your instructor to make sure an event that interests you is sufficiently relevant to course content before writing such a paper and turning it in.

## Readings

The following books are required for all students. They are available for purchase at the University Book Store, and are on reserve at College Library in Helen C. White Hall:

William Deverell and Anne Hyde, eds., *The West in the History of the Nation: A Reader*, Vol. 2, *Since 1865* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000).

William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992).

Natalia Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

Robert Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003).

There is also a small required course pack available for purchase at Bob's Copy Shop, 1401 University Avenue. This course pack consists of two chapters from Vol. 1 of *The West in the History of the Nation*. If you took History 461 last semester and still have this book, you will not need to purchase the course pack. Copies of Vol. 1 are also on reserve at College Library. The assigned chapters are also available in electronic form on the Learn@UW site for this course.

The following book is *not required*, but it is *ever-so-highly recommended*. It is a more reliable source of basic information about western history than, say, *Wikipedia*, because the entries in this volume are written by some of the leading practitioners in the field. Those of you who purchase it at the University Book Store or elsewhere may well find it to be a book you'll be happy to have on your bookshelf for years to come. Still, it is quite expensive, so you might consider either using one of the copies on reserve at College Library in Helen C. White Hall. None of the assignments in this book are actually required, but once you start reading them, you might get hooked. This is no boring compendium of useless facts, but rather a curious collection of brief, readable essays on an extraordinary range of topics. Why did the Pony Express last only a year? Why did Kansas bleed? What do colleges and universities have to do with nineteenth-century land policy? Why do blue jeans have copper rivets? Why did women gain voting rights first in the West? What is a Wobbly? Who said, "raise less corn and more hell"? Who performed in the Wild West show? Why is Wounded Knee twice famous in western history? When *Dances With Wolves* won an Oscar in 1990, how long had it been since a western won the award? How did Las Vegas morph from a Mormon mission site to Sin City, U.S.A.? What is the "new western history"? You'll find the answers here:

Howard Lamar, ed., *The New Encyclopedia of the American West* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998). [Abbreviated as NEAW in syllabus.]

## Calendar and Assignments

### Week 1

Tues. Jan. 22: Course Introduction

Thurs. Jan. 24: Making the West American

Reading: The West, Introduction, pp. xv-xvii  
Nature's Metropolis, Preface & Prologue, pp. xiii-xvii, 5-19

NEAW: physiography of the U.S.; Indians of California, of Texas, of the Great Basin, of the Great Plains, of the Northwest, of the Southwest; see also entries for various Native nations, tribes, & confederacies, such as Sioux (Dakota, Lakota), Ute, "Five Civilized Tribes," Pueblo, Cheyenne & Arapaho, Apache, Navajo, Modoc & Klamath; Indian languages; Texas, annexation of; Oregon controversy; Mexican War; Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; Gadsden Purchase; frontier theory; Turner, Frederick Jackson; western history, 1970s-90s; Chicago; Wisconsin

### Week 2

Tues. Jan. 29: Incorporating the West

Thurs. Jan. 31: *The West*, part 4, *Death Runs Riot*

Reading: Course pack (from The West, vol. 1, Chaps. 13 & 14, pp. 266-311)  
Nature's Metropolis, Chaps. 1-2, pp. 23-93

NEAW: railroads; Compromise of 1850; California (up through American conquest & the Calif. gold rush); telegraph; transportation, overland; stagecoach; Russell, Majors & Waddell; Overland Mail Co.; Pony Express; Wells, Fargo & Co.; Kansas-Nebraska issue; popular sovereignty; Utah expedition of 1857-58; Latter Day Saints; polygamy; Civil War in the West; Cortina, Juan; Chivington, John; Fetterman massacre; Sand Creek massacre; Washita, battle of; Cheyenne & Arapaho Indians; Cheyenne & Arapaho war; Bent brothers; Sioux (Dakota, Lakota) Indians; vigilantism; law & order

### Week 3

Tues. Feb. 5: Special presentation on finding primary sources  
 David Null, University Archivist  
*First paper due in lecture*

Thurs. Feb. 7: Mining the West

Reading: Nature's Metropolis, Chaps. 3-5, pp. 97-259

NEAW: gold and silver rushes; Daly, Marcus; boomtowns; mining towns; Denver; mining, metal; mining law; mining engineer; prostitution; buffalo; cattle industry; cattle towns

Week 4

Tues. Feb. 12: Creating the Range

Thurs. Feb. 14: *The West*, part 6, *Fight No More Forever*

Reading: The West, Chap. 2, pp. 22-45  
Nature's Metropolis, Chaps. 6-7, pp. 263-340

NEAW: Black Hills; Indian wars, 1865-91; Little Big Horn, battle of; Nez Perce War; Sitting Bull; Chief Joseph; Custer, George Armstrong; land policy, 1780-1896; Homestead Act; Timber Culture Act; public domain; sod house; agricultural expansion; colleges & universities; Powell, John Wesley; sheep ranching; Basques; Navajo Indians; Navajo weaving; bonanza farming; wheat production

Week 5

Tues. Feb. 19: Railroad Blues

Thurs. Feb. 21: discussion of Nature's Metropolis

Reading: The West, Chap. 3, pp. 46-59 only  
Nature's Metropolis, Chap. 8 & Epilogue, pp. 341-385

NEAW: Central Pacific Railroad; Union Pacific Railroad; Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad; Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad; Southern Pacific Railroad; railroad land grants; transcontinental railroad surveys; immigration; Chinese Americans; Chinese immigration; Irish immigration; cities, growth of

Week 6

Tues. Feb. 26: *The West*, part 7, *Geography of Hope*

Thurs. Feb. 28: Reservations About Empire  
Nature's Metropolis papers due in lecture

Reading: The West, Chap. 1, pp. 2-21, *plus* Chap. 3, #13, "An African American Community," pp. 59-63

NEAW: African Americans on the frontier; Edmunds Acts; Chinese, riots against; U.S. Indian Policy, 1860-present (read to 1900); Carlisle Indian School; Sun Dance; Dawes Severalty Act; Oklahoma; Ghost Dance; Wounded Knee massacre

Week 7

Tues. March 4: All-American Men?  
*option #1 film journal due in lecture*

Thurs. March 6: An Army of Women  
MIDTERM EXAM QUESTIONS HANDED OUT

Reading: The West, Chap. 3, #14, "Demography in the West," pp. 63-67

NEAW: men & manhood in western history; Paul Bunyan; lumber industry; lumberjack; cowboy; cowboy clothing; barbed wire; women in western history; woman suffrage

Week 8

Tues. March 11: work on exams; professor and TAs available for consultation

Thurs. March 13: Protesting the West Agrarian  
MIDTERM EXAMS DUE IN LECTURE

*NOTE: no discussion section meetings this week*

Week 9 *SPRING BREAK!!!*

Week 10

Tues. March 25: Protesting the West Industrial

Thurs. March 27: Water, Woods, and Wilderness

Reading: The West, Chap. 4-5, pp. 68-111  
Fit to Be Citizens, Introduction & Chaps. 1-2, pp. 1-74

NEAW: agrarian movements; Greenback Party; Populism; Populism in the Mountain West; Lease, Mary Elizabeth; Bryan, William Jennings; election of 1892; election of 1896; silver issue; coal mining; copper mining; Cripple Creek strikes; Waite, Davis; Western Federation of Miners; Industrial Workers of the World; labor movement; conservation movement; Muir, John; Carey Act; Newlands Reclamation Act; Taylor Grazing Act; cattle industry in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; reclamation & irrigation; water in the trans-Mississippi West; California, water & the environment; Pinchot, Gifford; Roosevelt, Theodore; Boone & Crockett Club; wilderness; national parks and monuments; National Park Service; Yellowstone National Park; Yosemite National Park; tourist travel; Los Angeles, California; Mexican Americans; Japanese immigration; Japanese Americans

*Week 11*

Tues. April 1: *Goin' Back to T-Town*

Thurs. April 3: Oil, Soil, and Dust

Reading: The West, Chaps. 6-7, pp. 112-147  
Fit to Be Citizens, Chaps. 3-4, pp. 75-157

NEAW: petroleum industry; dust bowl; California, the Great Depression; Okies; Steinbeck, John; Tulsa, Oklahoma

*Week 12*

Tues. April 8: Constructing the Wild West

Thurs. April 10: discussion of Fit to Be Citizens

*NOTE: Tues. evening, special screening of film "High Noon," TBA*

Reading: The West, Chaps. 8-9, pp. 148-187  
Fit to Be Citizens, Chap. 5 & Epilogue, pp. 158-188

NEAW: Wild West Show; rodeo; Cody, Buffalo Bill; Calamity Jane; dime novels; novel, western; Grey, Zane; L'Amour, Louis; Wister, Owen; Remington, Frederic; Russell, Charles; artists of Taos and Santa Fe; Luhan, Mabel Dodge; O'Keefe, Georgia; Benton, Thomas Hart (1889-1975); Cather, Willa; Austin, Mary; Wilder, Laura Ingalls; films, western; motion picture industry; Wayne, John; radio & television, westerns on; music, western; music about the West; Civilian Conservation Corps

*Week 13*

Tues. April 15: Internments, Terminations, and the Roots of Resistance

Thurs. April 17: *Forbidden City, U.S.A.*  
*Fit to Be Citizens papers due in lecture*

Reading: The West, Chaps. 10-11, 188-223  
American Babylon, Introduction & Chaps. 1-3, pp. 1-131

NEAW: U.S. Indian policy, 1860-present (read 1900-present); Indian Affairs, Bureau of; Collier, John; Wheeler-Howard Act; Navajo Indians; Deer, Ada; Kaiser, Henry; California, World War II & Japanese American internment, and politics and racial tensions

*Week 14*

Tues. April 22: The Empire Strikes Back

Thurs. April 24: *The Times of Harvey Milk*

Reading: The West, Chaps. 12-13, pp. 224-257  
American Babylon, Chaps. 4-5, pp. 133-214

NEAW: Reagan, Ronald; African Americans in the Far West; Indian Power movement; Chicano liberation movement; Chávez, César; Gonzales, Rodolfo (“Corky”); Tijerina, Reies Lopez; Deloria, Vine, Jr.; Mankiller, Wilma; San Francisco

*Week 15*

Tues. April 29: Paving Paradise  
 (guest lecture by Jennifer Martin)  
*option #2 film journal due in lecture*

Thurs. May 1: discussion of American Babylon

*NOTE: Thurs. evening, special screening of film “Smoke Signals,” TBA*

Reading: The West, Chaps. 14-15, pp. 258-300  
American Babylon, chaps. 6-8 & Conclusion, pp. 215-334

NEAW: aerospace industry; uranium mining; Los Alamos, N.M.; Nevada Proving Ground; roads & highways; environmental history of the West; Spokane Indians; Coeur d’Alene Indians

*Week 16*

Tues. May 6: Imagining a New West

Thurs. May 8: Wrap-up  
American Babylon papers due in lecture  
 FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS HANDED OUT

Reading:

NEAW: Abbey, Edward; Anaya, Rudolfo; Didion, Joan; Doig, Ivan; Erdrich, Louise; Hillerman, Tony; Kingsolver, Barbara; McMurtry, Larry; Momaday, N. Scott; Silko, Leslie Marmon; Stegner, Wallace

*Finals Period*

Mon. May 12: 7:45 a.m. to 9:45 a.m., FINAL EXAMS DUE