

U.S. History, 1945-Present
26:510:585
RESEARCH SEMINAR ON U.S. HISTORY, 1945-1990
Spring 2015

Class Location: Conklin 445
Class Meeting Times: Mon. 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Professor: Dr. Beryl Satter
E-mail address: satter@andromeda.rutgers.edu
My Office: 336 Conklin Hall
Phone: (973) 353-3900
Office Hours: Mondays, 4-5 p.m. and by appointment

This seminar is devoted to researching and writing a substantial, footnoted research paper (approximately thirty pages in length, typed and double spaced, approximately 250 words per page) on some aspect of U.S. history, 1945-1990. We will spend the first few weeks reading books and articles on this period. Class meetings will lead you through the step-by-step process of writing a research paper, including primary source research and analysis, the presentation of polished project proposals and the creation of outlines of your thesis. Some class sessions will be set aside for individual conferences, and others for group discussion.

Your research paper will be due in draft form well before the end of the seminar, so that it can go through several major revisions. Since revision is a process that is crucial to effective historical research and writing, we will devote class time to discussion of each of two drafts of your research project that you must complete a few days before the dates indicated in the syllabus below. Students will meet with the professor on an individual basis to discuss their projects and revisions and also work together on their papers, meeting in small groups with other students to discuss and critique each other's work.

Course Materials

Books:

- Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005)
- Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979)
- Dan Berger, ed., *The Hidden Seventies: Histories of Radicalism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010)
- Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East Since 1945*, Updated Edition, with a Post-9/11 Chapter (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005)

The remainder of the course readings are posted on Blackboard. Readings on Blackboard are marked with an asterisk.

Keep in mind that each of you will be expected to read many books and articles on your individual research topic – easily a dozen or more. You should expect to do *more* reading for this course than for a standard MA graduate course, but the reading will be tailored to your project.

Course requirements

1) *Class Participation* (will be taken into account and can raise or lower final grade)

2) *Source Analysis Paper* (20% of grade)

Each of you will write a paper, five to seven pages long, on either Kevin Kruse's *White Flight* or Melanie McAlister's *Epic Encounters*. Your paper will focus on the sources that the author used for his or her study and how the author used them. Include the following points in your paper. 1) State the thesis of the book. What question or questions did the author set out to answer? (While the thesis is usually stated in the book's first chapter, you should also pay attention to the thesis of each subsequent chapter; together they should add up to the thesis of the book.) 2) What obstacles – historical, methodological, or source-based – did the author have to overcome in order to answer his/ her question? How did the author deal with those obstacles? What methods did he/ she use to overcome them? 3) How does the author situate himself/ herself against what other historians have said about the question? What is new or different about what this author is arguing? 4) What sources did the author use to answer the key question or questions? Try to be specific. What sources seemed most fruitful, and why? How did the author “read” his or her sources (including visual sources)? Did the author read “against the grain”? If so, how? NOTE: if you'd like, you can respond to point 4 by focusing on two specific chapters out of the book, rather than on the book as a whole. 5) Conclude your paper with an imaginative exercise in which you list *at least* three short topics that one could explore related to the book's topic. What would be a small, manageable piece of the research that would spin off of or contribute to the research agenda laid out in the book you've just read? What sources (ideally) could one consult in order to answer that small piece of the puzzle? Append a list of PRIMARY SOURCES that could be used to answer your imagined questions (and try to go beyond mainstream newspaper articles). If possible, append at least ONE ACTUAL SOURCE and write a brief (one page or less) description of how you would use it.

3) *Paper Proposal* (10%)

4) *Footnote and Bibliography Form Assignment* (5%)

5) *Thesis Outline* (5%)

6) *Written Comments* on other students' drafts (10%)

7) *YOUR RESEARCH PAPER* (50%)

Syllabus (subject to minor revisions)

Mon. 1/26: Introduction

*Jules R. Benjamin, *A Student's Guide to History*, 11th edition (Boston and New York: Bedford/ St. Martin's, 2010) (hereafter "Benjamin"), on "Researching a History Topic" and "Writing a Research Paper," pp. 88-92, 128-131 (on Blackboard, under "Course Documents"). Pay particular attention to the boxed texts on pages 89 and 130. Also read paragraph "How the Thesis Was Developed," in Benjamin, 144.

Note: You will need to retrieve many readings for your project from library databases such as Project Muse, JSTOR, and EBSCOhost. If you are unsure of how to use these databases, see Benjamin, 102-105 (included in posting of Benjamin, 94-108, 252, on Blackboard).

2/2: Post-War Conservatism

Kevin Kruse, *White Flight*

NOTE: You will need to read the endnotes of all assigned readings for the first few weeks of the course simultaneously with the text in order to learn what source materials authors use to construct their narratives and analyses.

2/9: Civil Rights, the Feminist Movement, and the U.S. Left.

Sara Evans, *Personal Politics*

*Barbara Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), Chapters One (partial), pp. 24-57.

BRAINSTORM RESEARCH TOPICS: What, why, how! Please read the few pages on Blackboard about "How To Choose a Research Topic," titled "Topic Choice Marcus and Berkin." You can also review Benjamin, 88-92 if necessary.

216: Varieties of 1970s Radicalism

Dan Berger, ed., *The Hidden 1970s*, Chapters 1-3, 5-7, 9, 11-13 (read entire book except chapters 4, 8, 10, and 14).

*Epstein, *Political Protest*, Chapter Five (partial), pp. 157-183.

NOTE: brief assignment on proper footnote and bibliography form is due next week, in class. The assignment is posted on Blackboard under "Assignments." See Benjamin, 166-172, for samples of endnotes and bibliography. Also due next week is a paragraph describing your paper topic.

Look at the website created by Dana's reference librarian, Natalie Borisovets, under "My Library" in this class's Blackboard. It suggests numerous primary source possibilities. Also read Benjamin, 94-108, and p. 252 (on Blackboard), for explanations of how to do library searches for both secondary and primary sources.

2/23: Cultural Analysis and Foreign Policy in post-World War II U.S.

Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East since 1945*

Assignment on Proper Footnote and Bibliography Form DUE.

TOPIC SELECTION (Preliminary) DUE (a paragraph describing what you would like to write about, and primary sources you'd ideally like to use; also summarize it in one sentence that I can pass on to Natalie Borisovets). See Benjamin, 88-92.

Start gathering your primary sources and your secondary reading. What questions would you like them to answer? What makes your particular primary sources useful? What interpretive problems might they pose (what *can't* you learn from them?) What background reading will you need to do to supplement the primary sources and make them more fruitful? Begin a bibliography of secondary sources that you will use to situate your primary sources.

3/2 : Class workshop with Natalie Borisovetz at **Dana Library**

-Start preparing your paper proposal (due on Blackboard by noon, Saturday March 7, to be discussed in class on March 9).

IMPORTANT: A paper proposal must include four paragraphs covering the following:

A) Your question. B) What others have said about your question. C) What you hope to say or discover that is *different from or additional to* what others have said. D) What sources you will use to answer your question. (You can include an opening anecdote as well.)

-YOUR PAPER PROPOSAL MUST ALSO INCLUDE AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOTH PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES. This takes time, so please start right away even though the proposal is not due till March 9.

*Read "Sample Prospectus by Mia Bay," on Blackboard.

*Also read introduction of Beryl Satter, "Marcus Garvey, Father Divine, and the Gender Politics of Race Difference and Race Neutrality," *American Quarterly* 48:1 (March 1996), (pp. 43-47 of the article only).

3/9: PAPER PROPOSALS DISCUSSION.

You must post your proposals on Blackboard by noon on Saturday March 7, so that they can be available for the rest of the class to download and read by tonight's meeting. We will spend tonight's class reading and critiquing each other's proposals.

3/16: SPRING BREAK

3/23: Individual meetings with professor. Each of you will sign up for a half-hour meeting with me (we can open additional evenings if you cannot all meet with me this evening).

After our meeting, please draft an outline of your thesis. The outline should include the argument you plan to make, and show how you will use your evidence to make that argument. You must post your outlines on Blackboard by 10:00 a.m. on Saturday March 28 so that they can be available for the rest of the class to download and read before we meet on March 30. On outlines, see Benjamin, 131-135, 145-146.

3/30: Critiques of Thesis Outlines

We will spend tonight's class reading and critiquing each other's outlines.

4/6: Individual Meetings with professor. Each of you will sign up for a half-hour meeting with me (we can open additional evenings if you cannot all meet with me the evening of 4/6).

On writing a first draft, read Benjamin, 135-142.

Friday April 10: You must post copies of your first draft to Blackboard by no later than 10:00 a.m. today so that your group will have a chance to read and write a typed response to your draft, which they will post on Blackboard by 9:00 a.m. on Mon. April 13.

4/13: FIRST DRAFT MEETINGS

TYPED RESPONSES TO YOUR GROUP'S FIRST DRAFT DUE.

*Marius, "A Writer's Checklist: Revising an Essay"

*Frakes, pp. 56-64 (on how to revise a research paper and on common writing mistakes to avoid)

*Marius, pp. 105-108 and 161-173 (on same topics, with an emphasis on grammar)

*"Student Evaluations of Other Student's Papers" (You should try to incorporate these basic questions in your typed response to your groups' first drafts, but you don't need to follow the form number by number.)

4/20: FIRST DRAFT MEETINGS

UPDATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

On second drafts, read Benjamin, 142-144.

Friday April 24: You must post copies of your second draft to Blackboard by no later than 10:00 a.m. today so that your group will have a chance to read and write a typed response to your draft, which they will post on Blackboard by 9:00 a.m. on Mon 4/27.

4/27: SECOND DRAFT MEETINGS

5/4: SECOND DRAFT MEETINGS

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE NO LATER THAN 10:00 AM on Friday May 15.

NOTE: If you are graduating this semester, I will need the paper sooner, so that I can get your grade in in time for your graduation.