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Office Hours: Wednesday , 3–5pm

and by appointment

History 367

Spring 1997

Lectures: 123 David Kinley Hall

Time: Tu/Thur 1–2:30pm; graduate student meeting, Tuesday, 3–4pm

History of the American West: A Legacy of Conquest and Resistance

This class will examine the history of the Trans–Mississippi West, focusing on the process of conquest and resistance which defined this region. We will begin by examining the "human–dominate ecosystems" of the many Native American civilizations present in the region before the coming of Euroamericans. We will follow with a thorough discussion of the Euroamerican conquests, and the vanquishing of those groups that preceded the conquerors. In analyzing the U.S. phase of this conquest, we will examine how Anglo Americans circumvented Mexican American rights, waged wars of extirpation against Native Americans, and exploited Asian and Mexican immigrant laborers to secure white male domination over the region during the 19th and 20th centuries. In the final weeks of the class, we will examine how these practices and attitudes shaped the modern West. As we will see, the conquest of the American West did not go unchallenged. Native Americans, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans, African Americans, women, reformers, and labor activists who experienced aggression and discrimination often fought back. In addition, conquering groups possessed within their ranks people who questioned these deeds and attitudes. Therefore, this class will also focus on acts of resistance, as well as interracial alliances which strove to counter the aggressors. Last, we will examine how conquest has contributed to the exhaustion and abuse of natural resources. Throughout the course, we will focus on both the human and environmental history of the West.

Reading and writing requirements will challenge students to think critically about the changing image of the West. In addition, significant portions of the documentary film "The West" will be viewed in class and discussed. Therefore attendance and timely completion of readings and assignments will be expected in order to maximize the classroom experience.

The following is a list of the required reading for the course:

Almaguer, Tomás, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994)

Davis, Mike, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (London and New York: Verso, 1990)

García, Andrew, *Tough Trip Through Paradise, 1878–1879*, edited by Bennett H. Stein, (Sausalito, CA: Comstock Editions, 1967)

Pascoe, Peggy, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874–1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990)

See, Lisa, *On Gold Mountain* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995)

White, Richard, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991)

The following is a list of recommended reading for the course. (This is **required reading** for graduate students)

**Limerick, Patricia Nelson, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of The American West* (W. W. Norton & Company, 1987) **

Rölvaag, Ole Edvart, *Giants in the Earth: A Saga of the Prairie* (New York: HarperPerennial, reprint 1991)

Lillian Schlissel, Vicki L. Ruiz, and Janice Monk, eds., *Western Women: Their Land, Their Lives* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988)

White, Richard, *Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983)

Course requirements: Attendance and participation in discussions is required at all class meetings. The following is a breakdown of how undergraduate student grades will be determined.

Final Exam: 30%

Midterm Exam: 20%

Essay #1: 20%

Essay #2: 20%

Attendance, discussion & participation: 10%

Assignments:

All students will be required to take the final and midterm exams. In addition, undergraduate students will write two essays based on the historical novels **Tough Trip Through Paradise** and **On Gold Mountain**. Specific guidelines and requirements will be given to all students during the course of the semester well before the assignments are due.

Graduate Students:

Graduate Students will meet with me outside of lectures/seminars each week on Tuesday, 3–4pm to discuss reading assignments. In addition, you will complete an historiographical essay of 20–25 pages based on primary and secondary source materials introduced in class. Specific guidelines and requirements will be given to graduate students during the course of the semester.

History of the American West: A Legacy of Conquest and Resistance

Weekly Readings and Topics:

The reading assignments should be completed by the date that they appear on the schedule below.

1 [1/21] Introduction: The West of the Imagination and Reality

[1/23] Native American civilizations in North America

Reading: White, pp.1–26

2 [1/28] Spanish Conquest of North America and Native American Resistance

Reading: White, pp.27–53

[1/30] Native American/Euroamerican Trade and Borderland Cultures

Reading: Garcia, Part I; White, pp.54–77, 119–136

3 [2/4] The American Conquest: Manifest Destiny and The Mexican War

Reading: Almaguer, pp.1–41; White, pp.77–84

[2/6] "The World Rushed In": The Gold Rush and Migration

Reading: Almaguer, pp.45–74; White, pp.137–211

4 [2/11] Organized Violence: The Slavery Question and The Sand Creek Massacre

Reading: White, pp.84–99

[2/13] Building of the Railroad and the Slaughter of the Bison

Reading: Garcia, Part II; White, pp. 212–227

5 [2/18] (Im)migration & Settlement

Reading: Pascoe, pp.3–31; White, pp.211–242

[2/20] Attitudes and Policies Toward Native Americans

Reading: Almaguer, pp.107–150; Garcia, Part III

6 [2/25] Native American Resistance and Survival

Reading: Garcia, Part IV; White, pp.99–118

[2/27] **MIDTERM EXAM**

7 [3/4] The West and the World Economy

Reading: See, Foreword & Part I; White, pp.242–269

[3/6] Labor Exploitation and Conflict

Reading: Almaguer, pp.153–182; White, pp.270–297

8 [3/11] New Communities and the Search for Female Moral Authority

Reading: White, pp. 298–387; Pascoe, pp.31–69

[3/13] Social Conflict and "Racial Fault Lines"

Reading: See, Part II; Almaguer, pp.183–213

FIRST ESSAY DUE

9 [3/18] Hydraulic Societies and "Instant Cities"

Reading: White, pp.391–430; Pascoe, pp.73–111

[3/20] Asian and Mexican Immigration

Reading: See, Part III; Pascoe, pp.111–173; White, pp.431–457

[3/21–3/31] **SPRING BREAK**

10 [4/1] Transformation of the West: The Depression and Mexican Repatriation

Reading: Pascoe, pp.177–212; White, pp.458–471

[4/3] Transformation of the West: The Dust Bowl and Agricultural Reform

Reading: See, Part IV; White, pp.471–487

11 [4/8–4/10] Transformation of the West: Federal Programs and World War II

Reading: White, pp.487–513

12 [4/15] The Atomic West: Nuclear Test Sites and "Downwinders"

Film: Down Wind, Down Stream

[4/17] Regional Identities: Art, Music, and Film in the West

Reading: See, Part V; Davis, pp.17–97

13 [4/22] Braceros, Operation "Wetback," and The United Farmer Workers

Reading: White, pp.513–573

[4/24] The Chicano Movement and The Watts Riots

Reading: White, pp.574–596

14 [4/29] The American Indian Movement

Reading: See, Part VI

SECOND ESSAY DUE

[5/1] Rise of The Metropolitan West: Los Angeles as a Case Study

Reading: Davis, pp.101–219; White, pp.596–612

15 [5/6] Institutionalized Inequality: Militarized Zones, Prop. 13, 187, and 209

Reading: Davis, pp.223–322

[5/8] Review for the Final

Reading: White, pp.613–634