

History 902
Chican@ & Latin@ Studies 530
Spring 2006
Thurs. 8:50-10:50
5245 Humanities

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Research Seminar in American History: North American Regions, Landscapes, and Peoples

This course is an advanced research seminar on the history of North American regions, landscapes, and peoples broadly defined. It is designed for graduate students who are interested in the relationship between peoples and places or between human beings and the environments in which they live. It presumes some background in one of the following areas of inquiry: North American regional histories (the South, the Borderlands, or the West, for example), the history of “race” and “ethnicity” in North America, or North American environmental history. The goal of the course is for each student to produce a major research paper of publishable quality on some aspect of these histories in any period, from the first historical records of human habitation through the late twentieth century. The paper will be based on primary source research, and will make an original contribution to historical scholarship. We will meet together as a class for a few weeks, reading in common conceptual and theoretical scholarship that will help us to think about a wide array of key historical relationships, including those between peoples and places, between place and space, between human communities and natural environments, between the rural and the urban, and among social change, social justice, and environmental justice. We will also read scholarship that demonstrates concretely some of the ways that historians have made sense of such relationships. During these weeks, we will introduce ourselves as well to the world of research libraries—local, national, and, to the extent that we are able to draw on our collective experience, global as well. Finally, it will be during these early weeks that each student will settle on a research topic, identify relevant primary sources, and establish a tentative bibliography of relevant secondary works, including theoretical texts and works in other disciplines as well as historical scholarship. The next several weeks will be devoted to individual research and writing. We will not meet as a class during these weeks, but the professor will be available during the regularly scheduled class period for individual consultation. Each student should meet with the professor at least once during these weeks. We will come back together toward the end of the semester to exchange and review rough drafts of research papers and to prepare for the culminating exercise of the class: a one-day mini-conference in which each student will present publicly a short version of her/his paper.

Course requirements

1. General: Faithful attendance; prompt completion of weekly readings; cooperative effort in team exercises; respectful participation in class discussions; and individual initiative in scheduling consultations with professor during those weeks when the class does not meet as a whole.
2. Team report #1 (theoretical/conceptual): On Jan. 26, Feb. 2, and Feb. 16, small groups of students will be asked to report on some background reading relevant to the larger conceptual project of this course, which is interdisciplinary and involves insights from nonhistorians, including literary scholars and geographers. Toward that end, on Jan. 26, several students will be asked to read and report on the work of Henri Lefebvre, particularly his *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (1974; Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1991). This edition includes a biographical afterward by David Harvey plus a full bibliography (pp. 425-34) that should prove useful in your presentation. Although we will be reading Raymond Williams and others this week, it is important for all of us to have a bit of background on Lefebvre before turning the following two weeks to the work of Harvey and Soja. On Feb. 2, several students will be asked to read and report on David Harvey’s larger corpus, and particularly his *The Condition of Postmodernity : An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge, Mass.:

Blackwell, 1990). Finally, on Feb. 16, several five students will be asked to read and report on the larger corpus of Edward Soja, and particularly his *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London & New York: Verso, 1989).

3. Team report #2 (research): On Jan. 26, Feb. 2, and Feb. 16, small groups of students will be asked to investigate the holdings relevant to the intellectual project of this course in both on-campus and off-campus repositories. For the on-campus sites, research teams should visit the library, review any printed and on-line materials the library produces about its holdings, meet with a reference librarian or archivist, look at a few representative materials, and produce a 1-2 page description of how historians interested in the relationship between peoples and places in North America might make use of the repository. For the off-campus sites, research teams should investigate on-line resources such as web pages and on-line catalogues, locate and peruse any available published guides to collections, and produce a 1-2 page description of how historians interested in the relationship between peoples and places in North America might make use of the repository. For the off-campus sites, please also investigate whether or not there are any special requirements for using the repository and whether or not the repository offers any fellowships to graduate students who wish to use the collections. On the first day of class, we will make group assignments and discuss how to do this project.

3. Research paper: Your research paper should be based on an original analysis of primary source materials placed in appropriate historical, historiographical, and conceptual/theoretical contexts. It should run approximately 25-35 double-spaced pages and should be properly documented using footnotes or endnotes as detailed in chapter 8 of Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. It must be cleanly and clearly written with no errors in spelling, word usage, or grammar. Please use Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*, as a writing guide. The writing should be accessible to the general reader, defined as an intelligent college student, but should advance an original argument that makes a unique contribution to professional historical scholarship. You may also gear your paper to an interdisciplinary readership in such fields as environmental studies, gender studies, ethnic studies, or cultural studies, but the paper must remain accessible to the educated general reader and to historians in particular. The process of producing this research paper should proceed through the following steps:

a. Prospectus/Bibliography: By Thurs., Feb. 16, you will submit a 2-3 page prospectus that defines your topic, details the primary sources you intend to use, and places your topic in appropriate historical, historiographical, and conceptual/theoretical contexts. Along with this narrative, you will submit a 1-2 page bibliography that details the primary and secondary sources you intend to use in producing your paper, including conceptual and theoretical works.

b. Rough Draft: On Friday, March 31, by 4 p.m., you will turn in two copies of a rough draft of your entire research paper. One copy goes to Prof. Johnson's mailbox, and you should make arrangements to get the other copy to the classmate with whom you've been paired for this exercise. Because your professor will have less than two weeks to read and comment on your rough drafts, absolutely no late rough drafts will be accepted under any circumstances. Please read your classmate's paper carefully and prepare written comments for her/him. Bring two copies of your comments to class on Thurs., April 13--give one to your classmate and the other to Prof. Johnson. On this day, then, you will receive two sets of written comments on your rough draft, one from a classmate and one from Prof. Johnson.

c. Final Paper: Your final paper is due by 10 a.m. on Thurs., April 27, in Prof. Johnson's office. Please turn in two copies. Because you will be presenting a short version of your paper at our conference in early May and the scholar who has agreed to comment on your paper will need time to read it, absolutely no late papers will be accepted under any circumstances.

d. Presentation: Right around when classes end, and probably on May 6, we will hold a conference in which each student will present publicly a short version of his or her paper. The longer version of the paper will have been submitted to another scholar, who will have prepared a brief comment to deliver at the conference.

Grades

Your grade will be determined using the following formula:

Course participation (includes discussion and comments on classmate's rough draft)	10%
Team report #1	5%
Team report #2	5%
Research paper (includes prospectus/bibliography, rough draft, public presentation, and final paper, but final paper will be weighted most heavily)	80%

Readings

*Required readings are available in a coursepack from
Bob's Copy Shop at Randall Tower, 1314 W. Johnson*

Raymond Williams, "Ideas of Nature" (1970), reprinted in *Problems in Materialism and Culture: Selected Essays* (London: Verso, 1980).

Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 1-45, 279-306.

William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991), pp. xvi-xvii, 5-54, 371-85.

William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," in *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature*, ed. William Cronon (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995).

Keith Basso, "Wisdom Sits in Places: Notes on a Western Apache Landscape," in *Senses of Place*, ed. Steven Feld and Keith Basso (Santa Fe, N.M.: School of American Research Press, 1996).

David Harvey, *Justice, Nature, and the Geography of Difference* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 206-326.

Edward Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time," in *Senses of Place*, ed. Steven Feld and Keith Basso (Santa Fe, N.M.: School of American Research Press, 1996).

Andrés Reséndez, *Changing National Identities at the Frontier: Texas and New Mexico, 1800-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 15-55.

Elsa Barkley Brown and Gregg Kimball, "Mapping the Terrain of Black Richmond," *Journal of Urban History* 21, no. 3 (March 1995).

Edward Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 53-144.

David Gutiérrez, "Migration, Emergent Ethnicity, and the 'Third Space': The Shifting Politics of Nationalism in 'Greater Mexico,'" *Journal of American History* 86, no. 2 (September 1999).

Steven Conn and Max Page, eds., *Building the Nation: Americans Write About Their Architecture, Their Cities, and Their Landscape* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), chap. 4, "One Nation, of Many Pasts: Regionalism and the Built Environment" (pp. 141-86), and chap. 8, "Monuments and Memory: Building and Protecting the American Past" (pp. 361-407).

Recommended reference works

The following book is essential for all writers; you'll want it on your shelf for your entire scholarly career. I haven't ordered copies of it for purchase, since I assume most of you already own it. If you don't, buy it right away and read it. If you own it, read it again. It is available in all college and general bookstores:

William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style*, 4th ed. (New York: Longman, 2000). *Every scholarly writer should have a well-thumbed copy of this book.*

All graduate students should own at least one of the following two books; I've ordered copies of them for you to purchase at the University Bookstore. The first, *A Manual for Writers*, is much cheaper, and is adequate for most graduate-level work. But *A Manual for Writers* is really just a boiled down version of the second, *Chicago Manual of Style*. *Chicago Manual of Style* is the bible of scholarly publishing, and in it you'll find answers to virtually every imaginable question about scholarly writing, documentation, and publishing. If you purchase *A Manual for Writers* now, you'll no doubt bite the bullet and purchase *Chicago Manual of Style* later in your career. And it won't hurt to own both, either, because *A Manual for Writers* is often required for undergraduates, and so you'll want it for your teaching even after you have "graduated" to the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

University of Chicago Press Staff, *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003). *Note that this recent edition has been substantially revised to reflect advances in electronic publishing and the use of on-line sources.*

Calendar and Assignments

Week 1

Thurs. Jan. 19: Course Introduction

Week 2

Thurs. Jan. 26:

Reading: Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*,
 selections
 Raymond Williams, "Ideas of Nature"
 William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, selections
 William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness"
 Keith Basso, "Wisdom Sits in Places"

Team Report #1: the work of Henri Lefebvre

Team Report #2: libraries & archives

Week 3

Thurs. Feb. 2:

Reading: David Harvey, *Justice, Nature, and the Geography of Difference*, selections
 Edward Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time"
 Andrés Reséndez, *Changing National Identities at the Frontier*, selections
 Elsa Barkley Brown and Gregg Kimball, "Mapping the Terrain of Black Richmond"

Team Report #1: the work of David Harvey

Team Report #2: libraries & archives

Week 4

Thurs. Feb. 9: No class; work on prospectus/bibliography & prepare for Feb. 16 class.

Week 5

Thurs. Feb. 16:

Reading: Edward Soja, *Thirdspace*, selections
 David Gutiérrez, "Migration, Emergent Ethnicity, and the 'Third Space'"
 Steven Conn and Max Page, eds., *Building the Nation*, chap. 4, "One Nation, of Many Pasts: Regionalism and the Built Environment," and chap. 8, "Monuments and Memory: Building and Protecting the American Past"

Team Report #1: the work of Edward Soja

Team Report #2: libraries & archives

Turn in prospectus/ bibliography in class (you may turn these in earlier if you'd like; this is simply the final deadline).

Week 6

Thurs. Feb. 23: No class; research week.
Pick up prospectus/ bibliography in Prof. Johnson's office during regularly scheduled class period if you haven't received them back yet.

Week 7

Thurs. March 2: No class; research week.

Week 8

Thurs. March 9: No class; research week. Make transition from research to writing.

*SPRING BREAK!!!**Week 9*

Thurs. March 23: No class; writing week.

Week 10

Thurs. March 30: No class; writing week.

Friday, March 31: *Rough Drafts due by 4 p.m. in Prof. Johnson's mailbox. No late rough drafts accepted under any circumstances. Turn in one copy to Prof. Johnson, and arrange to exchange a second copy with the classmate with whom you've been paired.*

Week 11

Thurs. April 6: No class; rough draft reading week.

Week 12

Thurs. April 13: *Class meets; rough drafts returned. Bring two copies of your comments on your classmate's paper, one for Prof. Johnson and one for your classmate*

Week 13

Thurs. April 20: No class; revision week.

Week 14

Thurs. April 27 *No class, but final papers are due by 10 a.m. in Prof. Johnson's office. No late papers accepted under any circumstances. Turn in two copies of your paper, one for Prof. Johnson and one for the scholar who will comment on your paper at our conference. Turn in your rough draft with Prof. Johnson's written comments, too.*

Week 15

Thurs. May 4: Class meets; we will make final plans for our conference.

Finals Period

Sat. May 6 (tentative), Conference