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History 609 Colloquium: U.S. to 1865

Objectives:

This is a seminar course that provides an overview of the key questions and scholarly debates in the history of America to 1865. Graduate students will also consider the wide variety of methodological approaches employed by historians. By the end of the semester you should be able to do the following:

- Explain the central interpretations of American history from the colonial era through the Civil War. Through weekly readings and student-prepared annotated bibliographies, you should also be familiar with the major secondary works of each period.
- Define differences among the Progressive, Consensus, and Radical schools of history and demonstrate how the ideological assumptions of the three schools continue to shape interpretive differences among historians.
- Understand how historians construct different conceptual frameworks based on race, class, and gender.
- Write an analytical historiographic essay.

Evaluation:

Participation 30%
Historiography Papers 30%
Analytical Reviews 20%
Annotated Bibliography 10%
Presentations 10%

Attendance Policy:

Faithful attendance is essential. You are allowed one excused absence. **If you miss more than one class, there will be a 3% reduction of your final grade for each absence. Beyond even this penalty, a student who neglects attendance and preparation risks failing the course.**

Participation (30%)

This assessment will be based on three criteria:

- 1) This is a seminar, not a lecture course. After the first two weeks, pairs of students will lead class discussion. The discussion leaders will meet as a team with me before they are scheduled to lead class, preferably on Tuesday. The team must read the recommended reading for that week and the relevant historiographic material. In class, discussion leaders will ask questions about the common readings and how it relates to broader historiographic trends. They will not lecture to their fellow students.
- 2) Thorough preparation for this class is essential. All readings should be done before class. It is imperative that you have either handwritten or typed notes that outline the central questions and arguments of the assigned readings.
- 3) It is essential that you contribute to class on a consistent basis, that you intellectually engage with your peers, and that you are an active listener. In order to create an inviting environment for everyone to participate, please follow the guidelines:
 - Be ready to explain the broader argument and sub-themes of the assigned material and how the various readings fit together or diverge.
 - Instead of just criticizing a book, focus on understanding the contributions of the assigned readings and why they have had a lasting influence on the field.
 - You should feel free to disagree with others, but be specific in your own assertions and support them with evidence. You should also be willing to change your mind and concede to others when they make persuasive, well-reasoned arguments. Please challenge each other in a polite and courteous manner.
 - The success of a discussion depends on group interaction. Listen carefully and respond to your peers. There should be a dynamic give-and-take between the discussion leaders and the rest of the class. This can only happen if you elaborate upon the assertions of classmates or ask for clarification if you don't understand. Simply answering the questions will not lead to vigorous debate, and the discussion leaders will end up giving a monologue.
 - Make your point succinctly, avoid repetition, and stick to the subject.

Historiography Papers (30%)

This assignment is designed to help you do the following:

- Explain how and why the themes of a particular field have changed over time. To accomplish this, you need to be sensitive to the types of questions that historians have asked and to how those questions are continually debated and redefined.
- Understand how the work of historians is influenced by the time in which they live.

- Learn different historical methodologies and how the application of those theories has created new lines of inquiry and different interpretations.

The historiography paper is the capstone of 609. Your paper will focus on an interpretive issue that is based upon 12 to 15 books that you select as well as any pertinent articles. Be certain that your chosen monographs are published in different time periods in order to reflect the development and breadth of that particular field.

Potential topics will span the Colonial period to the Civil War and will be listed on a separate handout. I strongly encourage you to select one of the listed interpretive issues, but I will consider a topic of the student's own choosing. Students must choose a topic and turn in a tentative bibliography on **September 19**. Rough drafts are due **November 7**. Every student must receive a copy of your paper on that day, including the professor and commentators. **You must turn your written assignments in on time. Late papers will receive a letter grade deduction for each day after the due date.**

All historiography papers should be typed and double spaced (between 10-15 pages). Use Turabian, Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations for footnote formatting for specific quotations or paraphrases.

Presentations (10%)

Presentations of historiography papers are scheduled for November 14 and 18. A sign-up sheet will be circulated in advance. You will have five minutes to present an overview of your paper in which you will explain the dominant interpretive issues and arguments of your field and how they have changed over time. In other words, who are the key historians, what has been the nature of their debate, and over what issues do they agree or disagree. You should also be prepared to discuss where you see the future historiographic direction of your subject. Each commentator will receive five minutes to critique the assigned paper. The presenter will have a chance to respond before the discussion is open to the entire class.

This assignment is designed to help you:

- Learn to present and defend your ideas in an academic setting.
- Demonstrate an ability to make an argument that explains the historiographic shifts of your chosen field.
- Learn to critique the work of your peers.

Analytical Reviews (20%)

You will write three short papers that draw from the assigned readings and prearranged questions.

- Paper 1 (**Due August 29, 2-3 pages**) Please explain the origins of the Progressive, Consensus, and New Left Schools. As part of your analysis, you should discuss why some of these schools either fell into disfavor or were severely challenged in the scholarly community. In your response, you also need to convey the historical philosophy of each school and the ways in which they differ.
- Paper 2 (**Due September 12, 2-3 pages**) Based on the “Ideology and Revolutionary America,” readings, what is the source of the historiographical upheaval among Greene, Morgan, Bailyn, and Calhoun? In answering this overarching question, you must understand how this debate has changed over time. Who initiated the dialogue and over what issues? In what ways have these scholars responded to this challenge and where do they agree and disagree? Is there any attempt to synthesize the various arguments and offer a coherent interpretation?
- Paper 3 (**Due October 24, 3-5 pages**) Explain the role of slavery and industrialization in the development of sectional differences. Your analysis must incorporate the readings from September 19 to October 24.

Annotated Bibliography 10%

For your comprehensive examinations as master’s candidates you will need to become familiar with secondary sources outside the assigned readings of this class. You will prepare an annotated bibliography on a subject assigned by me. I will also provide a list of 10 books that will be the basis of your bibliography. For each monograph you will need to write a brief paragraph (no more than five sentences) summarizing the book’s argument and overall contribution to the field. Not only should you check out each book, but you also need to find the appropriate books reviews. You are responsible to photocopy and handout your annotated bibliography to all members of the class. By the end of the semester, each student will have an extensive collection of bibliographies that will serve as an essential reference guide for your comprehensive examinations. I will pass out a sample annotated bibliography for the class.

Texts

David Hackett Fischer, Albion’s Seed: Four British Folkways in America

Thomas Dublin, Women at Work

Ronald G. Walters, The Antislavery Appeal: American Abolitionism After 1830

Eugene Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll

Lisa C. Tolbert, Constructing Townscapes: Space and Society in Antebellum Tennessee.

Charles B. Dew, Apostles of Disunion: Southern Secession Commissioners and the Causes of the Civil War

James McPherson, What They Fought For

Drew Gilpin Faust, The Creation of Confederate Nationalism

Eugene D. Genovese, A Consuming Fire: The Fall of the Confederacy in the Mind of the White Christian South

All texts are available at the bookstore.

Class Schedule

*On electronic reserve

+J-Store

August 22 Introduction and library workshop.

August 29 What is Historiography? **(Two- to three-page response paper due)**

Discuss: *Grob and Billias, Introduction in Interpretations of American History; +Jonathan M. Wiener, "Radical Historians and the Crisis in American History, 1959-1980" in The Journal of American History 76 (September 1989); +John Higham, "Changing Paradigms: The Collapse of Consensus History," in The Journal of American History 76 (September 1989); *Alice Kessler-Harris, "Social History" in The New American History; *Phillip Shaw Paludan, "What Did the Winners Win?" in Writing the Civil War.

September 5 Cultural Conflicts in Colonial America **(Two- to three-page response paper due)**

Discuss: David Hackett Fischer, "Borderlands to the Backcountry," in Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America (Preface, Introduction, and 605-782); *Jack P. Greene, "Independence, Improvement, and Authority: Toward a Framework for Understanding the Histories of the Southern Backcountry during the Era of the American Revolution," in Imperatives, Behaviors, and Identities.

September 12 Ideology and Revolutionary America

Discuss: *Robert M. Calhoun, "Ideology as a Way of Thinking about the American Revolution," in Dominion and Liberty: Ideology in the Anglo American World 1660-1801; *Edmund S. Morgan, "Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power, 1764-1766" in The Challenge of the American Revolution; *Bernard Bailyn, "Political Experience and Radical Ideas in Eighteenth-Century America" in Faces of Revolution; *Jack P. Greene, "The Flight From Determinism: A Review of Recent Literature on the Coming of the American Revolution," in Interpreting Early America: Historiographical Essays.

September 19 Jacksonian America and Industrialization **Bibliography due**

Discuss: *Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. "Jacksonian Democracy and Industrialism" (Chapter 26), "Traditions of Democracy" (Chapter 37) in The Age of Jackson; Thomas Dublin, Women at Work; *Linda Gordon, "U.S. Women's History," in The New American History.

September 26 Middle Class Reform and Anti-Slavery

Discuss: Ronald G. Walters, The Antislavery Appeal: American Abolitionism After 1830; *Eric Foner, "Society, Politics, and the Market Revolution, 1815-1848," in The New American History;

October 3 The Slave Experience

Discuss *U. B. Phillips, "Forward" (xiv-xxi) and "Plantation Labor" in American Negro Slavery; *Kenneth Stampp, "Between Two Cultures" (Chapter 8) in The Peculiar Institution; Eugene Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll.

October 10 The Nature of the Old South

Discuss: *Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, "Southern Women, Southern Households," in Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South; Lisa C. Tolbert, Constructing Townscapes: Space and Society in Antebellum Tennessee.

October 17 Causes of the Civil War

Discuss: *Kenneth Stampp, "The Irrepressible Conflict," in The Imperiled Union; *Eric Foner, "The Causes of the American Civil War: Recent Interpretations and New Directions," in Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War; Charles B. Dew, Apostles of Disunion: Southern Secession Commissioners and the Causes of the Civil War.

October 24 The Soldier Experience **(Three- to five-page response paper due)**

Discuss: *Joseph Glatthaar, "The "New" Civil War History: An Overview," in The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography; *Bell Irvin Wiley, "Billy Yank and Johnny Reb," in The Life of Billy Yank; *Gerald Linderman, Chapters 1, 11, 12, in Embattled Courage; and James McPherson, What They Fought For.

October 31 No Class

November 7 The Confederacy **Historiography Papers due**

Discuss: *Emory Thomas, "Reckoning with the Rebels," in The Old South in the Crucible of War; Drew Gilpin Faust, The Creation of Confederate Nationalism; Eugene D. Genovese, A Consuming Fire: The Fall of the Confederacy in the Mind of the White Christian South; *William A. Blair, "The Problem of Confederate Identity," in Virginia's Private War

November 14 Paper Presentations

November 21 Thanksgiving Break

November 28 Paper Presentations

December 5 Final Papers Due

