Seminars in Ethnohistory
Anthropology 407/507, CRN: 17229/17230, Fall 2006
TuTh 2:00-3:50, 301 Condon Hall

The field of ethnohistory combines methodologies of anthropology and history to understand the ways in which culture and history inform and shape each other. In this seminar, we will be reading, evaluating, analyzing, and critiquing texts in Native American ethnohistory, with an eye towards understanding both the stories being told and the craft of ethnohistory.

Texts:

There is a heavy reading load for this class. We will discuss strategies for reading quickly on the first day. You will have to keep up with the readings and comprehend them to be able to participate. I would suggest taking notes as you read and perhaps writing a brief summary or outline of each book when you have completed it. This 15-20 minute task will help you both analyze the book and retain its information so you haven’t wasted those long hours of reading!

Students will be expected to lead discussions on a rotating basis. That means you should prepare to talk for 15 minutes or so and prepare a list of questions for your classmates
that bring out the provocative issues in each book. If you miss your discussion day, you will not have the opportunity to make it up (except under the most dire and documentable circumstances). Participation during every class is both critical to the success of the class and expected of every student. Since the reading load will be heavy, there will be no outside research requirement for undergraduates. Grading for undergraduates will be based on performance of discussion leadership duties, participation, and three short (4 page) reading analysis/response papers.

In addition to these responsibilities, graduate students will be expected to develop an original ethnohistorical research project over the course of the quarter or propose a reanalysis of a group of ethnohistories/ethnographies/histories related to a particular topic, group, or area and will write slightly longer (5 page) analysis/reaction papers.

Grading:

Undergraduates:
Analysis/reaction papers (4 pages each): 75% (25% each)
Discussion lead/participation: 25%

Graduates:
Analysis/reaction papers (5 pages each): 45% (15% each)
Discussion lead/participation: 25%
Final paper (10 pages): 30%

Late papers will receive a deduction of one half grade for every day that they are late.

Everyone in the classroom is required to be respectful of one another.

Academic honesty is expected at all points in your education. All sources used in your papers must be properly acknowledged and documented if they are not your original work for this class. Acts of academic dishonesty will result in an F for the class and referral to the student judiciary committee.

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon. Please request that the counselor for students with disabilities send a letter verifying your disability.
Schedule (likely to be revised):

Sep. 26: Introduction and background.
Sep. 28: James Merrell, *The Indians’ New World* to page 133

Oct. 3: Merrell, 134-284
Oct. 5: Richard White, *The Middle Ground* to page 141

Oct 10: White, 142-365
Oct 12: White, 366-523 **Paper 1 due** (White, Merrell)

Oct. 17: Tiya Miles, *Ties that Bind*, to page 128

Oct. 24: Jeff Ostler, *The Plains Sioux*, to 239
Oct. 26: Ostler, 243-369

Oct. 31: Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making*, to 159
Nov. 2: NO CLASS (American Society for Ethnohistory conference)

Nov. 7: Harmon, 160-249 **Paper 2 due** (Ostler, Harmon, Miles)
Nov. 9: Phil Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*, to 108

Nov. 16: Noenoe Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, to 86

Nov. 21: Silva, 87-203
Nov. 23: Holiday, no class

Nov. 28: Ned Blackhawk,
Nov. 30: Ned Blackhawk, **Paper 3 due** (Blackhawk, Silva, Deloria)
So it’s your turn to lead discussion…

What should discussion leaders do?

- Your presentation should include
  - a summary of the major arguments of the book,
  - a framing of the major issues the book addresses,
  - how well the author addresses the major issues,
  - how this work influences our understanding of Indian history and cultures,
  - what the interesting things about the ethnohistorical moment under study are,
  - how the work could be improved,
  - what its theoretical shortcomings might be,
  - comparisons with other work,
  - sources used and how they influence the story being told,
  - whatever else you think is important to talk about!

- Prepare a list of 6-10 thematic questions designed to provoke conversation that we will work on after your presentation.

- You should also come see me during office hours prior to your presentation to make sure everything is on track.

- We all look forward to your presentation and we’re rooting for you, so try not to be too nervous. Be just nervous enough to motivate yourself to prepare well!