

HIST 104: Interpreting the American Past
Spring 2014, Monday/Wednesday, 3:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.
CRN: 22646
Constant Hall 1042

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a fast paced introduction to the cultural, political, and social history of the United States from roughly 1400 to 1970, and to the tools, methods, and questions historians use to study the past. The broad organizing theme of the course is mobility. As an ordinary part of human existence, mobility is a universal phenomenon, situated historically everywhere and in every time. A number of key historical events, experiences, and processes of the American past implicitly and explicitly suggest mobility or movement, as in the “Columbian Exchange,” “social movements,” the “Great Migration,” “class mobility,” “Westward Expansion,” and “Japanese American Relocation,” to name a few. This semester we will consider how the voluntary and involuntary movements of people, capital, and ideas shaped the nation in complex and multifaceted ways. What moves, how, and why are questions we will ask of the peoples, products, animals, technologies, and ideas that moved across the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and within continents and regions. This mobility, which brought an enormous diversity of people, cultures, and economies into contact and conflict, underscore such themes as colonization and rebellion, production and consumption, nationalism and regionalism, religion, as well as race, ethnic, class and gender relations. We will consider questions such as: How does movement to, from, and within the U.S. create diversity, conflict, and accommodation and what are the consequences of encounters between different peoples, cultures, and goods? What methods have the U.S. nation-state employed to control social, economic, political and cultural movements? How did global exchanges between the U.S. and the world, such as American continental and overseas expansion, and two World Wars, influence the making of America?

REQUIRED READINGS

1. Nancy A. Hewitt and Steven F. Lawson. *Exploring American Histories: A Brief Survey with Sources*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2013.

Exploring American Histories is the required textbook and primary document reader for this course. It is available at the ODU Bookstore. Bring this book with you to class, as we will be reading and discussing the documents. The textbook is also on three-hour reserve at the circulation desk in the ODU Library.

2. Anzia Yeziarska. *Bread Givers*. New York: Persea Books, Inc., 2003 [originally pub. 1925]
3. Kevin Boyle. *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age*. New York: Henry Holt, 2004.

Students must activate their ODU email and Blackboard account. Throughout the semester I may post additional course readings and information on Blackboard. I will also post the course syllabus, assignments, weekly PowerPoint slides, and your grades on Blackboard so it is important that you check it weekly.

ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance/Participation (5%): Attendance is mandatory and excessive absences will affect your participation grade. If you have to miss a class, you must let me know in advance via email. Excused absences include sickness, family emergencies, religious holidays, and military obligations. Good participation also includes arriving to class on time, turning off your cell phones and giving the course your full, undivided attention (during class, laptops are allowed ONLY for note taking.). The course will provide you opportunities for active participation and discussion. In particular, we will spend time in class examining the Document Projects at the end of each chapter in *Exploring American Histories*. You will feel more invested in the course if you come to class prepared to critically discuss themes and topics that emerge from the readings.

***Exploring American Histories* Reading Quizzes (4 quizzes at 2.5% each = 10%):** There will be five reading quizzes throughout the semester, designed to encourage you to keep up with your reading and prepare you for the midterm and final exam. Each quiz will be ten questions and will cover the assigned reading material from *Exploring American Histories* up to the date of the scheduled quiz. For example, Quiz #1 on Jan. 27 will cover Chapters 1-5 in *Exploring American Histories*. The best way to prepare for these quizzes is to study the key terms at the end of each chapter. Half of the quiz questions that appear on the first three quizzes will appear on the midterm exam, and half of the quiz questions that appear on the last two quizzes will appear on the final exam. This means that you will have previously seen fifteen of the questions that appear on the midterm exam and ten of the questions on the final exam.

Dates of Reading Quizzes:

- Quiz #1: Mon., Feb. 3 (Chapters 1-5)
- Quiz #2: Wed., Feb. 19 (Chapters 6-11)
- Quiz #3: Mon., April 7 (Chapters 16-20)
- Quiz #4: Mon., April 21 (Chapters 21-25)

Midterm and Final Exam (each worth 15% for 30% total): There will be one midterm and one final exam. The final exam is not cumulative (the final will cover only the second half of the course material). The exams will be a combination of multiple choice and essay questions.

Dates of Exams:

- Midterm: Mon., March 3
- Final Exam: **Friday, May 2, 3:45 p.m.-6:45 p.m.**

Three papers

Paper #1: Colonial America through *The Virginia Gazette* (15%): Your first paper is a creative assignment that transports you to mid-18th century Virginia. You will use select editions of digitized versions of *The Virginia Gazette*, a weekly newspaper published in Williamsburg, Virginia, to write a 750 to 1,000-word paper that sheds light on Virginia society during the 1730s. The assignment is also designed to teach you how to read newspapers as historical sources. **DUE: Mon., Feb. 10**

Paper #2: Bread Givers and Hester Street (20%): Students will write a 750 to 1,000-word paper that compares representations of Jewish immigrant families at the turn of the twentieth century in Anzia Yeziarska's 1925 autobiographical novel *Bread Givers* and the 1975 film *Hester Street*. We will watch *Hester Street* in class on March 17. If you miss this class period, you are responsible for procuring and watching the film. **DUE: Wed., April 2**

Paper #3: Virginia School Desegregation (20%): For your final paper you will read and interpret a set of documents related to the history of School Desegregation and Massive Resistance in Virginia. The 1954 *Brown v. Board* ruling declared segregated schools unconstitutional. Rather than integrate the public school system, in 1958 Virginia Governor J. Lindsay Almond closed schools throughout Virginia, including six schools in Norfolk. In a 750 to 1,000-word paper you will analyze four-first person accounts to assess different individuals' experiences of race relations in Virginia during the Civil Rights Era. The documents used for this paper will be available on Blackboard and online through the ODU Special Collections and University Archive. **DUE: Wed., April 28 (last day of class)**

*Note: All three papers must be submitted in hard copy format and electronically through **SafeAssign** on Blackboard

Late Policy and Assignment Instructions

All assignments and papers must be turned in in **hard copy format** during class on the day indicated on the syllabus. For every day late, your assignment will be lowered by a third of a letter grade. For example, if you turn in a B paper the day after it is due, you will receive a -B grade. This includes weekends.

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments must be double-spaced, in 12-point font, with one-inch margins. You may print on both sides of the paper. Submit all assignments in hard-copy format and secure your work with a staple or paper clip. No cover page or sheet is necessary; put your name, course number, date, and the **word count of the paper** (the word count should not include the paper title, course number, or your name) at the top right corner of the first page.

HOUSE RULES

Questions and Syllabus

If you have any questions, see me during my office hours (Mondays/Wednesdays, 1:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m., and by appointment, 8004 Batten) or contact me via email (ezanoni@odu.edu).

This syllabus may be adjusted due to unexpected weather issues or other unforeseen events. Throughout the semester, I reserve the right to assign readings posted to Blackboard. If there are additional readings that are not on the syllabus, I will give you plenty of notice.

Respectful Discussion and Classroom Conduct

Every class has a culture influenced by the reality that students come from widely diverse backgrounds and hold different values. In this class, feel free to express your thoughts and opinions with your classmates and with me. You may disagree but make sure you express yourself in a respectful and intelligent manner. Also, be open to the ideas of others. While lively discussion and disagreement is part of the learning process, students who create a hostile environment for others through threatening or aggressive behavior will be asked to leave and be counted absent. Discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex (including gender identity), age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation **will not be tolerated**.

Plagiarism

All forms of cheating and academic dishonest are absolutely unacceptable. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me!

About Plagiarism: A Guide for College of Arts and Letters Students

What is plagiarism?

The ODU Code of Student Conduct defines plagiarism as: “Using someone else’s language, ideas, or other original material without acknowledging its source in any academic exercise. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the following: submitting a research paper obtained from a commercial research service, the Internet, or from another student as if it were original work; or making simple changes to borrowed materials while leaving the organization, content, or phraseology intact. Plagiarism also occurs in a group project if one or more of the members of the group does none of the group’s work and participates in none of the group’s activities, but attempts to take credit for the work of the group.”¹

Please note that in your papers, you must provide a citation **AND** put quotations around all direct quotes lifted from other source.

Hints for Avoiding Plagiarism:²

* *More than three words copied in sequence is plagiarism.* This is a good yardstick to use when wondering whether or not quotes are appropriate; they are, if you are copying more than three words in sequence that are not part of a common phrase (e.g. “up-to-date”).

¹ Old Dominion University, “Code of Student Conduct: IX. Prohibited Conduct,” <http://ww2.odu.edu/ao/bov/manual/pdfs/1530.pdf> (accessed December 14, 2012).

² This information is adapted from a guide developed by Old Dominion University’s College of Business and Public Administration. Please see “About Plagiarism: The College of Business and Public Administration, Old Dominion University,” http://bpa.odu.edu/bpa/Plagiarism_CBPA.pdf (accessed December 14, 2012).

- * *One source is not “common knowledge.”* Common knowledge does not require citation. But something is not common knowledge if you have found just one source for the information.
- * *When in doubt, cite!* If you have any doubt about whether or not to cite a source, err on the side of making the attribution.
- * *Look away.* When you are writing, do not have open books or papers in front of you as you type. Read your sources, and then put what you have read into your own words.
- * *Paraphrasing is more than changing a verb tense or reordering a list.* Essentially, paraphrasing is used to summarize another author’s text. A paraphrased passage must be cited.
- * *Writing is hard work.* Recognize that writing well is difficult. Learning to be a good writer is part of what your college education is about. Staring at an empty screen does become less daunting over time!
- * *Just because it’s on the Internet, doesn’t mean it’s yours.* The Internet is a fantastic resource and search engines are terrific research tools. But what you find on the Internet was written by someone. You must cite Internet web sites, and if you use a quote, use appropriate quotation procedures.
- * *Use a Style Guide.* Purchase a style guide and refer to it. History majors at ODU (and most professional historians) use Chicago Style footnotes.

The High Cost of Plagiarism

Plagiarism can ruin your reputation and cost you your professional career, along with the respect of your peers and family. Plagiarism at Old Dominion University is an act of academic dishonesty that has serious consequences. Note that plagiarism is specifically covered in the ODU Honor Pledge. Refer to your course syllabus and the Student *Handbook* and the Office of Student Affairs for details about sanctions and penalties for this behavior. For more information on plagiarism and cheating see the ODU Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website: <http://studentaffairs.odu.edu/oscai/>

Special Needs

Students with documented disability conditions that affect their ability to participate fully in class or to meet all course requirements should contact the Office of Educational Accessibility, and me, so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged. Further information is available at: <http://ww2.studentaffairs.odu.edu/educationalaccessibility/>

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: A New Global World

Mon., Jan. 13: Class Introductions

Wed., Jan. 15: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapters 1 and 2

Week 2: Snow, Snow, and Snow

Mon., Jan. 20: **NO CLASS: MLK DAY**

Wed., Jan. 22: **SNOW DAY**—*Exploring American Histories*, Chapters 3 and 4

Week 3: Growth and Crisis in Colonial Society

Mon., Jan. 27: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapter 5

Wed., Jan. 29: **SNOW DAY**

Week 4: Rebellion

Mon., Feb. 3: The *Virginia Gazette* Discussion
READING QUIZ #1 (Chapters 1-5)

Wed., Feb. 5: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapter 6

Week 5: The American Revolution and the Forming of a New Nation

Mon., Feb. 10: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapter 7
VIRGINIA GAZETTE PAPER DUE

Wed., Feb. 12: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapters 8 and 9

Week 6: Jacksonian America: Political, Economic, and Racial Transformations

Mon., Feb. 17 *Exploring American Histories*, Chapter 10

Wed., Feb. 19 *Exploring American Histories*, Chapter 11
READING QUIZ #2 (Chapters 6-11)

Week 7: The Civil War

Mon., Feb. 24: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapter 12

Wed., Feb. 26: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapter 13

Week 8: Reconstruction

Mon., March 3: **MIDTERM**

Wed., March 5: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapters 14 and 15

Week 9: NO CLASS; SPRING BREAK (Read *Bread Givers* over break)

Week 11: Business, Politics, and Labor during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era

Mon., March 17: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapters 16 and 17

Wed., March 19: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapters 18

Week 10: *Bread Givers* and *Hester Street*

Mon., March 24: Film: *Hester Street*

Wed., March 26: Discussion of *Bread Givers* and *Hester Street*

Week 12: The Progressive Crusade and the Great Migration

Mon., March 31: *Arc of Justice*, Prologue–Chapter 3; *Exploring American Histories*, Chapter 19

Wed., April 2: *Arc of Justice*, Chapters 4-6

HESTER STREET/BREAD GIVERS PAPER DUE

Week 13: *Arc of Justice* Discussion; the Great War and its Aftermath

Mon., April 7: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapters 20 and 21

READING QUIZ #3 (Chapters 16-20)

Wed., April 9: *Arc of Justice*, 7-Epilogue

Week 14: The Great Depression and WWII

Mon., April 14: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapters 22

Wed., April 16: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapters 23

Week 15: The Cold War and The Civil Rights Movement

Mon., April 21: *Exploring American Histories*, Chapters 24 and 25

READING QUIZ #4 (21-25)

Wed., April 23: VA School Desegregation Documentary and Discussion
Exploring American Histories, Chapter 26

Week 16: The Challenges of the 1970s

Mon., April 28: Course wrap-up

VIRGINIA DESEGREGATION PAPER DUE

FINAL EXAM: Friday, May 2, 3:45 p.m.-6:45 p.m.