HST 467/567
The United States West in the 20th Century
Winter 2007

Instructor: David Peterson del Mar
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Office Hours: After class or by arrangement
Class: Thursdays, 4:00 – 6:50, Lillis 132

Course Description
This four-credit course will survey the history of the U.S. West in the twentieth century, covering the migration and immigration of the various peoples of the modern West, the development of state and federal power, the incorporation of “Old West” economies into a modern global economy, and the politics of race, ethnicity, and gender in a region that is now, and in many respects always has been, a national and international crossroads. We shall also study the history of the twentieth-century West in relation to the rest of the nation, with particular attention to what the region has symbolized or represented.

Course Objectives
X To increase our knowledge of the history of the 20th Century U.S. West
X To increase our empathy for people different from ourselves
X To enhance our engagement with and excitement over history
X To increase our skills at making and critiquing scholarly arguments
X To enhance our ability to work cooperatively
X To increase our ability to write clear and compelling prose

Assessment
Attendance 10 points
Small-Group Work 10 points
4 three-page papers 60 points
Final Exam  20 points
Scale: 97% and above A+; 93% to 96.9% A; 90-92.9% A-; and so forth.
Note: Students taking the 567 course will write a research paper of approximately 10 pages (3,000 words) that will be worth 25 points, so their final grade will be calculated on the basis of 125 rather than 100 possible points.

Required Readings
Marc Reisner, Cadillac Desert: The American West and its Disappearing Water.
Packet of readings available for purchase at the campus bookstore.
Course Schedule

January 11
Introduction to the Course; Historical Context

January 18
The Economy in the Early 20th Century West
Small-Group Discussion #1
Read by class: Packet: Lee, Deloria, and Ellis selections.

January 25
Progressivism
Small-Group Discussion #2
Read by class: Gordon book, entire.
Due at the beginning of class: A three-page essay drawing from Gordon that answers one of these two questions: 1) What was the relationship between ethnicity (or race) and status in the Clifton area? 2) How did women exercise power in the Clifton area?

February 1
The Roaring/Conservative ‘20s
Film

February 8
The 1930s
Small-Group Discussion #3
Read by class: Packet, Brosamle/Arthur, Worster, Basso, and Matsumoto selections.

February 15
World War II
Small-Group Discussion #4
Read by class: Reisner book, entire.
Due at the beginning of class: A three-page essay drawing from Reisner that answers one of these two questions: 1) What accounts for western commitments to irrigation in the face of so much failure? 2) How did the justifications for dam building shift during the twentieth century?

February 22
1945-1960
Film: “Shane”

March 1
Western Utopias since 1960
Film: “Road Scholar”
Due at the beginning of class: A three-page book review.
March 8
The Radical West since 1960
Discussion #5
Read by class: Packet: Avila, Belmonte, and Jorgenson selections.

March 15
The Conservative West since 1960
Read by class: Tygiel book, entire.
Due at the beginning of class: A three-page essay drawing from Tygiel that answers one of these two questions: 1) In what sense was President Reagan shaped by western values? (Note: Reagan grew up in the Midwest, not the West.) 2) What accounts for President Reagan’s popularity?

March 22
Final Exam
E-mail by 4:00 p.m. to delmardw@hevanet.com a five-page essay answering this question: What interpretive thread or threads, if any, hold this subject together? Does the twentieth-century West have a coherent history? Or is it simply a collection of disparate events and processes?

Assignments

Attendance
You receive credit for attending class: 1 point for each class, for a total of 10 points (10 percent of your grade for the course). If you are unable to attend class for reasons outside your control, you can receive equivalent credit by doing 3 hours of reading in that class’s subject. This will require: submitting, in writing, to the instructor the reason that you were unable to attend class; gaining the instructor’s approval of these reasons; reading 3 hours on the subject of the class meeting in a book selected by you but approved by the instructor; writing a one-page (about 300 words) summary of the reading and turning it in to the instructor.

Small-Group Discussion
We shall meet in small groups of five students each during the second half of five of the classes. The instructor will pose several questions on that week’s reading for discussion, and in each of the five discussions a different member of each group will lead the small-group discussion and then present to the class her or his answer one of those questions. The answers should be about five minutes long, and each student will do one presentation during the term. The instructor will grade each presentation and, at the end of the term, each student will give the instructor a written evaluation of how effective each group member was in helping to prepare for the presentations.
Essays

There are four 3-page essays for this class and one 5-page (final exam) essay. The four shorter essays should rely largely on the course readings. The final exam should, as much as possible, cover the entire scope of the class rather than focusing on a particular time period, region, or group and should make full use of the class lectures and films. The essays should be double-spaced. The 3-page essays should be no more than 1,000 words, the 5-page final should be no more than 1,700 words. You do not need to provide full bibliographic references to the material you quote in your essays. Simply put the book and page number in parentheses after the quotation (packet, 137).

The book reviews should be of a scholarly book on the twentieth-century U.S. West. I would like you to do the work of choosing this book yourself, but please e-mail me your selection to make sure that I agree that it is a good choice. Your review should not simply be a report; it should consist largely of analysis rather than just description. It should include the following elements: a statement of the book’s central argument; an assessment of that argument (including whether it is clear, logical, and consistent and, particularly, how successfully the author backs it up—this section should be the longest part of your paper); at least a brief exploration of how the book illuminates the broader subject of the course (the twentieth-century West).

Late Policies

Late three-page essays are accepted, although they are penalized 2 points for each week that they are late (for example, an essay turned in one to seven days late would lose 2 points, eight to fourteen days 4 points, and so on).

Compelling personal reasons are of course grounds for extensions, with no late penalty. These reasons must be spelled out in writing before the assignment is due.

All assignments must be turned in by the day and time of the final exam. Requests for the grade of incomplete must be received by the day and time of the final exam, and such requests will not necessarily be granted.