

U.S. History since World War II

HIST 380, Spring Semester 2015

1:50-4:30 Friday, 005 Herman Hall

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Office Hours: By appointment, SH 327

Course Description

This course covers key transformations in U.S. culture, society, and politics since World War II. Some of the developments we will consider are the ideological and material construction of “the American way of life”; Cold War political culture; the rise of movements challenging hierarchies based on race, gender, and sexuality; the trauma of the Vietnam War; the rise of the New Right; and the dissolution of the New Deal order.

Course Outcomes

3 credit hours, meets C/H requirements

- Ability to read and interpret texts in the humanities and social sciences.
- Participate effectively in critical discussion of cultural, social, and psychological issues.
- Knowledge of the historical context of your own or others’ cultural identities or heritages.
- Knowledge of how social structures influence human behavior.
- Knowledge of the issues entailed in providing evidence of intellectual justifications for claims.

Course Requirements

This is a discussion course, which I will augment with contextualizing lectures; therefore, much of your grade and the quality of the class depends on your regular attendance, completion of reading assignments, and active participation. **You’re allowed one absence.** The rest of your grade is based on the following written assignments, due at the start of class:

1. Reading response

You’ll write three 2-3-page papers that analyze the readings. The first is for the January 23 readings. The second is for February 6. For the third, you may choose from the readings due January 30, February 13, February 27, or March 27. Your discussion should synthesize the readings in relation to a common theme, and you should raise questions or criticisms you’d like to discuss further. Each paper is worth 20 points.

2. Oral history essay

You will also write a 6-7 page oral history of a family member’s experience in the U.S. during this time period. For those of you with limited ties to the U.S. prior to 1996, we can discuss alternatives to this assignment. This is due April 24.

3. Historical mix tape

You’re going to organize into pairs, and you and your partner will pick one of the weeks between February 6 and April 24. Your task is to work with your partner to check out *Billboard’s* top songs for your period, listen to some music, and select three songs that tell us something about the period. You might pick songs that reinforce the themes of the readings or you may select some that offer an alternative perspective. You’ll email the artists and titles to all of us by 5:00

pm the Wednesday before class, which will give us time to listen to them (and provide some background music for anyone still finishing the reading). In class, we'll take ten to fifteen minutes so you can explain your logic and we can discuss your choices.

The grading breaks down as:

Attendance/participation: 40 points

Reading response papers: 60 points (20 x 3 papers)

Mix Tape contribution: 50 points

Oral History essay: 50 points

All papers should be written in 12-point Times, with one-inch margins, and use footnotes instead of endnotes for citations (Chicago style). **No extensions.**

Academic Integrity

Do your own work, and do not plagiarize. We'll discuss this concept the first week of class, but if you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism at any point during the semester, please ask me. *Plagiarized material will earn your paper a zero. If you then submit a second paper with plagiarized material, you will fail the course.* Aside from violating general moral and professional principles, plagiarism also violates IIT's Code of Academic Honesty. **I will report all violations of this code to academichonesty@iit.edu.** You can view the code at: iit.edu/student_affairs/handbook/information_and_regulations/code_of_academic_honesty.shtml

Readings

You should purchase the following books, whether print or e-book:

Christian Appy, *Patriots: The Vietnam War Remembered from All Sides* (Penguin, 2004)

Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New Press, 2012)

David Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago, 2006)

Beryl Satter, *Family Properties: How the Struggle Over Race and Real Estate Transformed Chicago and Urban America* (Picador, 2010)

Other readings listed below are available via the "Content" tab on Blackboard.

Class Schedule

Jan 16: Introduction to the Course

Terkel, *The Good War* (excerpt)

Jan 23: World War II and Defining the American Way of Life [**Reading Response due**]

A. Philip Randolph, "Call to Negro America to March on Washington" (May 1941)

James G. Thompson, "Double V" letter to the *Pittsburgh Courier* (January 31, 1942)

Executive Order 9066 (February 19, 1942)

Franklin Roosevelt, "Second Bill of Rights" (January 11, 1944)

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

Frank Capra, *Prelude to War* (1942)

Jan 30: Building the American Way of Life

Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the U.S.* (231-271)

Lee Rainwater et al., *Workingman's Wife* (1959; pp. 15-21, 145-155, 173-83)

James Bender, "Your Wife: A Help or a Hindrance?" *American Magazine* (July 1955)

"I Hate My Husband's Success," *McCall's* (July 1958)

Feb 6: Cold War and the Anxious Society [**Reading Response due**]

Archibald MacLeish, "The Conquest of America" (1949)

J. Edgar Hoover, "This is the Party" (1958)

Johnson, *Lavender Scare* (Intro through Ch. 2, 1-64; Ch. 4, 79-99; skim Ch. 7, 147-178)

Feb 13: Tremors at the New Frontier

Dwight Eisenhower, "Farewell Address" (1961)

YAF, "Sharon Statement" (1960)

SDS, "Port Huron Statement" (1962)

Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (1962, selections)

Betty Friedan, introduction to *The Feminine Mystique* (1963)

Feb 20: Civil Rights I

Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" (1963)

Malcolm X, "The Ballot or the Bullet" (1964)

SNCC Position Paper: Women in the Movement (1964)

Feb 27: Civil Rights II

Satter, *Family Properties*: Ch. 2-3, 36-75; Ch. 4, 118-131; Ch. 6, 169-214;

Ch. 8, 233-271; 372-377

Mar 6: LBJ's Great Society

Mar 13: The Vietnam War

Appy, *Patriots* (selections)

The War at Home (1979)

March 20: SPRING BREAK

Mar 27: Fragmentation in the 1970s

Ronald Reagan: Remarks on the Berkeley Free Speech Movement (1966)

Black Panther Party Platform and Program (1966)

Amy Uyematsu, "The Emergence of Yellow Power in America" (1969)

Redstockings Manifesto (1969)

Hunter S. Thompson, "Strange Rumbblings in Aztlan" (1971)

Randy Wicker oral history excerpt (1974)

Apr 3: Richard Nixon and the Rise of the New Right

Cowie, *Stayin' Alive*: 1-19; 42-54, 57-62, 70-74, 133-141 (optional: 167-209)

Loretta Lynn, "The Pill" (1972/75)

Jet "Alleged Welfare Queen Is Accused of \$154,000 Ripoff" (December 19, 1974)

Apr 10: **NO CLASS.** Work on your oral histories.

Apr 17: Reagan's America

Cowie, *Stayin' Alive*: 221-244, 309-312, 313-329, 353-356; 357-369

C. Everett Koop, "Understanding AIDS" (1988)

Apr 24: From Cold War to Culture War [**Oral History essay due**]

Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" in *The National Interest* (1989)

Dan Quayle, "Address to the Commonwealth Club" (May 19, 1992)

Patrick Buchanan, "Address to the RNC" (August 17, 1992)

May 1: Fortress America

Tim Naftali, "George Bush and bin Laden" in *Blind Spot* (2006)

Jennifer Bryan, "Constructing the 'True Islam' in Hostile Times: The Impact of 9/11 on Arab Muslims in Jersey City" in *Wounded City* (2005)

Dana Priest and William Arkin, "Top Secret America" *Washington Post* series (2010)