

HISTORY 8020
SOUTHERN COMMUNITY STUDIES

Spring 2007
2:30 – 5:00 Wednesdays
LeConte 320

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“One place comprehended can make us understand
other places better. Sense of place gives equilibrium;
extended, it is a sense of direction, too.”

-- Eudora Welty

Community studies offer a unique perspective on the past and a unique form of historical inquiry -- the study of human relationships in a particular locale as affected by larger questions -- war, political, economic, and social conflict, industrial change, enslavement and emancipation, etc. This course is designed to enlarge, challenge, and explore historians' notions of place, of community, and of the relationships defined by both.

This is a promising avenue for historical research and writing, as is quite evident in our own department. A number of former graduate students in our program have conceived and produced successful dissertations, theses, and books as community studies, as have several faculty members, some of which we will read. One of the goals of the course will be to help you consider a community study approach to whatever topic or issue you are interested in exploring in your own research and writing.

No single definition of community will emerge from what we read. The readings -- primarily focused on the South -- are designed to provide you with a full range of models in terms of theoretical and methodological approaches to community, as well as to differences in questions scholars have asked and how they have gone about answering them. Always central will be the broader issues informed by these localized studies. The books below will be available in the bookstores on and off campus or, of course, via the internet.

Thomas Bender, *Community and Social Change in America*
Joshua Piker, *Okfuskee: A Creek Indian Town in Colonial America*
Jean B. Lee, *The Price of Nationhood: The American Revolution in Charles County* [Md.]
Ann P. Malone, *Sweet Chariots: Slave Family & Household Structure in 19th Cent. Louisiana*
Richard B. McCaslin, *Tainted Breeze: The Great Hanging in Gainesville, Texas, 1862*
Allison Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*
Altina Waller, *Feud: Hatfields, McCoys, and Social Change in Appalachia, 1860-1900*
Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second KKK* [Athens, Ga.]
Melissa Fay Greene, *Praying for Sheetrock* [McIntosh County, Ga.]
Leon Fink, *The Maya of Morganton* [NC]: *Work and Community in the Nuevo New South*

We will meet weekly for the first half of the semester, and use our sessions together to

discuss the books and supplementary articles and essays. (The latter will be available in a course packet from Bel-Jean's). Every student is expected to participate in every class discussion, and demonstrate a familiarity with the assigned readings. During this part of the course, each student will write short papers based on analyses of the readings and some outside readings; the exact number and nature of these will be laid out once class begins.

Students will spend the latter half of the course researching and writing a larger paper, which may be one of two sorts, either: 1) an in-depth article-length research paper utilizing the theory and methodologies explored through our readings or 2) a mock prospectus, laying out the means, methods, and rationale you would propose to a faculty committee for a community-based thesis or dissertation (who knows, it might become a real one for some of you!) We will reconvene at the end of the semester to spend our final class session presenting this work to the rest of the class.

Class Schedule:

- January 10 Bender, *Community and Social Change in America*
Darrett Rutman, "A Community Study," Chapter 3 in *Small Worlds, Large Questions: Explorations in Early American Social History, 1600-1850*
- January 17 Piker, *Okfuskie* (special guest star: Prof. Claudio Saunt)
- January 24 Lee, *The Price of Nationhood*
Peter Moore, "The Mysterious Death of William Richardson," *North Carolina Historical Review* (July 2003)
- January 31 Malone, *Sweet Chariots*
Christopher Phillips, "The Maturation of a Black Community," Chapter 6 of *Freedom's Port: The African American Community of Baltimore, 1790-1860*
- February 7 McCaslin, *Tainted Breeze*
Daniel E. Sutherland, "Getting the 'Real War' into the Books," *Va. Magazine of History and Biography* (April 1990)
Martin Crawford, "A Community at War" Chapter 6 of *Ashe County's Civil War*
- February 14 Waller, *Feud*
Darrett and Anita Rutman, "The Village South," Chapter 12 in *Small Worlds, Large Questions*
- February 21 Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together* or MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry*
Jane Dailey, "Deference and Violence in the Postbellum Urban South: Manners and Massacres in Danville, Va." *Journal of Southern History* (Aug. 1997)

- February 28 Greene, *Praying for Sheetrock*
Bruce E. Baker, "Under the Rope: Lynching and Memory in Laurens County,
S.C.," in W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *Where These Memories Grow*
- March 7 Fink, *The Maya of Morganton*
- March - April Independent Study B Researching and Writing Final Paper
Individual Consultations with Instructor
- April 20 Final Papers Due (turn in to instructor before 5 pm)
- April 25 Class Presentations