

MODERN TIMES: POLITICS AND CULTURE IN THE EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY U.S.  
SPRING 2011  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

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Summary:

This course immerses students in the issues, conflicts, and debates of bohemian culture, women's rights, and labor struggles in Greenwich Village, New York, in 1913. It culminates in a seven-week long game, in which students will assume the role of a person who actually lived during this time or, in a few cases, of a fictional character whose life story has been based on the lives of several individuals. The first half of the course will center on a fairly traditional format of reading, lecture, and discussion, designed to prepare students for their roles in the game and is divided into three sections covering the organizational evolution of the women's movement and early feminism in the 19<sup>th</sup>–early 20<sup>th</sup> century U.S., the intellectual and organizational developments that shaped the labor movement in the 19<sup>th</sup>–early 20<sup>th</sup> century U.S., and the cultural rebels who shaped bohemian society in New York City at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Upon concluding this preparation, we will jump immediately into playing a game that will extend through the remainder of the semester.

Requirements:

(PRIOR TO GAME)

1. *Attendance.* Attendance at all class meetings is both expected and required. Repeated absences will significantly affect your grade. I reserve the right to withdraw any student who accumulates three or more absences.
2. *Participation.* The format of this half of the course is designed to generate thoughtful debate and discussion. Students are expected to read material closely and come to class prepared to share their questions, ideas, and opinions with others. Participation should reflect careful consideration of issues discussed in reading and class. Overall participation (full semester) will constitute 30% of the final grade for the course.
3. *Reading.* The goal is to read material closely and carefully, in order to become familiar with different facets of the subject at hand. Your grasp of the ideas articulated by the writers, philosophers, and activists whom we study in the first half of the course is particularly important because, once the game begins, you

will be drawing on this foundation as you work to navigate successfully through a complex historical situation in a very short period of time.

4. *Quizzes.* There will be two quizzes, one of which will conclude the section on the 19<sup>th</sup> century women's movement, and the second of which will conclude the section on the 19<sup>th</sup> century labor movement. Each quiz will test students' mastery of 1) ideas articulated in relevant readings and 2) the historical context presented in relevant lectures/class discussions. Together, the quizzes will constitute 20% of your final grade.
5. *In-class writings.* Class will sometimes begin with a question to respond to the reading. These are fairly informal and are graded on a "check," "check +" or "check –" basis. Collectively, the reading responses will constitute 10 % of grade.
6. *Short papers.* There will be 4 short (approx. 2-page) take-home assignments during this part of the course. Collectively, they will constitute 20% of your final grade for the course.

#### (DURING THE GAME)

1. *Attendance.* See above.
2. *Writing*  
The precise assignments will vary with each role, but each student will have written assignments totaling approximately 8-10 pages during the game. Collectively, these written assignments will constitute 20% of your final grade for the course. Regardless of your particular role, the purpose of your written work will be to persuade other students that "your" views make more sense than those of your opponents, in order to further your particular game objectives. Therefore, most student writing will be shared with the entire class via a class web site.
2. *Participation*  
In all roles, students will also seek to achieve their "game objectives" by expressing their views in the full classroom, so as to persuade others of their point of view. Overall participation (full semester) will constitute 30% of your grade in this course.
3. *Reading/Research*  
Students' capacity to argue persuasively, both in class and in written assignments, will depend significantly on the thoroughness of their research into the historical context and materials relating to their specific roles.

#### Grading summary

In-class writings (preparatory) 10%

Writing assignments (preparatory) 20%

Writing assignments (during game) 20%

Quizzes (preparatory) 20%

Participation (entire) 30%

\*Winning the game (ie. Achieving game objectives) will result in a half-grade bonus (eg. a “B” becomes a “B+”). Please note: losing the game does **not** cause your grade to drop.

### Assigned readings.

Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*

Karl Marx, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*

In addition, one packet of required readings will be available at Bel-Jean Copy Center and a second packet, “Greenwich Village 1913,” which will be used during the game, will be available via handout or e-mail.

### **Please note:**

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty,” available at [http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic\\_honesty/culture\\_honesty.htm](http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm).

Each student is responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

### Week I: Introduction

Tuesday, January 11

Introduction

Thursday, January 13

Greenwich Village, NY in 1913

Reading: *Greenwich Village, 1913*, pp. 3-10 (hand out)

Tuesday, January 18: Founding Mothers

Reading: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “*Sophie Or the Woman*”

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/470/>; Selections from Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*; “On the Supposed Superiority of the Masculine Understanding” in Bel-jean packet.

Thursday, January 20: Generating Movement(s)

Jarena Lee, “My Call to Preach the Gospel;” The New York Moral Reform Society, “An Appeal to the Wives, Mothers, and Daughters of Our Land;” Louisa Hall, “Birth in a Slave’s Hut;” Frances Ellen Watkins [Harper], “The Slave Mother;” Sarah Grimke, “The

Equality of the Sexes;" Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "The Declaration of Sentiments" all in packet.

\*Short writing assignment #1 due

Tuesday, January 25: Postwar Battles

Sojourner Truth, "Colored Men Will Be Masters;" Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Suffrage for All;" Susan B. Anthony, "Letter to the Colored Men's State Convention;" Paulina Davis, et al., "Debate on the Fifteenth Amendment;" "Petitions for a Sixteenth Amendment;" Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "An Educational Suffrage Qualification Necessary;" Harriot Stanton Blatch, "Educated Suffrage a Fetich [sic];" all in packet.

Thursday, January 27 : Suffragism or Feminism?

Laura Curtis Bullard, "What Flag Shall We Fly?" Matilda E. J. Gage, "Is Woman Her Own?" Rose Young, "What is Feminism?" Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Solitude of Self;" Sofia M. Loebinger, "Suffragism Not Feminism;" all in packet.

Tuesday, February 1: Quiz 1

Thursday, February 3: Industrial Capitalism's critics: I

Reading: Excerpts from Karl Marx, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*

\*Short writing assignment #2 due

Tuesday, February 8: Industrial Capitalism's critics: II

Mark Twain, "Poor Little Stephen Girard" packet.

In-class viewing and discussion, *Modern Times*

Thursday, February 10: Labor Wars

"The Purposes and the Program of the Knights of Labor;" "Samuel Gompers Defends the Strike;" "Preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World;" "Why I Became A Socialist Organizer" all in packet. "Haymarket Anarchist Michael Schwab Fights for Freedom;" "'Freedom,' Poem by Haymarket Anarchist;" "Fitz John Porter Explains How to Quell Mobs;" "George Pullman Defends Managerial Paternalism;" all in packet

Tuesday, February 15: Race and Gender in the Labor Movement

"A Trade Union Official Enunciates a Restrictive AFL Policy . . ." "Sex and Work;" "African-American Washerwomen Demand Higher Wages;" "Why Do People Look Down on Working Girls?" "The Triangle Fire" all in packet.

Thursday, February 17: Quiz 2

Tuesday, February 22: Introduction to "The Modern"

Thursday, February 24: The Armory Show

No Reading—in-class writing on paintings displayed at the Armory Show in NYC

\*Short writing assignment #3 (to be completed in class)

Tuesday, March 1: Distribution of roles and faction meetings  
Reading: *"The Spirit of the New"* in *Greenwich Village 1913*, 52-63  
\*Short writing assignment #4 due

Thursday, March 3: Factions meet and get to work!

### **GAME WEEK I: SUFFRAGE**

**\*\*\*Each suffragist posts a 5-6 page paper arguing "We Must Demand Suffrage" on the Suffrage Discussion Board for other faction members to read. Postings must be made no later than 9:00 pm Monday, March 7. Individuals should also submit a hard copy of each paper at the beginning of class on Tuesday.**

March 8: Suffragists present their views. Labor and Villagers respond.

March 10: The "Antis" attack—the suffragists fight back!  
(Suffragists are given the opportunity to refute anti-suffrage views that are circulating in the U.S.)

**\*\*\*The suffrage faction submits ONE Position Statement (not to exceed 5 pages) to Polly's Bulletin Board, synthesizing and summarizing the three individual papers posted on Monday. Deadline is 3:00 pm Friday, March 11.**

\*SPRING BREAK\*

### **GAME WEEK II: LABOR**

**\*\*\*Each Labor faction member posts a 5-6 page paper arguing "We Must Organize the Working Class" on the Labor Discussion Board for other faction members to read. Postings must be made no later than 5:00 pm on Monday, March 21. Individuals should also submit a hard copy of each paper at the beginning of class on Tuesday.**

March 22: Each member of Labor presents his/her views. Suffragists and Villagers respond.

March 24: The Heckling Game. Details to be announced in class.

**\*\*\*The Labor faction submits ONE Position Statement (not to exceed 5 pages) to Polly's Bulletin Board, synthesizing and summarizing the three individual papers posted on Monday. Deadline is 3:00 pm Friday, March 25.**

### **GAME WEEK III: STRATEGY, PLOTTING, INTRIGUE**

**March 29-31: Individuals, groups, and factions use this time to assess how the game is going, attempt to sway individual votes and create break-away factions, lobby Mabel Dodge for opportunity to speak on April 12, and/or plan a performance to submit to Polly for possible presentation to full group April 12 or April 14 (these will be final opportunities to make case and sway votes before concluding statements)!**

### **GAME WEEK IV: VILLAGERS**

**\*\*\*Each villager posts a 5-6 page paper on the topic “Why I came to Greenwich Village: My Life and My Views.” The goal is to explain what he/she cares about and why. The papers must be posted directly to Polly’s Bulletin Board by 5:00 pm on Monday, April 4. A hard copy of each paper should also be turned in at the beginning of class on Tuesday, April 5.**

**\*\*\*\*Mabel Dodge and Polly Holladay write a paper but do not post it on the bulletin board; papers are turned in to GM (Game Master) only, due at 5:00 pm on Monday, April 4.**

April 5: Villagers and their friends present their views in an effort to persuade the labor and suffrage factions to pay closer attention to the issues they care about, especially those pertaining to the creation of an individual identity or the Self. Faction members take notes on the Villagers’ interests and ask for clarifications.

April 7: Witty Quips. Details to be explained in class.

\*Deadline for anyone (faction, group, or individual) placing a request to Polly for permission to perform (max. 20 minutes) in class on April 12 or 14.

### **GAME WEEK V: LAST CHANCE TO SWAY VOTES**

April 12: An Evening at Mabel Dodge’s Apartment

- 1) Player of Mabel Dodge’s choice presents his/her views any way he/she likes. Questions and comments from the audience follow.
- 2) Optional pageants, plays, and songs performed by players and factions OR The Speech Game.

April 14: 1)Max Eastman presents his edition of *The Masses* in a 20 minute lecture.

Copies are distributed to all players, who take notes as he speaks.

2) Optional pageants, plays, and songs performed by players and factions OR The Speech Game.

**\*\*\*Short writing assignment, due to GM Friday, April 15, at 3:00 pm: Write a “Letter to the Editor” of *The Masses* evaluating Max Eastman’s lecture (in your role).**

**\*\*\*Individual faction (Labor and Suffrage) members post a short statement (no more than one page) on the Village Bulletin Board, calling on Villagers to vote for their faction and explaining why they should do so. Statements must be posted no later than 8:00 pm on Sunday, April 18.**

#### **GAME WEEK VI: THE VOTE**

**\*\*\*Each Villager prepares a one-page statement for the press explaining how she/he will vote and why. This statement will be submitted in writing to the GM no later than 3:00 pm on Monday, April 16.**

April 19: THE VOTE. The faction that has amassed the most points “wins.”

April 21: THE CELEBRATION

#### **GAME WEEK VII: POSTMORTUM**

April 26: 1917: The War to End all Wars

April 28: POSTMORTUM