

HIST348
Peoples of Kansas
Fall 2009

Blogging Assignment

Part of the written work that you will produce this semester will be in the form of blog posts. The main goal of these assignments is to encourage you to think critically about our reading and to make connections between history and the present day. You are required to post three blog entries during the semester; you are part of Group _____. **Posts are due by 4:00pm** on Thursdays (excluding holidays). You are also required to comment *substantively* on at least one post each week; **comments are due by Friday at 4:00pm**. All blogs will be linked to on the course homepage.

Posts should follow this format:

- Posts should be 250-500 words long
- Clearly state which document, article, video, or question you are addressing (if any), and quickly summarize its content or provide a brief block quotation
- Avoid using casual, informal language
- All quotations must be accurately cited—use asterisks as footnote markers (* for footnote #1, ** for footnote #2, etc...)
- Spell check and proofread before publishing your post!
- Be advised that the university's standards regarding plagiarism will apply to blog posts

Occasionally I will provide questions for reflection or issues for you to consider. For weeks where I do not provide a specific question or topic, you are free to explore your own interests *as long as your post relates to a historical topic being covered in our course*. Some suggestions are listed below:

- Blog about one of our assigned primary sources, giving a brief summary (in one short paragraph) and an analysis of the document. Use the "Interpreting Primary Sources" handout for ideas.
- Write a short biography of an influential Kansan. Use sources on [Kansas Memory](#) or [Territorial Kansas Online](#) to describe key moments in his/her life (including quotations from their writings, if possible) and explain why this person was influential.
- Blog about a document or image (not an assigned source) on [Territorial Kansas Online](#) or [Kansas Memory](#) that relates to a topic covered in class that week. For a post of this nature, you should provide the site URL, summarize/describe the source very briefly, and then discuss your personal reactions to it: does this remind you of something going on in the world today? Or, how does this relate to other readings from this course? Does this provide a different perspective from the sources we discussed in class? If you do not use *Kansas Memory*, you must use a source from a credible site, such as a webpage affiliated with a university or a historic site. Wikipedia does not count as a credible source!
- Locate a podcast that relates to our readings for the week and blog about your reactions. Provide a brief description of the podcast and provide the URL. There are podcasts about items at the Kansas Museum of History and podcasts tied to sources on Kansas Memory; selected examples are linked to on the course homepage.
- Blog about a recent history broadcast on PBS, the National Geographic Channel, Discovery Channel, or the History Channel that is tied to Kansas history in some way. Be sure to include the date, time, and title of the broadcast.
- Write a post about a history article published in a news magazine or newspaper. Be sure to include the full citation for the article. You may choose an article from any reputable source like *Newsweek*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *Washington Post*, *Lawrence Journal World*, *Topeka Capital Journal*, or the *Kansas City Star*.

- Blog about your visit to a museum or historic site in Kansas. This would include sites such as the Watkins Community Museum (1047 Mass Street), the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka, the Shawnee Indian Mission (just off Shawnee Mission Parkway in KC), The Brown v. Board State Historic Site in Topeka, the Frontier Trails Museum in Independence, or some other site.
- Write a "this day in Kansas history" post. Using Daniel Webster Wilder's *Annals of Kansas* (text available online <http://www.kancoll.org/books/cutler/>), find out what was going on in Kansas on this date and describe that event and its larger significance.
- Blog about a history lecture that you attended at the library or some other venue. Describe the content of the talk briefly and then address what you believed were the strengths or weaknesses of the lecture, any information that you found particularly interesting, etc....

For some examples of good history blog posts, check out those listed below. Not every element of these posts is exactly what will be required of you in this course, but these are generally useful guides. Also note how these authors include summary sections and quotations, and they embed links to the sources that provided the information for their post.

"Colonial Silk Gown Donated to Smithsonian," *The History Blog*, <http://www.thehistoryblog.com/archives/369>, accessed June 1, 2008.

"Taking Stonewall Jackson Seriously," *Civil War Memory*, http://civilwarmemory.typepad.com/civil_war_memory/2008/03/the-latest-issu.html, accessed June 1, 2008.

"A Query," *Southern Pasts*, <http://southernpasts.wordpress.com/2007/05/06/a-query/>, accessed June 1, 2008.

"The Promised Land," *Elle PhD*, <http://elleabd.blogspot.com/2008/04/promised-land.html>, accessed June 1, 2008.

"Bye, Bye, Jesse James," *Mason-Dixon Wild West*, <http://masondixonwildwest.blogspot.com/2008/04/bye-bye-jesse-james.html>, accessed June 1, 2008.

"The Death of Doc Holliday," *History Rhymes*, <http://historyrhymes.alexseifert.com/?p=34>, accessed June 1, 2008.