American Indian Histories
Reading/Historiography Seminar
Professor Erika Bsumek
Unique: AMS 391, 30343 and HIS 389, 39325
Meeting Place and Times: GAR 1.122
Office: GAR 2.124
Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30-3:30

New Perspectives American Indians Histories

Images: painting: “Just a Regular Guy” Bunky Echo Hawk
Photo: Puye Cliffs, New Mexico, Erika Bsumek
Photo: Marilyn Vann—the fight to retain tribal status, Cherokee Freedman Debate

Note: Syllabus subject to change. I will post announcements about any changes on Canvas.

Class Description:
This class will provide an overview of the historiography related to American Indian histories with a special focus on issues related to land use, cultural preservation, identity, violence, and political action. Special attention will be devoted to defining key terms (i.e. Indigeneity, sovereignty, settler-colonialism) related to the field. Readings will cover a wide time frame (ranging from pre-contact to the twenty-first century). Not only will we chart how the field of American Indian history has changed over time, we will also discuss the current state of the field and consider where the field might be headed in the future.

Format, Writing and Class Assignments: In addition to our reading during the first few meetings, students undertake a number of short writing exercises. You will produce one short “NEP research” based paper (2-3 pages) that we will workshop in class (you can turn this in at any time before spring break), one comparative historiographical essay at mid-semester (4-6 pages), 3 book reviews (2-3 pages) on books of your own choosing (from those assigned), use ClioVis to reverse engineer the argument of one academic article (your choice of article), and write one substantive historiographical essay (10-15 pages).

This will be a discussion-oriented class. Students will also lead two discussions over the course of the semester. You will do this in pairs and we will sign up on the first day of class. Leading a discussion means that the pair leading the discussion will produce written 6-8 questions about the weekly text(s) 24 hours in advance of the class. They will post these questions on Canvas. In return, students not leading discussion should look at those
questions, think about them prior to coming to class, and, write out one additional question that they would like the class to consider. (You will bring this question with you to class.)

**Linking books/readings to the field at large:**
One of the goals of this class is to help students understand how the field of Native American History has changed over time. One way to do this is to think about the texts we are reading as part of a larger conversation taking place among scholars. In order to help us do that, each student is expected to find book reviews about the texts we are reading (i.e. if we are reading *Comanche Empire* you should locate a book review about the book, read it, and bring it class). In addition, students are also **expected to locate a book review of a text the author mentions or utilizes in the text.** So, when Hamalainen makes a broad claim, as he does on p. 3, that the Comanche “built an imperial organization that subdued, exploited, marginalized and profoundly transformed near and distant colonial outposts, thereby reversing the conventional imperial trajectory in vast segment of North and Central America” students should examine the corresponding footnote, pick one of the books he cites, and locate a book review of it. Alternatively, if the author specifically mentions an author she or he is in conversation with, locate that author’s work, a book review of it, and then bring it to class. In other words, we will be discussing books for the arguments they make, the evidence authors use, the methodological approach they utilize, and also, the larger debates/conversations that authors are addressing. You will then use these writings when you write your own book reviews.

**Grading:**
- Engaged participation in discussion of readings, 25%
- Research exercise, 10%
- Book reviews, 20%
- ClioVis exercise, 5%
- Historiographical paper 25%
- Weekly questions, 5%
- Leading discussion, 10%

**Course policies:**
Weekly writing assignments are due when class meets on Tuesday at 12:30. If you need an extension, please let me know as soon as possible. When leading discussion, questions are due 24 hours in advance of our class meeting (posted to Canvas), other assignments are due as noted below.

**Class Format: Discussion based.**

**Required Books:**
12. Donald Fixico, *Call for Change: The Medicine Way of Amc...*

Native American Podcast Resource: [https://player.fm/featured/native-american](https://player.fm/featured/native-american)

**Course Schedule:**

**Week 1:** Tuesday, January 16, 2018 – Introduction to class and First Discussion readings. Juliana Barr, “*There’s no such thing as ‘Prehistory’: What the Longue Durée of Caddo and Pueblo History Tells Us about Colonial America*,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 74, no. 2 (April 2017): 203–40.


**Week 2:** Tuesday, January 23, 2018
Reading: Cronon, *Changes in the Land*

Andrew Lipman and Michael Kinsley, *“Masters of the Atlantic,”* Slate, Nov. 24, 2015.

James H. Merrell, “*Second Thoughts on Colonial Historians and American Indians*,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 3 (July 2012): 451–512. PDF in Canvas.
Week 3: Tuesday, January 30, 2018
Reading: Deloria, Playing Indian


Week 4: Tuesday, February 6, 2018
Reading: Juliana Barr, Peace Came in the Form of a Woman


Week 5: Tuesday, February 13, 2018
Reading: Pekka Hamalainen, Comanche Empire


Week 6: Tuesday, February 20, 2018
Reading: Marsha Weisiger, Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country


Week 7: Tuesday, February 27, 2018
Reading: Ari Kelman, A Misplaced Massacre

Chapter: Jeffery Ostler, “Indian Warfare in the West, 1861-1890,” in You Can’t Teach (Posted on Canvas.)

Week 8: Tuesday, March 6, 2018
Reading: Tiya Miles, Ties that Bind

Chapter: Paul Conrad, “Why You can’t Teach the History of U.S. Slavery without American Indians,” in Why you can’t teach. (Posted on Canvas.)

Week 9: Tuesday, March 13, 2018 – SPRING BREAK
Week 10: Tuesday, March 20, 2018

**Short Historiography essay due either today or on March 27th.** To write this essay, think about the themes that we have discussed in class so far. Pick one theme and compare three of the books we have read and discuss how the authors approach the specific theme you have picked.

**Reading:** Julie Cruikshank, *Do Glaciers Listen or*, Donald Fixico, *Call for Change.*

*Note:* This week, I would like to try something different. I would like half the class to read one book, and half will read the other. We will compare and contrast the two books.

Week 11: Tuesday, March 27, 2018

Coll Thrush, *Indigenous London*


Week 12: Tuesday, April 3, 2018

Reading: Jeanne O’Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*


Week 13: Tuesday, April 10, 2018

Reading: Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*


Week 14: Tuesday, April 17, 2018

Reading: Boyd Cothran, *Remembering the Modoc War*


Week 15: Tuesday, April 24, 2018
David Chang, *The World and All the Things Upon It.*
Article: TBA (skype with Dr. Change)

**Week 16: Tuesday, May 1, 2018**

Reading: Josh Ried, *The Sea is My Country*

Introduction and Chapter 3: Jace Weaver, *Red Atlantic.* (Posted on Canvas).

Final class meeting

Due date for final essay, TBA.

**NEP Research exercise:**
NEP document assignment: Choose one of the readings as your “inspiration” and locate a historical document or artifact.

Find a primary source related to American Indian history. This can be something you have already found or something you find online or in the archives.

You will then write a sample essay on your document or source modeled after a *Not Even Past* post. We will workshop these in class. (Following this exercise, you can then submit these to NEP for publication if you so choose.)

The guidelines for NEP are as follows:

“Essays on archival documents for *Not Even Past* should convey the reason a document is memorable, revealing, or illustrative. Why is it worth writing and reading about?

Keep in mind our audience: general readers with an interest in history.

Write an essay that tells an interesting story to a general reader rather than a description of a document for a professor or an academic scholar.

You can tell readers the most interesting thing about the document in the first paragraph, and then you can go into complex ideas or academic issues further on. On the other hand if you tell the reader the historical context and describe the document in detail in the beginning, you can later explain its importance or the reasons the document is fascinating afterwards.

It is not necessary to mention the archival box number or even the collection where your document resides (unless there is something very interesting about the whole collection). It is, however, fine to mention finding the document in an archive if that adds intrigue or
dynamism or authenticity to your story.

We hope that writing for a general audience about documents you want to use in your own research will help you articulate your own scholarly ideas clearly and engagingly.

Look at any of the essays in the Discover section of NEP for a very wide variety of ways to write about archival documents. Note that some authors begin with a straightforward description of their topic and some begin with a related anecdote: which do you prefer and why?” Essays should be approximately 500-1000 words.”

After we have reviewed these exercises, I would encourage you to submit them to NEP: Neuberger@austin.utexas.edu

General Information:

THE SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE, CHANGES WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS AND CHANGES WILL BE POSTED ON CANVAS.

ACADEMIC HONESTY and PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY: Academic honesty is very important. You are expected to complete your own work. If you have any questions about academic guidelines you may call me, 475-7253, or email me at ANY time. You should follow University guidelines regarding plagiarism and student conduct. For further information see: http://uwc.fac.utexas.edu/~virgil/essay/research/plagiarism.html

Important Notes:

1. Respect the classroom environment. Turn off all cell-phones while in class. Do not search the web or send text messages while in class unless instructed to do so by myself or the TA. You may use your computer in class but if I find anyone in the class using their computer for non-class related activities the entire class gets a warning. After 3 warnings, the use of computers in the classroom will be prohibited.
2. Any handouts that you receive from the instructor or teaching assistant should be treated as required reading.
3. My office is on the 2nd floor in Garrison Hall. It is accessible by elevator. If, for some reason, my office is inaccessible to you, I will make arrangements to meet in a different locale.
4. The University of Texas provides, upon request, academic accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information contact the Office of the Dean of Students, 471-6259 or 471-4641.
5. I will follow University standards and rules regarding academic dishonesty. You should familiarize yourself with these standards.
6. Email policy: I will answer student emails within 72 hours of receiving them.
7. I respect religious holidays. Please keep me informed if you will miss class.
8. Respect your peers.
9. "Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of
support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you have the right to report it. See: https://policies.utexas.edu/policies/prohibition-sexual-discrimination-sexual-harassment-sexual-assault-sexual-misconduct.