

Syllabus

Reading US History, Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, Part 1

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Google Meet, Mondays, 9:30 am-11:30 am. February 19 through April 22, 2024.

We will read and discuss the first half of Richard White's *The Republic for Which It Stands: The United States during Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, 1865-1896*. The first part covers the years 1865 to 1881. The second half of the book will be discussed in the Fall of 2024.

White is a prolific historian and is known for his writing on the American West, railroads, and Native Americans. He "writes with the panache and sensitivity of an accomplished novelist." In *The Republic for Which It Stands*. White argues that the United States changed immensely in the 30 years after the Civil War, becoming more familiar to the one we know than to the one Lincoln imagined. The book explores major changes resulting from immigration, urbanization, environmental crisis, political stalemate, new technologies, powerful corporations, income inequality, failures of governance, mounting class conflict, and increasing social, cultural and religious diversity.

All sessions will be held online. Participants should obtain a copy of the book and come prepared to discuss the Introduction, Prologue, and Chapter 1 at our February 19 session.

Buy or borrow a copy of Richard White's *The Republic for Which It Stands: The United States during Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, 1865-1896*. Paperbacks and e-books are available in bookstores and online. Used hardcovers and paperbacks are widely available in used bookstores and online.

How to participate

To join the group contact me at michaelstevens50@gmail.com

Do readings before each class (usually 1 chapter each week)—not so much to overwhelm anyone—but long enough to allow a close discussion of the topics. **Read and be ready to participate in a lively discussion of the Introduction, Prologue, and Chapter 1 prior to the February 19 class.**

I will e-mail a Google Meet notice every week with a link. Just click on the link and request to join the meeting. I will let you in. Desktop computer or laptop are preferred. No special software required, but if you are using a tablet or iPad, it's best to download the Google Meet app from the Apple Store or Google Play.

February 19	Introduction; Prologue: Mourning Lincoln; Chapter 1: In the Wake of War
February 26	Chapter 2: Radical Reconstruction
March 4	Chapter 3: The Greater Reconstruction
March 11	Chapters 4: Home; and Chapter 5: Gilded Liberals
March 18	Chapter 6: Triumph of Wage Labor
March 25	Chapter 7: Panic
April 1	Chapter 8: Beginning a Second Century
April 8	Chapter 9: Years of Violence
April 15	Chapter 10: Party of Prosperity
April 22	Chapter 11: People in Motion