

The American West

AmStud 124A, ArtHist 152, English 124, History 151, PoliSci 124A

T/Th, 10:30-11:50 a.m. Room: 200-002

GERs: DB-Hum; EC-AmerCul

WAYS: WAY-A-II; WAY-SI

(last updated: March 14, 2018)

Professors:

Bruce Cain	(Political Science)	bcain@stanford.edu
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Teaching Assistants and Section Times:

Megan Strackbein	(English)	mstrackb@stanford.edu
	Thursday 4:30-5:20; Friday 10:30-11:20	
Cynthia Garcia	(Modern Thought & Literature)	cjgarcia@stanford.edu
	Friday 9:30-10:20; 11:30-12:20	
Lance Sorenson	(Law School)	lfsorens@stanford.edu
	Wed 2:30-3:20; 3:30-4:20	

Office Hours:

Bruce Cain: By appointment, Y2E2 Room 173. (Email Surabhi at surabhi2@stanford.edu to schedule)

Shelley Fisher Fishkin: By appointment, 460-420.

David Freyberg: TBD

David Kennedy: By appointment, 200-234.

Alexander Nemerov: TBD

Course Objectives:

This course integrates several disciplinary perspectives into a comprehensive examination of western North America—its history, physical geography, climate, institutions, politics, demography, economy, and continuing policy challenges, as well as its artistic and cultural expression.

The course will examine how the West came to be settled, defined, and ultimately viewed as distinctive. Students will understand how geology, topography, and climate—aridity in particular—have shaped the region's history, development and public policies. Aridity accounts in part for the fact that the federal government is the region's largest landlord, controlling more than 50 percent of the West's surface area. In addition, Western governance is complicated and distinctively shaped by its populist culture, direct democracy options, and highly fractured system of local jurisdictions. Direct democracy, for instance, enables more innovative programs to manage climate change and the environment, but the dispersion of jurisdictional responsibilities makes it harder to implement them.

Students will also examine transformations in the West's demography and its economy. The West has been the nation's most demographically dynamic region since World War II. Massive wartime and postwar internal migration has given way to transnational migration, notably from Mexico and Asia. And the West is home to a majority of the nation's Native Americans. Migration, of course, closely tracks economic patterns. The transformation of the West from a natural resource extraction economy to a high-tech economy—with Silicon Valley its exemplar and locomotive—will be another course theme, as will the policy issues attending the prospects for the West's environmental, demographic, and economic future. Participating in vigorous analytical discussions and writing papers on western trends, students will be able to analyze westerners' behavior and western social organizations using data or primary source material.

The course will also examine the long tradition of rendering and expressing the West in art, film, and literature. In addition to analyzing poems, essays, short stories, and excerpts from longer works, the course will focus on paintings, photography, sculpture, and prints of the American West. The goal is for students to understand that these various accounts are not illustrations of the West but rather inventions that suited the ideological needs of particular moments. The portrayal of western peoples differed from one period to the next, and the same is true for borders, water, and the landscape itself. At the same time, the goal is to note how the works we study can—sometimes—introduce us to states of feeling not easily categorizable by recourse to social or ideological explanations.

Course requirements:

Students who come to class, attend discussion sections and complete the course readings will do well in the course.

Readings

All readings are posted on Canvas as assigned.

Many of our readings are made available through Stanford Libraries' restricted databases, electronic journals, or e-books. In order to access these readings, you must be connected to the Stanford network. If you are having trouble accessing these readings, visit <http://library.stanford.edu/using/connect-campus> to test your connection.

Lectures and Discussion Sections

Class lectures will include 2 or 3 back-to-back lectures (25 or 40 min). Attendance will be taken at each lecture and section, starting the second week of the quarter. Students are fully responsible for checking in at the student ID scanner placed by the door of the lecture hall. Attendance at and participation in lectures and discussion sections constitute 20% of your final grade.

Related Course Events

Several events related to the American West Course are scheduled during Spring Quarter. Attendance at these events is *highly encouraged* by the faculty team. Details can be found on the Bill Lane Center's website: west.stanford.edu/events. Please note the following dates on your calendar:

- **May 2: Clay Jenkinson Visit**
 - Clay Jenkinson as John Wesley Powell
 - Location TBD
- **May 15, 12:15pm: Ana Minian Book Talk**
 - Professor Ana Minian (History) will discuss her new book, *Undocumented Lives: Mexican Migration to the United States 1965-1986*
 - Terrace Room, Margaret Jacks Hall
- **May 18, 2-5pm: ArtsWest Borderlands Symposium**
 - Panel discussion between five scholars of arts in the U.S.-Mexico border region.
 - Stanford Humanities Center
- **REQUIRED: June 5, 4:30-6pm: Mary Dailey Desmarais**
 - Curator at Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
 - McMurtry Building

Other talks organized for the class will be announced during the quarter. **Students are expected to attend at least two outside events and write one reflection paragraph about each.**

Written Assignments

Students are expected to write two five-page papers throughout the quarter, each constituting 20% of the final grade. These will be due on **April 29th** and **May 20th**. Further details on the expectations and topics for written assignments will be discussed early in the quarter.

Exam

Students will complete a take-home final at the end of the quarter. The exam will take the form of one or more essays that test your ability to synthesize the diverse interdisciplinary perspectives offered in the class into an understanding of the American West as a distinct region. It will be due by 5pm on **Monday, June 11th** and it will constitute 40% of the final grade.

DCI Students

We are glad to have DCI students in the American West Course. Please note that DCI students should not attend weekly sections with the TAs, and instead will have the opportunity to attend an optional one-time, two-hour section led by the faculty.

Electronics Policy

Electronics, including but not limited to laptops and mobile phones, are not permitted during lectures for this course.

Course Outline

THEME 1: SPACE

Tuesday, April 3

1. **Introduction: Themes of the West** *Professor Cain*
2. **Western Spaces** *Professor Freyberg*
3. **Writing the West** *Professor Fishkin*
 - Twain, Mark. "Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog." 1865.
 - Twain, Mark. "Buck Fanshaw's Funeral." *Roughing It*. American Publishing Company, 1872.
 - Twain, Mark. "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses." 1895.
 - Dunbar, Paul Laurence. "Welcome Address, to the Western Association of Writers." *Oak and Ivy*. Dayton: Press of United Brethren, 1892.
 - Wister, Owen. Chapters 1 and 2. *The Virginian: A Horseman of the Plains*. New York: The Macmillan company, 1904.
 - OPTIONAL: Katharine Lee Bates, "Pike's Peak" (1904).

Thursday, April 5

1. **Policy Spillover and Domestic Borders** *Professor Cain*
 - Sheridan, Thomas E. "Embattled ranchers, endangered species, and urban sprawl: The political ecology of the new American West." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 36 (2007): 121-138.
2. **Open Space vs. Bordered Space in the West** *Professor Fishkin*
 - Anzaldúa, Gloria E. *Borderlands/La Frontera*. 4th ed. [1987]. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2012. Excerpts from preface to the first edition ; excerpts from chapters 1, 2, and 7: pp. 19-20, 23-35, 41-45, 99-102, 112-113.
3. **International Borders** *Professor Cain*
 - Liverman, Diana M., et al. "Environmental Issues Along the United States-Mexico Border: Drivers of Change and Responses of Citizens and Institutions." *Annual Review of Energy and the Environment* 24, 1 (1999): 607-643.

Tuesday, April 10

1. **At the El Paso Holiday Inn: A Reading of Marisela Norte's "Act of the Faithless"** *Professor Nemerov*
 - Norte, Marisela. "Act of the Faithless." Peeping Tom Tom Girl. San Diego City Works Press, 2008.
2. **Drowning on the Mountain: Anne Brigman in the High Sierras** *Professor Nemerov*
3. **From Stanford to Tule Lake: The Internment of Professor Yamato Ishihashi** *Professor Nemerov*

Thursday, April 12

1. **Water and Borders** *Professor Freyberg*
2. **Controlling Space: Federal Lands and Local Control** *Professor Cain*
 - John D. Leshy, *Unraveling the Sagebrush Rebellion: Law, Politics and Federal Lands*, 14 *U.C. Davis L. Rev.* 317 (1980).
 - "The Oregon Occupiers' Land Dispute, explained in nine maps"
 - "Beyond the Coal Boom: Powder River Basin Residents Look to a Diversified Future."
3. **Mobility vs. Confinement in the West** *Professor Fishkin*
 - Inada, Lawson Fusao. "Prologue." *Legends from Camp: Poems*. Minneapolis: Coffee House Press, 1992. 1-2.
 - Inada, Lawson Fusao. "Concentration Constellation." *Legends from Camp: Poems*. Minneapolis: Coffee House Press, 1992. 1-2.
 - OPTIONAL: Tully, Jim. "A California Holiday." *The American Mercury*. January 1928. 22-29.
 - OPTIONAL: Lai, Him Mark, Genny Lim, and Judy Yung. "The Detainment, Poems 12-33." *Island: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island, 1910 to 1940*. 1981. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991. Poems #12, 17, 21, 22, 31.

THEME 2: TIME

Tuesday, April 17

1. **The Evolution of the Western Landscape** *Professor Freyberg*
2. **The Shrinking Iconic West – Demography and Politics** *Professor Cain*
 - Turner, Frederick Jackson. “The Significance of the Frontier in American History.” *The Frontier In American History*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1921.
 - Teixeira, Rui et al, “States of Change: Demographic Evolution of the American Electorate,” 2015, pp1-17, 62-82
3. **Discussion**

Thursday, April 19

1. **Historical Time, Mythical Time** *Professor Kennedy*
2. **The Evolution of the Western Landscape** *Professor Freyberg*

Tuesday, April 24

1. **The End of Time: The Art of James Castle** *Professor Nemerov*
2. **Pearl Harbor: or, Where Do We Go When We Die?** *Professor Nemerov*
3. **Take from the Rich and Give to the Poor: Sherwood Forest in Chico, California** *Professor Nemerov*

THEME 3: FIRE AND WATER

Thursday, April 26

1. **Coming into the Country** *Professor Kennedy*
2. **Sharing Resources: Water Rights and Water Law** *Professor Freyberg*
3. **Writing Aridity in the West** *Professor Fishkin*
 - Stegner, Wallace. "Thoughts in a Dry Land." *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs: Living and Writing in the West*. New York: Random House, 1992. Pgs 45-56.
 - Stegner, Wallace. "Living Dry." *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs: Living and Writing in the West*. New York: Random House, 1992. Pgs 60-64, 68-75.
 - Austin, Mary. "The Land of Little Rain" and "Water Trails of the Ceriso." *The Land of Little Rain*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1903.
 - Abbey, Edward. "Water." *Desert Solitaire: A Season in the Wilderness*. 1968. New York: Simon & Schuster/Touchstone Books, 1998. 112-127.
 - OPTIONAL: Rivera, Tomás. "Los niños no se aguantaron / The Children Couldn't Wait." ...*Y No Se Lo Tragó La Tierra...And the Earth Did Not Swallow Him*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1987. 7-9, 87-89.

Tuesday, May 1

1. **How the West Was Won and What it Has to Lose** *Professor Kennedy*
2. **Water in the West: Too Little?** *Professor Freyberg*

Thursday, May 3

1. **Water in the West: Too Much?** *Professor Freyberg*
2. **36 Views of Lake Tahoe** *Professor Fishkin*
3. **Climate Change Adaptation to Fire and Water** *Professor Cain*

Tuesday, May 8

1. **Water Politics** *Professor Cain*
 - Fahlund, Andrew, Min L. Janny Choy, and Leon Szeptycki. "Water in the West." *California Journal of Politics and Policy* 6.1 (2014): 61-102.
2. **Water and Power in the West** *Professor Freyberg*
3. **What Is A Work of Art?: A Meditation on Sergio Leone's Exploding Bridge in *The Good, The Bad and the Ugly*** *Professor Nemerov*

THEME 4: PEOPLES

Thursday, May 10

1. **Native Americans** *Professor Kennedy*
2. **Western Multiculturalism** *Professor Cain*
 - “A Racial/Ethnic Diversity Interpretation of Politics and Policy in the States of the U.S.” Authors(s): Rodney E. Hero and Caroline J. Tolbert Source: American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Aug., 1996), pp. 851-871,

Tuesday, May 15

1. **Native American Voices Remember Wounded Knee** *Professor Fishkin*
 - Black Elk, Nicholas. *Black Elk Speaks, Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux As told through John G. Neihardt (Flaming Rainbow)*. [1921]. University of Nebraska Press, 1979, Chapters 21-25.
 - Momaday, N. Scott. “December 29, 1890.” *In The Presence of the Sun: Stories and Poems, 1961-1991*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992. 139.
 - Welch, James. “The Man from Washington.” 1971. *The Seattle Times* 20 October 2004.
 - Rose, Wendy. “I Expected My Skin and My Blood to Ripen.” *Bone Dance: New and Selected Poems 1965-1993*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1994. 18-19.
2. **Water, Sanitation, and Salmon on the Reservation** *Professor Freyberg*
3. **Tribal Governance** *Professor Cain*

Thursday, May 17

1. **The Chinese in the West: The Challenge of Reconstructing Chinese Railroad Workers' Lives** *Professor Fishkin*
 - Kingston, Maxine Hong. “The Grandfather of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.” *China Men*. [1980]. New York: Vintage Books and Random House Inc, 1989. pp. 128-130, 135-146.
 - Chang, Gordon and Fishkin, Shelley Fisher. “The Chinese Helped Build America.” *ForbesAsia* 12 May 2014.
 - Browse the website of Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project at Stanford University: <http://chineserailroadworkers.stanford.edu>
2. **Immigration and “Reconquista”** *Professor Kennedy*
3. **The Chinese in the West: Discrimination and Exclusion** *Professor Fishkin*
 - Twain, Mark. “Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy.” *The Writings of Mark Twain, Volume XXIII*. [1870]. New York: P. F. Collier & Son Company, 1917.
 - Twain, Mark. “Goldsmith’s Friend Abroad Again.” [1870, 1871] , Letters 1-4, 7,
 - Stegner, Wallace. “The Chink.” *Collected Stories of Wallace Stegner*. [1940]. New York: Random House/Penguin Books, 1990. 191-203.

Tuesday, May 22

1. **Emory Douglas and the Art of the Black Panthers, Oakland** *Professor Nemerov*
2. **Black California Writers** *Professor Fishkin*
 - Himes, Chester. "Zoot Riots are Race Riots." [1943]. *Black California*. Ed. Aparajita Nanda. Berkeley: Heyday, 2011. 70-73.
 - Williams, Shirley Anne. "North Country: The Dream Realized." *The Peacock Poems*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1975. 74-75.
 - Copeland, Brian. "In the Beginning." *Not a Genuine Black Man, Or, How I Claimed My Piece Ground in the Lily-White Suburbs*. New York: Hyperion, 2006. 19-26.
 - Bradley, David. "Eulogy for Nigger." *Tri Quarterly*. Northwestern University, 15 July 2014.
 - OPTIONAL: Carter, Jennie. Letter to the Editor of the San Francisco Elevator, 13 June 1869 and 4 July 1869. *Jennie Carter: A Black Journalist in the Early West*. Ed. Eric Gardner. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010. 73-76.
 - OPTIONAL: Coleman, Wanda. "L.A. Love City." [1996]. *Black California*. Ed. Aparajita Nanda. Berkeley: Heyday, 2011. 230-234.
3. **The Killing of Matthew Shepard, Laramie, Wyoming, October 6, 1998** *Professor Nemerov*

THEME 5: BOOM AND BUST

Thursday, May 24

1. **Gold and Other Rushes** *Professor Kennedy*
2. **Writing the Gold Rush and the Silver Boom** *Professor Fishkin*
 - Dame Shirley. *The Shirley Letters from California Mines in 1851-52*. San Francisco: Thomas C. Russell, 2007. Letter the sixth (pp. 77-86), twelfth (pp. 163-176), fourteenth (pp. 191-204), fifteenth (pp. 205-222), and twenty-second (pp. 317-334).
 - Twain, Mark. *Roughing It*. American Publishing Company, 1872. Chapters 26-30, 40-41.
3. **“The Observatory Scene in Rebel Without a Cause” (1954)** *Professor Nemerov*

Tuesday, May 29

1. **Boom: The Rise of Irrigated Agriculture in the West** *Professor Freyberg*
2. **Europe Discovers the West** *Professor Fishkin*
 - May, Karl. Chapters I and II. *Winnetou*. New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago: Benziger Brothers, 1878. 7-26.
3. **The Modern Western Economy** *Professor Kennedy*
 - Berlin, Leslie. “The History of Silicon Valley.” Manuscript.

Thursday, May 31

1. **The Political Implications of Modern Boom and Bust: California and Wyoming Compared** *Professor Cain*
2. **Bust: Sustaining Irrigated Agriculture in the West (or Not)** *Professor Freyberg*
3. **The Port Chicago Disaster: Racial Injustice during World War II** *Professor Nemerov*

Tuesday, June 5

1. **Dams: Boom, Bust, or Both?** *Professor Freyberg*
2. **Bigfoot: The Rise and Fall of a Legend** *Professor Nemerov*
3. **Discussion**