**BRIEF INTRO:**
Where in the world is the United States? Although American history is by definition, nationally bounded and typically told chronologically from colonial to modern times, historians have recently begun tearing apart the nation-state as a “natural” and ever-present organizing principle. More often than not, the history of Americans falls outside the nation-state – when mass migration takes place, for instance, or when borders are disputed and cultural exchanges occur. As Tom Bender summed up neatly, “we must understand every dimension of American life as entangled in other histories. Other histories are implicated in American history, and the United States is implicated in other histories.”

This is not strictly a course on foreign relations or diplomatic history. Instead, we will examine the major themes of a traditional American history course through these new lenses of transnational, international, and global histories. We will think about how to better structure and understand the US in the world.

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**GRADES:**
40% - Participation
60% - Essays

*No midterm or final exam.*

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**WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT:**

**READING:** You should expect to read A LOT.

**WRITING:** You will also write six shorter reaction papers OR two long papers over the course of the quarter. You cannot mix and match. (i.e., If you start with short papers, you must do short papers for the whole quarter.) All papers must demonstrate analysis; do NOT summarize readings. Please use footnotes rather than endnotes or in-text citations.

- **The shorter papers** should be between 2-3 pages in length (no longer), double-spaced, and should have an original argument in reaction to at least two of the assigned readings for one week. You can choose which weeks you will be responding to, but all papers are due on the day of class. (That is, you must write your reaction paper before participating in the discussion about that week’s readings.)

- **The longer papers** should be 6-8 pages and should answer the following questions, in order:
  - *What are the decisive turning points in American history, and do they tend to be national, transnational, international, or global in character? (due Week 5)*
  - *When and how do transnational, global narratives contradict or support a view of the US as an imperial power? (due Week 10)*

To compensate for the heavy reading load, you will have NO EXAMS in this class.

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**BOOKS:**


Course reader. An asterisk (*) in the syllabus means it is in the course reader.

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**SCHEDULE:**

**Week 1: Breaking open the frame**

[Rethinking]: Part I, Part IV

*Bruce Mazlish, “Global history and world history,” from Bruce Mazlish and Akira Iriye, eds., *The Global History Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2005).*


Week 2: Early America
[Rethinking]: Karen Kupperman, “International at the Creation” and Ian Tyrell, “Beyond the View from Euro-America”

Week 3: Revolution and Early Republic

Week 4: Nineteenth-century slavery, Civil War, and Reconstruction
[Rethinking]: Robin D.G. Kelley, “How the West was One”

Week 5: Frontiers and borderlands
[Rethinking]: Dirk Hoerder, “From Euro- and Afro-Atlantic to Pacific Migration System”
*Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History”

Week 6: Industrialization, reform, and mass consumption

Week 7: American empire
*Charles Maier, Among Empires (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2006) ch. 1 “What is empire?”
*Laura Briggs, Reproducing Empire: race, sex, science, and US imperialism in Puerto Rico (Berkeley: UC Press, 2002) ch. 1 “Sexuality, medicine, and imperialism”

Week 8: Civil Rights
Film: “A Force More Powerful” (disk 1 only). Please watch before coming to class.

Week 9: Cold War

Week 10: Second-wave globalization