



# **NINETEENTH-CENTURY REFORM MOVEMENTS IN THE U.S.**

**HIST 4990    SPRING 2009  
Wednesdays, 4:30-7:00 p.m.**

**PROF. DANIEL J. McINERNEY**

**Main 323    Office hours: M W F, 2:30-3:30 pm    (and by appointment)**

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(state a specific "SUBJ" in all e-mail)**

This course is designed for *senior History majors* as the capstone course for their undergraduate work. HIST 4990 offers students the opportunity to apply knowledge from survey classes and upper-division courses to a well-defined research project. The course emphasizes historiographical literacy, research, and writing skills in relation to a specific historical topic: slavery and antislavery.

The class has three objectives:

- First, students review the basic methods, skills, and tools of historical research.
- Second, class members examine the historiography of a particular issue, nineteenth-century reform in the U.S.
- Third, and most important, students write a major research paper based on a critical examination of varied primary sources. Students will first create a statement of their research topic, then develop an interpretive approach to the topic (their "thesis"), then construct a bibliography, then outline the project, and then compose the complete paper.

Your first task is to familiarize yourself with the requirements of the course. Read this syllabus carefully in order to understand the *assignments* you must complete, the *due dates* for your work, and the *penalties* for late submissions.

## **BASIC REMINDERS**

► Research papers for this course will:

- (a) focus on questions dealing with reform movements in the U.S. during the nineteenth century (particularly the years 1800-1860); and  
 (b) rely principally on *primary source* materials.

Under *certain* circumstances, I may allow a student to expand the area of research to the broader Atlantic world. But there *will* be limits on how far a student's work may depart from the stated topic.

► There is a waiting list of students trying to get into this course so they can graduate in May. Priority admission to the course goes to History majors who will complete their undergraduate work at the end of the Spring 2009 semester.

► Attendance is **mandatory** during our first FIVE meetings. No exceptions. If you have schedule conflicts, drop the course now.

From February 18<sup>th</sup> forward, I will be in the seminar room to field questions you may have about your work. I STRONGLY recommend that you attend. You will receive answers to questions about your research, learn from the work of your colleagues, and pick up useful tips along the way.

► Understand the meaning of a "deadline." All deadlines are **firm**. I impose stiff penalties for any written work submitted late. I do not make exceptions, regardless of the reason.

► That includes the equivalent of "My dog ate my hard drive." All through the composition of your paper, make back-up copies of your files. In April, on the day your paper is due, a system crash or lost disk will *NOT* be an acceptable excuse for late submissions.

► Understand the meaning of "plagiarism." ANY evidence of plagiarism--even a single sentence--will be grounds for automatic failure.

See: <http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/plagiar.html>

## **REQUIRED BOOKS:**

Kirszner, Laurie G., and Stephen R. Mandell, *The Pocket Handbook for History*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Boston: Thomson Wadsworth, 2004.

Walters, Ronald. *American Reformers, 1815-1860*. Revised ed. New York: Hill & Wang, 1978, 1997.

## **TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE**

Week 1: January 7

**No class meeting;** *I will be in New York City for meetings of the American Historical Association and the U.S. Dept. of Education.*  
But you *do* have an assignment: read Walters's *American Reformers*.  
-See page 7 for a reading guide to the Walters book.

Week 2: January 14

Review of course structure and requirements.  
Seminar discussion: Walters, *American Reformers*.

Week 3: January 21

Library visit: meet in the ground floor lounge of the Merrill-Cazier Library.  
After the library tutorial: a discussion of topic interests; be prepared to speak about the historical topic on 19<sup>th</sup>-century reform you wish to examine

Week 4: January 28

► TOPIC & THESIS DUE: 1-2 paragraph statement of your historical topic and the interpretive thesis that will inform your paper; list general types of primary sources and key secondary sources

Week 5: February 4

► BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE: list of primary and secondary sources;  
Write citations in the "Chicago style" (see *The Pocket Handbook*)

Week 6: February 11

Updates on progress of papers  
► OUTLINE DUE: 2-3 page explanation of the paper's informing thesis, its methods, and the components of its argument

Week 7: February 18

Updates on progress of papers

Week 8: February 25

Updates on progress of papers

Week 9: March 4

Updates on progress of papers

Week 10: March 11

***Spring break; no classes***

Week 11: March 18

Updates on progress of papers

Week 12: March 25

**No class meeting:** *I will be in Seattle for the Organization of American Historians conference*

Week 13: April 1

Updates on progress of papers

Week 14: April 8

Updates on progress of papers

Week 15: April 15

**No class meeting:** *I will be in Albuquerque for an American Studies conference*

Week 16: April 22

Updates on progress of papers

Week 17: April 27 **(MONDAY)**

► Paper due, no later than 4:30 pm (BOTH electronic & hard copy versions)

Two versions of your paper due:

1. Electronic version: e-mail the file to me at [danielj@hass.usu.edu](mailto:danielj@hass.usu.edu)  
(time stamp on e-mail must be no later than 4:30 pm, April 27)
2. Hard copy version: drop this off to me in the History office, Main 323L.  
Deadline, again, is no later than 4:30 pm on April 27.

Penalties imposed for papers submitted after 4:30 pm on Monday, April 27:

- submitted 4:31 - 5:00 pm on Monday: . . . . . one full letter grade penalty
- submitted 5:01 pm Monday-4:00 pm Tuesday: . two full letter grades
- submitted 4:01 Tuesday-4:00 pm Wednesday: . three full letter grades
- submitted 4:01 Wednesday-4:00 pm Thursday: . four full letter grades
- submitted 4:01 Thursday-4:00 pm Friday: . . . . . five full letter grades

Evaluation of the final paper: the following factors “count” in grading the paper:

- Opening paragraphs (strong, precise statement of nature of the question and thesis; clear preview of the argument the paper will follow)
- Main argument (well-organized; coherent; logical sequence of points; plausible interpretation of sources; reasonable claims; significance and persuasiveness of arguments)
- Primary sources (their range and relevance to the topic)
- Secondary sources (range; interpretive choices; relation to your thesis)
- Citations (proper use and form)
- Mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar, sentence and paragraph structure)

You will receive an evaluation form in advance in order to understand the components of your grade.

## THE RESEARCH PAPER:

Bear in mind from the start that your central goal in this course is to demonstrate your skills as researcher who will:

- (1) tirelessly track down appropriate sources;
- (2) reflect on sources with a sophisticated, disciplined, and critical eye;
- (3) compose a paper that displays your mastery of expression and construction.

Since you will first tackle goal #1, understand what you are facing:

▶ Do NOT expect that the primary sources you need will be comfortably and conveniently identified with a few clicks on Google. If that is how you anticipate the work, you are in the wrong class.

▶ HIST 4990 requires extensive and time-consuming research legwork:

- You will spend much of your Spring semester in the library tracking, hunting, and exploring materials.
- You will be in contact with reference librarians.
- You may need to explore USU's Special Collections.
- You will have to use interlibrary loan to acquire necessary sources.
- You will work with those dreaded microfilm machines.
- You will probably have to arrange trips to the Marriott Library at the University of Utah.

▶ Success (i.e., a passing grade) will require:

- an understanding of the difference between a "topic" and a "thesis";
- a knowledgeable grounding in the key secondary sources;
- an appreciation of the interpretive questions scholars pose on the subject;
- an appreciation of the interpretive *debates* that have divided scholars;
- an ability to locate *your* interpretive question within this larger framework;
- an extensive effort to uncover all of the available resources that provide evidence for you interpretive questions;
- a subtle, skillful, sophisticated ability to read, interpret, and analyze sources within a historical context;
- an ability to express your arguments in a clear, well-organized, logical, and persuasive fashion;
- AND a recognition that you will do nearly all of these jobs on your own, on a schedule that YOU will have to construct and maintain.

That is what you are up against:

- Only those students who feel up to the task should stay in the class.
- Only those students mature enough to maintain a steady and productive rate of progress **on their own** (without the "stick" of conventional, upper-division class assignments) should remain.

As stated on page 2, research papers for this course will focus on questions dealing with reform movements in the U.S. during the nineteenth century. Under certain circumstances, I may allow a student to expand the area of research to the broader Atlantic world. But there *will* be limits on how far a student's work may depart from the stated topic.

You will work toward your final paper in stages:

- stage one: approval of a topic & thesis (due January 28)
- stage two: approval of a bibliography (due February 4)
- stage three: approval of an outline (due February 11)
- stage four: completion of the research paper (due April 27)

First drafts (OPTIONAL—completely voluntary):

- I will review first drafts of your papers—*if you choose to submit one*.
- The draft copy does not receive any credit, but you may find the commentary helpful.
- My review will focus on substantive issues: thesis, evidence, interpretation, analysis, organization.
- I will *not* make “editorial” corrections (spelling/grammar/sentences/paragraphs). YOU assume responsibility for following standard rules of composition, grammar, and spelling. If you assume such rules are “suggested” (not required), you are in the wrong class.
- DEADLINE for submitting optional first drafts: Wednesday, April 8, 4:30 pm. (The reason for this early deadline? I will be at an American Studies conference in New Mexico the following week. There will be little time after my return to make revisions in your paper.)

You will submit the **FINAL** version of your paper in TWO forms:

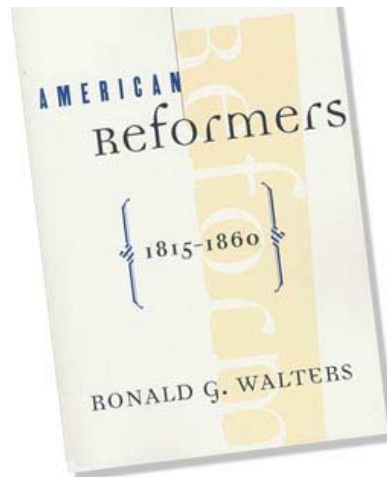
- an electronic file (in Word format; if necessary, WordPerfect is acceptable)
- a hard copy (printed in 12 pt. font; 1” margins all around; double-spaced; pages numbered; no plastic or paper holders/covers; paper clip to hold pages together; 20-24 pages of text + 1-5 pages of endnotes + 1-2 page bibliography).

**Back-ups:** *All through the composition of your paper, make back-up copies of your files. At the end, a system crash or lost disk will NOT be an acceptable excuse for late submissions.*

### **COMPONENTS OF FINAL GRADE:**

Your final grade for the course will be based on evaluations of:

- 10%: attendance and class participation
- 5%: TOPIC
- 5%: BIBLIOGRAPHY
- 10%: OUTLINE
- 70%: final paper



**Your first assignment? Start reading Walters.**

**Read *everything* in the work, including the author's note, preface, introduction, afterword, bibliographic essay, endnotes --- the parts that students usually think they can skip.**

**The book will give you considerable guidance about:**

- (a) the basic narrative of 19<sup>th</sup>-century American reform,**
- (b) an introduction to the thematic approaches historians have adopted toward the subject,**
- (c) important leads on primary and secondary sources, and**
- (d) interpretive debates that have swirled around these issues.**

**Seminar discussion on *American Reformers* for January 14<sup>th</sup>:**

For purposes of our class discussions, what are the key topics I would like you to address?

(The quality of your participation in the seminar discussion will be evaluated, so come prepared to speak about Walters's argument, having read—and carefully considered—the entire work.)

**-What did you learn from Walters's study that you did not know before? AND**

**-What significance do these illuminating arguments hold for an understanding of reform? (In other words, if you were struck by particular arguments in Walters's book, explain why those arguments are of historiographical importance.)**

**-Be prepared to speak about the long list of questions that appears in the middle of page x (where Walters refers to the "independent set of questions running through both editions of *American Reformers*.")**

**-What are the key historiographical disputes in which scholars have been engaged?**

**-How does his book make you reconsider reform in America?**

**HELPFUL GUIDES:**

- General writing guides:  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>  
<http://www.writing.northwestern.edu/links.html>
- Historical writing:  
[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/writing\\_guides/writing\\_guides.cfm](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/writing_guides/writing_guides.cfm)  
[http://www.brown.edu/StudenCServices/Writing\\_Center/lodewick.htm](http://www.brown.edu/StudenCServices/Writing_Center/lodewick.htm)
- "Primary" and "secondary" sources:  
[http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/new\\_primarysources.html](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/new_primarysources.html)
- The thesis:  
<http://www.iupui.edu/~writectr/pdf/Revising%20Thesis%20Statements%20Feb%2003.pdf>
- Picking a topic:  
<http://www.hist.umn.edu/hist4961w/faq.html>  
<http://www.hist.umn.edu/hist4961w/picking.html>  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/ResearchW/pick.htm>

**HELPFUL WEBSITES:**

[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/writing\\_guides/writing\\_guides.cfm](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/writing_guides/writing_guides.cfm)  
 (go to this website and scroll down to "slavery" and "reform")  
[http://lii.org/search?query=Abolitionists+or+"Underground+railroad"+or+\("United+States"+\(slave+or+slavery\)\);searchtype=subject](http://lii.org/search?query=Abolitionists+or+)  
 (web resources on slavery and abolition)  
 USU Libraries: "electronic journal," "research," and other searches  
<http://library.usu.edu/Reassist/howto.php?faqnum=1>  
<http://www.h-net.org/~slavery/>  
 (scholarly discussion of topics on slavery)  
<http://www.h-net.org/~shear/>  
 (scholarly discussion of topics in the early American republic)  
<http://www.hfac.uh.edu/gl/links.htm>  
 (U.S. history resources)  
<http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp/>  
 ("Making of America" digital library)  
<http://library.usu.edu/Reassist/howto.php?faqnum=1>  
 USU Libraries: "electronic journal," "research," and other searches

**ARCHIVES** (Source: <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/resources.html#ejournals>)

Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

<http://library.berkeley.edu/BANC/>

Beinecke Library, Yale University

<http://yaleinfo.yale.edu/YaleLibraries/Beinecke/manu/>

Houghton Library, Harvard University  
<http://hcl.harvard.edu/houghton/mss/>  
 Huntington Library  
<http://huntington.org>  
 Illinois History Resource Page  
<http://alexia.lis.uiuc.edu/~sorensen/hist.html>  
 Maryland State Archives  
<http://www.mdarchives.state.md.us/>  
 National Archives  
<http://www.nara.gov>  
 New-York Historical Society  
<http://www.nyhistory.org>  
 Notre Dame Archives  
<http://archives1.archives.nd.edu/>  
 Pierpont Morgan Library  
<http://www.morganlibrary.org>  
 Western Reserve Historical Society  
<http://www.wrhs.org>

### **ONLINE RESOURCES**

(Source:[www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/resources.html#ejournals](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/resources.html#ejournals))

Avalon Project, Yale Law School  
<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/avalon.htm>  
 Archiving Early America  
<http://earlyamerica.com/>  
 Guide to Uncovering Women's History in Archival Collections  
<http://www.lib.utsa.edu/Archives/links.htm>  
 Making of America digital library  
<http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrpl/>

DeBow's Review:  
<http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moajrnl/browse.journals/debo.html>  
 North American Review:  
<http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/moa/browse.journals/nora.html>  
 Southern Literary Messenger:  
<http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moajrnl/browse.journals/sout.html>  
 Ladies Repository:  
<http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moajrnl/browse.journals/ladi.html>  
 Freedom's Journal:  
<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/libraryarchives/aanp/freedom/>

Internet Library of Early Journals: A digital library of 18th and 19th Century journals (An eLib (Electronic Libraries Programme) Project by the Universities of Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester and Oxford )  
<http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/ilej/>

**ADDITIONAL PRIMARY SOURCES AVAILABLE ONLINE:**

-Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/mesnbibStates1.html>

-Alabama Department of Archives and History  
<http://www.archives.state.al.us/teacher/netres.html>  
 (scroll down to "Corn and Cotton Economy")

-Alabama Department of Archives and History: Using Primary Sources in the Classroom  
<http://www.archives.state.al.us/teacher/slavery.html>  
 (see, esp. Lesson 3)

-The Atlantic Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Americas: A Visual Record  
<http://hitchcock.itc.virginia.edu/Slavery/>  
 (an interesting iconographic website)

**WEBSITES DESCRIBING CONTENTS OF KEY MICROFORM COLLECTIONS:**

(consult with reference librarians about the availability of these collections to USU students):

Records of Ante-Bellum Southern Plantations from the Revolution through the Civil War  
<http://www.lexisnexis.com/academic/2upa/Ash/AnteBellumSouthernPlantations.asp>

Southern Women and Their Families in the 19th Century: Papers and Diaries Series A, Holdings of the Southern Historical Collections, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill  
[http://www.lexisnexis.com/academic/guides/womens\\_studies/womens.asp](http://www.lexisnexis.com/academic/guides/womens_studies/womens.asp)

Pamphlets in American History: A Bibliographic Guide to the Microform Collection  
<http://www.il.proquest.com/research/pd-product-American-History-372>

American Periodicals Series (APS I, II, and III), 1741-1900  
<http://www.il.proquest.com/research/pd-product-American-Periodicals-Series-APS-I-22.shtml>