

322.01 Twentieth Century American Sexualities  
Fall 2017  
Mears 217 MW 2:00-3:50

Professor Carolyn Herbst Lewis  
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Scheduled office hours: Tuesday 1:30-3:00 pm

No appointment necessary for office hours. To schedule a meeting for a different time, see instructions below.

Please note that there may be a puppy in my office. If you would prefer not to have a puppy present, please do not hesitate to let me know! You can email me in advance. Or, when you arrive, we can either move to another location or I can ask a colleague to puppysit. I promise, this is in no way offensive or inconvenient to me.

This seminar explores the history of sex and sexuality in the 20<sup>th</sup> century United States. We will identify changes, contradictions, and continuities in sexual ideals as well as the even more complicated realities of Americans' sexual experiences. Topics will include desire, pleasure, violence, marriage, dating, identity, laws, cultures, and more. Students enrolled in this course will formulate an original research question, conduct the relevant primary and secondary source research, and write a coherent article-length paper on this topic.

This is the syllabus for this course. As such, it is our plan for the semester, but I reserve the right to make any changes that I find to be necessary. Please review the material included here. I expect you to be familiar with and understand the policies and assignments listed here. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask for help.

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How to Schedule a Meeting with Professor Lewis:

Step 1: Log into your Grinnell email.

Step 2: Open the Calendar function.

Step 3: In the upper right corner, click on '?' and select the Help feature.

Step 4: In the Help window, select 'Creating Calendar Items.'

Step 5: Read the instructions in Help and follow them to send me an invitation to a meeting.

\*\*Please note that I am available only during "normal business hours" (approximately 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday-Friday). When you are selecting an appointment time, be sure to click on the 'Scheduling Assistant,' as that will allow you to see the busy/free times on my calendar. Please be sure to put your name and the time you

want to meet in the subject line. If your computer/Outlook is set to a time zone different than CST, the meeting time will not be correctly displayed and we will have confusion.

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#### Course Policies:

I expect students to attend every class period. This is especially important this semester as we are a small group.

This is not a lecture course. I expect students to come to class having completed the assigned readings, thought about their content, and formulated ideas and questions for class discussion.

In order to pass the course, students must submit all of the written assignments on time or with an approved extension. This includes written assignments and worksheets that do not earn an independent grade.

Assignments submitted late without an instructor-approved extension or documentation of an emergency will be accepted and/or penalized solely at the discretion of the instructor. As soon as you realize you are struggling to make a deadline, contact me.

I ask that you remember that email is a form of professional writing. In your life after Grinnell College, you will be required to communicate via email in a professional format (i.e., salutation, properly formatted sentences, and signature). I suggest you get in the practice of doing so now.

I do not check and respond to emails 24/7. Please give me 24 hours to respond to your email. If you have not received an email after that time, then forward me the original email with a little reminder. Also, I usually do not check email between 5 pm and 8 am. This time is reserved for my family. And sleeping. [Speaking of my family... if ever you see us having dinner in the d-hall, we welcome you to join us!]

I expect students to read and follow all instructions given for each assignment. Failure to do so will negatively affect your grade.

Please note that I expect your writing to improve in terms of style, structure, and content based on my comments on your graded work. You take time to write papers; I take time to think about how you might improve them. The expectation is that you will take my comments and edits into consideration so that you can, in fact, improve. No one in this classroom is such a good writer that they have no room for improvement. This includes me.

You are responsible for checking your grades in Blackboard and reading any comments in a timely manner.

All written work must be neatly and uniformly formatted with double-spaced lines and a minimum of size 12 font. All citations and bibliographies must be formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style, available via the Burling Library list of databases. <http://www.grinnell.edu/about/offices-services/library/research/citation>

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#### Academic Integrity:

It is the responsibility of all students to familiarize themselves with the section on “Honesty in Academic Work” in the Grinnell Student Handbook. These are the standards that you are held to, these are the standards that you have agreed to adhere to by enrolling in the college, and these are the standards that you claim you have met once you submit your written work for grading.

[http://catalog.grinnell.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=2537#Honesty\\_in\\_Academic\\_Work](http://catalog.grinnell.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=2537#Honesty_in_Academic_Work)

Please be aware that as a faculty member I am obligated to submit all suspected violations of these standards to the Committee on Academic Standing. I will not first invite you to explain what happened or attempt to confirm or resolve my suspicions. If I have a concern, I submit the paperwork to the Committee. Period. This helps to maintain the integrity of the Committee, to preserve the campus-wide commitment to due process and self-governance, and to ensure that all of my students are treated equally.

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#### Community and Accountability:

This classroom is a community of individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences coming together to learn. In order for this course to be a productive learning environment, it is imperative that we all treat one another with respect and courtesy. To that end, I ask that you refrain from arriving late or leaving early. Doing so is disruptive to your classmates as well as your instructor. So, too, are cell phone tones. Please make sure that all devices are turned off once you enter the classroom. If you are using a laptop or other device for your readings, please make sure all other programs are closed and notifications turned off. Students who regularly disrupt the class in any way will have their course grade penalized at the discretion of the instructor. If you are asked to modify your behavior, please do so. As members of this community, you all are responsible for informing me if at any point if a classmate’s behavior is impairing your ability to concentrate and learn in this class. This is not asking you to police one another, but to take responsibility for defending your right to a productive learning environment. Bottom line: let’s all treat each other with the same respect and courtesy we would like to receive.

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Accommodations:

I encourage students with documented disabilities, including invisible disabilities such as chronic illness, learning disabilities, and psychiatric disabilities, to discuss appropriate accommodations with me. You will also need to have a conversation about and provide documentation of your disability to the **Coordinator for Student Disability Resources, John Hirschman, located on the 3rd floor of the Rosenfield Center (x3089).**

As an instructor, I am endeavoring to use the philosophy of Universal Design in framing my courses to make them universally accessible to all students. I welcome all constructive feedback in this process. I cannot guarantee that I will adopt any or all suggestions that come my way, but I most certainly want to hear them for consideration not only for this course, but also for future courses.

Grinnell College offers reasonable accommodations for students who observe religious holy days. Please contact me within the first three weeks of the semester if you would like to discuss a specific instance that applies to you.

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**VERY IMPORTANT:**

**This class discusses intimate and sometimes embarrassing or painful subjects. Due to the nature of the course themes, materials, and format we will not be issuing specific trigger warnings. All readings are listed in advance on the syllabus. You should use the syllabus to get a sense of the types of topics we will be discussing throughout the semester. Just because something is not listed on the syllabus for a given day, however, does not mean that it might not come up in lecture or discussion as we draw connections between different readings and discussions. If you find yourself having a personal or emotional response to the readings, subject matter, or discussions, I suggest you make an appointment with a counselor at SHACS (Student Health and Counseling Services). They are located on the Lower Level of the Forum. Their phone number is 641-269-3230. I am happy to help you make an appointment.**

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Required Course Reading Material:

- Balay, Anne. *Steel Closets: Voices of Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Steelworkers*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016.
- Canaday, Margot. *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.

- Littauer, Amanda. *Bad Girls: Young Women, Sex, and Rebellion before the Sixties*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015.
- Additional readings are accessible via the hyperlinks embedded in this syllabus or via ERES.

Grades will be assigned in the course according to the following formula:

5%	Discussion Questions
20%	Class participation
5%	Primary source analysis
5%	Article review I
5%	Article review II
5%	Topic Proposal and Bibliography
15%	Research presentation (10-12 minutes, plus discussion)
40%	Research article

Preparation of Discussion Questions: We are reading three monographs and many articles this semester. For each class discussion day, a student will pre-circulate no later than 8:00 pm the evening before a minimum of 6 questions to be considered and discussed in class. These questions should address the author's or authors' overall thesis, the evidence used, methodology, the historiographical contribution, and the historical content itself.

Class Participation: Students are expected to come to class having completed the assigned readings, thought about their content, and formulated ideas and questions for class discussion. Participation is not the same as attendance, and it is not assessed according to a strict formula. By the end of the semester, I will know whether or not you are someone who has made regular and thoughtful contributions to the classroom discussion of readings and other material. How do you as a student ensure that you get a high mark for this portion of your grade? First, you attend class regularly. You cannot participate if you are not here. Second, you complete the assigned readings and spend time thinking about them before class. Finally, you answer the questions I pose to the class, ask questions of me and your classmates based on the readings and lecture content, share your thoughts about the material, and respond to your classmates' comments.

Article Review I: Students will write a 600-800 word review essay of one of the articles assigned for a class period. Students will sign up for a class period to write about on the first day of class. This may or may not be the same day they prepare discussion questions for the group. This review essay should meet all of the criteria

outlined in the instructions for Article Review II (see below), but rather than connecting to the student's research project should instead put the article "in conversation with" larger course themes and topics.

Article Review II: Students will write a 600-800 word review of an article selected from Section 2 of their research bibliography. This review should identify the author's or authors' main thesis, supporting arguments, primary source evidence, methodology, theoretical framework, and contributions to historiography. This should be written in the format of a professional quality review similar to those usually written for books. We will read and discuss an example of a professional book review in class. The final paragraph of the review should highlight how the article contributes to the student's research project. Your paper should be double-spaced, Times New Roman size 12 font, and footnotes should be formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style. Do not include footnotes in the word count.

Primary Source Analysis: Students will write a 600-800 word primary source analysis of an item or collection of items selected from Section 1 of their research bibliography. This analysis should begin with an introductory paragraph that presents the source and your thesis about it succinctly and thoroughly. Briefly describe your selected source. Be sure to provide enough detail that the reader will have an idea of what kind of primary source this is (magazine article, advertisement, speech, diary entry, etc.), when and where the source first appeared, who the author was, etc. This might require you to do some additional research. Be sure to cite the sources that you use for this information. Once you have provided a useful description of your selected source, proceed with your analysis of its contents. Each subsequent body paragraph should make one point in support of your thesis and contain specific references to the source's relationship to the research project's "hypothesis on probation." Your job is to analyze, not just describe. This means you need to pay attention to the "so what?" factor. Why should we care about this source? What does it reveal to us? [Note: do not write in your paper "We should care about this source because...." Aim for more sophisticated nuance in your writing.] You should offer a concluding paragraph restating your thesis and closing your paper convincingly. Your paper should be double-spaced, Times New Roman size 12 font, and footnotes should be formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style. Do not include footnotes in the word count.

Topic Proposal and Bibliography: There will be in class exercises designed to help you draft a topic proposal. This will give you sufficient detail on my expectations regarding the proposal's content. The final version of the topic proposal should be 3-5 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman size 12 font. The bibliography should be separated into two sections. Section 1 should identify the primary source collections you will be using for your research. Section 2 should list a minimum of 15 secondary sources (books and articles) that you will be using. The items listed in Section 2 must be written by reputable scholars (not the History Channel!) and have been

subjected to a peer review process. If you have questions about the suitability of your sources, contact me at least 72 hours before the applicable due date. The bibliography must be formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style guidelines. The bibliography does NOT count towards the page count.

Research Presentation: We will conclude the semester with a research presentation from each member of the class. The presentation should be 15 minutes and include PowerPoint, Prezi, or some other formal presentation software. You might include handouts. Be prepared for questions and discussion after. Each presentation will be evaluated by the instructor as well as your peers. Your presentation is your chance to share your research project with your peers. You should plan to explain your research question, your methodology and theoretical framework, your selection of primary sources, your thesis, and how your project contributes to our understanding or knowledge of the history of sex/uality in the 20<sup>th</sup> century United States. You will be evaluated on the clarity and professionalism of your presentation as well as its content.

Research article: Each student will plan, research, and write an original article on some topic related to the history of sex and sexuality in the 20<sup>th</sup> century United States. This article will utilize primary sources, will engage with the related historiography, and will make a clear and persuasive analysis of the materials. The article should be a minimum of 7,000 words (including footnotes). Do not include a bibliography with the final paper. A series of assignments and exercises will lead up to the completion of the final article. Students are required to complete all of these steps in order to receive full credit for the research article. In order to successfully complete this project, students will have to work independently for a significant amount of time. There will be many class periods, especially after Fall Break, when we do not meet as a group. Instead, you are expected to devote this class time, as well as the time you would have spent preparing for class time through reading and reflection, to your research project.

### **Schedule of Readings and Assignments:**

Monday, 8/28 Introduction to the Course, Each Other, and the History of Sex.

Reading:

- The Syllabus
- Victoria Harris, “Sex on the Margins: New Directions in the Historiography of Sexuality and Gender,” *The Historical Journal* 53.4 (December 2010), 1085-1104. [JSTOR]
- Pablo Mitchell, “Making Sex Matter: Historians of Latina/o Sexualities, 1898-1965,” in *Latina/o Sexualities: Probing Powers, Passions, Practices, and Policies*, ed by Marysol Asencio (Rutgers University Press, 2010), 38-47. [JSTOR]
- Stephen Valocchi, “Where Did Gender Go?": Same-Sex Desire and the Persistence of Gender in Gay Male Historiography,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 18.4 (2012), pp. 453-479 [Project Muse]
- Martha Vicinus, “The History of Lesbian History,” *Feminist Studies* 38.3 (Fall 2012), 566-596. [JSTOR]
- James Joseph Dean, “From ‘Normal’ to Heterosexual: The Historical Making of Heterosexualities,” in *Straights: Heterosexuality in Post-Closeted Culture* (NYU Press, 2014), 47-86. [JSTOR]

Wednesday, 8/30 Research Methods Lab I. Meet in the Basement of Burling.

Reading: *Craft of Research*, p. 1-40 [Why do we do research? Why do we write papers? How do we connect with our readers? How do we turn interests into topics?] [Free access online at archive.org]

<https://archive.org/details/WayneC.BoothGregoryG.ColombJosephM.WilliamsTheCraftOfResearchThirdEditionChicago>

**Assignment:** Come to the library with a list of potential topics that interest you about the history of sexuality. After the librarian has explained how to use the databases for primary source research, do some digging around. What sources can you find that relate to your topics and that might help you formulate a research question around them? Which topics no longer seem viable for a research paper? Which sources do? Choose two sources that represent two different topics you might pursue for your research paper. You do not have to know what your research question or hypothesis is at this point. You are looking for inspiration to help you focus your interests. Bring the sources to class next Monday.

Monday, 9/5 Research Methods Lab II. Meet in the Basement of Burling.

Reading: *Craft of Research*, p. 40-67 [Archive.org]

Wednesday, 9/7 Theory and Methods



Reading:

- Mattie Udora Richardson, “No More Secrets, No More Lies: African American History and Compulsory Heterosexuality,” *Journal of Women’s History* 15.3 (2003), 63-76. [PROJECT MUSE]
- Anna Clark, “Twilight Moments,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 14 (2005), 139-160. [JSTOR]
- Leisa Meyer, “Interrupting Norms and Constructing Deviances: Competing Frameworks in the Histories of Sexualities in the United States,” in *The Practice of US Women’s History*, ed by S. Jay Kleinberg, Eileen Boris, and Vicki Ruiz (Rutgers University Press, 2007), 280-307. [JSTOR]
- Nan Boyd, “Who is the Subject? Queer Theory Meets Oral History,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 17.2 (May 2008), 177-189. [JSTOR]
- Jim Downs, “With Only a Trace: Same-Sex Sexual Desires and Violence on Slave Plantations, 1607-1865,” in *Connexions*, ed. by Jennifer Brier, Jim Downs, and Jennifer Morgan (University of Illinois Press, 2016), 15-37. [JSTOR]
- George Chauncey, “Review of *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* by Margot Canaday,” *American Historical Review* 116.3 (June 2011), 839-840. [JSTOR]

Monday, 9/12 What is the relationship between sex, gender, and citizenship? What do we gain by taking a long view of the century? What do sources in national archives reveal?

Reading: Canaday, *The Straight State*, Introduction and Part I

Wednesday, 9/14 Class writing workshop: From topic to question to problem (Note: we will be writing during class time. Come prepared to do this.)

Reading: *Craft of Research*, 68-82 [Archive.org]

Assignment due in class: Bring to class the primary sources you chose after the Research Methods Lab.

Be prepared to discuss this source in relation to the other assigned readings. Today we begin the process of moving from topic to question to hypothesis-on-probation.

**\*\*Make an appointment or come to office hours this week to get approval on your research topic\*\***

Monday, 9/19 How does the relationship between sex, gender, and citizenship change after WWII? How does the structure of the book influence the strength of the argument and our reading of the evidence? Where else might we find evidence of the straight state?

Reading: Canaday, *The Straight State*, Part II and Conclusion

Wednesday, 9/21 Containing Sex/uality

Reading:

- Jennifer Brier, “Reproducing Sexuality in the Postwar United States,” *Journal of Women’s History* 25.1 (Spring 2013), 207-216. [Project Muse]
  - Kevin Allen Leonard, “Containing ‘Perversion’: African Americans and Same-Sex Desire in Cold War Los Angeles,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 20.3 (September 2011), 545-567. [Project Muse]
  - Robert Hill, “‘We Shared a Sacred Secret’: Gender, Domesticity, and Containment in ‘Transvestia’s Histories’ and Letters from Crossdressers and Their Wives,” *Journal of Social History* 44.3 (Spring 2011), 729-750. [JSTOR]
  - Frank Costigliola, “‘Unceasing Pressure for Penetration’: Gender, Pathology, and Emotion in George Kennan’s Formation of the Cold War,” *The Journal of American History* 83.4 (March 1997), 1309-1339. [JSTOR]
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Monday, 9/26 Containing Bad Girls

Reading:

- Bieke Gils, “Flying, Flirting, and Flexing: Charmion’s Trapeze Act, Sexuality, and Physical Culture at the Turn of the Twentieth Century,” *Journal of Sport History* 41.2 (Summer 2014), 251-268 [Project Muse]
- Anne E. Bowler, Chrysanthi S. Leon, and Terry G. Lilley, “‘What Shall We Do with the Young Prostitute? Reform Her or Neglect Her?’: Domestication as Reform at the New York State Reformatory for Women at Bedford, 1901-1913,” *Journal of Social History* 47.2 (Winter 2013), 458-481. [Project Muse]
- Catherine Christensen, “*Mujeres Publicas*: American Prostitutes in Baja California, 1910-1930,” *Pacific Historical Review* 82.2 (May 2013), 215-247. [JSTOR]
- Lauren Rackley, “Book Review: *Bad Girls: Young Women, Sex and Rebellion before the Sixties*,” *Journal of International Women’s Studies* 17.1 (January 2016), 213-214. [online]

Wednesday, 9/28 Class writing workshop: Topic Proposal I (Note: we will be writing during class time. Come prepared to do this.)

Preparation: You need to have decided on your research project topic and gotten approval from

Professor Lewis. You need to have done enough exploring of primary and secondary sources that

you have a developing sense of what your research questions are, what your sources may be, what your hypothesis-on-probation might be.

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Monday, 10/3 Is there such a thing as a national sex culture? How do women navigate prescriptive ideals and the realities of their own desires? What is the relationship between prescriptions and agency? What is the relationship between desire and behavior?

Reading: Littauer, *Bad Girls*.

Wednesday, 10/5 Containing/Consuming Pleasure

Reading:

- Hallie Lieberman, "Selling Sex Toys: Marketing and the Meaning of Vibrators in Early Twentieth-Century America," *Enterprise & Society* 17.2 (June 2016), 393-433. [Project Muse]
  - Adam Mack, "'Speaking of Tomatoes': Supermarkets, the Senses, and Sexual Fantasy in Modern America," *Journal of Social History* 43.4 (Summer 2010), 815-842. [Project Muse]
  - David K. Johnson, "Physique Pioneers: The Politics of 1960s Gay Consumer Culture," *Journal of Social History* 43.4 (Summer 2010): 867-892. [PROJECT MUSE]
  - Lucas Hilderbrand. "A Suitcase Full of Vaseline, or Travels in the 1970s Gay World." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 22.3 (2013): 373-402. [PROJECT MUSE]
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Monday, 10/10 Class writing workshop: Topic Proposal II (Note: we will be writing during class time. Come prepared to do this)

Preparation: Review Part I of the worksheet completed last week. Have a clear sense of the secondary sources you will need to read for this project (you don't already have to have read them, but you need to know where your topic fits).

Wednesday 10/12 Containing/Controlling Reproduction

Reading:

- Trent MacNamara, "Why 'Race Suicide'? Cultural Factors in US Fertility Decline, 1903-1908," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 44.4 (Spring 2014), 475-508. [Project Muse]
- Kristin Hall, "Selling Sexual Certainty? Advertising Lysol as a Contraceptive in the United States and Canada, 1919-1939," *Enterprise & Society* 14.1 (March 2013), 71-98. [Project Muse]
- Elizabeth Siegel Watkins, "From Breakthrough to Bust: The Brief Life of Norplant, the Contraceptive Implant," *Journal of Women's History* 22.3 (Fall 2010), 88-11. [Project Muse]

- D. Marie Ralstin-Lewis, “The Continuing Struggle Against Genocide: Indigenous Women’s Reproductive Rights,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 20.1 (Spring 2005), pp. 71-95. [JSTOR]

**Due Friday: First draft of topic proposal and bibliography via Blackboard by Noon!**

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**Fall Break!**

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Monday 10/23 Class writing workshop: Peer review of the draft of the topic proposal submitted before fall break. Professor Lewis will bring sufficient copies for everyone to use. [What makes an argument interesting to readers? What makes an argument compelling and convincing? How do we use evidence to strengthen an argument? How do we anticipate and respond to counter-arguments?]

Wednesday 10/25 Research, Writing, and Revising Day. Class will not meet today.

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Monday, 10/30

Class will not meet today. Instead, each student will meet with Professor Lewis individually to discuss their **revised topic proposal and bibliography, which is due in our meeting.**

Wednesday 11/1

Reading: Balay, *Steel Closets*

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Monday, 11/6 Research, Writing, and Revising Day. Class will not meet today. **Article Review II due via Blackboard by 8 pm.**

Wednesday, 11/8 Historicizing Consent. Class visitor: Sharon Block.

Reading:

- Sharon Block, “Violence or Sex? Constructions of Rape and Race in Early America,” in *New World Orders: Violence, Sanction, and Authority in the Colonial Americas*, ed by John Smolenski and Thomas J Humphrey (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 111-128. [JSTOR]
- Stephen Robertson, “Age of Consent Law and the Making of Modern Childhood in New York City, 1886-1921,” *Journal of Social History* 35.4 (2002), 781-798. [PROJECT MUSE]

- Dawn Rae Flood, “Stormy Protests on Sex Crimes: Local Debates about Race and Rape in Postwar Chicagoland,” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 102 (Fall-Winter 2009), 429-458. [JSTOR]

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Monday 11/13 Research, Writing, and Revising Day. Class will not meet.

Wednesday 11/15 Research, Writing, and Revising Day. Class will not meet. **Primary Source Analysis Paper due via Blackboard by 8 pm.**

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Monday 11/20 Research, Writing, and Revising Day. Class will not meet.

Wednesday 11/22 Research, Writing, and Revising Day. Class will not meet.

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Monday 11/27 Class writing workshop: we will review 2-3 page excerpts in class. Email your excerpt to Professor Lewis by NOON so that I can make sufficient copies.

Wednesday 11/29 Research, Writing, and Revising Day. Class will not meet.

**Friday 12/1 Rough draft due by 5 pm. Email me whatever you’ve got!**

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Monday 12/4 Individual meetings with Professor Lewis to discuss rough drafts.

Wednesday 12/6 Research, Writing, and Revising Day. Class will not meet.

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Finals week:

**Presentations during our final exam block period:**

**Final paper due via Blackboard by 5 pm, Friday 12/15.** Please note there are absolutely no extensions granted or late papers accepted without documented support from Academic Advising.