

HIST 270
Fall 2015
M/W 10:20-11:30
PPHAC 338

Dr. Jane Berger
bergerj@moravian.edu
Office hours: MW 11:30-1:00,
Thurs. 11:30-12:30 and by appointment

HISTORICAL METHODS AND INTERPRETATIONS



WHAT DIFFERENT IDEAS ABOUT U.S. HISTORY DO YOU GET FROM THESE IMAGES? IF EACH OF THESE PICTURES WAS INDIVIDUALLY ON THE COVER OF A HISTORY BOOK, WHAT WOULD YOU EXPECT EACH BOOK TO BE ABOUT? IS ANY OF THE PICTURES A MORE ACCURATE REPRESENTATION OF U.S. HISTORY THAN THE OTHERS? ARE ANY OF THE PICTURES BIASED REPRESENTATIONS OF U.S. HISTORY? WHY OR WHY NOT? WHY MIGHT IT BE CONTROVERSIAL TO PICK AN IMAGE TO REPRESENT U.S. HISTORY? WHAT KINDS OF ISSUES DO YOU THINK HISTORIANS THINK ABOUT WHEN DECIDING WHAT IMAGE(S) TO PUT ON THEIR BOOKS?

Course Description:

One of the questions this course will answer is “If the past does not change, why do historians write so many books about a single topic?” Answering this question reveals some of the difference between professional history and journalistic or antiquarian history. Historians not only hold different assumptions about the forces that drive historical change but each generation of historians approaches the past with different concerns and questions. Consequently, two historians using the same sources may come to quite different conclusions about the past. This course will focus on historiography (the history of history) and how the writing of history has changed over time and how historians actually work (the nuts and bolts of history). You will find this class challenging and sometimes confusing, but by the end of the semester you will be familiar with how professional historians work and the major “schools” of historical thought. I hope also that you will be on your way to developing your own philosophy about the nature of history and historical change.¹

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, you should have improved your ability to:

1. explain the ways interpretations of history change across time and place.
2. articulate your own view of why history matters and what historians ought to be doing.
3. identify and describe the main ‘schools’ of historiographical thought.
4. locate and use the chief tools of historical research (books, journal articles, electronic resources, and oral history).
5. design and deliver effective oral presentations.
6. write effectively using the conventions of history.

READINGS

Berger, Stefan, Heiko Feldner and Kevin Passmore, *Writing History: Theory and Practice* (Bloomsbury, New York, 2010).

I also expect that you have retained the *Bedford Handbook* or equivalent from your FYS/Writing 100 class. If not, you will want to borrow or purchase a copy.

EVALUATION AND ASSIGNMENTS

10% Participation

- Attendance is not enough; you need to be proactive expressing your ideas and doubts and interacting with other classmates. Participation is essential to generate a rich and stimulating discussion and to maintain students involved and motivated.
- In order to effectively participate you have to complete all the readings before class, take notes about them and be prepared to ask questions about, discuss, and reflect on the

¹ I wish to thank my colleagues in the History Department, particularly Sandra Aguilar, Jamie Paxton, Sandy Bardsley, and Heikki Lempa, who have generously shared their ideas and assignments.

assigned material. Be ready to define the main arguments and ideas addressed in each document, give your opinion about the content and style of each text, and establish connections with what we have read so far and your previous knowledge and experience. Comments such as: "my classmate already said everything", "I don't have anything else to add", "the main points were already covered", "s/he already summarized everything," or similar statements are not considered a form of participation.

- Asking questions is also an essential element of the learning process, so do not feel ashamed about having doubts. One of the main goals of college education is to develop a critical mind and be able to see the world from various perspectives, so please ask questions and express your dissent.
- Prior to the start of each class I will ask you to provide the main argument of the reading and to share your questions and concerns.
- If you aim to get an A or A- you need to do all the readings. This is a very intense course, so please organize your study time so you can finish readings before the due date.

7% **Presentation**

You will present the assigned reading once throughout the semester

Presentations will consist of a **seven- to ten-minute** analysis, including:

- a) A brief summary of the main argument(s) of the reading and how the author supports it, making specific references to pages and section.
- b) A concise analysis of one element of the reading that you found compelling and think warrants further discussion, including an explanation of why the class should consider such specific topic.
- c) One question for the class to consider as a group. You do not necessarily need to know the answer to the question, it is meant to clarify the arguments and/or expand the discussion of the reading. If you do not have a PowerPoint presentation, you need to write the question on the board.
- d) You can use Power Point or any equivalent software to present or you can just stand in front of the classroom and use written notes. You do not need to submit any written document as part of your presentation.

Presentation Rubric

Grade	Points	Description
Excellent	10	Student concisely presents the reading, providing a critical analysis of the main argument. S/he selects one topic to elaborate on, offering a succinct explanation of why such idea should be further considered. Comments make clear reference to pages and sections. The question for the class is clearly grounded in the text; careful thinking is required to give a possible answer. Overall, the presentation offers analytical arguments to rethink the text. It stays within 7 - 10 minutes time range.

identified within that historiographical trend. Therefore, to plan your presentation you need to address these two aspects:

- Provide a brief academic biography. (2 minutes)
- Give an assessment of their approach to history. In order to do so, read one chapter or article written by that historian and offer five clear examples of his/her writing that could identify him as a Marxist, Annaliste, social historian, or a combination of various approaches.
- This presentation should last no more than 10 minutes
- You will present a historian on the same day in which you present an analysis of a text. That will help you understand better why a particular historian is associated with a set historiographical school.
- You will not submit any written document as part of this assignment.

50% Historiographical Paper

- The final paper should be 10-12 pages double-spaced and be based on at least eight books or articles in any area of modern U.S. history (with my approval). Modern U.S. history begins after the Civil War. You will not be able to find an adequate number of secondary sources written by historians on a very recent topic. I will provide a list of possible topics, however, you are free to work on any topic of your interest.
- This paper must be written in formal, carefully-proofread, academic prose, with complete footnotes and bibliography. You will be writing this paper in stages throughout the semester, so you will receive lots of feedback and will make significant revisions.

As you prepare your paper, please keep in mind the following:

1. In the introduction you should summarize the history just to provide a general background on what historians are working on. This is not a traditional history paper in which you give an account of what happened in the past (narrative). You will analyze how historians have interpreted the past and the sources they have used (historiography).
2. Analysis of the historiography: you can do this chronologically or thematically. You will present the main theories or interpretations supported by the historians you reviewed. In order to do that you need to take into consideration the year in which the work was first published, the background of the historian, the primary sources used, and the arguments used to support their thesis. Not all historians' work fit into a single category. Scholars are typically influenced by more than one historiographical school. Therefore instead of just defining them as Annalists or economic historians analyze their multiple perspectives.
3. Objectivity: a historiographical paper is not an assessment of a historian's objectivity or lack of it. It is about understanding the way in which historians look

at the past and the value of their perspective in generating a better sense of a historical moment.

4. In the conclusions you should state what you see as the most interesting aspects of the topic already covered and what you would like to see historians work on in the future.

5 % Research topic and bibliography

Provide a tentative title and explain what topic you are planning to research, why it is interesting to you, and what perspectives historians have taken to study it based on the secondary sources that you have identified. The bibliography must include at least five books or articles (no website information should be used unless I authorize it ahead of time). Your bibliography should be in Chicago Style

5% Abstracts

Abstracts should be no longer than half a page. You will continue researching, reading and adding material for your final paper, however this literature review will be your first (required) opportunity to dissect in writing each of your sources individually and to consider your sources collectively. Spend time thinking about what the sources have in common and how they differ. Those assessments will be the meat of your final paper. In class, we will work on making charts that will help you organize your thinking. You are permitted to change topics, but you need to do so early in the writing process, so you do not get behind.

10% First draft

At least 5 pages. You need to add a bibliography, which does not count towards the five pages. The first draft does not necessarily have to be the first five pages of your paper. It will be your first attempt to put your ideas about the historiography you are reading in writing, and therefore it will probably change.

10% Second draft

At least 10 pages including you introduction, conclusions and bibliography consisting of at least eight books and/or journal articles. The bibliography does not count towards the overall number of pages.

On the due date you should submit your paper to me and to your team member/s via email. A week later we will have a writing workshop during which you will provide and receive detailed feedback.

10% Final Paper

10-12 pages including introduction, conclusions and bibliography. Bibliography does not count towards the overall number of pages.

You need to also turn in an **explanation of changes** paper. This should be one page and include a description of how you addressed the content comments from both your peer reviewer and the professor. You need to state the page numbers on which changes or revisions were made and a brief description of the rationales for the changes. Only content revisions should be included in this report. The explanation of changes should be

included at the end of your final historiography paper. In other words, you should submit one document that includes both your final paper and the explanation of changes page. I will not grade papers without an explanation of changes page.

5% Final research presentation

Presentations should last 10 minutes and will take place during the last week of classes of the semester.

5% Constructive feedback to others during peer review workshops

On days when assignments are due, you must submit all of your work electronically before the start of class (no later than 10:15am). You must also submit hardcopies of your work in class.

You are required to have correctly-formatted footnotes and bibliographic entries. Please use the Chicago Style. The following website will be of use if you are not familiar with the Chicago Style: <http://moravian.libguides.com/content.php?pid=59393&sid=436067>

The accumulated points will be converted to letter grades using the following scale:

100-93% =A, 92-90% = A-, 89-87% = B+, 86-83% = B, 82-80% = B-, 79-77% = C+, 76-73% = C, 72-70% = C-, 69-67%= D+, 66-63%= D, 62-60%= D- Anything less than 60% is an F.

Five points will be deducted from each paper's grade if it is submitted after the deadline and this deduction will be repeated for each consecutive late day after the assigned due date.

Extra-Credit

- Throughout the semester you will be offered the opportunity to earn extra credit towards your final grade by attending the History Club meetings, which usually take place in the History Commons. The meeting times of the History Club will be announced in class. History Club meetings usually include a brief presentation by a student or faculty member on his or her current research project. You need to submit a one-page reflection paper that includes the main idea or thesis of the presenter, how he/she is approaching the topic, and your assessment of the merits of the argument. You should also include at least one question for the presenter.
- There is no limit in the number of extra-credit reflections that you can submit, but you have to submit your paper no later than one week after the presentation you attend.

About style and sources:

- Please use size 12 Times New Roman font for all assignments. Except when conforming to the Chicago Style in your footnotes and bibliography, your work should be double-spaced, and your papers should have one-inch margins. The student's name, course number, and submission date should be typed in the upper left corner of the first page with single space in between lines. After this header, one blank line should appear before

the assignment title, which should be followed by one blank line before beginning the assignment.

- Contractions (don't, can't, he's) should not be used in academic writing. I will deduct two points per contraction you use.
- Do not consider Wikipedia a reliable source of information. It can be very useful, material in the entries is not always accurate. No websites (apart from journal databases) should be cited in your paper.
- Back up all your work (ideally on Google drive) in order to avoid losing your files. Computers fail, and having your work backed up will allow you to use another computer to work on your assignments if necessary.

About the Writing Center

- At the Writing Center, trained Moravian students work with you to figure out assignments and improve your writing. They can help at any stage of the writing process, whether you have not started the assignment and need help picking a topic or you are near the end and want to check that everything is in order. Any type of writing can be taken there. You can sign up for a half-hour or an hour-long appointment. After your appointment, the tutor you work with will send me a progress report, letting me know that you were there. The Writing Center is on the second floor of Zinzendorf Hall. This building is not accessible to persons with mobility disabilities. If you need the services of the Writing Center, please call 610-861-1392.

About attendance and classroom etiquette:

- The attendance policy for this course is strict. Only TWO unexcused absences are allowed in the semester. To justify an absence you must provide a doctor's note or a written explanation from an athletics coach. An email explaining why you were not in class does not suffice.
- You will lose two points per unexcused absence (beyond your two allowable unexcused absences). If you miss more than five classes your chances of passing the class will be seriously impacted. You are responsible for finding out important information provided in class if you were unable to attend.
- As a courtesy to the class, please be on time. Lateness will affect your participation grade.
- If you need to go to the restroom, please do so before or after the class. Restrain from leaving the classroom unless it is extremely necessary.
- Cell Phones: Please turn off the volume of your cell phones during class or leave them in airplane mode. No texting will be tolerated. If you need to make an urgent call or send a message, please leave the classroom. I will send you warning email the first time I see you using your cell phone in class. After the first email, you will lose one point per incidence towards your final grade.
- Contact me at least three days before the due date if you have questions about a specific assignment.
- Deadlines are not negotiable. If you foresee any issue that will interfere with meeting a deadline, please talk to me ahead of time.

Students with disabilities

- Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact the Academic Support Center, located on the first floor of Monocacy Hall (extension 1401). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

Readings, Blackboard site and email communication

- All readings should be completed before coming to class. It is essential that you bring your book, readings and notes to every class as we will routinely refer to both.
- The required book is available for purchase at the bookstore.
- Everyone is responsible for visiting the Blackboard site of this course where you will find:
 - The course syllabus
 - All the readings marked with a “📖”
 - Referencing and writing advice
- I will send you relevant information and contact you when necessary only through your Moravian email account, so please check it on a daily basis. I also expect you to contact me through your college email rather than your personal email.
- Email Etiquette: Whenever you are addressing an email to someone other than a good friend, you need to follow basic email etiquette. Your emails should have a proper greeting (Professor Berger or Dr. Berger, etc.); "Hi there" or just "Hi" is not acceptable. Your message should follow the rules of standard written English (capitalization, spelling, and grammar), and a closing (“Thank you for your help,” or “Thank you for your time”). It is always polite to thank the person for reading the email and trying to assist you. Also, be sure to sign the email with your own first and last name. The subject line of your email should be clear and formal.
- I will make my best effort to reply to your emails within 24 hours from Monday to Friday.
- Office hours: Feel free to drop in during my office hours or make an appointment if those times do not work for you.

Academic honesty

Moravian College expects its students to perform their academic work honestly and fairly. A Moravian student, moreover, should neither hinder nor unfairly assist the efforts of other students to complete their work successfully. This policy of academic integrity is the foundation on which learning at Moravian is built.

The College’s expectations and the consequences of failure to meet these expectations are outlined below. If at any point in your academic work at Moravian you are uncertain about your responsibility as a scholar or about the propriety of a particular action, consult your instructor.

- Moravian College does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat.
- Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own. It may be inadvertent or intentional.
- Direct quotes from any source (including the Internet) must be placed in quotation marks (or otherwise marked appropriately) and accompanied by proper citation, following the preferred bibliographic conventions of your department or instructor.

- When you use the specific thoughts, ideas, writing, or expressions of another person, you must accompany each instance of use with some form of attribution to the source.
- It is the instructor's responsibility to make clear to all students in his or her class the preferred or required citation style for student work. Student ignorance of bibliographic convention and citation procedures is not a valid excuse for having committed plagiarism.
- If you have questions about how to reference others' works you should look at the referencing advice and explore the suggested websites in the Blackboard site of this course. Also look at <http://moravian.libguides.com/content.php?pid=59393&sid=436064>
- You may not collaborate during an in-class examination, test, or quiz. You may not work with others on out-of-class assignments, exams, or projects unless expressly allowed or instructed to do so by the course instructor. If you have any reservations about your role in working on any out-of-class assignments, you must consult with your course instructor.
- You may not use writing or research that is obtained from a "paper service" or that is purchased from any person or entity, unless you fully disclose such activity to the instructor and are given express permission.
- You may not use writing or research obtained from any other student previously or currently enrolled at Moravian or elsewhere or from the files of any student organization, such as fraternity or sorority files, unless you are expressly permitted to do so by the instructor.
- You must keep all notes, drafts, and materials used in preparing assignments until a final course grade is given. In the case of work in electronic form, you may be asked to maintain all intermediate drafts and notes electronically or in hard copy until final grades are given. All these materials must be available for inspection by the instructor at any time.
- At Moravian, if a professor suspects plagiarism, the student will be asked to show the notes and drafts contributing to the final version of a paper. The instructor also has the right to see any books or periodicals that were used. The grade for the paper will be suspended until these materials have been reviewed. An instructor who suspects a student of violating the policy on academic honesty with regard to an assignment, requirement, examination, test, or quiz will consult with the Chair, using a blind copy of the work in question, to verify the violation. If the charge is verified, the instructor will, in almost all cases, assign either a grade of zero to the academic work in question or a failing grade in the course in which the violation occurred. The student must be informed in writing of the alleged violation and penalty; a copy of this memo must be sent to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.
- A student may appeal either a charge of academic dishonesty or a penalty as follows:
 1. First, to the course instructor.
 2. Next, to the Chair.
 3. Next, to the Academic Standards Committee, chaired by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Please do not hesitate to speak directly with me if you have any questions about any of the assignments and/or requirements for the class.

SCHEDULE

8/31 Course overview

- Syllabus and grading
- Introductions

9/2 Writing and interpretation

- Write a reaction to the course syllabus including two similarities and two differences between this class and other classes you have at Moravian College. Add at least two comments that can be in the form of doubts, suggestions, or any typos/mistakes that you found.
- John Tosh, *Writing and Interpretation* 📖

9/7 The limits of historical knowledge

- John Tosh, *The limits of historical knowledge* 📖

9/9 Objectivity in history

- Bevir, *Objectivity in history* 📖

9/14 The new scientificity in historical writing around 1800

- Berger *et al.*, chapter 1, pp. 3-21.
- Select two possible topics of research.

9/16 What is a historiographical paper?

- Anthony Brundage, *The Historiographic Essay*, 📖

9/21 Finding Secondary Sources (We will meet at the library)

- You need to have at least two possible topics to take advantage of this library session.
- Assignment 1: Anatomy of an Article. Beth Bailey, “Sexuality and the Movements for Sexual Liberation.” 📖

9/23 The Rankean tradition in British historiography

- Journal 1 based on Berger *et al.*, chapter 2, pp. 22-39
- Discussion of assignment 1.

9/28 The professionalization and institutionalization of history

- Research topic and bibliography due.
- Berger *et al.*, chapter 3, pp. 40-58.

9/30 Marxist historiography

Presentations start

- Historian presentation: Charles and Mary Beard; Mike Davis; Robin D.G. Kelley; Howard Zinn
- Journal 2 based on Berger *et al.*, chapter 4, pp. 61-80.

10/5 The Annales

- Abstracts due
- Historian presentation: Lucien Febvre, Marc Bloch, Eduardo Galeano.
- Berger *et al.*, chapter 6, pp. 108-122.

10/7 Individual meetings to discuss your research topics

10/12 No Class: Fall Break

10/14 Political history

- Historian presentation: Stephen Ambrose; Eric Foner; Richard Hofstadter, Susan Hartmann, John Lewis Gaddis (diplomatic history).
- Berger *et al.*, chapter 11, pp. 209-227.

10/19 Social history

- Historian presentation: Herbert Gutman; Alice Kessler Harris; Tera Hunter
- Journal 3 based on Berger *et al.*, chapter 12, pp. 228-247.

10/21 Peer review workshop on first draft

- First draft due. Bring a hard copy to class.

10/26 Economic and Labor history

- Historian presentation: Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., David Montgomery, Dorothy Sue Cobble
- Berger *et al.*, chapter 13, pp. 248-267.

10/28 Class Trip to the Moravian Church Archives

11/2 Individual meetings

11/4 Intellectual history

- Historian presentation: Fredrick Jackson Turner (American West), Benedict Anderson, Jackson Lear.
- Berger *et al.*, chapter 14, pp. 268-285.

11/9 From women's history to gender history

- Historian presentation: Linda Gordon, Joan Scott, Deborah Gray White, Leilia Rupp
- Journal 4 based on Berger *et al.*, chapter 15, pp. 286-312.

11/11 Race, ethnicity and history

- Assignment 2 due. Professor interview
Locate and familiarize yourself with the publications of any Moravian history faculty member. Then interview him or her and write a 2 page critical assessment that places the individual within an historiographical tradition. Please, request an interview several days in advance.
- Historian presentation: W. E. B. DuBois, Vicki Ruiz, Mae Ngai
- Journal 5 on Berger *et al.*, chapter 16, pp. 313-329.

11/16 Peer review workshop

- Second draft due. Bring a hard copy to class.

11/18 Historiography: new cultural historians

- Historian presentations: Kathy Peiss, Lisbeth Cohen, Jefferson Cowie
- Peter Burke, “Overture: The New History, its Past and its Future,” in Peter Burke, ed., *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, 1-23. 🗨

11/23 The Career Development Center: Searching jobs and writing cover letters

- Peter Stearns, “Why Study History,” available at <http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/WhyStudyHistory.htm>

11/25 No Class: Thanksgiving

11/30 Individual meetings

12/2 Oral history

- Historian presentation: Linda Shopes, Studs Terkel, Mark Naison.
- Paul Thompson, “Four Paradigm Transformations in Oral History” 🗨
- Assignment 3 due: cover letter due 12/1 by midnight.
Search for jobs you might apply for as a history graduate. Print out the description and details of a job that interests you. Then write a letter of application (1-2 pages) in which you explain how your college education and your history degree or minor have given you the skills appropriate to the job. You should include also extra-curricular activities and job experiences.

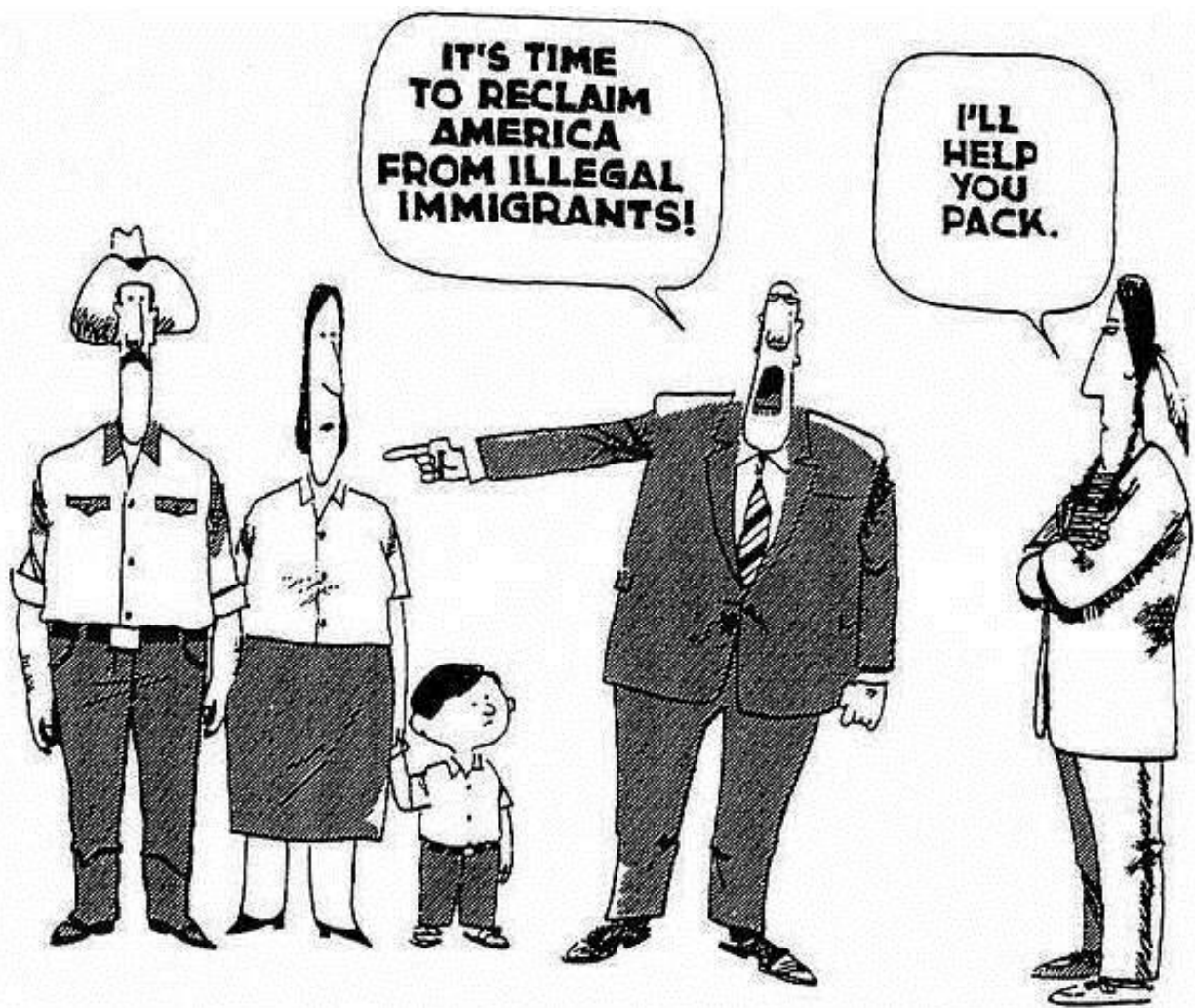
12/7 Presentations

12/9 Presentations

- Final paper due by midnight

I reserve the right to modify this syllabus. If I need to do so, I will give timely notification in class.

IF EACH OF THE SPEAKERS IN THIS CARTOON WAS TO WRITE ABOUT U.S. HISTORY, HOW MIGHT THE STORIES THEY TELL BE DIFFERENT?



STEVE KELLY, 1/1/2000