

LIBS 663-01 The Hudson River in the Nineteenth Century and the Modernization of America

Summer 2015

Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program (MALS)
Ramapo College of New Jersey
Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies
NEH Landmarks of American History and Culture: Workshop for School Teachers

Meredith Davis Assoc. Prof. of Art History (CA) BC 232 mdavis1@ramapo.edu
Stephen P. Rice, Dean, Prof. of American Studies (SSHGS) B 224 srice@ramapo.edu

Description: This course focuses on the Hudson in the nineteenth century, when the river was simultaneously a commercial thoroughfare, a tourist destination and the scene of dramatic technological, industrial, and environmental changes, all the while celebrated for its iconic natural beauty. A number of major literary and artistic figures who lived and worked near or on the Hudson River witnessed and often produced works in response to the great economic, social and industrial changes that marked the river during the nineteenth century. These include writers Washington Irving and John Burroughs, and artists Thomas Cole, Frederic Church, Sanford Gifford, and others who comprise what came to be called the “Hudson River School.” In focusing on both the history of the Hudson region in the nineteenth century and the various representations of the river produced during this time, this course treats the Hudson as a site through which a central humanistic question can be examined: *how does our material and imaginative relationship to the natural world change as we transform that world through development and use?* The course is run as a workshop in the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Landmarks of American History and Culture program and is available only to those who have been selected to participate in the workshop.

Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course you should be able to do the following:

1. Describe the environmental history of the Hudson River
2. Describe the social, and cultural history of the Hudson River in the nineteenth century
3. Discuss leading literary and artistic treatments of the Hudson River in the nineteenth century
4. Describe and use interdisciplinary methods of analysis
5. Describe and use place-based methods of analysis
6. Locate, evaluate, and analyze primary sources on the history of the Hudson River
7. Locate, evaluate, and analyze secondary sources on the history of the Hudson River
8. Synthesize experiential, visual, and textual resources into written responses that demonstrate critical thinking into a unit plan that demonstrates the ability to transfer this higher-level thinking, reading and writing into pedagogical plans and activities.

Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 are accomplished *in the workshop itself* through hands-on activities, assignments and discussions.

Outcomes 1-7 are also accomplished in the journal assignment

Outcome 8 is accomplished in the unit plan assignment

Requirements: This graduate course in Liberal Studies requires work to be carried out in three stages: pre-workshop preparation, workshop participation, and post-workshop culmination and synthesis.

Preparatory Readings: Complete the assigned pre-workshop readings indicated below. These will take about 40 hours to complete, so we suggest that you spread this work out over the months prior to your arrival. You are also required to complete all of the recommended assigned readings. We suggest that you set aside 3-4 hours per week for course readings and write-ups. Preferably in three 60- or 75-minute sessions rather than one or two longer timespans.

Workshop Participation: Participate in all lectures, discussions, site visits, and working sessions, Monday 4pm until Saturday 3pm (consult workshop detailed schedule on the program website). Full attendance at the workshop is expected for all NEH Summer Scholars. However, it is *required* of graduate students who are taking this course for graduate credit. Missing a day of the workshop will result in a grade of “F” in the course. Missing *any part* of the regular program (excluding those events, not listed in this syllabus, which may be added as “optional”) will result in a 10-point reduction in your grade, to be deducted upon each absence.

Journal: A written journal, with responses to readings and events, is required. Final, edited drafts of a selection of the journal responses will be generated by students and handed in with the Unit plan at the end of the course. The expectation for this journal is that you generate 2-3 pages (700 words) of critical writing for each of at least 6 assigned readings. Guidelines on journal entries will be distributed by May 15.

Final Assignment: Finally, you will be required to develop a unit plan consisting of at least three individual lessons. The unit plan must be organized around the at least two primary documents, one visual and one textual. Lesson plans must include full description of activities, materials required, standards met and achievable outcomes. In addition to the lesson plans, a written narrative of the Unit, of no more than three pages, is required. This will be completed and turned in after the conclusion of the workshop.

Grading: The final grade for the course will be either “Pass” or “Fail” and will be weighted as follows:

- Participation in the workshop: 45%
- Critical reading journal: 25%
- Unit plan: 30%

Students with Disabilities: If you need course adaptation or accommodations because of a disability that has been documented with the Office of Specialized Services, please make an appointment to see us.

Policy on Academic Integrity: You are expected to read and understand Ramapo College’s Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found in the *Ramapo College Catalog* (<http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog>). Members of the Ramapo College community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Students who are suspected of violating this policy will be required to meet with us and/or be referred to the Office of the Provost.

Additional Information: This is a three-credit course, and there are no prerequisites.

Assigned Readings

- Stephen Stanne, Brian E. Forist, and Roger G. Panetta, *The Hudson: An Illustrated Guide to the Living River*, 2nd rev. ed., 2007 (only assigned chapters, as indicated below)
- Tom Lewis, *The Hudson, a History*, Yale University Press, 2007.

Additional readings as indicated below are available in .pdf format or as links to open sources from our website.

Overview:

Tom Lewis, *The Hudson: A History*

Tuesday: Estuary and Harbor—Hudson Environmental and Human History

- Stanne, Forist and Panetta, *The Hudson*, chapters 1, 2, 7
- Walt Whitman, "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" in *Leaves of Grass*, 1860. Available through the Whitman archive (link at our site.)

Wednesday: Commerce, Art, and Tourism on the Changing River

- Thomas Cole, "Essay on American Scenery" (.pdf at our site)
- Stanne, Forist and Panetta, *The Hudson*, chapter 8
- Thomas Wermuth, "The Farmer Now Sells for Money," in *Rip Van Winkle's Neighbors: The Transformation of Rural Society in the Hudson River Valley, 1720-1850* (.pdf at our site)
- Martin Bruegel, "The Culture of Public Life," in *Farm, Shop, Landing: The Rise of a Market Society in the Hudson Valley, 1780-1860* (.pdf at our site)
- Reeve Huston, "Origins of the Anti-Rent Movement, 1839-1844," in *Land and Freedom: Rural Society, Popular Protest, and Party Politics in Antebellum New York* (.pdf at our site)

Thursday: The Romantic River and the Historical Imagination

- Washington Irving, "Rip Van Winkle" (1819) (.pdf at our site)
- Washington Irving, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" (1820) (.pdf at our site)
- William C. Bryant, "Cattskill Falls" (1854), available through Poetry Atlas (link at our site)
- Judith Richardson, "Irving's Web" in *Possessions: The History and Uses of Haunting in the Hudson Valley* (.pdf at our site)

Optional Additional Reading

- David Schuyler, "The River in a Garden: A.J. Downing," in *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists and the Hudson Valley, 1820-1909* (.pdf at our site)

Friday: Life and Work on the Waterfront

- James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, "The Growth of the Antebellum Antislavery Movement," in *Hope of Liberty: Culture, Community and Protest Among Northern Free Blacks, 1700-1860* (.pdf at our site)
- Stephen Kantrowitz, *More Than Freedom: Fighting for Black Citizenship in a White Republic, 1829-1889*, pp. 1-6. (.pdf on our site)
- Myra B. Young Armstead, "James E. Brown, Voting Rights Politics, and Antislavery Activism," in *Freedom's Gardener: James F. Brown, Horticulture, and the Hudson Valley in Antebellum America* (.pdf on our site)
- Anthony Chase to Jeremiah Hoffman, Chatsworth House [Baltimore], 8 August 1827, Number 1201, Otho Holland William Papers, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD (1 p) (.pdf on our site)
- "Convention of the Colored Inhabitants of the State of New York . . . Abstract of the Proceedings," *The Colored American*, 12 September 1840 (.pdf on our site)

Optional Additional Reading

- David Schuyler, "The Naturalist's River: John Burroughs" in *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists and the Hudson Valley, 1820-1909* (.pdf at our site)
- John Burroughs "A River View," in *The Writings of John Burroughs* (.pdf on our site)