

CAS HI 315 THE AMERICAN WEST

Spring 2018

CAS B06B, Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30-4:45

Professor Sarah Phillips

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office hours: Tuesdays 12-1:30; Thursdays 1:30-3; and by appointment

We will examine the American West—the mythical landscape of adventure, freedom, and individual opportunity—as a region of unusual violence, cultural conflict, environmental challenge, and political ferment. We will also explore its distinctive regional trajectory while considering its history in relationship to the nation as a whole.

Required Books:

Karl Jacoby, *Shadows at Dawn: An Apache Massacre and the Violence of History* (Penguin, 9780143116219)

Owen Wister, *The Virginian* (1902), any edition

Natalia Molina, *How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (University of California, 9780520280083)

Andrew G. Kirk, *Doom Towns: The People and Landscapes of Atomic Testing: A Graphic History* (Oxford, 9780199375905)

Sherman Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* (Grove Press, 9780802121998)

Additional Reading:

Pekka Hämäläinen, "The Politics of Grass: European Expansion, Ecological Change, and Indigenous Power in the Southwest Borderlands," *William and Mary Quarterly* 67 (April 2010) (available online through BU Libraries/JSTOR)

Judy Yung, "Bound Feet: Chinese Women in the Nineteenth Century" from *Unbound Feet* (available on Blackboard)

Gary Y. Okihiro, "An American Story" from *Impounded* (available on Blackboard)

Class Organization and Reading Quizzes:

We will meet for two class sessions every week. Each class will open with a brief quiz at exactly 3:33pm. If you arrive later than 3:34 you will not be permitted to take the quiz. The quiz will pose two short answer questions on the reading assigned for that day. The quizzes (20% of the final grade) create a consistent incentive structure in which you complete the reading as it is assigned, and are prepared to engage in discussions about the assigned material. The four lowest quiz scores will be dropped before calculating final grades. No make-up quizzes will be administered.

Writing Assignments:

There are five written assignments in addition to the quizzes. Guidelines for these assignments will be distributed well in advance of each deadline. No outside research is required for these assignments.

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance and class participation are 20% of the final grade. Attendance will be taken at the end of each class meeting. Every student is permitted four absences without questions or penalty. Each absence over four will result in reductions to the final grade. More than six total absences will result in a failing grade for the course.

There will be many opportunities to participate in class, from reacting to images and documents during a lecture, to discussing assigned readings with the entire class or within a small group. Bring the assigned books with you to class and come prepared to engage in a lively discussion. I will learn everyone's names within the first week of class, and record the level of each student's participation.

Class Decorum

No computers, tablets, or phones are allowed. Kindly turn off and put away your devices before we begin. Please take lectures notes with pen and paper. Drinks are allowed, but please do not bring food.

Communication:

I will communicate with the class using email. Please check your BU email account regularly. The syllabus, along with all assignments and handouts, will be posted to the Blackboard website.

Assignments and Final Grade Calculation:

Please note: Students must receive a passing grade (C- or above) on each course component to receive a passing grade in the course.

Component/Assignment	Due Date	% Final Grade
Reading Quizzes	every class meeting	20%
Attendance and Participation	every class meeting	20%
Podcast Response	Feb 13	5%
Frontier Lens Essay	Feb 20	15%
<i>How Race is Made</i> Assignment	Mar 29	10%
<i>Doom Towns</i> Assignment	Apr 17	10%
West as Fiction Essay	May 4	20%

Academic Integrity:

It is your responsibility to read and understand the Boston University Academic Conduct Code (available at www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code) and to abide by its provisions. Any suspected cases of plagiarism or unethical academic behavior will be referred to the appropriate officials.

Schedule

Jan 18

What is the West?

Jan 23

READ: Jacoby, *Shadows at Dawn*, pp. 1-46
Spanish Southwest and the Pueblo Revolt of 1680

Jan 25

READ: Pekka Hämäläinen, "The Politics of Grass: European Expansion, Ecological Change, and Indigenous Power in the Southwest Borderlands," *William and Mary Quarterly* 67 (April 2010)
([available online through BU Libraries/JSTOR](#))
Empires and Indians

Jan 30

READ: Jacoby, *Shadows at Dawn*, pp. 48-140
Manifest Destiny

Feb 1

READ: Jacoby, *Shadows at Dawn*, pp. 143-180
U.S. War With Mexico

Feb 6

READ: Jacoby, *Shadows at Dawn*, pp. 183-244
Frontier Thesis I

Feb 8

NO CLASS MEETING
LISTEN TO PODCAST
START THINKING ABOUT LENS ESSAY

Feb 13

PODCAST RESPONSE DUE IN CLASS
NO READING/NO QUIZ
Frontier Thesis II

Feb 15

READ: Jacoby, *Shadows at Dawn*, pp. 245-278
Be Prepared for Jacoby Discussion (handout distributed in advance)

Feb 20

NO CLASS MEETING (MONDAY SCHEDULE)
LENS ESSAY DUE UNDER INSTRUCTOR'S DOOR BY 4PM

Feb 22

READ: Wister, *The Virginian*, chapters 1-15
Land and Labor

Feb 27

READ: Wister, *The Virginian*, chapters 16-31
Cowboys and Outlaws

Mar 1

READ: Wister, *The Virginian*, chapter 32-end
Be Prepared for Wister Discussion (handout distributed in advance)

Mar 5-9

NO CLASSES (SPRING RECESS)

Mar 13

READ: Judy Yung, "Bound Feet: Chinese Women in the Nineteenth Century" from *Unbound Feet* (available on Blackboard)
Asian Immigration and Exclusion

Mar 15

READ: Gary Y. Okihiro, "An American Story" from *Impounded* (available on Blackboard)
Japanese Internment

Mar 20

READ: Molina, *How Race is Made in America*, Introduction and chs. 1 & 2 (pp. 1-68)
Becoming Mexican American I

Mar 22

READ: Molina, *How Race is Made in America*, chs. 3 & 4 (pp. 68-111)
Becoming Mexican American II

Mar 27

READ: Molina, *How Race is Made in America*, ch. 5 & Epilogue (pp. 112-152)
Be Prepared for Molina Discussion (handout distributed in advance)

Mar 29

HOW RACE IS MADE ASSIGNMENT DUE IN CLASS

READ: Kirk, *Doom Towns*, Introduction (xi-xxxiv)
The Dust Bowl

Apr 3

READ: Kirk, *Doom Towns*, chs. 1-6 of "The Graphic History" (pp. 6-92); be sure to refer to the "Cast of Characters" (xxxix-xlii) when needed
World War II, the Cold War, and the West

Apr 5

READ: Kirk, *Doom Towns*, chs. 7-9 of "The Graphic History" (pp. 94-130)
Sunbelt Cities

Apr 10

NO READING/NO QUIZ

Be Prepared for Kirk Discussion (handout distributed in advance)

Apr 12

NO CLASS MEETING

WORK ON KIRK ASSIGNMENT AND GET STARTED ON ALEXIE

Apr 17

DOOM TOWNS ASSIGNMENT DUE IN CLASS

READ: Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, Author's Prologue and Introduction; and the following stories: "Every Little Hurricane"; "A Drug Called Tradition"; "Because My Father Always Said..."; "Crazy Horse Dreams"

California Turns Left and Right

Apr 19

READ: Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, the following stories: "The Only Traffic Signal..."; "Amusements"; "This is What It Means..."; "The Fun House"; "All I Wanted to Do Was Dance"; "The Trial of Thomas Builds-the-Fire"

Contemporary Wests

Apr 24

READ: Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, the following stories: "Distances"; "A Train Is an Order of Occurrence..."; "Imagining the Reservation"; "The Approximate Size..."; "Indian Education"; "The Lone Ranger and Tonto..."; "Somebody Kept Saying Powwow"

Film: *The Return of Navajo Boy*

Apr 26

READ: Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, the following stories: "Witnesses, Secret and Not"; "Junior Polatkin's Wild West Show"

Be Prepared for Alexie Discussion (handout distributed in advance)

May 1

NO QUIZ/WORK ON WEST AS FICTION ESSAYS

Course Conclusions

FRIDAY MAY 4:

WEST AS FICTION ESSAY DUE UNDER INSTRUCTOR'S DOOR BY 4PM