

**HISTORY 163**  
***UNITED STATES HISTORY BEFORE 1876***  
Doctor John Walter Biles-  
Section 27, Room 304, SHB, TuTh 12:30 PM – 1:50 PM

**Contact Information:**

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**Office Hours:** TBA

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**Texts:**

Bilhartz and Elliot. Currents in American History.

Shaara, Michael. The Killer Angels.

**Blackboard and Electronic Reserve:** Notices and course information may be placed on **Blackboard** (found on the SHSU homepage). Use your university account name and password for access. Please check the Announcements section periodically. I may also email the class using your student computer account address. Copies of the overheads used in class, some lecture notes, and other information are available on Electronic Reserve. On the SHSU homepage, click Library, then Course Reserves, Electronic Reserve, and finally Electronic Reserves by Instructor (Biles, John), HIS 164, and finally the item you wish to download. The password is \_\_\_\_\_. You will need to use PDF (Adobe Acrobat) to download the material. It should come up automatically. **NOTE: You must take good notes yourself. Do not rely on just having the outlines and listening; that is a ticket to taking the course again next semester! Use the outlines as a basis for outlining your own notes.**

**My Website:** Lecture Outlines and Notes will be available at  
<http://www.thekeep.org/~wombat/SHSU>

**Purpose:** This course will introduce the student to the major events and trends of US History before 1865. During this period, multiple colonial powers fought for control of North America, seeking to exploit its wealth and to create new civilizations to enrich their motherlands. Britain emerged triumphant only to have its colonies revolt and become the United States of America. This nation nearly destroyed itself a century later in the Civil War, but emerged reunited and transformed, on the verge of its rise to superpower status. The political, social, religious and economic transformations of America in this period which led first to colonization, then to independence and then to civil war form the focus of this class.

**Requirements:** You will take three non-comprehensive exams and a comprehensive final. The non-comprehensive exams are each 100 points. Each exam will require you to define some vocabulary terms, answer multiple-choice questions, and write a brief essay. You will also write a 100 point essay based on the book *The Killer Angels*. More details

can be found in the next section. You may choose to write an optional paper; should you choose to do so, it will replace your worst of the three non-comprehensive test grades, assuming it gains a higher grade than at least one of your tests. Optional paper topics will be assigned as necessary.

In short:

- 3 100 point exams: 300 points
- 1 100 point Book Essay: 100 points
- 1 200 point comprehensive final: 200 points  
(100 point optional paper substituted for worst test)

540-600 total points gives you an A. 480-539 total points is a B. 420-479 is a C. 360-419 total points gives you a D. 0-359 total points is an F.

### **History 163 Book Essay**

**Due:** November 20, 2007

You must read The Killer Angels, by Michael Shaara. Having read it, you must then write an essay addressing **one** of the following topics, using the book as a source of evidence to support your contentions:

1. Why did soldiers fight? Did the motivations of men on the two sides differ? Did everyone have similar motivations? What enabled men to fight in the face of death?
2. Were soldiers religious? What did they think about God? What sorts of religious viewpoints do we see in this book? Do men change their views? If so, why?
3. What did soldiers on each side think about the slaves? Did they see themselves as fighting over slavery? If so, why? If not, why not? Do you think they were right?
4. None of the viewpoint characters are female; the book is written from a strongly male perspective. What views of women do we see through the eyes of soldiers? What did they consider to be a woman's place in the world?
5. What thesis does the author argue as to why the Confederacy was defeated at Gettysburg? What evidence does he present to make his point? Do you agree or disagree with him?
6. Kilrain describes his motivations for fighting as a war against aristocracy. Is the southern leadership aristocratic? Why or why not?

I am open to other topics, but you must clear any other suggested topics with me first.

I am expecting a five to seven page essay, double spaced and typed in 12 point font, 1 inch margins. You should have a separate cover page which gives your name and the topic you choose in addition to the five to seven pages. You must cite examples from the book to prove your points; you may quote verbatim from the book, but please avoid long quotations, so you don't use up your available space without adequately arguing your point. (If you quote, please cite the page number(s) in a footnote.)

## **ATTENDANCE, MISSED WORK, PARTICIPATION, & COMPORTMENT**

Attendance is required and mandatory. There is a correlation between coming to class and decent grades. The first three unexcused absences do not affect your grade. 4 to 6 unexcused absences lowers your grade by one step. Seven to nine lowers it by two. Ten to twelve lowers it by three steps. More than 13 absences and I will simply flunk you.

**It is your responsibility to email me as soon as possible or talk to me before or after class if you are absent, so that things can be cleared up as soon as possible if you have an excuse.** You must speak to me within two weeks of returning to class after an absence if you want to see if I will excuse it. Please keep track of your attending class so you don't suddenly find you have eleven absences at the end of the semester because you weren't paying attention.

Students who wander off and don't come back while class is still in session will be counted as absent, even if they were present at roll call. If you have scheduling issues, please talk to me in advance, otherwise, I will assume you are basically skipping out on class and I will count you absent for the day. Please do not do this; it is very rude.

If you miss an assignment, contact me as soon as possible. Missed work must be made up within two weeks of your return to school after missing the test or due date. A missed final exam must be made up before the end of finals, unless you have a very good reason why not (such as broken legs).

**Turn off all cell phones, pagers and other items prone to make noise during class.**

### **TARDY**

Please don't be late; it is fundamentally rude. There is no formal punishment for being slightly late, but if I notice you are consistently tardy, I will tend to regard you as a bad student, which won't help you if you need to ask for mercy later. You'll also miss roll call, which is a good way to get counted absent if you don't come and make sure I noticed you came in.

Anyone who is more than fifteen minutes late will be counted absent unless you have a good reason why you are late (car wreck, family emergency, etc). **If you are going to consistently have trouble being on time, come talk to me, and we'll see if we can work something out.** DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE TERM TO COME TALK TO ME ABOUT IT.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:** All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain 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. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary

proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

<http://www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html#dishonesty>

**STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS POLICY:** Holy day absences are treated like other excused absences. Provide me documentation of the absence before or after the absence and arrange to make up any missed work within two weeks of the absence.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY:** SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. **NOTE: No accommodations can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.**

## Calendar

### Week 1:

August 21: Introduction to History and Europe and Africa in 1500.

August 23: Pre-Columbian America and the Beginning of Colonization *Read Chapter 1 by this date if possible*

### Week 2:

August 28: The Race for Colonies and English Colonial Types.

August 30: Indian Relations and The Struggle for Labor: African and European Labor in the New World.

### Week 3:

September 4: The Foundations of Empire.

September 5: **NOT A CLASS DAY:** Twelfth Class Day. Last day to drop without a "Q" and receive 100% refund.

September 6: The Struggle For Empire

### Week 4:

September 11: **First Exam**

September 13: "Biography: George Washington" (Film) and The Price of Empire.

September 14: **NOT A CLASS DAY:** Last day for dropping half-semester courses without grade of F.

### Week 5:

September 18: The Making of the American Revolution and The War For Independence. *Read Chapter 2 by this date*

September 20: Impact of the Revolution and The Crisis of Republicanism.

### Week 6:

- September 25: "In Search of the Constitution" (Film) and The Constitution and its Passage. *Read Appendix III up to the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment by this date*
- September 27: More Constitution Discussion, possibly start Washington Administration.
- Week 6:
- October 2: New National Strength: The Washington Administration and The Collapse of Consensus: The First Party System. *Read Chapter 3 by this date.*
- October 4: The Strengths and Limitations of Jeffersonian Democracy and "Battle of New Orleans" (Film) *Read Chapter 4 by this date*
- Week 7:
- October 9: The Era of Good Feelings.
- October 10: **NOT A CLASS DAY:** Last day for dropping Fall Semester courses without grade of F.
- October 11: **Second Exam**
- Week 8:
- October 16: Jacksonian Democracy and The Second Party System. *Read Chapter 5 by this date.*
- October 18: The Industrialization of the Northern US.
- Week 9:
- October 23: Reform and Moral Order
- October 25: The Economics of Slavery.
- Week 10:
- October 30: The Culture of Slavery
- November 1: **Third Exam.**
- Week 11:
- November 6: The Really Old West and Western Expansion and the Mexican War. *Read Chapter 6 by this date. "The Oregon Trail" (Short Film)*
- November 8: Consequences of the Mexican War. *Read Chapter 14 by this date.*
- Week 12:
- November 13: The Rise of Secessionism and The Confederate States of America.
- November 15: The Civil War Begins. *Read Chapter 7 by this date*
- Week 13:
- November 20: The Civil War Through 1863. **BOOK ANALYSIS ESSAY DUE. We DO HAVE CLASS. If you skip, you will get the absent penalty.**
- November 22: **NO CLASS DUE TO THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY.** Have fun, whatever you do!
- Week 14:
- November 27: A Civil War Film (TBA)
- November 29: The Civil War through 1865
- Week 15:
- December 4: Federal Reconstruction, 1865-1870 and Reconstruction Under Attack *Read Chapter 16 by this date*
- December 6: Review for Final
- Week 16: **FINALS WEEK**
- December 11: Final is at 11:00 AM – 1 PM. This is not the regular class time but it's the one they gave us.

