

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
Professor E. Foner

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
620 Fayerweather
Office Hours: Tu 2-4

Fall, 2002

History C4550x

SENIOR SEMINAR IN AMERICAN HISTORY

In this yearlong seminar, students will write a paper of 35-50 pages in length, based on research in primary sources. In addition to group meetings listed below, students should meet frequently with Professor Foner to discuss progress on the paper.

The first semester will begin with an introduction to the research facilities of Butler Library, followed by a brief introduction to historical methodology and the mechanics of developing, researching, and writing an independent research project. Students will then concentrate on identifying a research topic, developing a prospectus and tentative outline, and beginning the research. Writing of a draft of one part of the paper will begin toward the end of the semester. The second semester will be devoted to completing research and writing the paper. Within each section, students will read and comment on each others' outlines and drafts.

The Brebner Room is located on the fourth floor of Fayerweather. Copies of drafts should be xeroxed there and left in the box for the course for the other students to read. The cost of copying can be billed to the course number. Check with the Department office (611 Fayerweather) for hours when the reading room is staffed – do not count on being able to make copies at the last minute!

The books listed below can be purchased at Labyrinth Bookstore on 112th Street between Broadway and Amsterdam.

List of class meetings and deadlines:

September 3: Introductory session

September 10: Meeting at 203 Butler Library with John Tofanelli, Anglo-American bibliographer.

September 17: Reading: E. H. Carr, What is History?

September 24: Reading: Wayne C. Booth, et al., The Craft of Research

October 1: Reading: Two senior theses from last academic year, plus summaries of others

October 4 (Friday): Two page statement of topic and possible sources due; copies

for everyone in the seminar to be placed in Brebner Room.

October 8: Discussion of paper topics

October 15: Discussion of paper topics

October 22: Discussion of paper topics

October 29: No class session

November 5: No class session (election day)

November 8 (Friday): Paper prospectus due (Fivetoten page essay defining the historical problem, identifying sources and methods to be used, and briefly surveying the existing historical literature. Please provide enough copies for each member of the seminar.)

November 12: Prospectus discussion

November 19: Prospectus discussion

November 26: Prospectus discussion

December 3: Draft of one section of the thesis due; provide enough copies for each member

Winter break: read others' draft sections; complete as much research as possible