

History 3311
The Nineteenth-Century American West
SMU J-Term, January 2013

Professor Andrew R. Graybill
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This course offers a survey of the major themes in the history of the American West to 1900. Although the class follows a rough chronology, I have structured the lectures and readings around three central and overlapping themes: 1) cultural encounters in the West, encompassing not only the popularly familiar interactions between Euroamericans and Indians, but also among various Euroamerican groups, the Spanish-speaking populations of the Southwestern borderlands, and Asian immigrants to the Pacific Coast; 2) the reciprocal relationship between people and the environment, meaning not merely the impact of hunting, logging, mining, and city-building, but also the profound influence of the natural world on the people who lived and worked there; 3) and the cultural symbolism of the American West, both as an enduring national icon and as an ideology that shaped the settlement of the region.

READINGS:

Three books are required for this course, available at the SMU bookstore and on-line retailers:

Crisp, James. Sleuthing the Alamo: Davy Crockett's Last Stand and Other Mysteries of the Texas Revolution. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Milner, Clyde, et al. Major Problems in The History of the American West: Documents and Essays (2nd ed.). Boston: Wadsworth, 1997.

Welch, James. Fools Crow. New York: Penguin Classics, 2011.

COURSE GOVERNANCE:

If you need academic accommodations for a disability, you must first contact Rebecca Marin in the office of Services for Students with Disabilities (rmarin@smu.edu) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. You should then schedule an appointment with me in order to make appropriate arrangements. Students who require accommodation for this class must contact both Ms. Marin and me no later than Tuesday, January 3.

I take plagiarism – stealing and passing off another's ideas as your own, or using information without crediting the source – very seriously. Please consult the SMU Honor Code (http://smu.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook/PCL_05_HC.asp) for a fuller explanation of this offense. Some specific examples of actions that constitute plagiarism include pasting together uncredited information or ideas from the internet or published sources; submitting an entire paper written by someone else; submitting a paper written for another class (and thus not original work); and copying another student's work (even with that student's knowledge and permission). In short, when you write your essays for this

course, you will need to be meticulous about giving credit to any and all sources. As this is so important, if you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Finally, a note on professionalism. Discourteous or disruptive conduct will not be tolerated. You must arrive at class punctually and join in our activities for the entirety of the session. So as not to distract from your own learning or that of your classmates, you may not use cell phones, iPods, or any other PDAs during class (they must be stowed, out of sight, before we begin). Neither may you use laptop computers of any kind during class. I realize this may be inconvenient for some, but it is nonnegotiable.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance is mandatory, and each missed session will result in a half-grade penalty (i.e., from A- to B+, and so forth) assessed on the final grade. Two or more absences may result in an administrative drop. Reading assignments must be completed before the class meeting for which they are assigned. Students in the course will be expected to participate actively in class discussions, and will also complete two in-class essays (details to come) as well as a take-home final examination (details to come).

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

Class Participation:	15%
First in-class Essay (day 3; January 9):	25%
Second in-class Essay (day 7; January 13):	25%
Take-home Final Examination (due January 18):	35%

I consider the course syllabus a contract of sorts between us – if we all abide by its dictates, we should have smooth sailing indeed.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

In this course, students will learn – among other things – how to 1) read and evaluate a secondary historical source; 2) write an argument-driven, expository essay; 3) think critically about complicated social and political issues.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS:

FIRST WEEK – JANUARY 7-11, 2013

DAY 1: Natives and Newcomers

Reading: Milner, Major Problems, chapters 1-2
Morning: Locating the West and First Encounters
Afternoon: New Mexico and California

DAY 2: Exploration

Reading: Milner, Major Problems, chapter 3; Crisp, Sleuthing

Morning: Great Lakes and Great Plains
Afternoon: Southwest and the Borderlands

DAY 3: Conquest and Expansion

Reading: Milner, Major Problems, chapter 5; Crisp, Sleuthing
Morning: Indian Removal and the Texas Revolution
Afternoon: Manifest Destiny and the Mexican War
First in-class essay

DAY 4: Settlement and Society

Reading: Milner, Major Problems, chapters 4, 7, 8
Morning: The California Gold Rush and the Mormon Hegira
Afternoon: Migration and Immigration

DAY 5: Cowboys, Indians, and Buffalo

Reading: Milner, Major Problems, chapter 6; Welch, Fools Crow
Morning: The Civil War and Native-White on the Great Plains
Afternoon: Cowboy Ecology and the Destruction of the Bison

SECOND WEEK– JANUARY 14-16, 2013

DAY 6: Incorporation

Reading: Milner, Major Problems, chapters 9, 13; Welch, Fools Crow
Morning: Cities and Industry
Afternoon: Violence and the Roots of Social Conflict

DAY 7: The Closing of the Frontier

Reading: Milner, Major Problems, chapter 10; Welch, Fools Crow
Morning: Preservation and Conservation
Afternoon: Indian Reservations
Second in-class essay

DAY 8: Myth, History, and Memory

Reading: Milner, Major Problems, chapter 15
Morning: Cody, Roosevelt, and Turner
Afternoon: “Unforgiven”

Final examination due by 5:00PM on January 18.

