

HIST 202, Building the United States
Winter 2019
Class Hours: MWF 11:00-11:50

Professor: Jeff Ostler
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Graduate Employees (GEs)
(Discussion Section Leaders):
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Office Hours:
M 3:00-4:00
W, F 1:00-2:00
and by appointment

ABOUT THE COURSE

This course is the second term of a three-term exploration of U.S. history. This term is called the Building of the United States. We will cover a century of history from the War of 1812 to World War I.

At the inception of the United States, as articulated in the Declaration of Independence and fought for in the colonists' struggle for independence from Great Britain, many Americans imagined themselves to be members of a nation unique for its commitment to liberty and freedom. Yet, liberty and freedom meant many different things to different people. For slaveowners, for example, liberty meant the freedom to own slaves, while slaves themselves saw their condition as a violation of their liberty. Or, to take another example, Americans' pursuit of liberty depended upon the building of a continental empire, which in turn deprived Native Americans of their freedom to pursue their lives in their own lands. As the United States expanded in territory and population, people advanced different ideas about liberty and freedom and fought for their own view of these concepts.

What did liberty and freedom mean for different groups of people that lived in the United States or were incorporated into it? How did people struggle over the meaning of liberty and freedom as the United States was built? What were the outcomes of their struggles? These are the central questions of our course.

REQUIRED READINGS

Rebecca Edwards, et al., *America's History* (special edition for this course; listed on the schedule as "textbook") [Duckstore]

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, in Gates, ed., *The Classic Slave Narratives* [Duckstore]

Ida B. Wells, *A Red Record: Tabulated Statistics and Alleged Causes of Lynchings in the United States, 1892-1893-1894* [Canvas]

A course packet (abbreviated under the schedule as "CP") [Duckstore]

REQUIREMENTS

1. Midterm exam (Monday, February 11). Worth 20%
2. Comprehensive final exam (Monday, March 18, 10:15-12:15). Worth 30%.
Please note: No makeup exams will be given without a documented medical or university reason.
3. Paper (5-6 pages) on the readings for the course (due in class, Wednesday, March 6).
Worth 30%
Note: Late papers will be penalized 1/3 of a grade for each 24 hours late.
4. Attendance and participation in discussion sections. Worth 20%
Note: Section leaders will penalize students who fail to meet a minimum attendance requirement one full grade for the entire course.
5. Students must complete all assignments in order to pass the course.

CLASS RULES

1. Laptops may be used to take notes, but no devices with a small screen are permitted.
2. Please do not leave class before the end of the session. This is a matter of common courtesy to the other students and to the professor.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Studying history is valuable for its own sake, as it broadens our insight into the human experience. This history course also provides an opportunity for students to develop useful skills:

1. Reading and analyzing sources. The readings for this course, with the exception of the textbook, are all primary sources. Close reading and study of these sources will improve students' ability to interpret a variety of documents.
2. Writing about history. Unlike some general education courses in the social sciences, this course requires substantial writing. Students will improve their skills of organization, clarity of expression, and argumentation.

GRADING CRITERIA

The following criteria, formulated by the History Department, will be employed for all written work:

- A: Work that distinguishes itself by the excellence of its grasp of the material and the precision and insight of its argument, in addition to being well executed and reasonably free of errors.
- B: Work that satisfies main criteria of the assignment, and demonstrates command of the material, but does not achieve the level of excellence that characterizes work of A quality.
- C: Work that demonstrates a rudimentary grasp of the material and satisfies at least some of the assigned criteria reasonably well.

D: Work that demonstrates a poor grasp of the material and/or is executed with little regard for college standards, but which exhibits some engagement with the material.

F: Work that is weak in every aspect, demonstrating a basic misunderstanding of the material and/or disregard for the assigned question.

STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

Students should be aware of the Student Conduct Code: <https://policies.uoregon.edu/vol-3-administration-student-affairs/ch-1-conduct/student-conduct-code>

SCHEDULE

Week 1

- 1/7 Introduction: United States in 1815
- 1/9 Building the United States on Native American lands
- 1/11 Market revolution

READINGS for week 1:

CP 1
Textbook, pp. 1-32

Week 2

- 1/14 Jacksonian democracy
- 1/16 Jacksonian democracy—continued
- 1/18 The removal of the Cherokees and the Cherokee trail of tears

READINGS for week 2:

Begin *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
CP 2, 3, 4
Textbook, pp. 33-62

Week 3

- 1/21 No Class—Martin Luther King Day
- 1/23 Reform movements
- 1/25 Enslaved people in a land of liberty

READINGS for week 3:

Continue *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
CP 5, 6
Textbook, pp. 63-106

Week 4

1/28 Abolitionism

1/30 Feminism

2/1 Manifest destiny and U.S. war against Mexico

READINGS for week 4:

Finish *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

CP 7, 8, 9

Textbook, pp. 106-127

Week 5

2/4 Sectional crisis, 1850-1856

2/6 Coming of the Civil War, 1856-1861

2/8 Lincoln, the slaves' General Strike, and emancipation

READINGS for week 5:

CP 10, 11, 12

Textbook, pp. 128-180

Week 6

2/11 **MIDTERM EXAM**

2/13 Presidential and Congressional reconstruction

2/15 Political terrorism and the reestablishment of white supremacy in the South

READINGS for week 6:

CP 13, 14

Wells, *Red Record*, chapters 1-5 (Canvas)

Textbook, pp. 181-207

Week 7

2/18 Industrial capitalism

2/20 Workers and farmers in the Gilded Age

2/22 Populism

READINGS for week 7:

Wells, *Red Record*, chapters 6-10 (Canvas)

CP 15, 16, 17

Textbook, pp. 237-260, 285-299

Week 8

- 2/25 Jim Crow
2/27 A nation of immigrants
3/1 Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants

READINGS for week 8:
CP 18, 19
Textbook, 261-277

Week 9

- 3/4 American Indian nations and settler colonialism—continued
3/6 American Indian nations and settler colonialism

PAPER DUE

- 3/8 Overseas imperialism
READINGS for week 9
CP 20
Textbook, 209-235, 315-327

Week 10

- 3/11 Currents of reform and innovation in the “Progressive Era”
3/13 National issues in the “Progressive Era”
3/15 World War and the prospects for freedom

READINGS for week 10:
CP 21
Textbook, pp. 277-284, 299-313, 327-342

FINAL EXAM: MONDAY, MARCH 18, 10:15-12:15