HIST 6400-901
HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE NORTH AMERICAN WEST
David Wrobel
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Semester: F13; Credits: 3/4*
Location: DHT 408 or WHC 452/3
Class Time: M, 6-8:40pm

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COURSE DESCRIPTION
Historiography—the history of historical writing and thinking—considers historical scholarship within the intellectual and cultural contexts from which it emerged. This course examines the historical writing on the American West (including the Mexican and Canadian borderlands) from the late nineteenth century to the present.

The field of western history has experienced a renaissance in the last three decades and approximately half of our class sessions will focus on these more recent developments. However, the West first became a subject of interest to professional historians in the late nineteenth century and vital contributions to the field were made during the century preceding the advent of the New Western History, in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The first half of the course focuses on this earlier scholarship.

However, and contrary to popular perceptions of a frontier paradigm (the Turnerian model) being supplanted by a regional paradigm (the New Western History), both of these thematic frameworks—frontier and region—have operated for more than a century and a quarter. In recent decades, though, historians have more commonly rejected the frontier model, turning increasingly to the twentieth century West, gender, leisure, labor, race relations, urban and environmental history, borderlands and comparative global contexts. Still, the historiographical terrain is nothing if not ever shifting, and the last decade or so has also seen a resurgence of interest in the nineteenth century West.

The course places these developments in American western history into a broader national historiographical context for the purpose of addressing the degree to which western historians have, at different times, been on the cutting edge of American history scholarship, or behind the curve of new trends and developments.

Class sessions will be conducted mostly in a seminar format. However, discussions will generally be preceded by short, informal lecture overviews of the major works and key historiographical issues, particularly during the first half of the semester. The quality of class discussions is dependent upon your close familiarity and careful engagement with the assigned materials. We will examine approximately a book’s worth of material each week. Familiarizing yourselves with these readings now will facilitate your preparation for comprehensive exams. I strongly encourage you to write a one-paragraph to one-page summary and analysis of every assigned article, essay, and book chapter, and a somewhat longer summary and analysis of each course book as part of your class preparation.
OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES
There are three primary objectives:
a) To enhance understanding of the historiography of the American West by considering it in relation to larger national historiographical contexts, and, global contexts, too.
b) To facilitate preparation for comprehensive examinations in the North American West field.
c) To improve written, oral communication, and critical thinking skills through the construction of thematic frameworks, writing, rewriting, and oral presentation of essays, and the careful and collaborative discussion of course readings.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & CREDIT HOURS
Attendance and participation is expected and required. If important and unforeseen circumstances arise and you have to miss a class session then please let me know and accommodations will be made.

All incoming History M.A. and Ph.D. students and students in other programs (e.g. Art History and History of Science) will take the course for 3 credits. Some continuing M.A. and Ph.D. students will be taking the course for 4 credits.

For the standard three-credit version of the course there are two major written assignments: a book review essay, on two or three books (8-10 pages, 2,400-3,000 words, double-spaced, in 12-point font); and a historiographical essay (15-20 pages, 4,500-6,000 words). The two papers together should total 25-30 pages (7,500-10,000 words). The book review essay will draw on required course readings and the course bibliography. The historiographical essay will utilize a wide range of additional book, article, and essay sources. The book review essay may be revised and resubmitted. You have the option to submit your historiographical essay as a draft and then revise and resubmit based on feedback.

In addition to delivering a 10-12-minute presentation on your historiographical essay (sometime during the last four sessions of the semester), you will be required to present on and lead our discussion of works covered in your review essay. Lastly, you will be responsible for informal presentations on other assigned readings—articles, essays, and book chapters—and for regular participation in class discussions.

For the standard 3-credit version of the course the weighting of each assignment is:
Review Essay: 25% (Use Reviews in American History format)
Historiographical Essay: 50%
Class Participation: 25%

Those students taking the 4-credit version of the course will write (and rewrite) an additional 8-10-page review essay, present on that assignment to the class, and attend a few tutorial sessions to discuss the pertinent readings. Weighting of each assignment is:
Review Essay I: 20% (Use Reviews in American History format)
Review Essay II: 20% (Use Reviews in American History format)
Historiographical Essay: 40%
Class Participation: 20% (Including presentations)
REQUIRED COURSE READINGS


*David Wrobel., comp., “Historiography of the North American West, 1891-2013: A Reader” (Pdf. Files available on the course D2L site, arranged by week).

A Note on Course Readings: Required books can be purchased at the campus bookstore or from a range of other online booksellers. I have made efforts to ensure that course readings are affordable. If any of you have difficulty financing the cost of course books, please let me know and I will try to find spare copies to loan.

Discussion/Participation: A significant part of your grade is determined by in-class participation. This component of the grade is designed to reflect your engagement with the assigned materials, as well as your ability to absorb and reflect on the course themes and make connections among and between course readings. I will work hard to ensure that the class atmosphere is comfortable and conducive to productive discussion, and expect all class participants to do the same. Come to class fully prepared.

Avoiding Plagiarism: To take the words or ideas of someone else and pass them off as your own is plagiarism. All referenced sources must be cited in your essays. All assignments must be your own work. Early in the semester I will discuss plagiarism and strategies for avoiding even the most subconscious tendencies toward it. A grade of zero will be given to any student who commits plagiarism in an assignment for this course. In addition, in the event of plagiarism, I will make a report to the Director of Graduate Studies who will in return report the matter to the Department Chair and, in all likelihood, to the Dean of the Graduate College. For more information see OU’s integrity policy and the policies of the Graduate College.
WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Due Dates:
Paper 1: Review Essay
*Week 3, Sept. 14-Week 12, Nov. 11
Paper 2: Historiographical Review
Week 15, Dec. 9 (optional draft due Nov 25)
(Students doing the course for 4 credits must submit the first review essay on or before Sept. 30, and the second on or before Nov. 11).

*Please note that you have a good deal of choice in your review essay/s topic, though I would like to ensure that at least one class member presents every week between Week 3 (Sept. 9) and Week 12 (Nov. 11). Thus, some of you will have both papers due quite late in the semester and it is vitally important that you plan accordingly. For example, if you are writing your review essay on a topic that falls later in the semester, you should ensure that you arrive at a historiographical essay topic early in the semester and begin your work on that paper. I will consult with you all individually on paper topics.

Guidelines
Papers must be typed (preferably in Times New Roman 12 point font), double-spaced, and carefully proofread. Book reviews essays may be re-written and certainly should be re-written if I underscore the need for substantive revisions in my commentary. Historiographical essays are due on the last day of class (December 9) and cannot be rewritten; however, I will review drafts submitted up to two weeks prior to the due date (Nov. 25). You should cover different topics in your book review essay and historiographical essay. If you have a topic in mind for a seminar paper, thesis, or dissertation, the historiographical essay provides you an opportunity to lay the foundations for your research in primary sources.

OU POLICIES & INFORMATION

Announcements: Reminders and announcements will be provided in class and on the main page of the D2L website for this class. Please check the course D2L site regularly.

Disabilities: Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact both the Disability Resource Center and me as soon as possible, so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities. Contact Director Suzette Dyer at the OU Disability Resource Center, Goddard Health Center, Room 166, 325-3852 voice, or 325-4173 TDD (http://www.ou.edu/drc/home.html), to request an accommodation.

Religious Accommodations & Extra-Curricular Activities: It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Also, students involved in OU extra-curricular activities should let me know at the beginning of the semester of any known scheduling conflicts.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Wk 1: Aug. 19: Introduction + The West in Popular & Historical Imaginations

Wk 2: Aug. 26: The West as Frontier

Labor Day Recess, September 2: No Class

Wk 3: Sept. 9: The West as Region

Wk 4: Sept. 16: The West as Myth & Memory

Wk 5: Sept. 23: “C” Words, I: Colonialism, Comparison, Capitalism, & Continuity

Wk 6: Sept. 30: “C: Words, II: Continuity (continued!) & Conquest

Wk 7: Oct. 7: The New Western History (*WHA Meeting, Tucson, Oct. 9-12)

Wk 8: Oct. 14: The New West in Art & Literature (*WHA feedback)

Wk 9: Oct. 21: Where the West is & Why it Matters: Maps, Borders & Oceans

Wk 10: Oct. 28: Western Environments, I: Cities

Wk 11: Nov. 4: Western Environments, II: Water

Wk 12: Nov. 11: Western Environments, III: Wilderness

Wk 13: Nov. 18: Western Cultures: I: Gender, Sexuality, & Labor

Historiography Presentations, Group A

Wk 14: Nov. 25: Western Cultures: II: Race Relations, & Labor

Historiography Presentations, Group B

Wk 15: Dec. 2: Western Cultures, III: New Indian Histories, & Labor

Historiography Presentations, Group C


Historiography Presentations, Group D

**Historiography Papers Due** (submit hard copy & MS Word file)
SYLLABUS APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: ASSIGNMENTS

1. Review Essay (due in class, Week 3, September 9-Week 12, November 11):
   An 8-10 page essay on two or three related books, up to two of which may be required course books. Review essays should provide a full summary and analysis of each of the works, but should do so within a thematic framework of your own construction. Please consult the Journal Reviews in American History for model review essays.

   Possible groupings and pertinent works include, but are not restricted to:

   **HISTORIANS & HISTORIOGRAPHY**


PLACE


THE SOUTHWEST BORDERLANDS: Weber, The Spanish Frontier in North America and Barbaros; Brooks, Captives and Cousins; Bolton, The Spanish Borderlands; McWilliams, North From Mexico; Johnson, Revolution in Texas; Truett, Fugitive Landscapes; Truett & Young, Continental Crossroads: Remapping the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands History; St. John, Line in the Sand; Hernandez, Migra: A History of the U.S. Border Patrol; Mora, Border Dilemmas; Benton-Cohen, Borderline Americans; Johnson and Graybill, eds. Bridging National Borders in North; Meeks, Border Citizens: The Making of Indians, Mexicans, & Anglos in Arizona; Barr, Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands; America; Jacoby, Shadows at Dawn; Castañeda, ExMex: From Migrants to Immigrants; Cohen, Braceros: Migrant Citizens & Transnational Subjects in Postwar United States and Mexico; Reséndez, Changing National Identities at the Frontier: Texas & New Mexico, 1800-1850; Walsh, Building the Borderlands: A Transnational History of Irrigated Cotton along the Mexico-Texas Border; Deutsch, No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, & Gender on an American-Hispanic Frontier...1880-1940; Forjas, Border Bandits: Hollywood on the Southern Frontier; Nieto-Phillips, The Language of Blood: The Making of Spanish-American Identity in New Mexico, 1880s-1930s; Monroy, The Border Within: Encounters Between Mexico & the U.S.


CULTURE

GENDER AND SEXUALITY: Johnson, Roaring Camp; Gutiérrez, When Jesus Came the Corn Mothers Went Away; Hurtado, Intimate Frontiers; Boag, Same Sex Affairs; Berglund, Making San Francisco American; Matsumoto and Allmendinger, eds., Over the Edge; Sides, The Erotic City (San Francisco); Hurewitz, Bohemian Los Angeles; Faderman and Timmons, Gay L.A.; Rico, Nature’s Noblemen.

INDIAN HISTORY: Blackhawk, Violence Over the Land; Fixico, Indian Resilience and Rebuilding; Indigenous Nations in the Modern American West; West, The Contested Plains; and The Last Indian War; White, The Roots of Dependency; Fisher, Shadow Tribe; Rollings, Unaffected by the Gospel; Hoxie, Parading through History; and This Indian Country: American Indian Activists and the Place They Made; Thrush, Native Seattle; Bauer, ”We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here”; Hämäläinen, The Comanche Empire; DeLay, War of a Thousand Deserts; Smoak; Ghost Dances and Identity; Deloria, Playing Indian, and Indians in Unexpected Places; Yarbrough, Race and the Cherokee Nation; Anderson, The Conquest of Texas; Metcalf, Termination’s Legacy; Piker, The Four Deaths of Acorn Whistler

LABOR: Peck, Reinventing Free Labor; Jameson, All that Glitters; Robbins, Colony and Empire; Foley, The White Scourge; Andrews, Killing for Coal; Chiang, Shaping the Shoreline

MYTH & MEMORY: Athearn, The Mythic West; Christensen, Red Lodge and the Mythic West; Faragher, Daniel Boone; Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, and The Fatal Environment, and Regeneration through Violence; Smith, Virgin Land; Walton, Storied Land; Wrobel, Promised Lands; Hausladen, ed., Western Places, American Myths; Wilson, The Myth of Santa Fe; Kropp, California Veja; Johnson, Hunger for the Wild; Jacoby, Shadows at Dawn; Ari Kelman, A Misplaced Massacre; Bokovoy, The San Diego World’s Fairs & Southwestern Memory; Burke, Greenwich Village to Taos; Klein, The History of Forgetting: Los Angeles and the Erasure of Memory

RACE RELATIONS: Avila, Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight; Camarillo, Chicanos in a Changing Society; Gutierrez, Walls and Mirrors; Sanchez, Becoming Mexican American; Lee and Yung, Angel Island; Matsumoto, Farming the Home Place; Broussard, Black San Francisco; Monroy, Rebirth; Casas, Married to a Daughter of the Land; Taylor, In Search of the Racial Frontier, and The Forging of a Black Community (Seattle); Flamming, Bound for Freedom; Brilliant, The Color of America is Changing; Sides, L.A. City Limits; Deverell, Whitewashed Adobe

TOURISM: Pomeroy, In Search of the Golden West; Rothman, Devil’s Bargains, and ed., The Culture of Tourism, the Tourism of Culture; Shaffer, See America First; Wrobel & Long, eds., Seeing & Being Seen; Coleman, Ski Style; Childers, American Powder Keg; Chiang, Shaping the Shoreline; Philpott, Vacationland (Colorado)
2. Historiographical Essay (due in class, week 16/Finals Week, December 9):

A 15-20 page paper on a well-defined historiographic topic. Possible topics will be explored during the semester and include the full range of weekly topics. Or, you might examine the work and career of a key western historian/writer who is not included in Etulain, ed’s, Writing Western History, e.g., contemporary historians Patricia Limerick, Donald Worster, Richard White, William Cronon, Elliott West, Walter Nugent, Howard Lamar, Richard Etulain, or a deceased historian, e.g. Francis Parkman, Theodore Roosevelt, Bernard DeVoto, Wallace Stegner, Carey McWilliams, Wilbur Jacobs, Gerald Nash, Vine DeLoria, Jr., Angie Debo, Mari Sandoz, Hal Rothman, David Weber. These are merely suggestions.

The most important consideration is that you choose a topic that will directly contribute to the building of your scholarly expertise in the sub-field in which you will research and write your thesis or dissertation.

The historiographical essay should:
1. provide a clear overview of the scholarship on the topic, or the work of a single historian (along the lines of the essays in Writing Western History);
2. arrange the scholarship in an effective manner, generally chronologically or thematically, or a combination of the two;
3. reach some conclusions concerning how and why that scholarship (or that individual’s career) has unfolded according to certain patterns;
4. offer some suggestions for new and innovative work in the field, or some concluding statements on an individual historian’s contributions to the field.

The historiographical essay should not be a mere cataloging of works in the field; such an exercise fits the label of annotated bibliography, or bibliography essay, but not that of historiographical essay.

Richard W. Etulain, ed., Writing Western History contains excellent examples of how to construct an essay on a single historian. Historiographic overviews of work in particular sub-fields of American western history, including economic, environmental, political, urban, and women’s history, are collected in Gerald D. Nash and Richard W. Etulain, Researching Western History: Topics in the Twentieth Century (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), in Deverell, ed., A Companion to the American West, and Wrobel, ed., “The West Enters the Twenty-First Century” (though the essays in this special issue of The Historian are for the most part less extensive than the one you are required to write).
3. Presentations:

Your presentations will be considered as part of your grade for class discussion. Presentations, like papers, should be carefully crafted. Spontaneity is perfectly fine as a component of presentations, but is almost invariably more effective when layered on a firm, well-structured foundation. When responsible for presentations on your own written work or on particular the course required, come to class with a very clear sense of what you plan to say.

A) Week 3, Sept. 9-Week 12, Nov. 11: Book Review Essay Presentations
Prepare a five to six-minute presentation on your review essay, accompanied by a two-page handout including synopsis and analysis of the works covered.

B) Week 16/Dec. 9, Finals Week: Western History Scholarship, 2010-13.
First, review leading journals in the field, including the Western Historical Quarterly, Pacific Historical Review, American Historical Review, Journal of American History, Ethnohistory, Environmental History, American Indian Quarterly, American Quarterly, and Montana: The Magazine of Western History, for the period 2010-2013; or review recent essay collections published in the same period. Next, make your determination of the strongest article or essay published in the field in this period. Provide a brief synopsis and analysis of the article or essay. Provide a brief handout (1 paragraph) summarizing the article or essay, to accompany your short (3-4-minute) presentation on that piece.

C) Weeks 13-15/Nov. 23-Dec. 7: Historiography Presentation
Prepare a ten to twelve-minute presentation accompanied by a two-page handout on the key historiographical contours of your topic, the key works, and theme/s, and new directions for scholarship. (Earlier in the semester you will be responsible for a more informal presentation on your developing historiographical topic).

D) Presentations on course readings:
Every week or two you will be responsible for leading us into our discussion of some part of the course readings. I will generally make these assignments for the following week on the evening after, or the morning after, each class session. If there is a part of the next week’s reading that you are particularly interested in presenting on, then please let me know at the end of class. Please note that these presentations, like the one on your developing historiographical topic, are intended to be more informal than the presentations outlined in A-C (above).
APPENDIX II: WEEKLY READINGS

WK 1: AUG. 19: Introduction + The West in Popular and Historical Imaginations

WK 2: AUG. 26: THE WEST AS FRONTIER


Turner, Rise of the New West, 1819-1829; Turner, Rereading FJT; Webb, The Great Frontier; Bogue, Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down; Billington, Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher; Jacobs; On Turner’s Trail; Klein, Frontiers of Historical Imagination, Hofstadter, The Progressive Historians, Novick, That Noble Dream

SEPT. 2, Labor Day Recess: No Class
WK 3: SEPT. 9: THE WEST AS REGION


WK 4: SEPT. 16: THE WEST AS MYTH & MEMORY


Books: Smith, Virgin Land; Athearn, The Mythic West; Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation; Faragher, Daniel Boone; Wrobel, Promised Lands; Christensen, Red Lodge and the Mythic West; Kropp, California Vieja.; Warren, Buffalo Bill’s America.
WK 5: SEPT. 23: “C” WORDS, I: COLONIALISM, COMPARISON, CONTINUITY & CAPITALISM


Supplemental Reading:

Books: Pomeroy, The Territories and the United States, 1861-1890; The Pacific Slope; In Search of the Golden West; The American Far West in the Twentieth Century; Robbins, Colony and Empire; Brinkley and Limerick, eds., The Western Paradox; Nugent, Into the West: The Story of It’s People; and Crossings.

WK 6: SEPT. 30: “C” WORDS, II: CONTINUITY (CONTINUED) & CONQUEST


WK 7: OCTOBER 7: THE NEW WESTERN HISTORY


Books:
Limerick, Milner, and Rankin, eds., Trails; Milner, ed., A New Significance; Cronon, Miles, and Gitlin, eds., Under an Open Sky; Nash, Creating the West; Etulain, Re-Imagining the Modern American West; Gressley, Old West, New West.
WK 8: OCT. 14: THE NEW WEST IN ART & LITERATURE


Books, Allmendinger, Ten Most Wanted, Robinson, The New Western History; Comer, Landscapes of the New West; Etulain, Re-Imagining the Modern American West, and Telling Western Stories; Aquila, ed., Wanted, Dead or Alive; Goetzmann and Goetzmann, The West of the Imagination; Prown, et al, Discovered Lands, Invented Pasts; Truettner, ed., The West as America; Sandweiss, Print the Legend; Dippie, Catlin and His Contemporaries.


Supplemental Reading:

Books:
Riebsame, ed., The Atlas of the New West; Wrobel and Steiner, Many Wests; Nugent, Into the West; Ayers, et al, All Over the Map; Igler, The Great Ocean; Evans, Bound in Twine, and The Borderlands of the American & Canadian Wests; St. John, Line in the Sand: Belich, Replenishing the Earth.
WK 10: OCT. 28: WESTERN ENVIRONMENTS, I: CITIES


**Supplemental Reading**

WK 11: NOV. 4: WESTERN ENVIRONMENTS, II: WATER


Supplemental Reading:

Books: Worster, Dust Bowl; Worster, Rivers of Empire, A River Running West, Dust Bowl, Under Western Skies; White, The Organic Machine; Hundley, The Great Thirst; Pisani, To Reclaim a Divided West, and Water and American Government.
WK 12: NOVEMBER 11: WESTERN ENVIRONMENTS, III: WILDERNESS


WK 13: NOVEMBER 18:
1. WESTERN CULTURES, I: GENDER, SEXUALITY, & LABOR
2. HISTORIOGRAPHY PRESENTATIONS, GROUP A


Supplemental Reading:

Books:
Johnson, Roaring Camp; Boag, Same Sex Affairs, and Re-Dressing America’s Frontier Past; Hurtado, Sex, Gender, and Culture; Peck, Reinventing Free Labor; Jameson, All That Glitters; Andrews, Killing for Coal; Faragher, Men and Women on the Overland Trail; Gutiérrez, Ramón A. “The Pueblo Indian World in the Sixteenth Century,” When Jesus Came, The Corn Mothers Went Away; Scharff, Twenty Thousand Roads.
WK 14: NOVEMBER 25:
1. WESTERN CULTURES, II: RACE RELATIONS, AND LABOR
2. HISTORIOGRAPHY PRESENTATIONS, GROUP B


Books: Deverell, Whitewashed Adobe; Adams, Education for Extinction, Foley, White Scourge; Luebke, ed., European Immigrants in the American West; Matsumoto, Farming the Home Place; Casas, Married to a Daughter of the Land; Broussard, Black San Francisco; Monroy, Rebirth; Gregory, American Exodus; Gutierrez, Walls and Mirrors; Whitaker, Race Work.
WK 15: DEC 2:
1. WESTERN CULTURES, III: NEW INDIAN HISTORIES, & LABOR
2. HISTORIOGRAPHY PRESENTATIONS, GROUP C


Supplemental Reading:

Books:
West, The Contested Plains; Rollings, Unaffected by the Gospel; Hoxie, Parading Through History; Bauer, “We Were All Migrant Workers”; Deloria, Philip J. Indians in Unexpected Places; and Playing Indian; Blackhawk, Violence Over the Land; Hämäläinen, The Comanche Empire; DeLay, War of a Thousand Deserts; Yarborough, Race and the Cherokee Nation; Metcalf, Termination’s Legacy; Piker, The Four Deaths of Acorn Whistler.
WK 16: FINALS WEEK: DECEMBER 9:
1. NEWEST WESTS, (2004, & 2010-2013
2. HISTORIOGRAPHY PRESENTATIONS, GROUP D


III) Your top article or essay, 2010-13