

**HIST 8860 – Seminar in America and the World
Fall 2008**

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Course Description

Over the past decade or so, spurred on in part by the Organization of American Historians's "La Pietra Report," U.S. historiography has moved in an increasingly international direction. This "America and the World" scholarship has taken many forms, and it has built upon important past examples, but it has been united by a commitment to moving beyond nationalist and exceptionalist narratives that too often have portrayed U.S. history as having transpired in isolation from the rest of the world. This semester we will be both exploring and adding to that scholarship.

The main task of this course will be to produce a series of article- or chapter-length works of original scholarship rooted in primary research. Your goal should be to produce an article of *publishable quality*. To that end, assigned reading will be much lighter than in colloquia, and it will be concentrated in the first half of the class. Our discussions will mix historiography and theory with more practical questions about the research and writing process. Success in this class will also be a cooperative enterprise, as each of you will be responsible for providing constructive and meaningful critiques of each others' work throughout the semester.

Course Requirements

- **Research Paper** – The bulk of your grade in this course will be based upon my evaluation of your final research essay. I expect it to be substantial (30-40 pp), thoroughly researched and documented, well supported theoretically and historiographically, clearly and effectively organized, and well written.
- **Other Written Assignments** – During the first half of the semester, I will be asking you to complete several other short writing assignments, some of which will be incorporated into your research papers and others of which will not. On several occasions I will ask you to circulate these to the entire class prior to our weekly meeting, in which case they will need to be sent to me electronically by **noon** on the day that they are due. These writing assignments will also be an important part of how I evaluate your performance in the course.
- **Discussion** – You will also be evaluated on your contributions to class discussions and the quality of the feedback that you provide to your classmates. Consistent attendance is, of course, critical.
- **Grade Breakdown:** Research essay = 75%; short assignments and participation = 25%

Readings

- Thomas Bender, ed., *Rethinking American History in a Global Age*.
- Various articles and book chapters, all of which are available electronically
- Strunk and White, *Elements of Style* – This is a classic and should be right next to the dictionary on everyone’s writing desk. Copies are readily attainable.

Course Schedule – Part I

August 20 – Course Introduction

August 27 – Rethinking American History in a Global Age I

Read:

- Bender, *Rethinking American History*, 1-192
- “AHR Conversation: On Transnational History,” *American Historical Review* (*AHR*) 111, 5 (December 2006): 1441-1464.
- “La Pietra Report” - <http://www.oah.org/activities/lapietra/index.html>

September 3 – Rethinking American History in a Global Age II

Read:

- Bender, *Rethinking American History*, 193-396
- Shelley Fisher Fishkin, “Crossroads of Cultures: The Transnational Turn in American Studies,” *American Quarterly* (*AQ*) 57, 1 (March 2005): 17-57.

Writing Assignment: Prepare a 2-3 page statement on what you consider to be the major premises of the project to situate U.S. history in a global context, with a particular focus on how you see this project intersecting with your particular research focus.

September 10 – Research Proposal Workshop

Writing Assignment: Prepare a draft proposal of the research project that you will undertake over the course of the semester. Be sure to clearly explain the topic, your central research question(s), your methodology, and the primary sources that you will utilize. **These are limited to 5 pages max!**

September 17 – The Atlantic and Pacific Worlds

Read:

- W. Jeffrey Bolster, “Putting the Ocean in Atlantic History: Maritime Communities and Marine Ecology in the Northwest Atlantic, 1500–1800,” *American Historical Review* (*AHR*) 113, 1 (February 2008).

- David Iglar, "Diseased Goods: Global Exchanges in the Eastern Pacific Basin," *AHR* 109, 3 (June 2004).
- Eliga Gould, "Entangled Histories, Entangled Worlds: The English-Speaking Atlantic as a Spanish Periphery," *AHR* 112, 3 (June 2007).
- Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, "From Borders to Borderlands: Empires, Nation-States, and the People in between in North American History," *AHR* 104, 3 (June 1999).
- Ira Berlin, "From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African-American Society in Mainland North America," *William and Mary Quarterly* 53 (1996): 251-88.

September 24 – The Nation, the Region, and the World

Read:

- Brian DeLay, "Independent Indians and the U.S.-Mexican War," *AHR* 112, 1 (February 2007).
- Christina Duffy Burnett, "The Edges of Empire and the Limits of Sovereignty: American Guano Islands," *American Quarterly* 57, 3 (2005).
- Sven Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire: Reconstructing the Worldwide Web of Cotton Production in the Age of the American Civil War," *AHR* 109, 5 (December 2004).
- Kate Brown, "Gridded Lives: Why Kazakhstan and Montana are Nearly the Same Place," *AHR* 106, 1 (February 2001).
- Nan Enstad, "To Know Tobacco: Southern Identity in China in the Jim Crow Era," *Southern Cultures* 13, 4 (Winter 2007).
- Manako Ogawa. "The 'White Ribbon League of Nations' Meets Japan: The Trans-Pacific Activism of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 1906-1930." *Diplomatic History* 31, 1 (January 2007).

Writing Assignment: Choose a journal that you would consider submitting an article to and spend some time with it, looking through the tables of contents, editorial guidelines, etc. Then write/circulate in advance a 2-page paper on the journal that spells out your sense of the types of articles it publishes and what it would take to get published in the journal. I will ask everyone to let me know their chosen journal ahead of time so that we cover as many as possible.

October 1 – Immigration and America's Imperial Moment?

Read:

- Paul Kramer, "Empire, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule between the British and the United States Empire, 1880-1910," *Journal of American History (JAH)* 88, 4 (March 2002)
- Gabaccia, Donna. "Is Everywhere Nowhere? Nomads, Nations, and the Immigrant Paradigm of American History." *JAH* (December 1999).
- Lisa McGirr, "The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti: A Global History," *JAH* 93, 4 (March 2007).

- Kristen Hoganson, "Cosmopolitan Domesticity: Importing the American Dream, 1865-1920," *AHR* 107, 1 (February 2002).
- Erez Manela, "Imagining Woodrow Wilson in Asia: Dreams of East-West Harmony and the Revolt against Empire in 1919," *AHR* 11, 5 (2006).
- Julie Greene, "Spaniards on the Silver Roll: Labor Troubles and Liminality in the Panama Canal Zone, 1904-1914," *International Labor and Working Class History* 66 (2004): 78-98.

Writing Assignment: Submit a preliminary bibliography of secondary works that will form the core of your literature review.

October 8 – Postwar/Cold War/Globalization

Read:

- Petra Goedde, "From Villains to Victims: Fraternization and the Feminization of Germany, 1945-1947," *Diplomatic History*, 23, 1 (Winter 1999).
- Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, "Shame on U.S.? Academics, Cultural Transfer, and the Cold War--A Critical Review," *Diplomatic History* 24, 2 (Summer 2000): 465-94.
- Matthew Connelly, "Seeing Beyond the State: The Population Control Movement and the Problem of Sovereignty," *Past and Present* 193 (2006): 197-233.
- * James Watson, "McDonald's in Hong Kong: Consumerism, Dietary Change, and the Rise of a Children's Culture," in *Golden Arches East*, ed. J. Watson, 77-109. (* I'll email you all a PDF)
- Melani, McAlister, "One Black Allah: The Middle East in the Cultural Politics of African American Liberation," *American Quarterly* 51, 3 (1999): 622-656.
- Nick Cullather, "Miracles of Modernization: The Green Revolution as Apotheosis of Technology," *Diplomatic History* 28, 2 (April 2004)

Writing Assignment: Submit a literature review of no more than **5 pages** that frames and discusses your research paper in terms of other related secondary literature.

October 15-November 19 – NO CLASS MEETINGS – I will be contacting each of you to set up appointments to discuss your progress

December 3 and 4 – Workshop of Draft Essays, 5:45-8:45

*** Final Drafts are due on Friday, December 12 by 5pm.**