

HIS 572:02
Traditional American History to 1876

for TAH Teachers
Fall 2007

CID: 526

Dr. Terry D. Bilhartz
Email: his_tdb@shsu.edu
Office: #936-294-1483
Estill 441 http://www.shsu.edu/~his_tdb

American history is boring! At least that is what many young adults think. When asked why they feel that way, many say that it is hard to get excited about a subject that is so far removed from their daily lives. For many of these students, learning history is akin to memorizing multiplication tables, different only in that unlike multiplication tables, history data has no practical value and thus can be forgotten without personal detriment just as soon as the final examination has been taken.

Historians, of course, know that history is not boring, static, passive or valueless. On the contrary, they insist that the discipline is interesting, sometimes even entertaining, dynamic, and often controversial. But how can this enthusiasm for history be conveyed to those who lack this love for understanding the American past?

While agreeing that there is not a single answer to this question, the designers of this course are convinced that the quickest way to make history "come alive" is to encourage students to "do history" rather than simply to memorize it. We believe that many find the study of the past boring because they do not approach the past as historians do. Thus, one primary objective of this course is to help students to develop the detective skills of historians that will enable them to answer for themselves from primary source materials one basic question – what was life like back then? This course rests upon the premise that the sooner students develop the ability to construct for themselves a reasonable assessment of the American past based upon primary sources, the sooner they will be "turned on" to historical knowledge and the sooner they will be able to conceptualize and master the content of American history.

The particular piece of the past to be studied in this course is TRADITIONAL AMERICAN HISTORY TO 1876. (A related online course offered next semester will focus on TRADITIONAL AMERICAN SINCE 1876.) These courses present content that is offered to selected Texas public school History teachers who have been invited to participate in Summer Workshops at SHSU funded by the US Department of Education "TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY" Grant Program. By offering these classes online, students and teachers of American History unable to attend the summer workshops also will have the opportunity to explore ways to uncover, conceptualize, interpret, and communicate the content of traditional American history. Summer Workshop participants also are invited to enroll in the online course, complete the written assignments, and receive graduate credit for this work.

Click on any of the following headings to jump to that section of the syllabus:

Getting Started	Discussion Questions	Course Units and Assignment Schedule (This link will take you to one of the most important and most frequently used sections of this syllabus)	Grading Policies	Grading & Contact Schedule
Required Readings	Book Reviews		Points Available & Grading Scale	Office Hours
Course Participation	Semester Project		Contact Information	Course Policies

Getting Started -- First Steps for this Class:

1. Contact me via e-mail IMMEDIATELY after you have registered for the course. We will stay in touch primarily through e-mail and to avoid confusion ALWAYS use the same e-mail address throughout the duration of this course.
2. Sign up for an SHSU email account. I don't care if this is the one you use for the class, but it is essential for you to have this to use the databases at [SHSU's Newton Gresham Library](#). These will allow you to read articles online, some of which I'm requiring for the class, but many of which will be useful to you in developing your semester project. I suggest you peruse the library's [Databases and Index's](#) page. In particular, I recommend the databases [JSTOR](#) (thousands of online articles, book reviews, etc. from leading academic journals) and [America: History and Life](#) (great research tool for articles, books, book reviews, etc. that will help you learn more about traditional American history) for this course. To [activate your computer account, click here](#) and follow the instructions (your pin is your birth day, month and year with no spaces or slashes, i.e. if you were born on

- January 1, 1970 it would be 010170). As long as you are registered for this class, you can acquire this account. Then, when you try to enter these databases available to you as a member of the SHSU community, you just type in your user name and password and you're in.
3. I realize that you have outside commitments, other classes, work, family, etc., but in order to successfully complete this course you will have to assign a high priority to it. This course meets on a fairly flexible schedule that is broken into five units of approximately three-weeks each, but it is also intensive, challenging and demanding and thus requires you to exert a considerable degree of self-discipline and self-motivation. The pay-off for this hard work, I hope, comes in a rewarding learning experience that should spark new interests in various aspects of history.

Required Readings:

NOTE: You may be able to find these texts online at Amazon.com, Barnesandnoble.com, or in used bookstores that you can search at sites such as abebooks.com and bibliofind.com. Remember when ordering used books that you may want to find a copy that is "fine" or better, which is usually quite easy to do, available at a reasonable price, and nicer than a moldy, highlighted, or otherwise flawed text. I have placed links on the texts below that will allow you to click on the title and order directly from amazon.com's new or used selections, but, again, you're welcome to purchase these through whatever means are most convenient for you.

Primary Sources

Gorn, Roberts and Bilhartz, ed. *CONSTRUCTING THE AMERICAN PAST, VOLUME 1* (Longman, 5th edition, 2004 or 6th edition, 2007).

Bilhartz, *SACRED WORDS* (McGraw Hill, 2006)

Secondary Source Readings:

Bilhartz and Elliott, *CURRENTS IN AMERICAN HISTORY VOLUME 1* (ME Sharpe 2007)

Bruce, *THE HARP AND THE EAGLE* (New York University Press, 2005)

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Class Participation:

Students are expected to complete all assignments for each unit on time and submit these via Blackboard's Discussion Board to the entire class. If you need to include italics, etc. you may post the message within Blackboard's Discussion Board as an attached file, using either MS Word. All book reviews, answers to discussion questions, and your semester project should be sent for posting in Blackboard. All students should run an anti-virus check of all attached messages BEFORE sending them and BEFORE opening them. I encourage each of you to discuss the readings and each other's book reviews, respectfully, via group postings in the Discussion Board.

Primary Source Analysis Discussion Questions:

You will have a set of questions to answer for each of the assigned Units. To answer these questions, you will need to “construct” a version of the past that is compatible with the primary documents that you have been given. Be sure that your answers make frequent reference to the primary sources. Most answers should be about 500 to 1000 words in length.

WHEN YOU TURN IN YOUR ASSIGNMENTS, FOLLOW THESE BASIC RULES:

1. The subject of your thread within the Discussion Board should clearly state the class you are in (i.e., History 572), the Unit number, and your name.

VERY IMPORTANT: I would like you to use some direct quotes from your online and text readings to support your answers. For these assignments the use of a parenthetical reference is sufficient, although, as you probably know, the discipline of History generally demands the use of the Chicago Style.

Secondary Source Reviews:

In order to help you to develop your assessment and writing skills, during this semester you will review *The Harp and the Eagle*. Use this review as an opportunity to showoff your literary skills. Write it as if you were going to send it to a history journal for publication consideration. The review does not need to be long (500-800 words will do), but it should be insightful. For TIPS on writing book reviews, see Jules Benjamin's, *A Student's Guide to History* "[Writing Book Reviews](#)."

Semester Project:

For your final assignment in this class, you will demonstrate what you have learned this semester by creating a syllabus with lesson plans for a course on TRADITIONAL AMERICAN HISTORY TO 1876. For details, see below.

Research Tools:

- You may want to visit the [SHSU Newton Gresham Library](#) online to help you with this project. NOTE: as an SHSU student you are eligible for an SHSU email

address which will allow you access to our databases, articles online, etc. Remember that you were supposed to activate your computer account at the beginning of the class: To [activate your computer account, click here](#) and follow the instructions (your pin is your birth day, month and year with no spaces or slashes, i.e. if you were born on January 1, 1970 it would be 010170). As long as you are registered for this class, you can acquire this account. Then, when you try to enter these databases available to you as a member of the SHSU community, you just type in your user name and password and you're in.

- Don't forget my suggestions regarding the use of research tools via the SHSU Newton Gresham Library. Visit the library's [Databases and Index's](#) page and especially the databases [JSTOR](#), which contains thousands of online articles, book reviews, etc. from leading academic journals, and [America: History and Life](#), which is a great research tool for that will help you learn more about American History topics. I STRONGLY suggest that you contact the SHSU Interlibrary Services, and complete the Distance Learning form. To do so, go to http://www.shsu.edu/~lib_www/ils/distance.html Click on link for: "Sign Up for Distance Education Library Services" and complete and submit the form. Then come back to this page to link to forms for journal, book, or dissertation request forms. You need to complete this each semester, so if you have already done this for a previous class you will need to do it again.

Once you complete this form and are officially registered with Interlibrary Loan, you are eligible to request them to photocopy the article from the SHSU holding or to find it for you from another library and they will mail a copy of the article to you, no charge. If you need a book you can't find locally, again, you can request it from SHSU's Interlibrary Loan office. If we have the book, they'll mail it to you or they'll borrow it from a different library and have it sent to you. They pay shipping to you, the loan is usually for 3 weeks, but can be renewed in some cases, and then you pay shipping back, including insurance to cover any damage or loss of book (only costs about \$2-3 whereas replacing a lost book is \$75--get the insurance!)

General Guidelines for Written Assignments

- All material that is a direct quote or PARAPHRASED (i.e. anything that is not your original idea--remember that it's better to be safe than sorry and fail the course on grounds of plagiarism) must be cited with endnotes. For instructions on the proper format for endnotes please see [Jules Benjamin's A Student's Guide to History, 8th edition](#) (available online) and specifically, under the link for "[HOW TO WRITE A HISTORY PAPER](#)" see the instructions on

[How to Write a Footnote or Endnote for a Book](#) (See printed *Guide*, chapter 5, pages 124-26)

[How to Write a Footnote or Endnote for a Journal Article](#) (See printed *Guide*, chapter 5, pages 126-28)

[How to Write a Footnote or Endnote for a Web Site](#) (See printed *Guide*, chapter 5, pages 129-30)

[Writing A Bibliography: General Form](#) (See printed *Guide*, chapter 5, pages 130-31)

[Writing A Bibliography: Entries for Books](#) (See printed *Guide*, chapter 5, pages 131-133)

[Writing A Bibliography: Entries for Journal Articles](#) (See printed *Guide*, chapter 5, pages 133-34)

[Writing A Bibliography: Entries for Web Sites](#) (See printed *Guide*, chapter 5, pages 135-36)

The first page of your paper should include the title of your project, your name, the date, the name of this course, my name, and the name of this institution, Sam Houston State University. All pages MUST be numbered. I do not accept papers that obviously have not checked for spelling or careless typos. It may take you several drafts to complete your assignments to your liking. Be sure to read through the final draft at least two times before submitting it. You will have put a lot of work into this by the time you are finished--take pride in your writing and avoid sloppy errors. If you have had difficulty with writing assignments in the past, I suggest that you submit drafts of your paper to the SHSU Writing Center. They offer help with writing styles, making clear arguments, and ensuring that you submit a well-written piece. For more information go to the "[Distance Tutoring](#)" section of the SHSU Writing Center home page.

- Be sure to read the official course policy regarding plagiarism stated at the bottom of this syllabus.
- It always is wise to save and backup all your work, even after you have sent it. If your work is ever lost in cyberspace, you will want to have a backup copy to resubmit.

Grading:

Your grade for this course is based on your answers to the primary source questions in each of the units, the quality and quantity of your participation in the online discussions, and on your semester project.

Returning Grades: I usually require one week to grade and return your assignments. I may return grades more quickly sometimes, but please give me at least one week before you contact me to ask about your grade.

Points Available in this Course:

Assignments	Points available
Primary Source Analysis and Secondary Source Reviews - Units 1-3	300 points (100 points each unit)
Participation in Online Discussions	100 points

Semester Project – Strategies for Teaching the TEKS through Primary Sources, Event Analysis, and/or Issue Analysis	100 points
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Grade Scale:

Points	Letter Grade
450-500	A
400-449	B
350-349	C
300-349	D
Below 300	F

Contact Information:

If you ever have any questions about this course and your related assignments, the SHSU History program, etc. please do not hesitate to contact me. The best way to do this is via email at his_tdb@shsu.edu Always include your full name and the name of the course you are taking with me in your message. You can try to reach me at my office, too, at #936-294-1483, but sometimes I work at my home office, etc. so the best method is email.

Grading and Contact Schedule:

You are welcome to contact me at any time, but please realize that I will not always be able to respond to your message during the day of your query. Remember, too, that I take one week to return all graded assignments.

Office Hours: MWF 10 – 11 am and by appointment.

Course Units and Reading Schedule

This course is broken into four units, plus the final unit that includes the posting and eventual final submission of your semester project. Click each unit number ("Unit 1" for example) to learn more about the readings and assignments for that unit.

Unit Links	Topic	Reading Assignment	Writing Assignment
Unit 1 Aug 22 to Sept 16	History and Its Sources and	<i>Constructing the American Past, Introduction and</i>	Post on Blackboard your responses to the Unit 1 Discussion

	The Colonial Experience in America	<i>Chapters 1-3</i> CURRENTS, Introduction and Chapter 1 <i>Sacred Words</i> (selections)	Questions by Sept 16. Post your comments on the work of your classmates by Sept 23
Unit 2 Sept 16 to Oct 15	Topics in Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century America	<i>Constructing the American Past, Chapters 4-10</i> <i>CURRENTS, chapters 2 – 4</i>	Post on Blackboard your responses to the Unit 2 Discussion Questions by Oct 13. Post your comments on the work of your classmates by Oct 20.
Unit 3 Oct 13 to Nov 15	Topics in Mid- Nineteenth Century America	<i>Constructing the American Past, Chapters 11-12</i> <i>CURRENTS, chapters 5 – 7</i> <i>A Harp and an Eagle</i>	Post on Blackboard your responses to the Unit 3 Discussion Questions by Nov 4. Post your comments on the work of your classmates by Nov 11.
Unit 4 Nov 4 to Dec 6	Strategies for Teaching American History To 1876	Independent Readings	Post on Blackboard your Semester Project by Dec 7.

COURSE POLICIES

Plagiarism

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and may be punished by failure on the exam, paper, or project; failure in the course; and/or expulsion from the university. The *SHSU Student Guidelines* academic honesty policy states:

The university expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. 5.31The university and its official representatives, acting in accordance with Subsection 5.32, may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic

dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. See <http://www.shsu.edu/students/guide.html>

I suggest that you read Jules Benjamin's (*A Student's Guide to History*) [discussion of plagiarism](#) as well.

ADA Accommodations

Any student who may require an accommodation under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the instructor on this matter as soon as possible to ensure a positive learning environment.

Copyright Statement

The lecture materials presented in this course are copyrighted. Reproduction of class notes for commercial purposes without the express permission of the copyright holder is prohibited.

UNIT 1 ASSIGNMENTS: HISTORY & ITS SOURCES - POST ON BLACKBOARD

I. An Introduction to History and Its Sources - Read the Introduction to *Constructing the American Past, Volume 1* (hereafter cited CAP) and the Introduction to *Currents*.

Unit 1/Question 1: Part A: Define and illustrate the terms “history,” “historiography,” “primary source,” and “secondary source.” Explain how it is possible for a single document to be both a primary source and a secondary source. Part B. Write an essay in which you answer the question, “Did Hamilton try to kill Burr? (Base your arguments on the primary sources)

II. World History Sources

Unit 1/Question 2: Select any three chapters in *Sacred Words*. In these chapters, read the primary documents that deal with one of the nine themes that frame the volume (see page 4 for an explanation of these themes). Using these documents as your sources, write an essay in which you contrast and compare how each of your three selected religions approach the theme you selected to study.

III. Early American Sources

Read CAP, chapters 1-3 and *Currents*, chapter 2 and then answer the following questions. Support your answers with materials from the readings.

Unit 1/Question 3: Discuss the impact of European contact with the Americas between 1492 and 1700.

Unit 1/Question 4: Compare the settlements in Virginia and New England during the 17th century.

IV. Using Historical Dilemmas:

Unit 1/Question 6: The year is 1700 and you live in America. You can be a fictional character or a real person who was alive at that time. Write a 600 – 1000 word creative essay in which you tell me who you are, in what part of America you live, when and why you or your descendants came to America, and what you think, good or bad, about the colony in which you live. **GROUND YOUR ANSWERS ON YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE “FACTS” CONTAINED IN THE PRIMARY SOURCES IN CAP, CHAPTERS 1-3.**

UNIT 2 ASSIGNMENTS - POST ON BLACKBOARD

Eighteenth Century and Early Nineteenth Century America – Read CAP, chapters 4 - 9 and *Currents*, chapters 2-4 and answer the following questions.

Unit 2: Question 1: Create and answer a historical dilemma that could be used in a unit that deals with 18th century America. Be sure to inform the reader the intended grade level for this exercise.

Unit 2/Question 2: Part A: Describe the profile and discuss the point of view of a patriot and a Loyalist in 1776. Which of the arguments do you find to be most appealing? Why? Part B: If you were a delegate to a state ratifying convention, would you have voted for or against the Constitution of 1787? Explain the reasons for your vote.

Unit 2/Discussion 3: Question 3: You were born in New England in 1760 and proudly considered yourself to be a Federalist. How would you have reacted to the following events: a) Hamilton’s economic program of the 1790s, b) the purchase of Louisiana, c) the war declaration of 1812, and d) Jackson’s election in 1828. Support your answers with evidence from the readings.

Unit 2/Question 4: Using the documents in CAP, chapters 7, 8 and 10, discuss the religious profile of America during the first half of the 19th century. Include in your essay a discussion of the influence of religion on each the following groups: Protestant white southerners, Roman Catholics, African Americans, and antebellum women.

Unit 2/Question 5: Locating and Analyzing Digitalized Sources

Go to the SHSU Library website <http://library.shsu.edu/research/databases/history.php> and look at the following digital sites of early American publications:

Early American Imprints, Series I. Evans(1639-1800)

Early American Imprints, Series II. Shaw-Shoemaker(1801-1819) 

Do key word searches at each site for the following words: God, Almighty, Christ, Jesus, devil, Bible, scripture, Genesis, Psalms, Revelation, baptism, atonement, predestination, sins, hell, morality, death, and eternal life (plus any additional words that you would like to research). Create a table in which you give the number of citations for each word in Evans (1639-1800 publications) and Shaw & Shoemaker (1801-1819 publications). In a third column provide the ratio of the citations by dividing the Shaw & Shoemaker number by the Evans number. (Most likely, your chart will have about ½ the number citations in the two decades of Shaw & Shoemaker as it will have in the 161 years of

Evans.) Study the chart you created and write in essay in which you interpret the results. [If you want to impress me, divide the Evans series into three time periods, 1639-1730; 1731-1760; 1761-1800, and make a more detailed chart that includes the number of citations for each word for each of the four periods: 1639-1730; 1731-1760, 1761-1800, and 1801-1819, and then interpret these results.]

UNIT 3 ASSIGNMENTS - - POST ON BLACKBOARD

Read CAP, chapters 11-13 and *Currents*, chapters 5-7, and answer the following questions.

Unit 3/Question 1

Historical Dilemmas: The year is 1846 and the U.S. is in war against Mexico. You can be a fictional character or a real person who was alive at that time. Write a 600-1000 word creative essay in which you tell me who you are, where you live, what happened to you since the election of Jackson, and whether or not you support the war with Mexico. **GROUND YOUR ANSWERS ON YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE "FACTS" CONTAINED IN THE PRIMARY SOURCES IN CAP, CHAPTERS 8-10 AND CURRENTS, CHAPTERS 5-6.**

Unit 3/Question 2: Create and answer a historical dilemma that could be used in a unit that deals with the era 1850 - 1865. Be sure to inform the reader the intended grade level for this exercise.

Unit 3/Assignment 3: Summarize the major arguments in each chapter of Susannah Bruce's *A Harp and an Eagle*. Then write a 400 word review of the work.

UNIT 4 ASSIGNMENT - - POST ON BLACKBOARD

For your final assignment in this class, you will demonstrate what you have learned this semester by creating a syllabus with lesson plans for a course on **TRADITIONAL AMERICAN HISTORY TO 1876**. Your lesson plans should suggest ways to teach the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) through the use of primary sources, event analysis, issue analysis, historical dilemmas and/or technology.

This project should include the following items:

- a) a syllabus with a calendar of topics to be covered;
- b) unit lesson plans that include major objectives (TEKS), student reading assignments (include the bibliographical information on the texts or web sources that you would ask your students to read), and suggestions as to how to incorporate primary sources, event analysis, issue analysis, and/or technology into your teaching, and
- c) an annotated bibliography of secondary sources that would assist teachers in preparing for this course of instruction.

Be sure to identify the age level (middle school, high school, undergraduate, graduate) of your prospective audience.

This course was designed and is maintained by Dr. Terry D. Bilhartz.

Late update: Summer 2007