

**HURON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
HISTORY 4307F**

American Dreams:

Radicals and Reformers from a “City on a Hill” to Herland

Fall 2018

Class meets: Tuesday 12:30-3:30 W103

Dr. Nina Reid-Maroney

Office Hours: A 305 Monday & Wednesday 10:30-11:30

(and other times by appointment)

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Course Description: The phrase “American Dream” is among the most evocative in the lexicon of American culture. But what does it mean? Our course begins with the idea of American dreams—sometimes expressed in terms of personal or spiritual fulfilment, sometimes forming national aspiration or identity, sometimes equated with material success, and sometimes turned to the language of delusion or nightmare—and places that idea at the centre of a wider investigation of the histories of American radicalism and reform.

Urging the cause of American independence in the early days of the Revolutionary War, Thomas Paine told his compatriots, “we have it in our power to begin the world over again.” Is the impulse to “begin the world over again” at the heart of human experience? How do communitarian experiments try to change the world by withdrawing from the world? By studying reform movements thought to be on the “fringe”, what can we learn about American history at the centre? Where do traditional of individualism and “a more perfect union” meet, and how are they held in tension? In light of work such as Ta-Nehisi Coates’ *Between the World and Me* how might the histories of “American Dreams” inform our understanding of the present moment?

To address questions such as these, we begin with 17th-century concepts of English settlement in the “New World”—itself a term ideologically charged with reformist and millennial associations— and work our way toward the fictional utopia *Herland*, written by the feminist and economist, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and some 20th-century California dreamers. Along the way, we will consider Quakers, Shakers, and republican revolutionaries, abolitionists, communitarians, feminists, spiritualists, and utopian/dystopian reformers. You will be encouraged to explore your own interests through a research project of linked assignments. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

Critically analyze the tenets, context and significance of reform movements across the range of course material;

Outline the historiographical debates that shape our understanding of reform movements and radicalism in American history;

Conduct original research using primary and secondary materials, and present your research findings effectively through essay assignments and in class;

Develop and defend your own historical arguments on key themes of the course material.

Required Reading:

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Herland*

Andrew Delbanco, *The Abolitionist Imagination*

Other readings as noted, available on OWL

Assessment:

Participation (including in-class feedback on presentations) 20%

Proposal and annotated bibliography (Oct.16) 10%

Work-in-progress update (in-class) (Oct. 23) 5%

Final Presentation (in-class--schedule to be determined) 10%

Research Essay (due one week after final presentation) 25%

Final exam (take-home) 30%

Descriptions of written assignments can be found on a separate handout.

Class schedule and assigned reading:

Sept. 11 Introduction: Concepts and Historiography

Read: Mark Holloway, *Heavens on Earth*, 17-30; Ronald Walters, *American Reformers, 1815-1860*, xi-20.

Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me* (selection)

Sept. 18 Cities on a hill (and what became of them)

Read: John Winthrop, *A Model of Christian Charity*

William Penn, *The excellent privilege of liberty and property being the birth-right of the free-born subjects of England* (London 1687) selections; Wendy Warren, *New England Bound*, ch. 1

Sept. 25 Enlightenment, Revolution and Radicalism

Michael Meranze, Introduction to Benjamin Rush, *Essays, Literary, Moral and Philosophical*; Benjamin Rush, "Address to the Inhabitants of the British Settlements on the Slavery of Negroes in American" (1773) ; John Woolman, "Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes". 29

Oct. 2 "Burned over"

Read: Stephen Stein, *The Shaker Experience in America*, 2-38; Rothman, *Reforming America, 1815-1860*, Introduction and 21-34; Stephen Mintz, *Moralists and Modernizers* , xii-49.

Oct. 16 Communitarians & 19th Socialism

Read: Lawrence Foster, "Free Love and Feminism: John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Community," *Journal of the Early Republic* (Summer 1981): 165-183; Fogarty, ed., *American Utopianism*, 62-69 ; "The New Moral Order of Robert Own and New Harmony" (in Pitzer, *America's Communal Utopias*).

Oct. 23 Oberlin Background

J. Brent Morris, *Oberlin, Hotbed of Abolitionism* (selection)

Read: Andrew Delbanco, *The Abolitionist Imagination*

Oct. 30 Women's Rights

Read: Carol Lasser, "Enacting Emancipation: African American Women Abolitionists at Oberlin College and the Quest for Empowerment, Equality and Emancipation"; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Solitude of Self"

Nov. 13 John Brown's Body: Millennialism and the Civil War

Read: W. Caleb McDaniels, "John Brown, Quietist" *Common Knowledge* 16 (2010): 31-49; Zoe Trodd, "Writ in Blood: John Brown's Charter of Humanity, the Tribunal of History, and the Thick Link of American Political Protest" *Journal for the Study of Radicalism* 1 (2007):1-29.

Read: Drew Gilpin Faust, "Believing and Doubting: What Means this Carnage?" ; Fogarty, 101-122

Literary Utopias: *Looking Backward & Herland*

Read: Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward, 2000-1887* (selections); Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Herland*

Nov. 20 California Dreaming: Utopia and the Golden State

Read: Robert Hine, *California's Utopian Colonies* (selection)

Nov. 27 Research Presentations at in-class conference**Dec. 4 Research Presentations con't and Final Considerations**

Read: Walters, "Afterword: A Matter of Time"; Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me* (selection)

More about assignments in *American Dreams*:

The mark for participation is cumulative, and will be based on a combination of regular attendance; informed, engaged, and critical discussion of the assigned reading; written comment on readings (from time to time), and comment (including written comment generated in class generated in class) on classmates' presentations. A detailed record of participation is kept on file and you are invited to review this with me at any time during the term.

The main assignments in the course are interconnected. They are designed to explore aspects of scholarly work ranging from the first idea of a topic to the close reading of primary texts, through the public presentation of your work, and response to feedback. Because the assignments are linked, you'll want to choose a topic carefully, and build on your work from one assignment to the next. Brief descriptions of each assignment have been posted on OWL, and we will review instructions in class.

Course Highlights:

Participation in the trip to Oberlin College, November 1-2 is strongly encouraged—more details will follow in class!

RULES AND REGULATIONS

The History Department has specified that:

1. Each course instructor will set policy regarding the form (electronic and/or paper copy) and procedure for submitting essays and other written assignments in each course. Students are responsible for making sure they are familiar with each instructor's policy on electronic and/or paper submissions.
2. Footnotes, endnotes and bibliographies are to be prepared according to the Departmental Guide (which follows).
3. Late marks are calculated on the paper copy submitted to the instructor or in the Essay Drop Box. Late penalties are calculated according to calendar day, including Saturdays.
4. In first and second year courses lateness will be penalized as follows:
First day late -- 3 marks deduction. Each subsequent calendar day late -- 2 marks per day deduction.
5. Third and fourth year seminars will be penalized for lateness at the rate of half a grade (5%) per day.
6. No paper or seminar will be accepted if it is more than seven calendar days late.
7. Extensions will only be given for assignments **worth more than 10%** with medical documentation submitted through Academic Counseling.
8. Students must complete the written assignments worth more than 10% to pass essay courses. If the written assignments are not handed in, the default grade will be 48% or the cumulative average of the student, whichever is lower.

Guide to Footnotes and Bibliographies: Huron History Department

Footnotes have several purposes in a history paper:

- 1- They acknowledge your use of other peoples' opinions and ideas.
- 2- They allow the reader to immediately find your reference.
- 3- They give authority for a fact which might be questioned.
- 4- They tell the reader when a source was written.

Footnotes can appear either at the bottom of the page or collected together at the end of the essay where they are referred to as endnotes. The numeral indicating the footnotes should come at the end of the quotation or the sentence, usually as a superscript.¹

¹ They should be in Arabic, not Roman numerals or letters.

A footnote gives four main pieces of information which are set off by commas in the following order:

1. Author (surname *after* initials or first name),
2. Title
 - The title of a book is underlined or written in *italics*.
 - The title of an article is put within quotation marks, followed by the periodical in which it was published, underlined or in *italics*
- 3..Place and date of publication in parentheses (),
 - A fuller reference will include the publisher after the place of publication.
 - Article citations do not include the place of publication and publisher.
4. Page number (including volume number if necessary)

For example:

¹J.M.S. Careless, *Canada, A Story of Challenge* (Toronto, Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1970), 207.

²Basil Davidson, "Questions about Nationalism", *African Affairs* 76 (1977), 42.

In subsequent references, a shorter reference can be used. It should include the author's last name, a meaningful short title, and page numbers. For example:

³Careless, *Canada*, 179-206.

Where the reference is *exactly* the same as the preceding one, the Latin abbreviation *ibid.* can be used; where it is the same, but the page number is different, use *ibid.*, followed by the relevant page number. However, the short title form is preferable for subsequent references and the use of other Latin abbreviations such as *op.cit.* is not recommended.

Examples:

a) for a book by a single author: Author, title (place of publication: press, year), p#.

Elizabeth Wilson, *Shostakovich: A Life Remembered* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 324.

b) for an article in a book that has chapters by different people: Author, "title of chapter," in title of book, ed. editor's name (place of publication: press, year), total pages of article, page number you are referencing.

Elizabeth Heinemann, "The Hour of the Woman: Memories of Germany's 'Crisis Years' and West German National Identity," in *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968*, ed. Hanna Schissler (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 21-56, 34.

c) for an article in a journal, magazine, or newspaper: Author, "title of article," title of periodical, vol. # , issue # (year): total pages, the page you are referencing.

Gale Stokes, "The Social Origins of East European Politics," *Eastern European Politics and Societies* 1, 1 (1987): 30-74, 65.

d) for an old work that has been reissued: Try to find a way to include the original publication date somewhere. The easiest method is to use brackets.

Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Trans. and ed. James Strachey (New York: Avon Books, 1965 [1900]), 175.

Bibliography

All the works you consulted, not just those cited in the footnotes, should be included in the bibliography. You may be required to prepare an annotated bibliography, in which you comment on the contents, utility, or worth of each source. If so, make sure you understand what the instructor expects, in particular the length as well as the nature of each annotation.

Generally, list the sources in alphabetical order, by author. The format for a bibliography is similar to that for footnotes, except that the author's surname *precedes* the other names and initials, periods instead of commas are used to divide the constituent parts, publication data is not put in brackets, and page numbers are not included except in the case of articles where the full page reference is necessary. For example:

Careless, J.M.S. *The Union of the Canadas. The Growth of Canadian Institutions 1841-1857*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967.

Davidson, Basil. "Questions about Nationalism". *African Affairs* 76 (1977), 39-46.

Sources: University of Toronto Guide to Undergraduate Essays.

[Http://www.history.utoronto.ca/undergraduate/essays.html#footnotes](http://www.history.utoronto.ca/undergraduate/essays.html#footnotes). Accessed October 22, 2012.

Professor Julie Hessler's Guide to Footnotes: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~hessler/>. Accessed October 22, 2012.



The Appendix to Course Outlines is posted on the OWL course site.