

HIST 350, American Radicalism
Fall 2017
Class Hours: MWF 4:00-4:50

Professor: Jeff Ostler
346-1265
jostler@uoregon.edu
385 McKenzie
Office Hours:
TR, 12:00-1:00
F, 11:00-12:00
and by appointment

About the Course:

What is radicalism? What is American radicalism? This course explores these questions by taking up various forms of radicalism in American history from 1776 to 1896. After looking at the American revolution (was it radical, and if so, how radical?), we will consider several movements: abolitionism (with a particular focus on the “underground railroad”), women’s rights, Native American radicalism, the labor movement (including anarchism), and populism. Throughout, we will also look at problems these movements faced, including internal divisions, repression, conservative reaction, and perhaps a generally inhospitable political culture.

The course is capped below 40, which means that in addition to lectures, we will be able to discuss the issues in class. I am particularly interested in trying to figure out ways to encourage students to learn how to better engage historical writing. To promote this, I will be asking you to do some small group work and in-class presentations.

Required Readings:

Tom Paine, *Common Sense*
(available for purchase at Duck Store)

Eric Foner, *Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of the Underground Railroad*
(available for purchase at Duck Store)

James Green, *Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, The First Labor Movement and the Bombing That Divided Gilded Age America*
(available for purchase at Duck Store)

Articles, book chapters, and primary sources (posted under “pages” on Canvas)

Requirements:

1. Midterm exam (Friday, October 27). 20%
Format is greenbook: IDs and essay (questions given in advance).
2. Comprehensive final exam (Wed., Dec. 6, 2:45-4:45). 30%.
Format is greenbook: IDs since midterm; two essays, one covering material

since midterm, one comprehensive (questions given in advance).

Please note: No early or makeup exams will be given without a documented medical or university reason.

3. 5-6 page research paper (Due at the time of the final exam). 25%

You will identify an issue from the readings for the course and write a research paper based on secondary sources. The paper should use at least one book and two other sources (articles, good websites, etc.). Detailed instructions will be given after the mid-term.

Please note: No late papers will be accepted unless previous arrangements have been made. If you run into trouble, please contact me.

4. Pop quizzes on the assigned readings.

I will give several pop quizzes throughout the term. I will assign a grade of 0 to 4 points on each of the quizzes. If you average 3.25 or better on the quizzes, your final grade will be increased by 1/3 (B to B+, B+ to A-, etc.). If you average between 2 and 3.25, your final grade is unaffected. If you average below 2, your final grade will be reduced by 1/3 (B- to C+, C+ to C, etc.). No make-ups for missed pop quizzes without an excuse.

5. Participation, including contributions to class discussions and committee work. 25%.

Note on committee work: I will create nine-ten committees of three or four members for each of the two assigned books. The committees will be assigned a particular task designed to promote engagement with the books. Committees will make in-class presentations.

6. Students must complete assignments 1-3 and receive a passing grade for participation in order to pass the course.

Rules and Policies:

1. Laptops may be used to take notes and to go online to find information relevant to class discussions.
2. If you run into trouble meeting a deadline, attending class, etc., please notify me.

Learning Objectives:

1. Develop a feel for these keywords and movements: radicalism, abolitionism, women's rights, radical republicanism, trade unionism, industrial unionism, various forms of socialism, anarchism, populism.
2. Improve ability to analyze historical contexts for social movements.
3. Develop a greater appreciation for the fact that Native Americans are a part of U.S. history.
4. Improve ability to engage history books.
5. Improve skills of writing, group collaboration, and oral presentation.

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.

Statement about Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's product, words, ideas, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references, such as footnotes. Expectations may vary slightly by discipline. By placing one's name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. On written assignments, if verbatim statements are included, the statements must be enclosed by quotation marks or set off from regular text as indented extracts. A student will avoid being charged with plagiarism if there is an acknowledgement of indebtedness. Indebtedness must be acknowledged whenever (1) One quotes another person's actual words or replicates all or part of another's product; (2) One uses another person's ideas, opinions, work, data, or theories, even if they are completely paraphrased in one's own words; (3) One borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative materials--unless the information is common knowledge. Unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. If in doubt, consult the instructor or seek assistance from the staff of the Teaching and Learning Center (68 PLC, 346-3226). In addition, it is plagiarism to submit as your own any academic exercise (for example, written work, printing, computer program, art or design work, musical composition, and choreography) prepared totally or in part by another. Plagiarism also includes submitting work in which portions were substantially produced by someone acting as a tutor or editor.

<http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/AcademicMisconduct.aspx>

Schedule:

Week 1:

9/25: Introduction: What is American radicalism?

Read: Daniel Pope, "The Nature and Significance of Radicalism in American History" (Canvas)

9/27: Radical action and the coming of the American Revolution

9/29: How radical was the American Revolution?

Read: Declaration of Independence (Canvas)

Week 2:

10/2: Discuss Tom Paine, *Common Sense*

10/4: The anti-radicalism of the U.S. Constitution

Read: James Madison, *Federalist Papers # 10* (Canvas)

10/6: Early phases of the abolitionist movement

Read: excerpts from David Walker, *David Walker's Appeal* (Canvas)

Week 3:

10/9: Discuss Foner, *Gateway to Freedom*, pp. 1-118

10/11: Slave revolts

10/13: Watch: PBS, "The Abolitionists," part 1

Reading: Jay Driskell, "How PBS Whitewashed the Abolitionist Movement,"
Salon, March 27, 2014 (link on Canvas)

Week 4:

10/16: Women's radicalism

Read: Seneca Falls Convention, Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions, 1848 (Canvas)

10/18: Opposition to Indian Removal

Read: three petitions by Cherokee women; Catharine Beecher, "Circular Addressed to Benevolent Ladies of the U. States" (Canvas)

10/20: Later phases of the abolitionist movement

Week 5:

10/23: Discuss Foner, *Gateway to Freedom*, pp. 119-230

10/25: Review

10/27: Mid-term exam

Week 6:

- 10/30: Divisions about 15th amendment
Read: blog post at “Black Perspectives,” March 2, 2015
(link on Canvas)
- 11/1: How radical were the Radical Republicans?
Read: speech of George W. Julian (Canvas)
- 11/3: Eight-hour day movement and labor movement terminology

Week 7:

- 11/6: Discuss Green, *Death in the Haymarket*, pp. 1-84
- 11/8: Indigenous radicalism (part 1)
- 11/10: Indigenous radicalism (part 2)

Week 8:

- 11/13: Discuss Green, *Death in the Haymarket*, pp. 85-173
- 11/15: What was it like to be a farmer in the late nineteenth century?
- 11/17: What was Populism in the 1890s? What does the term mean now?
Read: People’s party platform 1892; Mary Elizabeth Lease speech
(Canvas)

Week 9:

- 11/20: Discuss Green, *Death in the Haymarket*, pp. 174-273
- 11/22: TBA
- 11/24: Thanksgiving holiday

Week 10:

- 11/27: Discuss Green, *Death in the Haymarket*, pp. 274-320
- 11/29: Opposition to Populism and the election of 1896
Read: William Allen White, “What’s the Matter with Kansas?”
- 12/1: Review

Final exam: Wed., 12/6, 2:45-4:45