

Reading List and Research Guide

American History in Transnational Perspective

This list is based in part on the following bibliographies. Look for further relevant books here:

- The American Yawp and The American Yawp Reader (<http://www.americanyawp.com>)
- Cambridge University, Historical Tripos, Part I, Paper 24; "The History of the United States since 1865" (<https://www.hist.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate/hist-tripos/part-i/part-i-papers-current/part-i-2018-19-reading-lists/paper-24-reading-list>)
- Trump Syllabus 2.0 (<https://www.publicbooks.org/trump-syllabus-2-0>)
- The Charlottesville Syllabus (<https://medium.com/@UVAGSC/the-charlottesville-syllabus-9e01573419d0>)
- Great Books in U.S. Intellectual History (<https://s-usih.org/2014/03/andrews-great-books-in-us-intellectual-history-series>)
- Bibliography in Philosophy of History (<http://www-personal.umd.umich.edu/~delittle/Bibliography%20in%20philosophy%20of%20history.htm>)
- Journal of the American Revolution: The 100 Best American Revolution Books of All Time (<https://allthingsliberty.com/2017/03/100-best-american-revolution-books-time>)
- History of Mass Communication in America: An Internet Bibliography (<http://mupfc.marshall.edu/~rabe/resources.htm>)

Obama Institute

American History in Transnational Perspective

Reading List for US History

Purpose of this reading list

American Studies in general, and as taught at the Obama Institute, covers several different academic subjects and approaches. This reading list offers guidance especially **for those students who choose to specialize in history** (as opposed to literary or cultural studies). It is neither a fixed canon of texts that need to be internalized nor is it finalized or complete.

The list is arranged into thematic sections. It includes a section of possible theoretical and methodical approaches as well as a list of archival collections that can be (partially) accessed online. The list puts the focus on literature produced within the last three decades. Older works are included if deemed necessary to gain an overview of current debates.

Your first stop to find physical copies of books should be our **USA-Bibliothek** in the Georg Forster-Gebäude (the green building): <https://www.ub.uni-mainz.de/usa-bibliothek>

The library follows the *Dewey Decimal Classification*. Most books on history should be in the #900 shelves, those dealing with North America in the #970 shelves specifically.

Glossary:

AHR = *American Historical Review*

AMST = *American Studies / Amerikastudien*

AQ = *American Quarterly*

EAS = *Early American Studies*

JAH = *Journal of American History*

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Topics

1. Overviews of U.S. History

Boyer, Paul S., *American History: A Very Short Introduction* (2012)

Lepore, Jill, *These Truths: A History of the United States* (2018)

Stöver, Bernd, *Geschichte der USA: Von der ersten Kolonie bis zur Gegenwart* (2017)

Zinn, Howard, *A People's History of the United States* (2015)

2. Native American History

Blackhawk, Ned, *Violence Over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (2006)

Claassen, Cheryl and Rosemary A. Joyce, eds., *Women in Prehistory: North America and Mesoamerica* (1997)

Deloria, Philip J., *Indians in Unexpected Places* (2004)

Dillehay, Tom D., *The Settlement of the Americas: A New Prehistory* (2000)

Hämäläinen, Pekka, *The Comanche Empire* (2009)

Lobo, Susan and Steve Talbot, *Native American Voices: A Reader* (2001)

3. Race in America

Anderson, Carol, *White Rage: The Unspoken Truth About our Racial Divide* (2016).

Berlin, Ira, *Generations of Captivity: A History of African-American Slaves* (2003)

Carrigan, William D. and Clive Webb, *Forgotten Dead: Mob Violence Against Mexicans in the United States, 1848-1928* (2013)

Carson, Clayborne, David J. Garrow, Gerald Gill, Vincent Harding and Darlene Clark Hine, *The Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader: Documents, Speeches, and Firsthand Accounts from the Black Freedom Struggle, 1954-1990* (1991)

Crenshaw, Kimberlé, "Color Blindness, History, and the Law," in *The House that Race Built: Black Americans, US Terrain*, edited by Wahneema Lubiano (1997)

Jamal, Amaney A. and Nadine Christine Naber, *Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects* (2008)

Thompson, Heather Ann, *Blood in the Water: The Attica Uprising of 1971 and its Legacy* (2016)

4. Ethnicity and Migration History

Daniels, Roger, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life* (1990)

Gabaccia, Donna R., *Foreign Relations: American Immigration in Global Perspective* (2012)

Gerstle, Gary, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (2001)

Hsu, Madeline Y., *The Good Immigrants: How the Yellow Peril Became the Model Minority* (2015)

Reimers, David M., *Unwelcome Strangers: American Identity and the Turn Against Immigration* (1998)

Sanchez, George, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (1993)

Takaki, Ronald, *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America* (2008)

5. Gender in American History

Breines, Wini, *The Trouble Between Us: The Uneasy History of White and Black Women in the Feminist Movement* (2006)

Coontz, Stephanie, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (2016)

Eig, Jonathan, *The Birth of the Pill: How Four Crusaders Reinvented Sex and Launched a Revolution* (2014)

Kimmel, Michael, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (2017)

Littauer, Amanda H., *Bad Girls: Young Women, Sex, and Rebellion Before the Sixties* (2015)

MacLean, Nancy, *Freedom is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Workplace* (2008)

Rosen, Ruth, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (2006)

6. LGBT+ History

Canaday, Margot, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (2009)

Chauncey, George, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture and the Making of a Gay World, 1890-1940* (1995)

Murray, Heather, *Not in this Family: Gays and the Meaning of Kinship in Postwar North America* (2012)

Rupp, Leila J., *A Desired Past: A Short History of Same-Sex Love in America* (1999)

Stewart-Winter, Timothy, *Queer Clout: Chicago and the Rise of Gay Politics* (2017)

Stryker, Susan, *Transgender History* (2017)

7. American Exceptionalism

Bender, Thomas, *A Nation Among Nations: America's Place in World History* (2006)

Foner, Eric, "Why Is There No Socialism in the United States?" *History Workshop* (Spring 1984)

Haskell, Thomas L., "Taking Exception to Exceptionalism," *Reviews in American History* (March 2000)

Kammen, Michael, "The Problem of American Exceptionalism: A Reconsideration," *American Quarterly* (March 1993)

Madsen, Deborah L., *American Exceptionalism* (1998)

Rodgers, Daniel T., "Exceptionalism," in Anthony Molho and Gordon S. Wood, eds., *Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past* (1998)

8. Intellectual History

Brick, Howard, *Transcending Capitalism: Visions of a New Society in Modern American Thought* (2006)

Brion Davis, David, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823* (1999)

Churchwell, Sarah, *Behold, America: A History of America First and the American Dream* (2018)

Hartz, Louis, *The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought Since the Revolution* (1955)

Igo, Sarah E., *The Averaged American: Surveys, Citizens, and the Making of a Mass Public* (2007)

Reuben, Julie A., *The Making of the Modern University: Intellectual Transformation and the Marginalization of Morality* (1996)

Rodgers, Daniel, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (2000)

9. Global and Transnational History

Barreyre, Nicolas et al, eds., *Historians across Borders: Writing American History in a Global Age* (2014)

Fishkin, Shelley Fisher, "Crossroads of Cultures: The Transnational Turn in American Studies: Presidential Address to the American Studies Association" (AQ 1, 2005) and Hornung, Alfred, *Transnational American Studies: Response to the Presidential Address* (AQ 1, 2005)

Patel, Kiran Klaus, 'Transnations' among 'Transnations'? The Debate on Transnational History in the United States and Germany (AMST 3, 2009)

Patel, Kiran Klaus, *The New Deal: A Global History* (2016)

Preston, Andrew and Doug Rossinow, eds., *Outside In: The Transnational Circuitry of U.S. History* (2017)

Rauchway, Eric, *Blessed Among Nations: How the World Made America* (2006)

Tyrrell, Ian, *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective since 1789* (2015)

10. Political and Diplomatic History

Balogh, Brian, *A Government Out of Sight: The Mystery of National Authority in Nineteenth-Century America* (2009)

Johnstone, Andrew, "Isolationism and Internationalism in American Foreign Relations," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* (2011)

McAlister, Melani, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East since 1945* (2005)

Milne, David, *Worldmaking: The Art and Science of American Diplomacy* (2015)

Preston, Andrew, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (2012)

Zeiler, Thomas W., "The Diplomatic History Bandwagon: A State of the Field," *JAH* (March 2009)

Zelizer, Julian, *Arsenal of Democracy: The Politics of National Security—From World War II to the War on Terrorism* (2010)

11. Religion

Butler, Jon, et al, Religion in America: A Short History (2003)

Diner, Hasia, The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000 (2004)

Griffith, R. Marie and Melani McAlister, eds., Religion and Politics in the Contemporary United States (2008)

Haws, J. B., The Mormon Image in the American Mind: Fifty Years of Public Perception (2013)

Kruse, Kevin M., One Nation Under God: How Corporate America Invented Christian America (2015)

O'Toole, James M., The Faithful: A History of Catholics in America (2008)

Schäfer, Axel, Countercultural Conservatives: American Evangelicalism from the Postwar Revival to the New Christian Right (2011)

12. Capitalism, Labor, and Economy

Beckert, Sven, Empire of Cotton: A Global History (2014)

Cowie, Jefferson, The Great Exception: The New Deal and the Limits of American Politics (2016)

Hild, Matthew and Keri Leigh Merritt, Reconsidering Southern Labor History: Race, Class, and Power (2018)

Hyman, Louis, Debtor Nation: The History of America in Red Ink (2011)

Levy, Jonathan, Freaks of Fortune: The Emerging World of Capitalism and Risk in America (2012)

McGerr, Michael, A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870–1920 (2003)

Zakim, Michael and Gary Kornblith, eds., Capitalism Takes Command: The Social Transformation of Nineteenth-Century America (2012)

13. The American West

Butler, Anne M. and Michael J. Lansing, The American West: A Concise History (2008)

Gitlin, Jay, George A. Miles, and William Cronon, eds., Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past (1992)

Limerick, Patricia Nelson, The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West (1987)

Malone, Michael P. and Richard W. Etulain, The American West: A Twentieth-Century History (1998)

Phillips, Sarah T., This Land, This Nation: Conservation, Rural America, and the New Deal (2007)

Taylor, Quintard, In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the West, 1528-1990 (1999)

White, Richard E., "It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West (1991)

14. Era of the American Revolution

- Ellis, Joseph J., *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation* (2002)
- Gilbert, Alan, *Black Patriots and Loyalists: Fighting for Emancipation in the War for Independence* (2012)
- Gordon-Reed, Annette, *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family* (2009)
- Hochgeschwender, Michael, *Die Amerikanische Revolution: Geburt einer Nation 1763–1815* (2016)
- Kerber, Linda K., *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (1980)
- Meier, Pauline, *American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence* (1998)
- Taylor, Alan, *American Revolutions: A Continental History, 1750–1804* (2016)
- Wood, Gordon S., *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (2011)

15. Sectionalism, Civil War, and Reconstruction

- Ayers, Edward L., *In the Presence of Mine Enemies: War in the Heart of America, 1859–1863* (2003)
- Blight, David, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (2001)
- Freeman, Joanne B., *The Field of Blood: Violence in Congress and the Road to Civil War* (2018)
- McPherson, James, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (1988)
- Merritt, Keri Leigh, *Masterless Men: Poor Whites and Slavery in the Antebellum South* (2017)
- Nelson, Megan Kate, *Ruin Nation: Destruction and the American Civil War* (2012)
- Richardson, Heather Cox, *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865–1901* (2001)

16. Industrialization and Urbanization

- Beckert, Sven, *Moneyed Metropolis, New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie* (2001)
- Corey, Steven H., and Lisa Krissoff Boehm, eds., *The American Urban Reader: History and Theory* (2010)
- Gordon, Robert J., *The Rise and Fall of American Economic Growth: The U.S. Standard of Living Since the Civil War* (2016)
- Lears, T. J. Jackson, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877–1920* (2010)
- Trachtenberg, Alan, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (2007)
- White, Richard, *Railroaded: Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* (2011)

17. Media History

- Blanchard, Margaret A., ed., *History of the Mass Media in the United States: An Encyclopedia* (2013)
- Brennen, Bonnie and Hanno Hardt, eds., *The American Journalism History Reader: Critical and Primary Texts* (2011)

Bush, Vannevar, "As We May Think," *Atlantic Monthly* (July 1945)

Chandler, Alfred D., Jr., and James W. Cortada, eds., *A Nation Transformed by Information: How Information Has Shaped the United States from Colonial Times to the Present* (2000)

Henkin, David M., *The Postal Age: The Emergence of Modern Communications in Nineteenth-Century America* (2006)

Schudson, Michael, *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (1978)

Schulman, Bruce J. and Julian E. Zelizer eds., *Media Nation: The Political History of News in Modern America* (2017)

18. America at War

Bailey, Beth, *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (2009)

Berkin, Carol, *Revolutionary Mothers: Women in the Struggle for America's Independence* (2005)

Capozzola, Christopher, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (2010)

Dudziak, Mary L., *War Time: An Idea, Its History, Its Consequences* (2012)

Honey, Maureen, *Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender, and Propaganda During World War II* (1984)

Kennedy, David, *Freedom from Fear: America in Depression and War, 1929–1945* (1999)

Wynn, Neil A., *The African American Experience During World War II* (2010)

Methods and Theories

19. The Basics of History

Appleby, Joyce, Lynn Hunt and Margaret C. Jacob, *Telling the Truth About History* (1995)

Arnold, John, *History: A Very Short Introduction* (2000)

Howell, Martha C. and Walter Prevenier, *From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods* (2001)

Jordan, Stefan, ed., *Lexikon Geschichtswissenschaft: Hundert Grundbegriffe* (2003)

Novick, Peter, *That Noble Dream: The 'Objectivity Question' and the American Historical Profession* (1988)

Wolbring, Barbara, *Neuere Geschichte studieren* (2006)

20. Philosophy of History and Approaches

Burke, Peter (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (2001)

Evans, Richard J., *In Defence of History* (1997)

Foucault, Michel, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (1971)

Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth, and Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn, *Reconstructing History: The Emergence of a New Historical Society* (1999)

Koselleck, Reinhart, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (2004)

Ricoeur, Paul, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (2004)

Stanford, Michael, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of History* (1998)

Wood, Gordon S., *The Purpose of the Past: Reflections on the Uses of History* (2008)

Archives and Resources

21. American Yawp Primary Source Reader

American Yawp Reader – <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader.html>

22. Library of Congress

Library of Congress Digital Collections – <https://www.loc.gov/collections>

A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation (1774–1875), U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates – <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw>

23. National Archives (NARA)

Access to Archival Databases (AAD) – <https://aad.archives.gov/aad>

Digitization at the National Archives – <https://www.archives.gov/digitization/digitized-by-partners>

24. Internet Archive

Internet Archive – <https://archive.org>

25. Digital Public Library of America (DPLA)

Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) – <https://dp.la>

26. Open Education Database

"250+ Killer Digital Libraries and Archives" – <https://oedb.org/ilibrarian/250-plus-killer-digital-libraries-and-archives>

27. WorldCat OAster Database

Find books in libraries and download full text scanned out of copyright texts – <http://oaister.worldcat.org>

28. Google Books Advanced Search

Out-of-copyright books in full text, searchable database – https://books.google.com/advanced_book_search

29. Hathi Trust Digital Library Collections

Search a host of collections, from 19th century magazines to presidential papers – <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/mb?colltype=updated>

30. Smithsonian Libraries

Smithsonian Institution (DC) digital collections – <https://library.si.edu/collections>

31. American Antiquarian Society (AAS)

Collections – <https://www.americanantiquarian.org/collections>

32. The Huntington Digital Library

Digital collections of the Huntington Library (CA) – <https://hdl.huntington.org/digital>

33. American Jewish Historical Society

American Jewish Historical Society digital holdings – <http://www.ajhs.org/digital-collections>

34. BlackPast.org

List of archival collections on the African-American experience – <https://blackpast.org/digital-archives>

35. State Library of Pennsylvania

Collections related to Pennsylvania – <https://www.statelibrary.pa.gov/GeneralPublic/Collections/Pages/Digital-Collections-at-the-State-Library-of-Pennsylvania.aspx>

36. Denver Public Library Digital Collections

Photograph collection mostly to do with Colorado and the American West – <http://digital.denverlibrary.org/cdm/photographs>

37. New York Public Library (NYPL)

Digital collections database from the NYPL (NYC) – <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org>

38. New York Historical Society

Digital collections – <https://www.nyhistory.org/library/digital-collections>

39. Massachusetts Libraries

Massachusetts Libraries Digital Collections – <https://libraries.state.ma.us/pages/digital-collections>

40. American University

Digital Collections @ AU (DC) – <https://www.american.edu/library/collections/digital.cfm>

41. Harvard University

Harvard University (MA) digital collections – <https://library.harvard.edu/explore-collections>

42. University of North Carolina

UNC Digital Collections – <https://library.unc.edu/find/digitalcollections>

43. Duke University Libraries

Emergence of Advertising in America, 1850-1920 – <https://repository.duke.edu/dc/ea>

44. Reed College Collections

Archival collections from Reed College (OR) – <https://rdc.reed.edu>

45. University of Michigan

"Making of America" database – <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moagrp>

46. University of Maryland

African-American history collections – <https://www.lib.umd.edu/special/guides/african-american-history>