

**HISTORY 1150: MULTICULTURAL AMERICA**  
**Section 31 (52264) • Section 37 (54706)**  
**Fall 2020**  
**ONLINE COURSE**

Dr. Shelby M. Balik  
*office hours:* by appointment  
sbalik@msudenver.edu

Teaching assistant:  
Ariana Gonzalez  
agonz175@msudenver.edu

How can we best tell the story of the American people? It depends on whom you ask. From before European contact to the present day, diversity has been an unbroken thread in American history. The men and women of different cultures, faiths, and social backgrounds who have inhabited this nation have both experienced and contributed to its history in dramatically different ways. In this course, we will examine the American experience in some of its infinite variations. As we do, you will notice that certain questions will crop up again and again. How, for example, have minority and majority groups both resisted and adapted to each other, thereby reshaping American culture? What kinds of identities have people devised for themselves or imposed on each other, and how have these identities affected their experiences in American society? And what, after all, has it meant to be an “American”?

**Required Readings:** The following books will be available at the Auraria Campus Bookstore (bargain-hunters should also try the selection of used books on Amazon.com and Bookfinder.com, but make sure you get the right editions). You can also find copies on reserve at the library.

James S. Olson and Heather Olson Beal, *The Ethnic Dimension in American History*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (2010)  
Ronald Takaki, *A Larger Memory: A History of Our Diversity, with Voices* (1998)

\*\* Required short readings are posted in the appropriate weekly folders on Canvas. See the weekly schedule in this syllabus for more information.

**Assignments, Grading, and Course Policies:** The course requirements and their value toward your grade are as follows. You will have one assignment per week, which will rotate among the first three categories (discussions, quizzes, and primary source analyses). The final will be available at the end of the semester and consist of cumulative essay questions. All of these assignments can be found in the “Weekly Assignments” link on our Blackboard page. *You must complete all of these components in order to pass.*

Discussions (total of 5): 25%	Reading Comprehension Assignments (total of 3): 25%
Writing Assignments (total of 3): 25%	Cumulative final: 25%

For all of these assignments, Canvas will be set up to allow *one week* for on-time completion (see policies for late work below). *All assignments will be posted at 11:59 p.m. on the Friday before the due date and will be due on the following Friday at 11:59 p.m.*

*Discussion boards:* You will participate in discussions during the last week of every unit. Except for the first discussion of the semester (which will involve the whole class), you will participate within smaller groups of 5-6 people. On discussion weeks, I will post a question on Friday night (prior to the discussion week). All members of the group will then have until *Tuesday* of that week to make an initial post to contribute to the discussion, which should bring in concrete references to the readings to make your points. You will then have until the following *Friday night* to make a follow-up post that addresses some point that another participant has made in his or her initial post. Any subsequent posts are welcome and up to you. Your grade on these discussions will take into account both the quantity (at least two) and quality of these posts. ***If you***

***post only once, you will not score higher than 50% for that week. If you skip it, your score will be a zero. Please note that due to the nature of discussions (which require you to interact with each other), you may not make them up or submit late responses under any circumstances.***

*Reading comprehension assignments:* These assignments will be more like short essay exams, spaced every few weeks throughout the semester to help you process the content in your reading. Generally, I will post a set of questions from which you will choose several to answer. The total length should be about 600-750 words, but the individual responses will be shorter. The point of these assignments will be synthesis and comprehension of content. Higher-scoring responses will synthesize evidence and information from a wide range of readings. They will be open book and open note, but *not collaborative*. You are expected to do your own work, and all of the rules regarding academic integrity will apply.

*Writing assignments:* These assignments will target key historical writing and thinking skills. The first two writing assignments will guide you through various stages and techniques of historical writing, and the third will ask you to write a short essay. You will be expected to follow the rules of acceptable writing, including correct grammar, sentence structure, spelling, academic integrity, and citation. Regarding citation, you may use any format with which you are comfortable, but at minimum, your citation should disclose the author and page number. Please see the writing guidelines at the end of this syllabus for more information. Submission links are posted for each assignment in the weekly assignment folder.

*Writing Center:* Located in King Center 415 (and with other offices around campus), the Writing Center can help you with any aspect of your writing, from generating ideas to supporting your arguments to organizing to editing for style. For the current schedule or to make an appointment, visit the Writing Center's website at <https://www.msudenver.edu/writectr/> or call 303-556-6070.

*Cumulative final exam:* This exam will be in the format of a take-home essay final. You will receive a list of several cumulative essay questions, and you will choose two. Each essay should be about (500-600 words) and should incorporate specific examples from the readings. The final exam will be open book and open note, but *not collaborative*.

**Communication:** Other than discussion boards and assignment submission through Canvas, all communication should be through e-mail. If needed or desired, we can then set up a conference via Teams at a mutually acceptable time. Regular communication will be essential to succeeding in this course; I will check my msudenver e-mail account regularly, and you should do the same.

**Technical requirements and assistance:** All course materials, assignments, and discussion prompts will be available through Canvas. If you need technical assistance provided, you should contact ITS (find contact information using this link: <https://www.msudenver.edu/technology/itsforstudents/>) I am also available to answer questions.

**Other course guidelines and policies:**

*Assignment deadlines:* All papers are due by the stated deadline, unless otherwise noted, and all students are expected to take exams by the specified deadline. Late papers and exams will be graded down one-third of a grade (A to A-, etc.) for every day they are late for the first week after the deadline. After the first week, a paper will receive 50% of the grade it would have earned had it been on time. After the second week, the paper will earn a zero. Make-up exams will not be allowed, except for students who have a valid excuse and have made prior arrangements with me. *Discussions cannot be made up under any circumstances.*

*Special Needs:* Students who need accommodations – for disability, religious observance, military service, or any other reason – should let me know within the first two weeks of class. A full statement on

accommodations covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act is available on Blackboard, in the "Syllabus and Policies" folder.

*Cheating and plagiarism:* Either offense is grounds for a zero on the assignment and failure in the course. If you are unsure of what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, I strongly encourage you to check with me *before* you hand in your assignment. Please also note that any student who cannot or will not produce the notes, outlines, and other preparatory work for his or her paper will be considered guilty of cheating or plagiarism and subject to the same penalties. The policy in this class is quite simple and is as follows. In the first documented instance of academic dishonesty (as described in the University guidelines, linked below), the student will receive a zero on the assignment. In the second instance, the student will fail the class. All code of conduct violations will be reported.

*Metro State's Academic Integrity Statement:* "As students, faculty, staff and administrators of Metropolitan State University of Denver, it is our responsibility to uphold and maintain an academic environment that furthers scholarly inquiry, creative activity and the application of knowledge. We will not tolerate academic dishonesty. We will demonstrate honesty and integrity in all activities related to our learning and scholarship. We will not plagiarize, fabricate information or data, cheat on tests or exams, steal academic material, or submit work to more than one class without full disclosure."

For more information on academic dishonesty, see

<https://www.msudenver.edu/deanofstudents/studentconduct/academicintegrity/>

Students are responsible for full knowledge of the provisions and regulations pertaining to all aspects of their attendance at MSU Denver, and should familiarize themselves with the policies found in the MSU Denver Catalog: [MSU Denver Catalog](#). For more information and recent updates, go to the CLAS website: <https://www.msudenver.edu/las/>

The College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences is committed to, and cares about, all students. To help you manage personal challenges and basic needs security, the university offer several resources. Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students (303-615-0220 or 303-615-0423), the Gender Institute for Teaching and Advocacy (303-615-2052), or our CLAS office (303-615-0995 or 303-615-1301) for support.

*For more information, please see the information on LAS policies and deadlines posted in the "Syllabus and Policies" folder on Blackboard.*

**General Studies Mission:** The General Studies program provides the foundation for the Bachelor's degree. Students develop thinking, reasoning, and communication skills while discovering new ideas and expanding their views. The coursework is designed to create the opportunity for learning across different disciplines and builds experiences for students as they grow into lifelong learners.

*Historical Courses:* Historical thinking contextualizes the present by using a wide range of sources and methods to understand how people experienced the past. This three-hour lower-division course fulfills the Historical General Studies requirement at MSU-Denver. It can be used in the History major and minor. With an earned grade of C -or better, it also counts as a guaranteed transfer class. History majors and minors cannot use a HIS prefix course to fulfill their History General Studies requirement. They must instead take an additional three hours in approved general studies in the one of the other General Studies areas: Arts and Humanities, Science, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

**Guaranteed Transfer (GT) Pathways Course:** The Colorado Commission on Higher Education has approved HIS 1150 for inclusion in the Guaranteed Transfer (GT) Pathways program in the GT-HI1 category. For transferring students, successful completion with a minimum C– grade guarantees transfer and application of credit in this GT Pathways category. For more information on the GT Pathways program, go to <http://higher.ed.colorado.gov/academics/transfers/gtpathways/curriculum.html>.

**Course Learning Objectives and GT Pathways Content Criteria and Competencies:**

1. Demonstrate the ability to locate sources when information is needed, and to evaluate the authenticity, validity, and reliability of resources applied to a specific purpose. (GT-HI1 Content Criteria 1, 3; GT Competency: Critical Thinking 4a; GT Competency Criteria: Information Literacy 3a, 3b)
2. Communicate in writing with an awareness of audience, by using language conventions appropriate to the occasion and task. (GT-HI1 Content Criteria 4; GT Competency: Information Literacy 4a, 5a)
3. Demonstrate historical knowledge of American History before 1865. (GT-HI1 Content Criteria 1; GT Competency: Critical Thinking 3a, 3b, 3c, 4a, 5a)
4. Demonstrate, using historical sources, how context and contingency influenced American History before 1865. (GT-HI1 Content Criteria 1, 2; GT Competency Critical Thinking 5b)
5. Develop an effective historical interpretation in American History before 1865 and marshal primary and/or secondary source evidence to support it. (GT-HI1 Content Criteria 1, 4; GT Competency: Critical Thinking 3a, 3b, 3c, 4a, 5a)

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**  
(subject to change)

Except for the first week, all assignments will be posted on the Friday before the due date at 11:59 p.m. All assignments will be due Friday of the week in which they are assigned at 11:59 p.m. (so you'll have a full week to do each assignment). All assignments will be posted with full descriptions and directions in the modules on Canvas.

Any reading assignment marked with an asterisk (\*) will be posted in the Canvas folder for the week during which it is assigned.

**UNIT ONE: INTRODUCTIONS**

**WEEK ONE: August 17-21**

*Readings:* *The Ethnic Dimension in American History*, Introduction  
*A Larger Memory*, Prologue and Part One

- \* Patrick Stokes, "No, You're Not Entitled to Your Opinion," *The Conversation* (October 2012)
- \* Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche, "The Danger of a Single Story" (TED Talk)

*Assignment:* Discussion 1 (due Friday, August 21)

**UNIT TWO: HOW DID WE GET TO STANDING ROCK?**

**WEEK TWO: August 24-28**

*Readings:* \* #StandingRockSyllabus, read the preface and timeline, and look at the maps

- \* Jack Healey, "From 280 Tribes, a Protest on the Plains," *New York Times* (September 2016)
- \* David Archambeault II, "Taking a Stand at Standing Rock," *New York Times* (August 2016)
- \* Nick Estes, "Fighting for Our Lives: #NoDAPL in Historical Context," *The Red Nation* (September 2016)
- \* Forum of Fargo-Moorhead, "Dakota Access Pipeline Good for Economy," *Grand Forks Herald* (January 2018)

*Assignment:* Complete this week's reading by August 28 (no written assignment this week)

**WEEK THREE: August 31 - September 4**

*Readings:* *The Ethnic Dimension in American History*, chapters 1, 3, 9  
*A Larger Memory*, Part Three, 47-78

- \* *Frontera! Revolt and Rebellion on the Río Grande* (a film about the 1680 Pueblo revolt)
- \* Documents relating to the Indian Removal Act of 1830
- \* Documents related to the Ghost Dance

*Assignment:* Reading comprehension assignment 1 (due Friday, September 4)

#### **WEEK FOUR: September 7-11**

*Readings:* *The Ethnic Dimension in American History*, chapter 16  
*A Larger Memory*, Part Four, 211-221

- \* Frank Hill, "New Patterns of Life for the Indian" (1935)
- \* Founding documents of the American Indian Movement
- \* Emily Chertoff, "Occupy Wounded Knee: A 71-Day Siege and a Forgotten Civil Rights Movement," *The Atlantic* (October 2012)

*Assignment:* Writing assignment 1 (due Friday, September 11)

#### **WEEK FIVE: September 14-18**

- Readings:*
- \* Ayana Byrd, "What SCOTUS Decision on Oklahoma Means for the Muscogee Creek Nation," *Color Lines* (July 2020)
  - \* Jaskiran Dhillon, Indigenous Youth Are Building a Climate Justice Movement by Targeting Colonialism, *Truthout* (June 2016)
  - \* Tristan Ahtone, "How the Media Did and Did Not Report on Standing Rock," *Al Jazeera* (December 2016)
  - \* Kristen Inbody, "Survey: People Think Native Americans Don't Exist/Aren't Discriminated Against," *Great Falls Tribune* (August 2018)
  - \* Rory Taylor, "Trump Administration Revokes Reservation Status for Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe amid Coronavirus Crisis," *Vox* (April 2020)
  - \* "Judge Sides with Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe in Lawsuit over Reservation Status," *Boston.com* (June 2020)
  - \* Jacey Fortin and Lisa Friedman, "Dakota Access Pipeline to Shut Down Pending Review, Judge Rules," *New York Times* (July 2020)

*Assignment:* Discussion 2 (ends Friday, September 18)

### **UNIT THREE: BLACK LIVES MATTER**

#### **WEEK SIX: September 21-25**

- Readings:*
- \* Jelani Cobb, "The Matter of Black Lives," *New Yorker* (March 2016)
  - \* Eric Reid, "Why Colin Kaepernick and I Decided to Take a Knee," *New York Times* (September 2017)
  - \* "Fatal Force" (a database of police shootings, 2015-present), *Washington Post* (continually updated)
  - \* Keisha N. Blain, "Violence in Minneapolis is Rooted in the History of Racist Policing in America," *Washington Post* (May 2020)
  - \* Fabiola Cineas, "COVID-19 is Disproportionately Taking Black Lives," *Vox* (April 2020)
  - \* Connor Maxwell and Danyelle Solomon, "The economic Fallout of the Coronavirus for People of Color," *Center for American Progress* (April 2020)
  - \* Emily Guskin, Scott Clement, and Dan Balz, "Americans Support Black Lives Matter but Resist Shifts of Police Funds or Removal of Statues of Confederate Generals or Presidents who Were Enslavers," *Washington Post* (July 2020)

*Assignment:* No written assignment this week – finish the readings by September 25.

**WEEK SEVEN: September 28 - October 2**

*Readings: The Ethnic Dimension in American History*, chapter 4

*A Larger Memory*, 38-44, 79-101

- \* "The Slave Trade in Two Minutes" (video; link available on Blackboard)
- \* Selected freedom petitions from slaves
- \* Selected fugitive slave ads
- \* Alexander Stephens, "Cornerstone Speech" (1861)
- \* Ta-Nehesi Coates, "What this Cruel War Was Over," *The Atlantic* (June 2015)

*Assignment:* Reading comprehension 2 (due Friday, October 2)

**WEEK EIGHT: October 5-9**

*Readings: The Ethnic Dimension in American History*, chapter 10, 12

*A Larger Memory*, 102-111, 317-344

- \* Reconstruction documents (1865-66)
- \* "How Southern Socialites Rewrote Civil War History" (video)
- \* Donald Yacovne, "Textbook Racism: How Scholars Sustained White Supremacy," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (April 2018)
- \* Great Migration readings
- \* Martin Luther King, Jr., "The Negroes are *Not* Moving Too Fast," *The Saturday Evening Post* (November 1964)
- \* The Black Panther Party's Ten-Point Platform (1966)
- \* Michele Lerner, "One Home, a Lifetime of Impact," *Washington Post* (July 2020)
- \* "Adam Ruins Everything: The Disturbing History of the Suburbs" (YouTube clip)
- \* "Mapping Inequality" (interactive website)

*Assignment:* Writing assignment 2 (due Friday, October 9)

**WEEK NINE: October 12-16**

*Readings:* \* "What We Believe" (BLM platform)

- \* Kevin McGill, "Did the Emmanuel AME Church Massacre Push New Orleans to Remove Confederate Monuments?" *The Post and Courier* (May 2017)
- \* Joe Heim et al., "Talking About Race in an Era of Confederate Statues and Black Lives Matter," *Washington Post* (October 2017)
- \* Alison M. Parker, "When White Women Wanted a Monument to Black 'Mammies,'" *New York Times* (February 2020)
- \* Jennifer A. Richesen, "Americans are Determined to Believe in Black Progress Whether It's Happening or Not," *The Atlantic* (September 2020)
- \* New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu on the removal of Confederate monuments (YouTube clip)
- \* Shannon Mullen et al., "Crack vs. Heroin: An Unfair System Arrested Millions of Blacks, Urged Compassion for Whites," *Asbury Park Press* (June 2020)
- \* Isabel Wilkerson, "America's Enduring Caste System," *New York Times Magazine* (July 2020)

*Assignment:* Discussion 3 (ends Friday, October 16)

## UNIT FOUR: WALLS OF VARIOUS SORTS

### WEEK TEN: October 19-23

- Readings:* \*Myths and Facts about Immigrants and Immigration,” Anti-Defamation League  
\* Samuel P. Huntington, “The Hispanic Challenge,” *Foreign Policy* (October 2009)  
\* David Bier, “Rapid Muslim Assimilation Continues Alongside Rapid Muslim Immigration,”  
CATO Institute (July 2017)  
\*Matt Ford, “What Could Trump’s Muslim Immigration Order Do?” *The Atlantic* (January 2017)  
\* Michael Dear, “Five Problems ‘the Wall’ Won’t Solve,” *Politico* (February 2017)

*Assignment:* No written assignment this week – focus on the readings.

### WEEK ELEVEN: October 26-30

- Readings:* *The Ethnic Dimension in American History*, chapters 2, 5-7  
*A Larger Memory*, 112-144  
\* Evan Taparata, “The US Has Come a Long Way Since Its First, Highly Restrictive  
Naturalization Law,” *PRI* (July 2016)  
\* Lorraine Boissoneault, “How the 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Know Nothing Party Reshaped American  
Politics,” *Smithsonian* (January 2017)  
\* Beth Lew-Williams, “The Chinese Must Go: Violence, Exclusion, and the Making of the Alien  
in America,” from *Racism in America: A Reader* (Harvard University Press, 2020)

*Assignment:* Reading comprehension assignment 3 (due Friday, October 30)

### WEEK TWELVE: November 2-6

- Readings:* *The Ethnic Dimension in American History*, chapters 8, 11, conclusions to parts I and II  
*A Larger Memory*, choose any four sections of Part Four that you have not yet read  
\* Denis Kearney, “Our Misery and Despair”  
\* Documents from the California State School Board (1918)  
\* Hiram Evans, “The Klan’s Fight for Americanism” (1926)  
\* The Congressional debate over the 1924 National Origins Act (two links)  
\* Noel Hartman, “*The Passing of the Great Race* at 100,” *Public Books* (July 2016)  
\* “How Anti-Mexican Racism in L.A. Caused the Zoot Suit Riots” (film)  
\* *New York Times* Immigration Explorer (interactive website)

*Assignment:* Writing assignment 3 (due Friday, November 6)

**WEEK THIRTEEN: November 9-13**

*Readings:* *The Ethnic Dimension in American History*, chapters 13-15, 17, conclusion to Part III

- \* Jose Antonio Vargas, "My Life as an Undocumented Immigrant," *New York Times Magazine* (June 2011)
- \* Priscilla Alvarez, "The Border Wall Prototypes Are Up – Now What?" *The Atlantic* (October 2017)
- \* Hamid Dabashi, "The Muslim Ban and the Ethnic Cleansing of America," *Al Jazeera* (March 2017)
- \* Kamala Kelkar, "How a Shifting Definition of 'White' Helped Shape U.S. Immigration Policy," *PBS NewsHour* (September 2016)
- \* Maria Sacchetti et al., "DACA Injunction Adds to Limbo for 'Dreamers' as Trump Crackdown, Hill Talks Continue," *Washington Post* (January 2018)
- \* Origins and Destinations of the World's Migrants, 1990-2015 (interactive website)

*Assignment:* Discussion 4 (ends Friday, November 13)

**UNIT FOUR: #METOO**

**WEEK FOURTEEN: November 16-20**

*Readings:* \*Sophie Gilbert, "The Movement of #MeToo," *The Atlantic* (October 2017)

- \* Sandra E. Garcia, "The Woman Who Created #MeToo Long Before Hashtags," *New York Times* (October 2017)
- \* Jacquelyn Iyamah, "From the Million Woman March to #MeToo: How Movements Created By and For Black Women Are Appropriated," *Afropunk* (November 2017)
- \* Jalal Baig, "The Perils of #MeToo as a Muslim," *The Atlantic* (December 2017)
- \* Kimberlé Crenshaw, "The Urgency of Intersectionality" (TED Talk)

*Assignment:* No written assignment this week – complete the readings by November 20 to prepare for our final discussion.

**WEEK FIFTEEN: November 23-27 – THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**WEEK SIXTEEN: November 30 – December 4**

*Readings:* \* "On Slaveholders' Sexual Abuse of Slaves" (a collection of narratives)

- \* Timothy Williams, "For Native American Women, Scourge of Rape, Rare Justice," *New York Times* (May 2012)
- \* Soraya Nadia MacDonald, "'The Rape of Recy Taylor' Explores the Little-Known Terror Campaign Against Black Women," *The Undeclared* (December 2017)
- \* P. R. Lockhart, "Women are Now Living with Fear of Deportation if they Report Sexual Violence," *Mother Jones* (May 2017)
- \* Raina Lipsitz, "Sexual Harassment Law was Shaped by the Battles of Black Women," *The Nation* (October 2017)
- \* Manny Fernandez, "'You Have to Pay with Your Body': The Hidden Nightmare of Sexual Violence on the Border," *New York Times* (March 2019)

*Assignment:* Discussion 5 (ends Friday, December 4)

**\*\*\* FINAL EXAM: DUE FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11 \*\*\***

## HISTORY 1150 • MULTICULTURAL AMERICA WRITING GUIDELINES

Over the course of the semester, you will be asked to complete several kinds of writing assignments – in other words, you will analyze and interpret documents and other texts. The guidelines are as follows.

**Argument:** Your paper must have a clear, analytical argument, in the form of a thesis statement and sustained throughout the paper. Your thesis statement should appear toward the end of your introduction. It must make some sort of historical argument, which you will then support with evidence in the rest of your paper. Think of your thesis statement as answering a “how” or “why” question rather than a “what” or “who” question – in other words, it should suggest an interpretation rather than a description. Some examples:

*Weak thesis (C or D paper):* "This paper will discuss how African Americans' legal status changed in the decades after World War II." [*Describes the topic but makes no argument.*]

*Somewhat better (B paper):* "African Americans' legal status improved dramatically in the decades after World War II." [*Suggests an argument but not the reasoning behind it.*]

*Much better (A paper):* "African Americans' legal status improved dramatically in the decades after World War II, partly due to improved economic opportunities and growing sympathy among whites, but even more due to mounting activism by blacks themselves." [*States a clear argument and summarizes the reasoning behind it.*]

Beyond the thesis statement, you should use your topic sentences to reinforce and support your argument. Think of each topic sentence as a mini-thesis statement that makes an analytical point about some piece of your overall argument.

**Organization and structure:** Develop your argument with clearly stated points, each of which builds logically on the points that preceded it and contributes a crucial piece to the overall argument. Prior to writing, develop an outline that breaks the overall argument down into two or three building-block points that work logically together. These building blocks will be the basis for your paragraphs.

*Weak organization (C or D paper):* Paragraphs have no logical organization or relationship to each other and lack topic sentences that support the overall argument. Paragraphs have no apparent arguments or topics holding them together, but rather seem to start and stop at random points. There may be not true topic or concluding sentences.

*Somewhat better (B paper):* Paragraphs have clear topics, but the sequencing of topics may not makes sense (for example – random chronological order, when the topic suggests an analysis of change over time), and topic sentences do not offer analytical points to support the main argument. Transitions may be lacking, abrupt, or unclear. Paragraphs may lack concluding sentences.

*Much better (A paper):* Each paragraph has an analytical topic sentence that supports the thesis statement, evidence and analysis that supports the topic sentence, and a clear concluding sentence that wraps up the main idea. Transitions (which appear with the topic sentences, not the concluding sentences) as smooth and logical. Paragraph topics build logically from one to the next.

**Primary and secondary evidence:** I cannot stress enough that these papers are intended to give you a chance to think and write like historians – and that means that you *must use evidence*. You must include *primary evidence* (evidence from the time or events you're discussing) and *secondary evidence* (writings based on primary research) to establish *historical context* (background information) in order to craft and present a historical argument. Without evidence, the paper is not a historical analysis – it's just an opinion piece. Evidence can include quotes (brief quotes from primary sources only, please), facts, statistics, anecdotes – anything that helps support your argument AND that you can document. Using primary evidence involves careful reading *and* writing, so leave yourself plenty of time for these tasks.

**Reading:** To use evidence effectively, you should read your documents (along with assigned reading in *Of the People*) with the following questions in mind:

- What is the subject of core issue of the documents?
- Who created the documents, when were they created, and under what circumstances? How did the creators relate to the events or people being discussed (as an eyewitness, secondhand source of information, etc.)?
- What was the documents' wider historical *context*? How might that context have influenced the author(s)?
- What do you know (or what can you infer) about the authors' social positions (class, race, gender, level of education, occupation, etc.). What about the authors' political orientations or biases? How might this background have shaped their perspectives?
- Who was the intended audience for the documents?
- Why did the authors create these documents – did they intend to persuade people? If so, of what?
- Based on all of the above, how reliable are these primary sources? What can we accept as fact, and what must we be suspicious of? Keep in mind that even a very biased source can be a valuable one, but we have to be aware of that bias as we analyze it.

**Writing:** Part of using evidence effectively means incorporating it into your writing in ways that strengthen your argument rather than distracting (or detracting) from it.

- **Quoting:** When you quote from a source, you must use quotation marks to indicate those portions that you are quoting. You should reproduce the words exactly and use citations to indicate from where they came. **Quote ONLY primary sources** (that is, sources from the time you are writing about that serve as evidence in your paper). You may quote from a secondary book or article, but only if the portion you are quoting comes from a primary source (so you might, for instance, use a quote from George Washington that appears in a book, but you should not quote the author of that book, who is writing about George Washington.). The reason: when you quote the author of a secondary source, you are letting that person do the historical thinking and analysis for you. In these assignments, *you* must do that work yourself. (There is an exception to this rule: when you are directly engaging a historian's argument, you may quote the historian to advance your point. But you should still rely on primary evidence to critique that argument, and you should not use secondary quotes as a stand-in for your own analysis.)
- **Paraphrasing:** When you paraphrase, you use someone else's idea but explain it in your own words. You must indicate whose idea it is, just as you would for a direct quotation. You should not, though,

use the original author's words; you must rephrase it in your own words. If you are paraphrasing, you may use ideas or arguments that historians present in their secondary works, as long as you give credit and synthesize these points in your own argument.

- *Citing your sources:* You should cite all evidence that is not common knowledge. This includes quotes, little-known facts and anecdotes, and statistics, along with any paraphrasing or reference to someone else's ideas. You will not be penalized for excessive citation, so if you are in doubt, cite it. Either footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical citations (author and page number in parentheses at the end of the sentence) will do. You need not include a bibliography unless you use a source outside of class material (which is not expected). Citing sources properly is an important matter of academic integrity. If you paraphrase or quote another person's ideas without acknowledgment, you are plagiarizing. This is illegal, unethical, and grounds for a failing grade. Don't do it.

What should all of this look like in your paper? I will consider use of evidence as follows:

*Weak (or no) use of evidence (C, D, or F paper):* The paper includes no primary evidence and little or no reference to the assigned primary documents. The paper might mention or even quote the primary documents, but because there is no historical context, the author inaccurately misinterprets the meaning or significance of the evidence or misses key pieces of information. Papers that include plagiarized text receive an automatic zero.

*Somewhat better (B paper):* The paper includes insufficient primary evidence. Some of the primary evidence supports the argument, but other examples may be poorly chosen, or the paper might simply rely on quotes with little context or analysis (letting quotes stand for themselves with no further discussion, for example). Formatting of quotes is awkward or grammatically incorrect (for example, floating quotes with no transitional phrases to link prose to quotes). The paper might have entire paragraphs without primary evidence.

*Much better (A paper):* Every paragraph (possibly except the introduction and conclusion) contains primary evidence. Primary documents are properly quoted, so that quotes and prose combine to form complete sentences. Quotes support but do not replace analysis; rather, analysis explains the quotes in proper context (derived from secondary evidence). Secondary evidence is paraphrased rather than quoted. All evidence works to support the broader argument as well as the points in each paragraph.

**Style:** I will not grade you on style alone, but good writing is necessary to communicate your ideas. Therefore, quality of writing will figure into your grade. Get to the point, use clear wording, and avoid awkward phrases and sentences. Steer clear of overly formal or informal prose (for example, unnecessarily complicated or elaborate language, colloquialisms or slang, contractions, etc.). Use correct grammar and spelling. I highly recommend that you read your prose aloud to catch awkward or incorrect phrasing.

*Weak writing (C or D paper):* The paper either uses slang and inappropriately informal language, or it uses overly formal and unnecessarily wordy language. There are numerous problems with word choice, conventions of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and awkward phrasing. The mechanical problems are significant enough to obscure the paper's argument and distract the reader.

*Somewhat better (B paper):* This paper has many of the same problems as a C paper, but they will not be significant enough to distract from the overall argument. The weaknesses in writing are less universal and easier to fix than in a C paper, but the prose overall is not as polished as an A paper.

*Much better (A paper):* The prose is polished with good word choice, proper grammar and punctuation, few (if any) instances of awkward phrasing, and no nagging or repetitive problems.