

# **Borderlines: Race in the Nineteenth-Century United States**

The University of Western Ontario

Fall Term 2013

Prof. Laurel Clark Shire

History 4396F, T 12:30-3:30 STVH 3166

Office Hours: Lawson 2226, W 11-2 & by appointment

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Race - that set of socio-cultural borderlines that Americans constructed between white privilege, African American enslavement, and Native American removal - shaped every facet of American life and culture in the 1800s. This course is based on reading, discussing, and writing about prize-winning books and articles on race in the nineteenth-century United States, as well as examining the impact of that scholarship on the field of North American history. We will thus be engaged in learning new historical content (what happened?) and in learning about historiography (the study of how history gets written by historians). Any exploration of this topic must include some attention to slavery, abolition, Native American removal and sovereignty, sexuality, gender, and territorial and economic expansion. We will, therefore, take up the relationship between those dynamics and the construction of race in the U.S. between 1800 and 1899. Many of our seminar meetings will be student-led, and all of them will require your full and prepared participation. Assessments will include locating, reading, and writing your own book reviews, directed primary research, and essays on historiography and research topics of your choice.

## **Course Objectives**

Content - By the end of this course you will be able to:

- describe and analyze some of the many ways that diverse Americans defined and used “race” during the 1800s, and how this changed over time
- describe and analyze how race intersected with gender, ethnicity, wealth, region, and other social and cultural factors to produce and reproduce social privilege and disadvantage
- explain the significance of the above to individuals, groups, the social order and the history of North America

- answer this question with your own educated, reasoned opinion: “was slavery, Indian Removal, or immigration the most important influence on ‘race’ in America in the nineteenth century?”

Skills - By the end of this course you will be able to

- identify and analyze the thesis and historiographical importance of an historical monograph (find the main argument of a book and identify what is significant to other historians about that argument)
- identify and assess the archive that a scholar used to write a book (figure out what the primary sources are that the author based her/his main argument on)
- write a concise and insightful book review
- rewrite an essay into something new and better

### **Course Texts (required):**

Melvin Patrick Ely, *Israel on the Appomattox: A Southern Experiment in Black Freedom from the 1790s through the Civil War* (Knopf, 2004)

Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Harvard University Press, 2001)

Moon-Ho Jung, *Coolies and Cane: Race, Labor, and Sugar in the Age of Emancipation* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009) – available free as e-book from Weldon library

Tiya Miles, *Ties that Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom* (University of California Press, 2005)

Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Harvard University Press, 2010)

Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (Oxford University Press, 2009)

David R. Roediger, *How Race Survived U.S. History: From Settlement and Slavery to the Obama Phenomenon* (Verso, 2008)

Edward B. Rugemer, *The Problem of Emancipation: The Caribbean Roots of the American Civil War* (Louisiana State University Press, 2008) – available free as e-book from Weldon library

John Stauffer, *The Black Hearts of Men: Radical Abolitionists and the Transformation of Race* (Harvard University Press, 2001) – available free as e-book from Weldon library

### Course grade components:

Participation in class and discussion forums	15%
Locate and post 3 book reviews	5%
Locate and post 2 Primary Sources	5%
3 book review essays	30%
Midterm Essay (due 5 November)	20%
Final Essay (due 14 December)	25%

### Assignments and Deadlines:

**Class participation** - Class time will be devoted principally to a discussion of the readings and reviews. All students are expected to attend every class, to read thoughtfully, and to share their insights and observations with the class. If you have an emergency and you must miss class, please contact me. I am happy to consider family emergencies, religious holidays, and illness in calculating your participation grade, but you **MUST** communicate the reasons for your absence or lack of participation to me. Unexplained absences (or excessive tardiness) will affect your participation grade. Unless you notify me, I will expect your assignments whether or not you attend class.

You are expected to arrive in class ready to discuss the reading in a scholarly and critical fashion. We will not review the content – you will be expected to know the content and be ready to talk about it. Some questions to keep in mind as you read:

1. Are the author's arguments persuasive?
2. Are there other types of source the author might have considered?
3. What assumptions is the author making, in particular about race?
4. What role do nationalism, expansion, gender, sexuality, slavery, and/or class play in the writer's analysis?

Unless otherwise indicated, you should turn in all assignments via email. Late assignments are penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are late – however, **book review essays cannot be turned in late**, after you have had the benefit of class discussion. If you anticipate having a hard time meeting a particular deadline, due to heavy coursework in another class for example, please come talk to me about an extension or alternative assignment *in advance* of the due date. I am usually happy to work something out with students who need more time. Please remember that your book review essays **WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED** after class meets on the assigned book.

**Book Review Essays - THESE PAPERS MAY NOT BE SUBMITTED LATE.** All students must write a paper of 500 words (2 pages, double-spaced, 12pt font) 3 times during the course, on assigned dates (Group A, B, or C) before class by email. The title and bibliography are not counted as part of the 500 words. Although you do not have to write a review essay for every book, you should take good reading and class notes, because you will eventually have to include all the readings in your longer essays.

This paper should specifically answer the following questions about each book:

1. What thesis is the author arguing?
2. What evidence does the author use to substantiate the thesis?
3. Are the author's arguments in support of that thesis persuasive? Which are most persuasive? Which are least?

**BOOK REVIEW ESSAYS MAY NOT BE SUBMITTED LATE.**

**Scholarly Book Reviews:** Three times during the course (on dates assigned to your Group), you are required to find and read a review of the book we are reading in class from a scholarly journal or online forum. These will be due to be posted to the OWL Forum by Sunday night so that your classmates will have time to read and respond to the reviews before class on Tuesday. You must post that review to our course site in OWL (Forums/Book Reviews), bring a (digital or hard) copy to class, and be prepared to summarize and discuss it for your classmates. To find scholarly book reviews, go to the Library's website and use "Summon" to search for reviews of the book. An alternative is also to search at <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/>. Informal reviews from Amazon.ca or other unedited online content is not sufficient for this assignment. If you have difficulty locating a review, please send me an email immediately, or go and ask a librarian for help.

**When you post** the scholarly book review to the book review forum on OWL, you should

1 - download the review as a .pdf and attach it to your forum thread

**AND also include answers to the following questions:**

2 – What does the reviewer identify as the main argument or thesis of this book? (You may summarize or quote directly, cite the page number from the review).

3 – Is this review generally positive or negative? Or is it mixed? (Again, cite page numbers and include quotes).

**When you respond to reviews posted by your peers** please answer this question:

1 – Quote one passage from this review (cite page number) that you find particularly helpful to your engagement with the text, and explain why.

*PLEASE do not post the same review as another student, or use the same passage as another student, as this will forfeit your grade on this assignment.*

**Primary Sources** - Twice during the course, you will be required to go to the library (and/or use online research tools available through the library) and look for a primary source relevant to that week's reading. This might be an archival source such as a letter or diary, a newspaper or magazine article, an image, or an advertisement or cultural artifact (like a song sheet or playbill). You will post this item (or if necessary a link to it or description of it) to the OWL Forum/Primary Sources before class and bring this item to class so that we can all work together to interpret it. When you post it, include the keywords and database you searched to find it (or whatever is relevant – tell us how you found it, basically). Your peers will be required to post reactions to it within a week. You will receive more instruction about this assignment in class.

**Midterm and Final Essays** - In addition to the book review essays, you will have to synthesize information about the first 6 weeks of reading for November 5 and about all of the course readings for the final essay. In these essays, you will need to organize your thoughts about the materials we have read around a particular theme or themes. Using some of what you have already written in your short papers, you will “make these texts speak to each other.” That is, you might compare how authors use different methodologies or sources, how they approach social identities like race, gender, or class, or how they represent a certain historical moment differently, and the strengths and weaknesses of their choices and methods. This is both an exercise in analytical thinking and in rewriting something you have already written.

- **Midterm Synthesis Essay:** 6-7 pp. (1500-1750 words) Synthesis of the books covered thus far, revising your book reviews into a longer synthesis. Due Nov. 5 at 12:30pm.
- **Final Essay:** 10-12 pp. (2500-3000 words) For the final essay you will be revising your previous essays into a longer one, and including one new book into your analysis. You will choose one additional book about race in the nineteenth century U.S. to read. The title of this book is due to me in class on Nov. 12. It should be about U.S. history in the 1800s; on a topic related to race that is of particular interest to you (possible titles should be discussed with and approved by Prof. Shire before you complete this additional reading). Use that book, along with at least five of the texts we read for class, to make an argument about race in nineteenth-century U.S. culture and society, and/or its historiography. If you would prefer to write a research paper drawing on primary sources that is an acceptable alternative, but you must discuss that option with Prof. Shire by Nov. 5.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

*Reading listed under a date below is due ON that date in class.*

The instructor reserves the right to add supplementary readings (articles, primary documents) or to require less reading in any given week.

Date		Topic	Readings	Assignments	Goals
September	10	Intros & housekeeping		How to read like a History nerd	Assign groups and discussion leadership dates
September	17	What is race to an American?	Roediger	Group B finds reviews Group C brings primary sources: on race in America today or drawn from something in Roediger	- Discuss Roediger's book and its reception - Social construction mini-lecture - Interpret one primary source together
September	24	What was slavery? Part 1	Johnson	Group A finds reviews Group B writes review essays	- Discuss book and its reception - Discuss slavery as economic and social system
October	1	What was slavery? Part 2	Miles	Group C finds reviews Group A writes review essays Group B: primary sources on slavery (general, resistance, or in Native American country)	- Discuss book and its reception - Interpret one primary source - Explore impact of expansion and indigenous land politics - Diversity of slaveries in North America mini-lecture - Methods in American Studies v. U.S. History, Miles' use of fiction
October	8	What about free African Americans? Race without slavery	Ely	Group B finds reviews Group C writes a review essay Group A: primary sources on free black communities	- Discuss book and its reception - Interpret primary source - Free Black Communities mini-lecture
October	15	What about abolition? Didn't that challenge racial thinking?	Stauffer	Group A finds reviews Group B writes a review essay	- Discuss book and its reception - Various forms of American anti-slavery mini-lecture - Primary docs: David Walker's Appeal v. Angelina Grimke's

					letter to the women of the South
October	22	What about that War that ended slavery? What happened to race then?	Rugemer	Group C finds reviews Group A writes a review essay	- Discuss book and its reception - Mini-lecture on race and the origins of the Civil War
October	29	Civil War continued	McCurry	Group B finds reviews Group C writes a review essay	-Discuss book and its reception - How does McCurry explain origins of the CW differently than Rugemer did? What are the implications of this?
November	5	<b>MIDTERM</b>	<b>Midterm due at 12:30pm to <a href="mailto:profshire@gmail.com">profshire@gmail.com</a></b>		
November	12	So, post-slavery equality reigned, right? How race changed after slavery	Pascoe, part 1	Group A finds reviews Group B writes a review essay Group C: finds primary sources on "miscegenation" <b>DUE from EVERYONE: what book will you read for the final?</b>	- Discuss book and its reception - Mini-lecture on lynching, interracial sex before and after emancipation - Hemmings and Hodes – primary sources
November	19	Race & Sex	Pascoe, part 2	Group A finds primary sources on legal definitions of race	- Mini-lecture on legal history of race, census categories - Interpret primary sources
November	26	What about immigrants?	Jung	Group C finds reviews Groups A & C write a review essay	- Discuss book and its reception - Immigration history mini-lecture
December	3	Final Discussion	James Baldwin, "Going to Meet the Man" (a short story, 1965)	Group B: primary sources on race in Jim Crow era	- Discuss Baldwin's short story - Interpret the primary sources - Discuss final essays
<b>December</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Final Essay</b>	<b>Due to <a href="mailto:profshire@gmail.com">profshire@gmail.com</a> by 12 noon</b>		

## SUPPORT SERVICES

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

*Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.*

## THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

### PLAGIARISM

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

A. In using another writer's words, you must both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer.

You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. Acknowledgement is indicated either by (1) mentioning the author and work from which the words are borrowed in the text of your paper; or by (2) placing a footnote number at the end of the quotation in your text, and including a correspondingly numbered footnote at the bottom of the page (or in a separate reference section at the end of your essay). This footnote should indicate author, title of the work, place and date of Publication and page number. Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.



B. In adopting other writer's ideas, you must acknowledge that they are theirs.

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers' trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of acknowledgement given in 'A' above. Since the words are your own, they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own; where you must use words or phrases from your source; these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in 'A' above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgements and, when necessary, quotation marks is necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction, your instructor very likely will do so for you, and they will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student's receiving an 'F' in a course or, in extreme cases, in their suspension from the University.

#### MEDICAL ACCOMMODATION

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Please go to [https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical\\_accommodations\\_link\\_for\\_OOR.pdf](https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical_accommodations_link_for_OOR.pdf) to read about the University's policy on medical accommodation. Please go to <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medicalform.pdf> to download the necessary form. In the event of illness, you should contact Academic Counselling as soon as possible. The Academic Counsellors will determine, in consultation with the student, whether or not accommodation is warranted. They will subsequently contact the instructors in the relevant courses about the accommodation. Once a decision has been made about accommodation, the student should contact his/her instructors to determine a new due date for term tests, assignments, and exams.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact, Rebecca Dashford, Undergraduate Program Advisor, Department of History, 519-661-2111 x84962 or [rdashfo@uwo.ca](mailto:rdashfo@uwo.ca)