



The United States from 1815 to 1877



Instructor: James Paxton

Fall 2013

Office: Comenius 306

Office Hours: Mon. & Wed. 1:30-2:30, Fri. 10:30-11:30, or by appointment.

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Welcome to HIST 243! This course provides a historiographical introduction to some of the major themes in American history between the end of the War of 1812 and the American Civil War. Together we will examine the developments in the economy and society of Antebellum American that contributed to the outbreak of the Civil War. Despite an outpouring of books and articles on the subject, historians cannot agree on the war's causes. To be sure, slavery was at the root of North-South tensions but slavery had existed since before the founding of the nation and cannot by itself account for secession. Did, as some contend, slavery give rise to two hostile economies and cultures? Did the Civil War pit a premodern, agrarian south against a modern, industrializing North? Or were North and South essentially the same? This year we will attempt to formulate possible answers to the question "How different were North and South?"

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students will be able to

- critically evaluate, and use secondary sources.
- identify major schools of thought and historiographical debates that have shaped historians' understanding of the Antebellum and Civil War periods.
- understand the ways in which historians have "constructed" the past.
- further develop clear and effective oral and written communications skills.
- use writing conventions appropriate to the discipline of history.

Attendance

While there is no penalty for missing classes, students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes. Comprehension of the material and success in the course depends upon your participating in class discussions.

Grade Distribution

Reading Journals	17%
Paper (44% broken down as follows)	
Topic and meeting with me (week of Sept. 23)	3%
Outline and bibliography (Oct. 7)	5%
Abstracts (4@2%) (Oct. 16)	8%
Historiography (Oct. 30)	10%
Full draft (Nov. 13)	5%
Final paper (Dec. 6)	17%
Peer Review (2@3%)	6%
Participation	15%
Presentation	12%

The participation grade reflects the quality and quantity of your participation. It is an attendance grade only to the extent that if you are not present you cannot participate.

Late Policy

Papers turned in after the beginning of the class on which they are due will be assessed a penalty of 5% for the first day they are late and 2% for each day thereafter. Computer and printing problems are not acceptable reasons for lateness.

Assignments

Reading Journals

Throughout the semester you will write a weekly reading log in which you identify and evaluate the thesis and argument of the articles you read. I will provide a model for you to use. I will read every log entry to ensure that you are keeping up with the reading and take them seriously. In terms of format and style, logs may be less formal than the essays. They will be graded for content, regularity, and willingness to engage with ideas, rather than for stylistic concerns such as spelling and grammar. Nonetheless, I do expect you to proofread your reading logs before handing them in. Reading logs are due at the **beginning** of class. Late logs will not be accepted. Logs will receive a grade of 0-3.

Essay

Part 1: The major assignment in this course is a twelve-page essay written in stages that combines historiography with primary research. First, you will select a topic in consultation with me. Beyond fitting within the chronologically and geographic limits of the course, the primary criterion for choosing a topic is that both primary and secondary sources must be available to you. You will work with the secondary sources first. On Oct. 30, you will turn in a five-page historiographical analysis of at least three major books on your topic. A historiographical essay provides comment and analysis on a number of works pertaining to one subject. Do not summarize the contents of the books. Instead, write a coherent essay with a thesis that assesses how historians have interpreted the topic over time. We will discuss historiography and historiographical papers in class.

Part 2: Once you have written the historiographical paper, you will then analyze the pertinent primary sources and in a seven-page paper that assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the historiography. A full draft is due Nov. 13 and the final paper on Dec. 4.

Academic Dishonesty

According to the Moravian College Student Handbook, the following constitutes plagiarism: "the use, deliberate or not, of any outside source without proper acknowledgment. While the work of others often constitutes a necessary resource for academic research, such work must be properly used and credited to the original author. This principle applies to professional scholars as well as to students....All work that students submit or present as part of course assignments or requirements must be their own original work....When students use the specific thoughts, ideas, writings, or expressions of others, they must accompany each instance of use with some form of attribution to the source. Direct quotes from any source (including the Internet) must be placed in quotation marks...and be accompanied by an appropriate citation." Plagiarism

will result in the offender receiving zero in the course. Please consult the Student Handbook for fuller details.

It is normal and desirable that students will assist each other with assignments. Such assistance may take two forms. In discussing your papers outside of class, someone may give you an idea or clarify your thinking that you later incorporate into the paper. Note you are not taking their ideas word for word. This is permissible but you must acknowledge your friend's contribution either in the text or in a footnote. Similarly, you should acknowledge in a footnote anyone who has read and commented on your paper.

Accommodation

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, assistant director of learning services for academic and disability support at 1307 Main Street, or by calling 610-861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

Schedule

Week 1 Aug. 26	Jacksonian and Antebellum America: An Historiographical Introduction
Aug. 28	Assessing Articles and Books
Week 2 Sept 2	Labor Day – No Class
Sept. 4	A Framework of Interpretation Sean Wilentz, Society, Politics, and the Market Revolution, 1815-1848,” in Eric Foner, ed. <i>The New American History</i> (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997), 61-83. Due: Reading Journal 1
Week 3 Sept. 9	The Problem: How Different were North and South? Eugene Genovese, <i>The Political Economy of Slavery</i> (New York: Vintage, 1964), 3-10, 13-39. Group 1 James McPherson, “Antebellum Southern Exceptionalism: A New Look at an Old Question,” <i>Civil War History</i> 50 (2004): 418-433. Group 2 Due: Reading Journal 2. How do Genovese and McPherson address the issue of exceptionalism differently? What accounts for their differences?
Sept. 11	Technology William G. Thomas, <i>The Iron Way: Railroads, the Civil War, and the Making of Modern America</i> (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 1-55. Due: Reading Journal 3.
Week 4 Sept. 16	Evaluation of Thomas’s argument based on his sources
Sept. 18	Industrial Labor Thomas Dublin, “Women, Work, and Protest in the Early Lowell Mills,” <i>Labor History</i> 16 (Winter 1975): 99-116. Due: Reading Journal 4.
Week 5 Sept. 23	Northern Society and Religion Paul E. Johnson, <i>A Shopkeeper’s Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837</i> (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 3-78. Due: Reading Journal 5.

	<p>Note: Individual Meetings to Discuss Paper Topics This week I will meet with each of you to discuss topics for your final paper. We will schedule meeting times the previous week. At least 24-hours before the meeting email me 150 word outline of your thoughts about a paper.</p>
Sept. 25	<p>Southern Society William Barney, "Toward the Civil War: The Dynamics of Change in a Black Belt County," in eds., Orville Burton and Robert McMath, <i>Class, Conflict and Consensus: Antebellum Southern Community Studies</i> (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982), 146-65. Due: Reading Journal 6.</p>
Week 6 Sept. 30	<p>Northern Society and Religion Cont'd Paul E. Johnson, <i>A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837</i> (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 79-141. Due: Reading Journal 7.</p>
Oct. 2	<p>Two Approaches to the Slave Experience Kenneth M. Stampp, <i>The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South</i> (New York: Knopf, 1956), 322-382. Robert William Fogel and Stanley Engerman, <i>Time On the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery</i> (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1974), 107-157. Due: Reading Journal 8.</p>
Week 7 Oct. 7	<p>Southern Women Slave and Free Deborah Gray White, <i>Ar'n't I a Woman: Female Slaves in the Plantation South</i> (New York: Norton, 1985), 62-90. Group 1 Catherine Clinton, "Women in the Land of Cotton" and "Slaves of Slaves" <i>The Plantation Mistress</i> (1982), 3-15, 16-35. Group 2 Due: Reading Journal 9. Discussion: Was race or gender more important to southern women's identities? Would they have emphasized the similarities or differences between them?</p>
Oct. 9	<p>Testing the Interpretations Eugene Genovese, <i>Roll Jordan Roll</i> (New York: Vintage, 1976), 3-7. Due: Reading Journal 10. Read a minimum of ten slave narratives from the Library of Congress website. Bring two of the most important to class. Citing the historians' arguments (Stampp, Fogel, White) and evidence from the narratives, do the narratives support one interpretation of slavery over another or are the results more ambiguous.</p>
Week 8 Oct. 14	<p>Fall Recess – No Class</p>
Oct. 16	<p>Southern Politics and Political Culture Kenneth S. Greenberg, <i>Masters and Statesmen: The Political Culture of American Slavery</i> (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985). Due: Reading Journal 11. Due: Abstracts via email by 3pm.</p>
Week 9 Oct. 21	<p>Northern Women: Ideal and Reality Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," <i>American Quarterly</i> 18 (1966), about 4 pages. Found in abridged form at http://www.pinzler.com/ushistory/culttwo.html Nancy Grey Osterud, <i>Bonds of Community: The Lives of Farm Women in</i></p>

	<p><i>Nineteenth-Century New York</i> (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 1-13, 139-158.</p> <p>Due: Reading Journal 12.</p>
Oct. 23	<p>Individual meetings to discuss papers</p> <p>This week I will meet with each of you to discuss the progress of your paper. At least 24-hours before the meeting email me an agenda consisting of three questions you have about the paper.</p>
<p>Week 10 Oct. 28</p>	<p>Sectionalism and Secession</p> <p>James McPherson, "What Caused the Civil War?" <i>North South</i> 4 (November 2000): 13-22. Common</p> <p>Joel Silbey, "The Surge of Republican Power," <i>The Partisan Imperative: The Dynamics of American Party Politics before the Civil War</i> (1985), 166-89.</p> <p>Group 1</p> <p>Marc Egnal, "The Beards Were Right: Parties in the North, 1840-1860," <i>Civil War History</i> 47 (March 2001): 30-56. Group 2</p> <p>Due: Reading Journal 13. Compare McPherson's thesis with that of your author.</p>
Oct. 30	<p>Historiographical Paper Due</p> <p>Read: "Useful Feedback and Constructive Criticism," 1p. "Revision," in <i>A Sequence for Academic Writing</i>, 245-250.</p>
<p>Week 11 Nov. 4</p>	<p>Peer Review Workshop</p> <p>Bring to class two copies of the papers you commented on, one for me and one for the author.</p>
Nov. 6	<p>Why Men Fought?</p> <p>Reid Mitchell, "The Northern Soldier and His Community," in <i>The Vacant Chair: The Northern Soldier Leaves Home</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 19-37. Group 1</p> <p>James Paxton, "Fighting for Independence and Slavery: Confederate Perceptions of Military Life," <i>Virginia Social Science Journal</i> 33 (1997): 31-46. Group 2</p> <p>Due: Reading Journal 14.</p>
<p>Week 12 Nov. 11</p>	<p>Michael Fellman, "Terrorism and the Civil War" in Fellman, <i>In the Name of God and Country: Reconsidering Terrorism in American History</i> (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010): 57-96.</p> <p>Marc Neely, "Was the Civil War a Total War?" <i>Civil War History</i> 37 (March 1991): 5-28.</p> <p>Due: Reading Journal 15.</p>
Nov. 13	Due: Full draft of paper including historiography.
<p>Week 13 Nov. 18</p>	Peer Review Workshop
Nov. 20	<p>African Americans and the War</p> <p>Jim Cullen, "'I's a Man Now': Gender and African American Men," in Catherine Clinton and Niona Silber, eds., <i>Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 76-91.</p> <p>Emory Thomas, <i>The Confederacy as a Revolutionary Experience</i> (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1971), 119-132.</p> <p>Due: Reading Journal 16.</p>
<p>Week 14 Nov. 25-29</p>	Thanksgiving – No Class
Week 15	What Difference did the War Make?

Dec. 2	Jonathan M. Wiener, <i>Planter-Merchant Conflict in Reconstruction Alabama</i> ,” Past and Present 68 (Aug. 1975): 73-94. Michael J. Pfeifer, “The Northern United State and the Genesis of Racial Lynching: The Lynching of African Americans in the Civil War Era,” <i>Journal of American History</i> (Dec. 2010): 621-635. Due: Reading Journal 17.
Dec. 4	Conclusion and Review Due: Final paper via email by 4pm
Dec. 11 8:30	Presentations