

History 422/522* Pacific Northwest
Course Syllabus
WSU Vancouver Spring 2012
Tuesdays 6:00-8:45 pm UCB 100

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Course Description

This course will survey the social, economic, political, environmental, and cultural history of what we call the Pacific Northwest, from prehistoric times to the present, with an emphasis on the 19th and 20th centuries. We will explore what makes the region distinctive and how its history mirrors the national experience. This semester we will focus in particular on the region's social history—that is, the people of the Northwest, why they came here, what they did for a living, their interactions, and their efforts to build community. In addition to providing a general survey of the region's past, the course will focus on how historians interpret the past. We will learn the historian's craft by using historians' methods and tools to explore two particular questions: how has the region shaped human activity, and how have people shaped (or tried to reshape) this place?

Class participants will pursue this theme in two principal ways: by studying how scholars have used evidence to reach their conclusions about Northwest history, and by actively locating and analyzing the primary sources that tell us something about the motives, actions, and thinking of people of the past. To do this we will read four books, several journal articles, and a variety of online primary sources that explore how individuals and communities have sought to re/shape the Pacific Northwest. Today there are many excellent resources available on the World Wide Web, including the WSUV-created digital project, the Columbia River Basin Ethnic History Archive. This course will help you learn how to locate, navigate, and evaluate these sources.

Required Texts

Coll Thrush *Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place*

Jamie Ford *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet: A Novel*

Sandy Polishuk *Sticking to the Union: An Oral History of the Life and Times of Julia Ruutila*

Phillip Garrison *Because I Don't Have Wings: Stories of Mexican Immigrant Life*

(Other readings, including primary sources, posted on Angel.)

Course Goals

By the end of the semester you will have learned a lot about the region, in particular how different peoples have settled here and interacted over time, and about the many electronic and other resources available about the Pacific Northwest. The assignments are designed to help reinforce content knowledge and to refine your reading, research, thinking, and writing skills. In addition, you will become more familiar with the historian's craft—how we sift through and interpret primary and secondary sources, formulate and defend arguments, and develop products explaining this history for others to read, see, visit, or hear.

In addition to these general goals, by the end of the semester you will learn how to:

- identify, assess, critique, clarify, and defend an historical argument;
- analyze historical documents, photographs, and oral history interviews;
- locate, navigate, and evaluate electronic resources about the Pacific Northwest;
- generate and critique different interpretations about the region's history;
- develop or refine your ability to work independently and in groups.

Evaluations and Grading

The point of this course is to develop a general understanding of the history of the Pacific Northwest—especially about the lives of some Natives of and migrants to the region--and of how to use primary and secondary sources in interpreting the past. Therefore, your grade will be based on the evidence that you are succeeding in these goals through contributions to oral and written discussions and activities throughout the course. At various points in the course your work will be assessed by me, other students, and yourself. Furthermore, because the class is heavily dependent on discussion and collaboration, you must complete work by the due date posted in the course schedule.

Final course grades will be based on preparation for and contributions to class discussions and Angel, three short analytical papers, and a final exam, which draw upon course resources and will be described in greater detail in the "Assignments" section of Angel. You are encouraged to work with the WSUV Writing Center staff to make sure that your papers have a clear and persuasive thesis, are well organized without mechanical or grammatical errors, and use evidence successfully to support your paper's argument(s). A rubric for grades (how papers are evaluated, what constitutes an A, B, etc.) will be distributed with the first assignment.

Class Participation (25%) and attendance are critical and required. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the reading assignment and to make regular, weekly contributions to various discussions and assignments on Angel (at least 10). For extra credit, you may also write a short response to an outside speaker/event relating to course themes (2 pp).

Short papers (50%) You will turn in three 3-4 page papers (doublespaced, wordprocessed), responding to and discussing the theme(s) related to readings and materials from the previous week.

Take-home final exam (25%) will incorporate materials from the course to address the theme of how people have (re)shaped the environment and how the Pacific Northwest region shaped human activity. Everything we do this semester—our readings, class discussions, lectures and films, and online research and activities—will help prepare you for thinking and writing about the assigned question(s) (5-6 pages).

Class Procedures

The class will pursue the theme, “Shaping the Pacific Northwest,” through readings, lectures, films, guest speakers, in-class and online discussions, and extensive analysis of primary sources, the materials that provide historians with the raw “data” necessary for interpreting the past. The course is divided into three parts, each focusing on a particular chronological theme, related to our larger course theme, and designed to further develop your knowledge and skills.

All participants are expected to read with care assignments and come to class prepared to offer thoughtful comments, questions, and evaluations. Students will also be expected to use and participate in the class-created activities and discussions on Angel <https://lms.wsu.edu/>. Since we meet just once a week, it is essential to come to every class, check Angel regularly for announcements, and to participate every week in the online discussions. To enhance discussions, we will create an atmosphere of cooperation, respect, and open exchange.

The instructor assumes that an absence is due to an illness or family emergency, and the **STUDENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MISSED INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS**. Since critical announcements and instructions are usually delivered at the beginning of class, **please be in the classroom no later than 6:00**. Also, **please be courteous** to fellow students and the instructor. It should go without saying, but I’ll say it: no cell phones, texting, checking email or surfing the net (all of which not only distract you, but your neighbors and the instructor).

Ground Rules for Discussions on Angel

This course utilizes the **Angel** website: <https://lms.wsu.edu/>. To access your account, use your WSU User ID and password (the same as for My WSU). Announcements, lectures, assignments, and other will be posted on Angel.

We want to encourage constructive, useful, and respectful interactions. Do share your observations, perspectives, insights, questions, and critiques, as this kind of sharing results in a critical and substantive dialogue that greatly enhances the learning potential of the entire class. Don’t hesitate to disagree with one another, to investigate different or unorthodox perspectives, and to experiment with or tweak an idea. This is a collaborative class: we will all work together to decide what is a “quality” historical argument. In these important ways, everyone’s weekly entries will be the products of multiple minds and efforts.

It is important to make substantive posts when responding to your fellow classmates. This means you are invited, and should feel safe, to question and analyze deeply the positions you, your fellow students, the readings, (and the instructor) take. Through the investigation of assumptions and values, of context, and evidence, everyone can develop a more substantial understanding of the historical issues we will explore. Open discussion requires that we all work

together to ensure that we separate the ideas being expressed from the person expressing them. What we are here to critique and to explore are the ideas, not the personalities behind them. Remember: a feeling of safety is basic for any collaborative dialogue. Be open to other's thoughts and viewpoints.

I will be the facilitator of this process and will be assessing your contributions to discussions. From time to time I may contribute to the discussion by adding my own thoughts, but for the most part, the discussions will be your responsibility. Your grades will be assigned based on the quality of your work, not on whether I happen to agree or disagree with your perspectives. I want you to think independently and work out your own interpretations.

Course Schedule

Part 1, Weeks 1-5:

Themes: Encounters, Interactions, and Boundaries, 1700-1880s

- Jan 10** Introductions; What and Where is the Pacific Northwest?
Activity: Who belongs in the Pacific NW?
- Jan 17** The Native Northwest; European Empires and Explorations
Activity: the Native Northwest
(discuss *Native Seattle*, vii-65)
- Jan 24** Commerce and Contact
Film: NW Indian Nations and Lewis & Clark
Activity: Lewis & Clark among the Indians
- Jan 31** Securing and Settling Oregon
Activity: Oregon Trail
(discuss *Native Seattle*, 209-259)
- Feb 7** Boundary Setting
Activity: History as Mystery: Who Killed William Robinson?
(discuss *Native Seattle*, 66-150)

Part 2, Weeks 6-10:

Themes: Political Economy, Migrations, and Community Building, 1870s-1940

- Feb 14** Land of Plenty: Railroads, Markets, Farmers, and Enterprises
(**short paper #1 due**; discuss *Native Seattle*, 66-150)
- Feb 21** Immigrants, Families, and New Lives in the Northwest
Films: Turbans; Work is Our Joy
Activity: Columbia River Basin Ethnic Communities

- Feb 28** Wagers and Industrial conflicts
 Film: The Wobblies
 Activity: the Centralia massacre
 (discuss *Sticking to the Union*, 1-122)
- Mar 6** Building Communities
 Film clips: American Cowboys; Finding Home in Chinatown
 Activity: Northwest Communities
 (discuss *Native Seattle*, 151-161)
- Mar 13** **spring break**
- Mar 20** Peculiar Politics and the Great Depression
 (**short paper #2** due)

Part 3, Weeks 12-15:
Themes: Modern Developments, Dilemmas, and Identities, 1940-2010

- Mar 27** World War II
 Film: Family Gathering
 (discuss *Hotel on the Corner*, all)
- Apr 3** The Cold War and the Atomic Northwest
 Guest Speaker: Sandy Polishuk
 (discuss *Sticking to the Union*, 123-end)
- Apr 10** Troubled Waters: The Columbia, Indians, Dams, and Fish
 Films: Columbia: America's Greatest Power Stream; River People
 (discuss *Native Seattle*, 162-207)
- Apr 17** Northwest Bounty and Migrant Agricultural Workers
 Activity: Northwest Bounty and Migrant Agricultural Workers
 (discuss *Because I Don't Have Wings*, all)
- Apr 24** Tech, Tourism, Grunge, and Espresso: The New Northwest
 (**short paper #3** due)
- May 3** **Final exam due**

Additional WSUV Policies

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the cornerstone of the university and will be strongly enforced in this course. Any student caught cheating on any assignment will be given an "F" for the course and

will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. **Plagiarism** is considered cheating. It is when you present someone else's words or ideas as your own, in writing or in speaking; present ideas without citing the source; paraphrase without crediting the source; use direct quotes with no quotation marks; use direct quotes without citation of the source; submit material written by someone else as your own (this includes purchasing a paper); submit a paper or assignment for which you have received so much help that it is no longer your own work. Consult with the instructor if you do not have a clear understanding of plagiarism. For additional information about WSU's Academic Integrity policy/procedures please contact (360) 546-9573.

Disability Accommodation: Accommodations may be available if you need them in order to fully participate in this class because of a disability. Accommodations may take some time to implement so it is critical that you contact Disability Services as soon as possible. All accommodations must be approved through Disability Services, located in the Student Resource Center on the Lower Level of VSSC. (360) 546-9138

Note-taking and other recording during class: Copyright belongs to Laurie Mercier (2012) as to this syllabus, all lectures, and course-related written materials. During this course students are prohibited from making audio, video, digital, or other recordings during class, or selling notes to or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the express written permission of the faculty member teaching this course.

Emergency Notification System: The WSU Vancouver Campus Safety Plan, which can be found at <http://www.vancouver.wsu.edu/safety-plan>, contains a comprehensive listing of university policies, procedures, statistics, and information relating to campus safety, emergency management, and the health and welfare of the campus community. Everyone should also become familiar with the WSU Vancouver ALERTS web site <http://www.vancouver.wsu.edu/alerts/> where information about emergencies and other issues affecting WSU Vancouver will be found and should go to the ZZUSIS portal at <http://zzusis.wsu.edu> and register/update their emergency contact information for the Crisis Communication System (CCS). In the event of a **Building Evacuation**, a map at each classroom entrance shows the evacuation point for each building. Please refer to it.

Finally, in case of **class cancellation campus-wide**, please check local media, the WSU Vancouver web page and/or www.vancouver.wsu.edu/alerts. Individual class cancellations may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

*Grad students taking Hist 522 for graduate credit will have additional assignments.