

AMH 5930

Power and Politics in the American South

Spring 2018

Wednesday, periods 8-10 (3-6 pm)

William A. Link
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Office hours:
Monday/Wednesday 2-3, or by
appointment

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Course description and objectives

This course explores power and politics in the South, broadly construed, beyond electoral politics--including the rise and fall of white supremacy, and the history of southern education. Students will have the opportunity to construct a semester project around their interests—should that be suitable to their program of study.

Books

1. Edward Ayers, *The Thin Light of Freedom*
2. Glenda Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*
3. Steven Hahn, *The Political Worlds of Slavery and Freedom*
4. Pippa Holloway, *Living in Infamy*
5. Greta de Jong, *You Can't Eat Freedom*
6. Christopher Phillips, *The River Ran Backwards*
7. Jennifer Ritterhouse, *Discovering the South*
8. Jason Ward, *Defending White Supremacy*

Evaluation:

Course grades are calculated on the following basis: discussion, 25 percent; papers, 75 percent.

NB: As a matter of policy, I do not give out incompletes.

Attendance policy:

Students are expected to attend ALL classes.

Minimal expectations:

1. Attend all classes.
2. Complete the assigned weekly readings before each class.
3. Criticize your peers' work constructively.
4. Participate regularly in class discussions.
5. Complete all papers by the deadline. Late papers will be penalized by a full grade for every 24 hours.

Writing assignments:

1. A course project, which can be one of the following
 - A single historiographical paper of approximately 5,000 words;
 - A primary source, research-based paper of approximately 5,000 words.

Discussion facilitators/Peer review

Discussion facilitators will consult with me ahead of time, and devise a strategy for discussion for our Wednesday class meeting. The discussion facilitators are responsible for the reading, and providing a brief review of the former. I ask that, at a minimum, discussion facilitators prepare for the class: 1) questions regarding the reading, 2) a summary of published book reviews; and 3) a brief (no more than 1 pg.) bibliography of relevant works, emailed to the class in advance.

Each student will also serve as a critic of the work of another student.

I will make assignments for discussion facilitators and critics during the first part of the semester.

Course Schedule

WEEK 1 January 10: What is Southern Political History?

Reading: Robin D. G. Kelley, "We Are Not What We Seem": Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South," *Journal of American History* 80 (June 1993): 75-112; Laura F. Edwards, "Southern History as U.S. History," *Journal of Southern History* 75, No. 3 (August 2009): 533-564.

I The Civil War South

WEEK 2 January 17: Christopher Phillips, *The River Ran Backward*

Additional reading: Steven Hahn, "'Extravagant Expectations' of Freedom: Rumour, Political Struggle, and the Christmas Insurrection Scare of 1865 in the American South," *Past & Present*, No. 157 (November, 1997), pp. 122-158.

WEEK 3 January 24:

Steven Hahn, *The Political Worlds of Slavery and Freedom*

WEEK 4 January 31:

Edward Ayers, *The Thin Light of Freedom*

II The Disfranchised South

WEEK 5 February 7:

NO CLASS: work on paper proposals; meet with instructor.

WEEK 6 February 14:

Papers: provide your critic with a 5 pp description.

WEEK 7 February 21:

Pippa Holloway, *Living in Infamy*

WEEK 9 February 28:

Glenda Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*

March 5-9 Spring Break

III The Civil Rights South

WEEK 10 March 14

Jennifer Ritterhouse, *Discovering the South*; Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History* 91 (March 2005): 1233-1263.

WEEK 11 March 21

Professor Aaron Sheehan-Dean, Milbauer Conference: reading will be provided.

WEEK 12 March 28:

Jason Ward, *Defending White Democracy*

WEEK 13 April 4:

Greta de Jong, *You Can't Eat Freedom*

WEEK 14: April 11

NO class—work on papers

WEEK 15 April 18

Paper presentations, with critics

WEEK 16 April 25

Paper presentations, with critics