

U.S. History Since 1865

History 2112H
102 LeConte Hall

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This course is designed to help you understand how our nation's ideas and institutions developed. In this class, history will **not** be presented as a series of chronologically or even topically arranged anecdotes, but rather as a series of problems which will be used to examine many of our institutions and why they developed at the did. Along the way perhaps we can learn something about human problem solving in general. Do people really have free will or are they programmed by the past? Do societies tend to be proactive or reactive in dealing with problems? Ultimately isn't history made up of people rationalizing the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain? Is American history any different from other nations in terms of broad patterns and trends that affect the lives of their citizens? If so, how are they different and why?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. If you miss four classes your grade will be dropped by a 1/3 (Example: B+ becomes a B). If you miss five classes your final grade will be dropped by 2/3 (Example: B+ becomes a B-). If you miss six classes your final grade will be dropped a full letter grade, (B+ becomes a C+). Strong class participation gives me a little wiggle room to adjust the above criteria.

Reading and Discussion

I expect students to do the reading listed below and to be prepared to discuss the material in class. During most weeks, I will lecture two days and set aside one class period for discussion.

Exams:

There will be three take home essay exams which includes the final exam. The three exams along with the book review essay discussed below will be weighted equally (25% each). I will give students a sheet of three questions a class period before the exam due date. You will answer two of the three questions and turn them in on the due date. By essay questions, I mean questions which are designed to be written on over a fifty minute period if it were an in class exam.

Make Up Exams

Make up exams do not come from the same sheet of questions mentioned above and you will have no prior review sheet before the exam. Therefore it would be in your interest to take the exam when it is originally scheduled.

Book Review Essay

Each student will write a three to five page (double spaced, one inch margin, 12 pt. font). **I must approve your choice of books.** A book review **IS NOT** a book report. This assignment is designed to help you gain an appreciation for reading material critically. I will pass out a separate sheet listing the criteria for the book review essay. **Acts of plagiarism will result in an automatic "F" for this course**

Required Reading

Eric Foner, Give Me Liberty, Seagull Edition

**Hollitz, John Thinking Through the Past: A Critical Thinking Approach to U.S. History
Vol. II 3rd Edition**

**Kyvig, David, Daily Life in the United States 1920-1940, The Roaring Twenties and the
Great Depression**

Moody, Anne, Coming of Age in Mississippi

August 18, 20, 22

Orientation

Overview: The Search for Order before the Civil War

August 25, 27, 29 Reconstruction

Foner, Chapter 15

Hollitz, Chapter 1

September, 3, 5 The Golden Age of the Machine

September 1, Labor Day Recess

Foner, Chapter 16, 510-520

Hollitz: Chapter 2

September 8, 10, 12 Urbanization, Immigration, City Bosses and the New South

Search for order through religion, education, health and getting rid of unwanted people

Foner, Chapter 17, 528-545, 566-572

Discussion: Hollitz, Chapter 6

September 15, 17, 19. The Great Round Up: Indian Reservations in the Late 19th Cent.

Foner, Chapter 16, 520-528

Discussion: Hollitz, Chapter 3

September 22, 24, 26 Farmers in Revolt

Foner, Chapter 17, 546-566

September 29, October 1, 3 America's Growing Empire

Foner, Chapter 17, 572-581

Discussion: Hollitz, Chapter 4

October 6, 8, 10 Fixing Machine and the Approaching Golden Age of the Bureaucrat

Begin reading Kyvig, "Daily Life in the United States 1920-1940; How Americans Lived
Through the Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression."

Foner, Chapter 18, 19

Discussion: Hollitz, Chapter 5

October 13,15,17 New Deal: True Reform or Missed Opportunity

Discussion: Kyrig, “Daily Life in the United States 1920-1940; How Americans Lived Through the Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression

Foner, Chapter 20,21

Discussion: Hollitz, Chapter. 7

October 20,22,24 WW II , The Cold War

Foner, Chapter 22, 23

Discussion: Hollitz, Chapter 8

October 27,29

October 31, Fall Break

The Fabulous Fifties: There’s Commies Everywhere. Even Granny May Be a Red.

Foner, Chapter 23, 797-807, Chapter, 24

Discussion: Hollitz, Chapter. 9

November 3,5,7 The Fabulous Fifties continued

November 10,12,14

The Sixties and America's Second Longest War

Foner, Chapter 24, 829-830, Chapter 25

Discussion: Hollitz, Chapter. 11

November 17,19,21

Trying to Realize the Myth About Equality For All in America

Begin reading Moody, “Coming of Age in Mississippi”

Foner, Chapter 24, 833-844, Chapter 25

Discussion: Hollitz, Chaps. 10 & 12

Discussion: “Coming of Age in Mississippi”

November 24,26,28

Thanksgiving Break

December 1,3,5 The Dawning of a New Age of Conservatism. It's “Deja Vu All Over Again”

Foner, Chapter 26,27

Discussion: Hollitz, Chap 13

December 8 - Catch Up Day

SOME WAYS PEOPLE SEARCH FOR ORDER IN THEIR LIVES WHEN THE AMERICAN DREAM SEEMS TO BE IN JEOPARDY

1. Religion

Some look to new forms of worship; updating God

Some try to restore what are thought to be older more stable forms of worship thought to be lost to modernism

2. Intellectual Awareness

Educational reform as a result of general feeling that there is a decline in educational standards in America

Common belief that higher education leads to more money and happiness as well as a slot in the upper echelons of American society. (status consciousness and the American Dream)

3. Health, Diet and Exercise Fads

Diet and exercise fads as a way of gaining an edge in the quest for the American Dream

Example: high fiber diet fads in the 1840s, in the early 20th century and finally, the present day

4. Pseudo-Science Fads

Non-mainstream science become more popular as tool to achieving the American Dream

Examples: Phrenology (1840s) Eugenics (early 20th century) and lord knows what in the present day.

5. Equality Movements

Race, ethnicity, gender, age, the under represented and those who pursue alternative live styles.

Temperance, feminist & abolitionist movements (early 19th century); temperance, feminist & labor movements (early 20th century); and in the past forty years, temperance, feminist, and civil rights movements.

6. Cleansing Movements

Common categories: alcohol, drugs, unacceptable sexual practices, unwanted people and all kinds of “isms” i.e. socialism, communism and capitalism.