This course introduces Ph.D. students to the historiography of the U.S. through the Civil War and is intended to prepare students for the First Written Examination.

One of our primary concerns will be periodization. To what extent should the colonial period be considered a prologue to U.S. history? And on the other side of the nationhood divide, are there analyses that suggest a coherence or continuity to U.S. history beyond the peculiarities of the early republic or Civil War periods? What is the status of the Revolution and the Civil War, and the political history that drives or used to drive the narrative of U.S. history, amid transformations that might otherwise be seen as social, cultural, economic? Are there explanations that that cut across centuries, or stories that hold up in our time? What are the most important achievements of recent US historians, and what are the trends in the field now?

The books and articles we shall discuss include prizewinning narratives, monographs born as dissertations, and historiographical essays. An important part of what we will be doing is attempting to read these in light of each other. Be forewarned: the reading is extensive, in recognition of the five credits this course carries and its status as required preparation for qualifying examinations. My goal is to prepare you for the exam, of course, but also to prepare you to teach this period at the college level and to lay a substantial foundation for future research and teaching in any period of U.S. history.

Instead of a seminar paper or historiographical essay, your written work for the course will consist of weekly short (2-3 page) responses to the readings. Each week I will provide prompting questions that will help us work toward the kinds of writing and analysis the faculty will expect for the examination in December. These short essays, while relatively informal, will be due Thursday mornings at 10am, will be shared with the seminar, and may serve as jumping off points for our Thursday discussions.

**Aug. 28 Introduction**

**9/4 American History in 1948, 1998 and beyond: Origins, Celebration, Criticism, and the Big Story**

Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition and the Men who Made It* (1948), introduction and ch. 1-5 (pp. v-163)
9/11  Revisions, I: America’s Virginian (and Atlantic, and European, and Enslaved) Origins
David Brion Davis, “The Historical Problem: Slavery and the Meaning of America,” ch. 1 of The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture (1967), 3-28
Edmund S. Morgan, American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia (1975)
Thomas Bender, “The Ocean World and the Beginnings of American History,” A Nation Among Nations, ch. 1, pp. 3-60

9/18  War, Land, Ideas, and Empires
Andrew R. L. Cayton and Fred Anderson, “Champlain’s Dream” and “Penn’s Bargain,” The Dominion of War, ch. 1-2, pp. 1-103.

[9/25 no class – Rosh Hashanah]

10/2  Colonization on the Ground in New England: Still the Exception or Still the Rule?
Ulrich, The Age of Homepsun, chapters 1-3 (pp. 41-141)

10/9  Zooming In on Colonial Development: Commerce and People in New York
Burrows and Wallace, Gotham, ch. 1-12 (pp. 3-190)

10/16  Zooming Out: From Revision to Synthesis
Burrows and Wallace, Gotham, ch. 1-12 (pp. 3-190)
Daniel Richter, Before the Revolution: America’s Ancient Past
10/23  The American Revolution: liberation from what and for whom? (inspiration from where?)
Barbara Clark Smith, The Freedoms We Lost: Consent and Resistance in Revolutionary America (2010)
Ulrich, The Age of Homespun, chapters 4-6 (pp. 142-247)
Burrows and Wallace, Gotham, ch. 13-19 (pp. 191-298)
Cayton and Anderson, “Washington’s Apprenticeship” and “Washington’s Mission,” The Dominion of War, ch 3-4 (pp. 104-206)
T. Bender, “The ‘Great War’ and the American Revolution,” A Nation Among Nations, ch. 2 (pp. 61-115).

10/30  The Early Republic and the Public: Democracy, Nationalism, Postcolonialism, Empire?
Sean Wilentz, The Rise of American Democracy, Part I (pp. xi-178)
Burrows and Wallace, Gotham, ch. 20-26 (299-408)
Andrew W. Robertson, “‘Look on This Picture. . . And on This!’: Nationalism, Localism, and Partisan Images of Otherness in the United States, 1787-1820,” American Historical Review 106 (Oct. 2001): 1263-80.
Nicole Eustace, 1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism (2012)

11/6  The Early Republic at home: women and governance
Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, The Age of Homespun, ch. 7-12 (pp. 248-417)

11/13  Capitalism Revisited, Slavery Revisited
Rosanne Currarino, “Toward a History of Cultural Economy,” Journal of the Civil War Era 2 (December 2012), 564-585

11/20  The West, the Frontier: Colonization and Empire 19th Century Style?
Pekka Hamalainen, The Comanche Empire (2009)

[11/27 no class – Thanksgiving]
12/4  1815-1848: Was it “Jacksonian”? Was it “Democracy”?
Wilentz, *Rise of American Democracy*, ch. 6-20 (pp. 181-632)
Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham*, chapters 27-45 (pp. 429-820)
Cayton and Anderson, “Jackson’s Vision,” *The Dominion of War*, ch. 5 (pp. 207-46)

12/11 “Antebellum America” and The Coming and Fighting of the Civil War: A field taking stock
Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham*, ch. 46-50 (pp. 821-905)
Cayton and Anderson, “Grant’s Duty,” ch. 6 of *The Dominion of War*, pp. 274-316
Wilentz, *Rise of American Democracy*, ch. 21-25 (pp. 633-796)

*Read your choice of the following:*
Yael A. Sternhell “Revisionism Reinvented?: The Antiwar Turn in Civil War Scholarship,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 3 (June 2013), 239-256