

HIST 160, Spring Term 2017  
Power and Inequity in America to 1865



Credit: Wesley VanDinter E+ Getty Images

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This class will follow American history from before the landing of Columbus at Guanahani to the end of the U.S. Civil War in 1865. Along the way we'll explore what liberty has meant to different groups at different times; how the denial of liberty to some groups by others has helped defined power relations in an American world; and how appeals to liberty can change a whole nation.

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REQUIRED TEXTS:

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty!: An American History*. Fifth edition. (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2016). E-book: <https://digital.wwnorton.com/givemeliberty5sv1>

ASSIGNMENTS

### **Quizzes (3): Due April 3, April 21, and May 12**

Purpose:        1) To give you practice analyzing primary sources (records that come from the period of time we're studying, such as diaries, illustrations, photographs, newspaper columns, account books, or letters)  
2) To give you practice assessing the trustworthiness of information

Task:            **In class:** we will practice analyzing sources according to the rubric of Source, Observe, Contextualize, and Corroborate  
**In your quizzes:** you will use this rubric to analyze a primary source you haven't seen before

### **Paper One: Separate elements due on April 10, April 17, and April 24. Final version of paper due May 1.**

For your first paper you'll be asked to take one of the readings we've completed for class discussion and write a 4-6 page paper tying that reading to the larger themes of the course.

### **Paper Two: Separate elements due May 15 and May 24. Final paper due during final exam period.**

For your second paper you will take a contemporary news event and explain its connection to the history we've studied.

### **In-Class Writing: Due throughout the term**

In this class I'll ask you to periodically write – during the class period – on a prompt I provide. These are not pieces of writing that I will grade for grammar and syntax, but rather reflection pieces that check in with your understanding of the reading and your reactions to our texts and discussion

## Attendance and Participation

The outcome of this course relies on your informed, honest, and active involvement. You are allowed two unexcused absences during the course, but your attendance is expected at all other times. Excused absences include serious illness or family emergency, and cultural and religious holidays with notification. Though I hope no one experiences an illness or family emergency, if you do, please inform me as soon as possible—ideally, in advance of the class meeting. Make-up work may be assigned. If you have a religious or cultural holiday that conflicts with a class meeting or activity, notify me by Monday, March 27 so I can make sure that you have an excused absence for this day. If I do not hear from you by Monday, March 27 I will assume that you plan to attend all class sessions, and full attendance will be required.

Your active, engaged participation in this class is crucial. In determining your participation grade in this class, I will assess your contribution to the conversation each week. Asking questions of texts in class will be central to this endeavor. In making these assessments, I realize that modes of participation may vary, and that there are culturally specific norms about how to best engage in a conversation. In this course, we will recognize the varieties of ways that individuals and groups contribute to discussion. Quantity of talk is not in and of itself the basis for evaluating participation; the quality of input, the consistency and depth of reflection, and the demonstration of active listening are important components of conversation. Good participants also support and help others to participate.

## GRADES

Paper One	20%
Paper Two	25%
Quizzes	15%
In-Class Writing	15%
Participation and Attendance	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please contact Stephanie Grimes (x7478) at the Center for Teaching and Learning at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, such as the assignments, in-class activities, or the way I teach may be modified to facilitate your progress. As soon as Stephanie makes me aware of your needs, I can work with you and the Center for Teaching and Learning to help make appropriate accommodations. All accommodation information is treated with the utmost discretion.

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## INCLUSIVITY

Social identities--race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual identity, religion, mental and physical ability, size, national origin, citizenship, etc.--affect not only how we are understood, represented, and treated on campus and in society, but also the types of knowledge and learning seen as worthwhile and legitimate. In this class, we commit to analyzing the ways in which social identities condition what we assume, experience, and conclude about the world, in ourselves and in the material we encounter in discussions, readings, experiments, and essays. The content of this course (readings, topics, films, and assignments) aims to include authors, perspectives, and critiques from multiple diverse social identities. I am always open to feedback on how the class can be made more inclusive.

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## HONOR CODE

The Knox College community expects its members to demonstrate a high degree of ethical integrity in all their actions, including their academic work. Examples of academic dishonesty include plagiarism, giving or receiving unauthorized help, voluntarily assisting another student in cheating, and dishonestly obtaining an extension. If you have any questions about this, or if you are panicking about your ability to meet deadlines, please come and talk with me.

Please re-acquaint yourself with the Knox College Honor Code at <https://www.knox.edu/Documents/PDFs/Academics/Honor-System.pdf>

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## TRIGGER WARNINGS

If you have a clinical condition, such as PTSD or severe anxiety, that makes a trigger warning for certain issues helpful in navigating this class, please let me know as soon as possible (use email if this is too hard to do in person). I will be happy to provide trigger warnings for such material.

It is likely that the material in this class will elicit strong emotional reactions from all of us. We'll discuss this on Friday, March 24, and work on tools to help us manage those reactions. You'll also see that your journal prompts often ask you to reflect on what you feel as well as what you think. This class does not treat you as an intellect alone—a brain in a jar—but as a whole human being. The journals will hopefully provide space for you to do some emotional processing about our readings and discussion