



History 21 – Race, Ethnicity and Gender in American Culture

Spring 2017 (2/8 – 5/17)

Instructor: Nick Perrone

Course: History 21

Course Time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 4:00-6:00 PM (Late Start)

Location: Emeritus Hall 1678

Office Hours: TBA

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Introduction and Requirements:

This course is an examination of the interrelated roles of race, ethnicity and gender in shaping political and cultural institutions in the United States. From pre-Columbian times to the present, the course will explore and analyze the experiences, contributions, and interconnectedness of African, Asian, European, Latino and Native American peoples. Special emphasis is placed on analyzing the cause and effect relationships in U.S. history and on the historical interpretation of events and trends in U.S. history.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of historical methodology and an analytical approach to interpreting the past.
2. Compare and contrast different historical interpretations to explain historical events and societal change over time.
3. Recognize the critical role of gender in the acculturation and assimilation of particular ethnic groups in the United States.
4. Identify the legacies of racism and sexism and their impact on American law and custom.
5. Analyze political, economic, social and cultural developments in the United States from the perspectives of Asian, African, European, Latino, and Native American peoples.
6. Place key events and actors in appropriate historical time periods.
7. Create and support an historical argument.
8. Distinguish between primary and secondary sources.
9. Analyze critical events in US history from the varied perspectives of African, Asian, European, Latino and Native Americans.
10. Analyze the critical role that women from different ethnicities and classes have played in the social, political, and economic development of the United States.
11. Compose expository essays, critically analyzing historically significant people, events, and problems in the United States history connected to issues of ethnicity and/or gender

Expectations:

Full and informed participation (attending class, keeping up with all assigned readings, and actively engaging with discussions) is expected of all students and will comprise 10% of the grade. Several short, in-class quizzes will count for another 15% of the grade. Two short paper will comprise 30% of your grade. 20% of your grade will come from the midterm. The last 25% of the grade will be drawn from the final examination. Please be aware that there will be no late assignments accepted in this class. Failure to hand in any assignment by the deadline will result in a failing grade on that assignment.

A word on e-mail: I will do everything in my power to respond to student e-mails as quickly as I can (within 24 hours, whenever that's possible). That said, I will not accept any assignments via e-mail. And I warn you that I don't always check e-mail more than once a day.

There will be numerous reading assignments and I will expect you to keep up with the readings from class meeting to class meeting. I will frequently ask you to draw upon the assigned reading in order to participate in class discussions. Some weeks will have more reading than others so be prepared to get a head start on some of the longer reading assignments.

Discussions:

You will be required to answer weekly discussion questions and bring a typed copy of your response to class. Answering the questions is not necessarily all you need to do in order to receive full credit. You need to be sure to have some measure of analysis in your answer. I don't simply want you to report back what the sources said, but do some critical reading and demonstrate that you have the ability to think critically.

You also need to have an argument. This is a good way to think about approaching any writing at the college level. We are beyond the point where you just need to prove that you did the reading. I don't want a book report, but instead I want you to demonstrate that you have the ability to construct an argument from the reading. If I ask about the similarities and differences between slaves and indentured servants, you should be able to make an argument about the nature of unfree labor (was it good? was it bad? were there winners and losers? if so, who were they? was race an issue? if so, why? if not, why not?) The point here is that you can take any number of positions and make a convincing argument. This is the beauty of historical writing. There is not just one single right answer, there are a number of right answers. There are a number of ways to make a convincing argument.

And this leads us to our final part of the argument. In order to receive full credit, you must support your argument with evidence. We all have opinions, but they mean a lot less without evidence to support them. You can say that aliens built the pyramids, but without evidence it doesn't make for a very compelling argument (and you sound crazy). The Major Problems book is where you should be able to find the primary source evidence that you need to support your argument. What you saw on the History Channel, or what your friend told you is not evidence. These are not academic or primary sources. And since this is a college level course, you should be able to demonstrate that you can utilize college level sources.

Finally, be sure to make thoughtful, well-reasoned comments to your colleagues. Just saying, "nice summary," or "I totally agree with what you said here" is not really good enough. Try and actually engage with the argument. You can be critical as long as you are constructive and polite. Our classroom is a safe place to express our ideas, so racism, sexism, homophobia or any other form of intolerance will not be allowed.

A Note on Terminology:

This is just a bit of guidance to help you navigate the sometimes perilous subject of historical terminology. Many of the readings use the term "negro" when referring to African Americans. Most of these readings are from the nineteenth century through the 1960s. From the 1970s forward, that term falls out of favor with the people that it was used to describe, and thus becomes outdated and, in most cases, inappropriate. You should only use the term "negro" in quotes, as I have done, and only when referring directly to how people used the term in the past. It would be best to use the term African Americans at all times, unless directly quoting a text. The term "negro" is no longer appropriate and is offensive. The term African American did not exist in the nineteenth century, and the word "negro" was the most popular and, at the time, appropriate word for referring to Americans of African descent. Times have changed and that term is no longer appropriate.

The same goes for "colored people." This term is no longer appropriate to use. It was used through the 1960s, but has really been out of favor and become offensive in the last 40 years. If you need to describe all racial minorities in one fell swoop, then the term "people of color" is best. But, you should try and distinguish between racial and ethnic groups at all times. The experiences and situations of minority groups is almost never the same, and thus you should use extreme caution when using the term anyhow.

I don't make the rules, but you should be aware of what is and is not appropriate out in the wider world. Stick with "African Americans" and "people of color" and you should be alright. There are far more nuances to these terms, and more terms that are appropriate or even better to use under certain circumstances, but for now these are a couple good rules to get acquainted with.



Here is a good article to help explain the change over time and place:

<http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2014/03/30/295931070/the-journey-from-colored-to-minorities-to-people-of-color> (Links to an external site.)

The same rules apply when referring to Hispanics (people who come from Spanish speaking countries), Latinx (people who come from Latin America), and Chicanx (people of Mexican origin). Confused? That's alright, we'll have a whole section on when these terms became more popular and why. Here's a quick video to help you out if you need it: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/hispanic-latino-latinx-difference_us_57e40929e4b0e28b2b52b15e

One more note on terminology while we're at it. Please do not use the term "illegals" when referring to a person or group of people you believe to be in the United States without documentation. Only very serious misbehavior is generally considered "criminal" in our legal system. Violations of less serious laws are usually "civil" matters and are tried in civil courts. People accused of crimes are tried in criminal courts and can be imprisoned. Federal immigration law says that unlawful presence in the country is a civil offense and is, therefore, not a crime. The punishment is deportation (<http://www.tolerance.org/immigration-myths>).

Special Needs and Emergencies:

If you require special educational services due to any special needs of any kind, please see me by the beginning of the second week of class. You will need to provide campus-authorized verification and a list of needed services. Similarly, in the event of serious illness, personal injury, death in the family, or other personal crisis, I will be sympathetic and flexible with assignments if you alert me quickly. A belated excuse for missing class, an exam, or failing to submit a paper will not suffice. For all medical excuses, you will need to provide appropriate and clear written documentation.

Academic Honesty:

Students are expected to observe the standards of scholarly integrity detailed in the Solano Community College Code of Student Conduct and discipline. According to the code, “Academic dishonesty, such as cheating or plagiarism; forgery, alteration, misuse, misappropriation or theft of College papers, documents, records or identification or knowingly furnishing false information to the District or College or its officers or employees” are all forms of academic dishonesty. Any student appearing to have committed such violations will be referred to the Vice President of Student Services for disciplinary action.

Course Texts:

All books listed below are available for purchase at the campus bookstore, or, if you prefer, via online vendors, and have been placed on reserve at the library.

Ronald Takaki, *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America Revised Edition* (2008)

Angela Y. Davis, *Race, Women, Race, & Class*

Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*

A Note On the Texts:

The books I have selected are designed to accomplish two main tasks. The Takaki book is assigned in order to provide you mainly with historical interpretations. There are a series of essays in each chapter that have been written by a professional historian. These essays offer a particular interpretation of the period in which we are studying. You might read the chapter and come to a different conclusion than the author about the cause and effect, and that is alright. This book will provide you with an understanding of how historians “do history.” Essentially, historians interpret and analyze primary sources in order to try and understand cause and effect as well as change over time. This is one of the primary goals of this course, the ability to understand **change over time**. While it is important to learn about important historical actors, **history is not about memorizing names and dates**. Hopefully this book will help drive this point home.

You will use Deloria to write the short paper, and Davis to write the long paper. I will explain these assignments in greater detail as we get closer to the due dates.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, **buy the books!!!!!!** (or rent them, or check them out from the library, or download them for free from a sketchy Russian website that will steal your identity and crash

your computer) I am not particularly concerned with how you get the books. I am sympathetic to financial restrictions and that is why I have chosen books that are widely available in multiple formats and reasonably priced. You will need the books to complete this course. There is no reason to wait until week three to purchase the books. If you are purchasing the books from an online purveyor that promises to deliver the books within three weeks, then be sure to have a way to access the assigned readings in the interim. If you email me to inform me that your books “are on the way” you will not receive an extension on your assignments. If you get your books early, you will decrease your risk of falling behind.

Part One: A Savage Civilization

Week One: Introduction

2/8 Course Introduction/Defining Race

Reading: Takaki, Chapter 1

Week Two: The Indians Old World?

2/13 Encounter

2/15 Invasion

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 2

Week Three: Empire of Slavery

2/20 **Washington’s Day Holiday (No Class)**

2/22 “The Half Has Never Been Told”

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 3

Part Two: A Republic of Liberty?

Week Four: Race and Capitalism

2/27 Indian Removal

3/1 Women and Abolition

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 4 & 5

Week Five: Divide and Conquer

3/6 Division of Laborers

3/8 Manifest Destiny

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 6 & 7

Week Six: Fortune and Slavery in the West

3/13 American Made

3/15 **Midterm**

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 8

Week Seven: **Spring Break**

3/20 No Class

3/22 No Class

Reading:

Part Three: A Nation of the Displaced

Week Eight: Immigrants in Their Own Land

3/27 A Nation of Massacres

3/29 The Japanese in America (**PAPER #1 DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS**)

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 9 & 10

Week Nine: Ghetto to Ghetto

4/3 Sweatshop Nation

4/5 Triangle Factory Fire

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 11

Week Ten: The Promised Land

4/10 Mexican America

4/12 Cities of Broken Dreams

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 12 & 13

Week Eleven: Internment, Incarceration, or Concentration?

4/17 Executive Order 9066

4/19 Korematsu

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 14

Part Four: The Fear of Diversity

Week Twelve: Lavender Scare

4/24 Gay Government Workers in the Cold War

4/26 Stonewall

Read: Textbook Chapter 15

Week Thirteen: Reform and Rebellion

5/1 Refugees (**PAPER #2 DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS**)

5/3 The Politics of Imprisonment

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 16

Week Fourteen: The New Right

5/8 The Rise of the New Right

5/10 End of the New Deal Consensus

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 17

Week Fifteen: The Last Right Turn?

5/15 Review

Final – May 17, Time TBD

Check the finals schedule on the college website to be sure of the final time and date.

*Please note that this syllabus will change as we move through the semester. Inevitably, some discussions and topics will require more discussion than originally planned. This depends on a number of factors including but not limited to class dynamics and current events. I will add and subtract readings depending on the circumstances.