

## **Syllabus HIST 442 Race, Class, and Gender in the American West Fall 2015, Fully Online**

Instructor: David Peterson del Mar

e-mail: delmard@pdx.edu

Office Hours: Mondays 1:30 to 3:30 and Thursdays 10:00 to Noon Cramer Hall 492-C

[Instructor's website](#)

[Instructor's blog](#)

### **Course Description**

This four-credit course will survey the social history of the U.S. Trans-Mississippi West, with particular emphasis on race, class, and gender. All of the course work will be accomplished over the Internet, so regular access to a computer with a reliable internet connection is crucial to your success. Students should have upper-division standing or have taken HST 201/202.

### **Course Objectives**

- To demonstrate relevant knowledge of the history of race, class, and gender in the U.S. West
- To evaluate and analyze primary and secondary sources
- To demonstrate an appreciation of multiple historical perspectives
- To make scholarly arguments addressing a range of perspectives and show original and independent thinking
- To support arguments with multiple pieces of evidence
- To engage collaboratively in critical thinking
- To reflect on our civic responsibility
- To write clearly and logically

### **Assessment**

5 Short Essays/Critiques	25 points
5 Longer Essays	75 points
Extra Credit	Up to 5 extra points

Scale: 93% and above A; 90-92.9% A-; 87-89.9% B+, and so forth. Your final grade is determined by adding up your points for the above assignments. Grades (and feedback) for each assignment are posted and sent to students within D2L: via private mail, the drop box, and the grade book.

### **Required Readings**

(Available for purchase at the PSU Bookstore, and copies are on reserve at the PSU library.)

- Sherman Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*
- James F. Brooks, *Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands*

- William D. Carrigan and Clive Webb, *Forgotten Dead: Mob Violence against Mexicans in the United States, 1848-1928*
- [Willa Cather, \*O Pioneers!\* Available as e-book via PSU Library](#) (To access, click on the link, then the “Check catalog at Portland State University” link, then “view online.”)
- Becky M. Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965*

## **Course Schedule**

Note: All short essays are due by the end of Saturday of a given week (by 11:59 p.m. October 3, for example). The short-essay critiques and the longer essays must be posted by the end of Sundays. All extra-credit posts are due by the end of Saturdays.

### **Week #1**

(Longer Essay #1 due October 4)

Western History: Burden or Inspiration?

To Do This Week:

- Instructor’s introduction to the course and the first of ten weekly videos
- Alexie book, entire.
- Write an essay of no more than 1,000 words on this question: What role does history play in Alexie’s stories?

### **Week #2**

(Short Essay #1 due October 10, Critique October 11)

Pre-Contact and Contact

To Do This Week:

- Instructor’s weekly video
- [Catherine M. Cameron, “How People Moved among Ancient Societies: Broadening the View,” \*American Anthropologist\*, 2013](#)
- [Douglas J. Kennett, et al., “Sociopolitical Effects of Bow and Arrow Technology in Prehistoric Coastal California,” \*Evolutionary Anthropology\*, 2013](#)
- [Richard White, “The Winning of the West: The Expansion of the Western Sioux in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” \*Journal of American History\*, 1978](#)
- [Theodore Binnema, “Allegiances and Interests: Niitsitapi \(Blackfoot\) Trade, Diplomacy, and Warfare, 1806-1831,” \*Western Historical Quarterly\*, 2006](#)
- Write a short essay of no more than 350 words on this question: Do these articles suggest that the arrival of whites was the key event in the history of Native Americans? Remember to also post a critique.

### **Week #3**

(Longer Essay #2 due October 18)

The Southwest as Middle Ground

To Do This Week:

- Instructor’s weekly video
- Brooks book, entire

- Write an essay of no more than 1,000 words on this question: Does this book show that Native Americans affected the Spanish and other newcomers as much as vice versa?

#### **Week #4**

(Short Essay #2 due October 24, Critique October 25)

Colonization

To Do This Week:

- Instructor's weekly video
- [David Peterson del Mar, "Intermarriage and Agency: A Chinookan Case Study," \*Ethnohistory\*, 1995](#)
- [Benjamin Madley, "California's Yuki Indians: Defining Genocide in Native American History," \*Western Historical Quarterly\*, 2008](#)
- [Janne Lahti, "Colonized Labor: Apaches and Pawnees as Army Workers," \*Western Historical Quarterly\*, 2008](#)
- Write a short essay of no more than 350 words on this question: Indian reaction to white contact and colonization was driven almost entirely by what they perceived to be their individual and collective self-interest, not by tradition or ethno-racial ("Indian") solidarity. Remember to also post a critique.

#### **Week #5**

(Longer Essay #3 due November 1)

Death and Resistance in the Southwest

To Do This Week:

- Instructor's weekly video
- Carrigan/Webb book, entire
- Write an essay of no more than 1,000 words on this question: Was the lynching of Mexicanos driven more by racism or economic self-interest?

#### **Week #6**

(Short Essay #3 due November 7, Critique November 8)

Gender and Settlement

To Do This Week:

- Instructor's weekly video
- [Roth, et al., "Homicide Rates in the Old West," \*Western Historical Quarterly\*, 2011](#)
- [Gunter Peck, "Manly Gambles: The Politics of Risk on the Comstock Lode, 1860, 1880," \*Journal of Social History\*, 1993](#)
- [Cynthia Culver Prescott, "'Why She Didn't Marry Him': Love, Power and Marital Choice on the Far Western Frontier," \*Western Historical Quarterly\*, 2007](#)
- [David Peterson, "Wife Beating: An American Tradition," \*Journal of Interdisciplinary History\*, 1992](#)
- Write a short essay of no more than 350 words on this question: Why did the performance of gender (how men and women acted) change in the late 1800s, as the West became more settled and modern? Remember to also post a critique.

## Week #7

(Longer Essay #4 due November 15)

Transforming the Land

To Do This Week:

- Instructor's weekly video
- Cather book, entire
- Write an essay of no more than 1,000 words on this question: How would you sum up how the characters of this novel relate to the land?

## Week #8

(Short Essay #4 due November 21, Critique November 22)

Race in the Modern West

To Do This Week:

- Instructor's weekly video
- [Brian Paciotti, "Homicide in Seattle's Chinatown, 1900-1940: Evaluating the Influence of Social Organizations," \*Homicide Studies\*, 2005](#)
- [Lon Kurashige, "Resistance, Collaboration, and Manzanar Protest," \*Pacific Historical Review\*, 2001](#)
- [Elizabeth R. Escobedo, "The Pachuca Panic: Sexual and Cultural Battlegrounds In World War II Los Angeles," \*Western Historical Quarterly\*, 2007](#)
- Write a short essay of no more than 350 words on this question: What role did racism toward and oppression of people of color play in their internal divisions? Remember to also post a critique.

## Week #9

(Longer Essay #5 due November 29)

The Suburban West

To Do This Week:

- Instructor's weekly video
- Nicolaides book, entire
- Write an essay of no more than 1,000 words on this question: Agree or disagree: These working-class suburbanites were consistent Libertarians inasmuch as they consistently demanded as little government as possible.

## Week #10

(Short Essay #5 due December 5, December 6)

Environmentalism and Status in the Modern West

To Do This Week:

- Instructor's weekly video
- [Rina Ghose, "Big Sky or Big Sprawl? Rural Gentrification and the Changing Cultural Landscape of Missoula, Montana" \*Urban Geography\*, 2004](#)
- [Michael Allen, "'I Just Want to be a Cosmic Cowboy': Hippies, Cowboy Code, and the Culture of a Counterculture," \*Western Historical Quarterly\*, 2005](#)

- [Matthew A. Wilson, "The Wolf in Yellowstone: Science, Symbol, or Politics?," \*Society & Natural Resources\*](#)
- [J. Dwight Hines, "In Pursuit of Experience: The Postindustrial Gentrification of the Rural American West," \*Ethnography\*, 2010](#)
- Write a short essay of no more than 350 words on this question: How, if at all, does modern environmentalism in Western America express class privilege or conflict?

## **Assignments**

### **Short Essays/Critiques**

The five short essays/critiques are worth twenty-five (25%) percent of your course mark. The answers should be no more than 350 words in length. The answers are due by the end of Saturdays, the critiques by the end of Sundays. Please see the grading rubrics, below, for the instructor's expectations, as they are quite specific. The answers are worth 2/3s of the grade, the critiques 1/3. Please try to critique answers that have not yet been critiqued. The instructor will send his feedback through personal d2l mail.

### **Longer Essays**

These essays are the most important and heavily-weighted elements of the course. Please see the grading rubric, below, for the instructor's expectations. Do not exceed 1,000 words for the longer essays. All of your essays should focus on the assigned reading. Submit these essays via the website's drop box, which is where I'll post my feedback.

### **Extra-Credit Discussions**

Each week there will be an optional discussion available. You can post on any aspects of the readings that you would like—and respond to the posts of others. If you make a meaningful contribution to the discussion (go beyond the obvious), I'll give you an extra .25 points. If you make an exceptional contribution to the discussion, I'll give you an extra .5 points. The maximum amount of extra credit that anyone can receive during the term, then, is 5 points. You must post by the end of Saturday each week to receive extra credit, and there are no extensions for extra credit.

### **Providing Context/References**

Unlike many history courses, which require a mastery of the Chicago Manual of Style method of notation, for this course you need only to place the author's name and page number in parentheses after a quotation. But in the text you should also provide context for the quotation. Here is an example: "We have never had minority problems here," wrote a Los

Angeles woman in 1964, “until the red agitators, minority bosses, and self-interested politicians commenced to stir up ill will” (Nicolaides, 311-312). If you use any outside sources (which is not encouraged), please list the book’s author, title, place of publication, publisher, and date of publication at the end of your essay.

**Grading Rubrics**

Short Essay Rubric

This table describes the characteristics of an excellent, good, average, poor, and very poor short essay.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very Poor</b>
Clarity of Prose (20%)	Clear and concise	Clear but at times wordy	Generally clear, often repetitive	Hard to understand, very repetitive	Very hard to follow
Focus (20%)	The thesis, topic sentences, and evidence are aligned with each other and address the question	The thesis answers the question, the topic sentences and most of the evidence support the thesis	The topic sentences and evidence support aspects of the thesis	The argument is vague or inconsistent, the essay diffuse	The essay seems unrelated to the question
Evidence (60%)	There are 6 pieces or more of evidence (paraphrased or quoted) and they are placed in context (such as date, speaker, place)	There are 4-5 pieces of evidence and they are placed in context	There are 2-3 pieces of evidence, usually without context	There is an example with little if any context,	What evidence?

Long Essay Rubric

This table describes the characteristics of an excellent, good, average, poor, and very poor long essay.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very Poor</b>
Clarity of Prose (15%)	Clear and concise	Clear but at times wordy	Generally clear, often repetitive	Hard to understand, very repetitive	Very hard to follow
Focus (15%)	The thesis, topic sentences, and evidence are aligned with each other and address the question	The thesis answers the question, and the topic sentences and most of the evidence support the thesis	The topic sentences and evidence support aspects of the thesis	The argument is vague or inconsistent, the essay diffuse	The essay seems unrelated to the question
Evidence (50%)	There are 4 pieces or more of evidence (paraphrased or quoted) per (roughly 150-word) paragraph, and they are placed in context (such as date, speaker, place)	There are 2-3 pieces of evidence per paragraph, and they are usually placed in context	There are 1-2 pieces of evidence, usually without context, per paragraph	Most of the paragraphs lack evidence, and little context is provided for it	There are only 1-2 pieces of evidence in the entire essay or none at all
Analysis (30%)	The essay is sensitive to multiple arguments and shows originality of thought	The essay acknowledges that there is more than one good way to answer the question and shows some independent thought	The essay answers the question but is not sensitive to complexity	The essay speaks to the question's general topic without really answering the question	The essay does not answer the question

## Critique Rubric

This table describes the characteristics of an excellent, good, average, poor, and very poor critique.

Area	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Balance (35%)	The critique identifies the essay's strengths and weaknesses	The critique is strong weaknesses but thin on weaknesses	The critique is strong on strengths but thin on weaknesses	The critique does not much address the essay weaknesses	The critique does not address the essay
Breadth and Specificity (65%)	The critique addresses all three categories by identifying 2 or more specific strengths or weaknesses in each of the 3 categories (thesis, topic sentences, evidence)	The critique addresses 1-2 specific strengths or weaknesses in all three categories	The critique addresses 1 specific strength or weaknesses in each category	The critique addresses 1-2 categories	The critique does not address the essay

### Critical Thinking Defined:

The ability to explore many perspectives, interpretations, and pieces of evidence before forming a nuanced conclusion.

### Late Policies

I am liberal with extensions if they are requested before the due date—although I realize that there are occasions in which that is not possible. E-mail me if you would like me to consider granting you a retro-active extension. I am reluctant to grant more than two extensions per term.

If you do not request an extension before an assignment is due or persuade me that you should have a retroactive extension, even work that is just a few minutes late will receive no credit, with this exception: longer essays turned in within twenty-four hours past the due date will receive half credit.

All assignments must be turned in by the day and time of the final assignment. Requests for the grade of incomplete must be received by the day and time of the last assignment, and such requests will not necessarily be granted. Students must have completed at least half of the work for the course to receive an incomplete. If you are unable to keep up with the work of the course during the first half of the term, you should drop the course as soon as possible.

### **Online Etiquette**

Please do your best to:

1. Take issue with each others' ideas, not each other—stay respectful;
2. Not take criticism of your work personally; we are all trying to help each other improve, and that requires honest feedback;
3. Realize and accept that we come from diverse backgrounds, including age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, political and religious beliefs, and experiences.
4. Be open to changing your mind.

### **Plagiarism**

It is cheating to pass off the work of others as your own. This includes using the words of scholars without attribution (be sure to use quotation marks and indicating the source of the words) and using the words of your fellow students. Your instructor takes such violations of the ethical code very seriously and will penalize violators as severely as the university allows. Consequences can include failing the class and having the violation noted on your permanent university record.

### **Accessibility**

It is Portland State University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, please register with the [Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC) (503-725-4150 or [drc@pdx.edu](mailto:drc@pdx.edu)) in order to establish reasonable accommodations. Once you have registered with the DRC, please schedule a time to talk to me so that we can discuss your needs for the term.