

History 461
Fall Semester 2002
Lecture: Tues.-Thurs. 9:30-10:45
1651 Humanities
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The American West to 1850

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This course explores the history of places that have been called the American West, focusing on the period before 1850. We start with the era of American Indian occupation; continue with European invasion and the eventual creation of two new occupying nations, Mexico and the United States; and end with the U.S. conquest in the nineteenth century. At the outset, we consider the varied and changing world of Native North America before the arrival of Europeans, and then watch as that land and those peoples became the object of Spanish, French, Russian, and English imperial designs. As we enter the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, we see how European incursions gave way to the hopes and dreams of new nations, particularly Mexico and the U.S., and also of increasingly powerful native peoples, such as Lakotas, Cheyennes and Arapahos, and Comanches. After studying the trails and trades that brought more and more newcomers from the U.S. into lands claimed by Mexicans and Indians, we approach the end of the semester with a key convergence of events: the U.S. conquest of the Mexican North, the discovery of western gold, and the West Coast arrival of Chinese immigrants. 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, including those of North American, Latin American, European, African, and Asian origin or descent, and we look at how such varied aspirations both clashed and coalesced, sometimes producing new peoples and new economies. We study all of this by means of lectures, discussions, scholarly books, and primary documents, as well as several episodes of the 1996 documentary film *The West*. We conclude with a meditation on history, memory, and the West, aided by an evening screening of the feature film *Lone Star*.

Course requirements

1. General: Faithful attendance in lecture and discussion sections; prompt completion of weekly readings; respectful participation in class discussions. Film episodes shown in class also require attendance; you'll be responsible for their contents in exams, and there also will be a written assignment based on film episodes (see below).
2. Film Journals: Each of you will keep a journal about your intellectual reactions to the three episodes of the film "The West" that will be screened in class. You'll write a one-page journal entry for each episode in which you discuss the content of that episode *and its relationship to readings and lectures*. You'll turn in the journal entries you've written twice in the semester. The first entry (for Part 1) is due at the beginning of lecture on Tues. Oct. 22. The second and third entries (for Parts 2 & 3) are due at the beginning of lecture on Tues. Dec. 3. These journal entries can be word-processed, typed, or handwritten. They won't be graded, but they will be marked using a + , ü , - 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](#), those reprinted in chapter one, "Cultures in Conflict: First Encounters." You'll choose at least two of the primary sources in the chapter and analyze the different points of view of the Spanish conquest represented by each. Your paper will be due at the beginning of lecture on Thurs. Sept. 12. Papers must be word-processed or typed, 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-third 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: Gutiérrez, When Jesus Came; White, The Middle Ground; or Johnson, Roaring Camp. 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 will be discussing the book assigned to that mega-group (When Jesus Came, Thurs. Sept. 26; Middle Ground, Tues. Oct. 22; Roaring Camp, Tues. Dec. 3). 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 unless you are writing on Middle Ground; in that case, you will have a later due date so that your work won't conflict with your midterm exam (When Jesus Came, Thurs. Oct. 3; Middle Ground, Tues. Nov. 5; Roaring Camp, Tues. Dec. 10). Papers must be word-processed or typed, 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-third 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 Tues. Oct. 22, and your answers must be handed in at the beginning of lecture on Tues. Oct. 29. There will be no lecture on Thurs. Oct. 24, but the professor and teaching assistant will be available in the classroom to answer any questions you may have about the midterm. The Final questions will be handed out at the end of lecture on Tues. Dec. 10, and your answers must be handed in between 12:25 and 2:25 p.m. on Tues. Dec. 17--that is, during the regularly scheduled final exam period for this course. There will be no lecture on Thurs. Dec. 12, but the professor and teaching assistant will be available in the classroom to answer any questions you may have about the midterm. Midterm and Final exams must be word-processed or typed, 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. 1, To 1877 (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000).

Ramón Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, The Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1991).

Susan Lee Johnson, *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000).

Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

The following book is *not required*, but it is *ever-so-highly recommended*. 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 sharing with a classmate or 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 written by some of the leading practitioners in the field of western history. Was Daniel Boone saint or sinner? What are the roots of contemporary Chicanas and Chicanos? Before Wisconsin was known for cheese, for what was it known (a question for out-of-state students)? Where were the seven cities of gold, or Cibola? How did Lakota people become known as the Sioux? Where did the Santa Fe Trail begin and end, and who and what traveled along it? Who were the first people of African descent in what we now call the West? Who invented scalping? Who cried on the Trail of Tears? Why were mountain men hooked on beavers? Why does so much of the Midwest look like a checkerboard when you fly over it? Who was Lola Montez, and why were they saying such awful things about her? Why is Texas so weird? You'll find the answers here:

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

Calendar and Assignments

Week 1

- Tues. Sept. 3: Course Introduction
- Thurs. Sept. 5: Native North America: Concepts

Reading: The West: Introduction, pp. xv-xvi, & chap. 1, pp. 6-23
When Jesus Came: Introduction, pp. xvii-xxxi; chap. 1, pp. 3-36

NEAW: Physiography of the U.S.; Indian languages; Frontier theory; Turner, Frederick Jackson; western history, 1970s-90s

Week 2

- Tues. Sept. 10: Native North America: Peoples and Places
- Thurs. Sept. 12: Imperial Designs: Spain and France
First paper due in lecture

Reading: The West: chap. 2, pp. 24-45
When Jesus Came: chaps. 2-3, pp. 39-140

NEAW: Indians of California, of Texas, of the Great Basin, of the Great Plains, of the Northwest, of the Southwest; see also entries for various Indian nations, groups, & confederacies, such as Sioux (Dakota, Lakota), Ute, Iroquois Confederacy, "Five Civilized Tribes," Pueblo, Cheyenne & Arapaho, Apache, Navajo, Modoc & Klamath

Week 3

- Tues. Sept. 17: Imperial Designs: England and Russia
- Thurs. Sept. 19: Spanish Colonies and Indian Peoples: New Mexico

Reading: The West: chap. 3, pp. 46-65
When Jesus Came: chaps. 4-7, pp. 143-240

NEAW: New Mexico (thru Spanish period); Cabeza de Vaca; Coronado; DeSoto; Oñate; Exploration, Spanish; Cibola; Acoma Pueblo; Santa Fe (thru Spanish period); Exploration, English; Exploration, French; Exploration, Russian; land policy in the colonies (1607-1775); Mississippi Valley; Indian-captivity narratives

Week 4

- Tues. Sept. 24: Spanish Colonies and Indian Peoples: Texas and California
- Thurs. Sept. 26: discussion of *When Jesus Came*

Reading: The West: chap. 4, pp. 66-87
When Jesus Came: chaps. 8-10, Epilogue, pp. 271-340

NEAW: Texas (thru the Spanish period); San Antonio; California (thru the Spanish period); Serra; missions, California (read entries for missions that interest you); Boone

Week 5

- Tues. Oct. 1: Empires in the Woods
- Thurs. Oct. 3: Pushing into the Plains *When Jesus Came papers due in lecture*

Reading: The West, chap. 5, pp. 88-109
Middle Ground, Introduction, pp. ix-xv, & chaps. 1-3, pp. 1-141

NEAW: French heritage; Mississippi Valley; fur trade, in the colonies; Hudson's Bay Co.; beaver; horse; buffalo; Sioux (Lakota, Dakota); Cheyenne & Arapaho; Comanche

Week 6

- Tues. Oct. 8: Wars of Empire
- Thurs. Oct. 10: New Nations: Mexico

Reading: The West, chap. 6, pp. 110-27
Middle Ground, chaps. 4-7, pp. 142-314

NEAW: Colonial wars; New Mexico (thru the Mexican period); Texas (thru the Mexican period); California (thru the Mexican period); Indian-white relations, British Indian policy, 1763-75; Pontiac's Rebellion

Week 7

- Tues. Oct. 15: New Nations: United States
- Thurs. Oct. 17: Film, *The West*, part 1, *The People*

Reading: The West, chap. 7, pp. 128-53
Middle Ground, chaps. 8-10, pp. 315-468

NEAW: land policy, 1780-1860 (thru 1850); U.S. Indian policy, 1775-1860 (to 1820s); Northwest Ordinance; territorial system; Whiskey Rebellion

Week 8

- Tues. Oct. 22: discussion of The Middle Ground
first film journal entry due
MIDTERM EXAM QUESTIONS HANDED OUT
- Thurs. Oct. 24: work on exams; professor and T.A. available for consultation

Reading: Middle Ground, chap. 11 & Epilogue, pp. 469-523

NEAW: Tecumseh; Tenskwatawa

NOTE: *no discussion section meetings on Fri. 10-25 or Mon. 10-28*

Week 9

- Tues. Oct. 29: The Science of Conquest: Exploration
MIDTERM EXAM DUE IN LECTURE

- Thurs. Oct. 31: The Business of Conquest: Trade

Reading: The West, chaps. 8-9, pp. 154-97

NEAW: Exploration, U.S.; Lewis; Clark; Lewis & Clark Expedition; Charbonneau; Sacagewea; Pike; Louisiana Purchase; fur trade, in the U.S.; trappers; Northwest Co.; American Fur Co.; Rocky Mountain Fur Co.; Astor; Chouteau; Ashley; Smith, Jedediah; China trade; California rancho system; Bryant, Sturgis & Co.; Dana; Santa Fe and Chihuahua Trail; Alvarez; Becknell; Gregg; Bent brothers; Bent's Fort; Carson; Fremont, Jessie & John C.; U.S. Indian policy, 1775-1860 (from 1820s); Cherokee Indians

Week 10

- Tues. Nov. 5: Engines of Conquest: Farms, Factories, Plantations
Middle Ground papers due in lecture
- Thurs. Nov. 7: Manifest Design: The Mexican North

Reading: The West, chaps. 10-11, pp. 198-239

NEAW: agricultural expansion; Missouri Compromise; Wilmot Proviso; Compromise of 1850; African Americans on the frontier (to 1850); frontier life to 1850; empresario system; Texas (thru 1850); Texas annexation; Bear Flag Rebellion; Mexican War; Guadalupe Hidalgo, Treaty of; Mexican Americans; Benton, Thomas Hart (1792-1858); manifest destiny; Magoffin

Week 11

- Tues. Nov. 12: Manifest Design: The Oregon Country
- Thurs. Nov. 14: Trail's End: Santa Fe and Salt Lake

Reading: The West, chap. 12, pp. 240-51 only
Roaring Camp, Prologue & chap. 1, pp. 23-95

NEAW: Oregon (to 1850); Oregon Controversy; Whitman; Lee, Jason; Adams-Onís Treaty; Santa Fe (thru 1850); Latter-Day Saints (thru 1850); Mormon Trail; Young, Brigham; Salt Lake City (thru 1850); Deseret; Murieta

Week 12

- Tues. Nov. 19: Trail's End: Willamette Valley and Sutter's Fort
- Thurs. Nov. 21: Film, *The West*, part 2, *Empire Upon the Trails*

Reading: The West, chap. 12, pp. 251-65 only
Roaring Camp, chaps. 2-4, pp. 97-234

NEAW: Oregon Trail; California Trail; California (thru 1850); Sutter; Marsh; gold & silver rushes; gold towns in California

Week 13

- Tues. Nov. 26: Film, *The West*, part 3, *Speck of the Future*
- Thurs. Nov. 28: *Thanksgiving, no class*

Reading: Roaring Camp, chaps. 5-6 & Epilogue, pp. 235-344

NEAW: women in western history; men & manhood in western history; Chinese immigration (early years)

NOTE: *no discussion section meetings on Fri. 11-29 or Mon. 12-2*

Week 14

- Tues. Dec. 3: discussion of Roaring Camp
second & third film journal entries due
- Thurs. Dec. 5: "Forget the Alamo": History, Memory, and the West
Thurs. evening: special screening of the film "Lone Star," TBA

Reading:

NEAW: western films; Alamo

NOTE: *no discussion section meetings on Fri. 12-6 or Mon. 12-9*

Week 15

- Tues. Dec. 10: Wrap-up
Roaring Camp papers due in lecture
FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS HANDED OUT
- Thurs. Dec. 12: work on exams; professor and T.A. available for consultation

Final Exam Period

- Tues. Dec. 17,
12:25 to 2:25 p.m. FINAL EXAMS DUE