

General Seminar in History: American History

HISTORY 608B, Section 0101
Spring 2008
Thursdays, 1:00-3:30, Taliaferro 2110
Class reflector: sicilia-grad@umd.edu

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This course -- the second part of a two-semester series for first-year graduate students -- explores critical issues in U.S. history from 1877 to the present through some of the best historical work addressing those issues; and develops students' skills as readers and critics of historical literature.

Assignments:

Reading and class participation: Each student is expected to complete all the common readings and all or much of the review books for each week's class and to participate in class discussions. Class participation will comprise 40 percent of the course grade.

Review essays: Each student will be responsible for two 1,000-1,500-word review essays. The essays will analyze the common readings and review books from two weeks of the course. The essays should be organized thematically, not as a sequential review of the books and articles. Although you should discuss the central thesis, organization, and sources of each book and article, the essay should be constructed around and dominated by the themes that you have defined. Each presenter should submit her or his essay to members of the class over the class listserv – sicilia-grad@umd.edu – at least 24 hours before the class session in which she or he will present. You may use the short citation method for these essays – for example: (Lichtenstein, p. 77). Each review essay will comprise 15 percent of the course grade.

Synthetic essays: In addition, each student will write two 1,500-2,000-word take-home essays. These essays will respond to general exam-like questions chosen from a list of questions submitted by members of the class. The first take-home essay, due via email March 27, will pertain to the first half of the course readings; the second, due May 15, will pertain to the remainder. The questions will be distributed one week before the due date. Each synthetic essay will comprise 15 percent of the course grade.

Books and articles: Course books are on reserve in the McKeldin Library (the Reserve desk is next to the check-out station on the first floor). Articles are available online through JSTOR or Project Muse, as indicated.

Policy on absences and late assignments: If you need to miss or come late to class, please inform the instructor beforehand if possible. Written assignments turned in late will be penalized one full grade per 24 hour period unless otherwise arranged with the instructor.

Statement on Academic Integrity: The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards in this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html>

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

Jan. 31: Organizing America

Common readings:

- Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967). E661 .W58
- Louis Galambos, "The Emerging Organizational Synthesis in Modern American History," *The Business History Review* 44 (Autumn 1970): 279-290. JSTOR

Review books:

- Morton Keller, *Affairs of State: Public Life in Late Nineteenth Century America* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1977). E661 .K27
- Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1977). HF5343 .C584.

Feb. 7: Immigration, Ethnicity, and Nationalism

Common readings:

- Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998). E184.E95 J33 1998
- Peter Kolchin, "Whiteness Studies: The New History of Race in America," *Journal of American History* 89 (June 2002): 154-173. JSTOR

Review books:

- John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002). E184.A1 H5 1981
- Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001). E741 .G475 2001

Feb. 14: Progressivism

Common readings:

- Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998). HN57 .R556 1998

- Peter G. Filene, "An Obituary for 'The Progressive Movement,'" *American Quarterly* 22 (Spring 1970): 20-34. JSTOR

Review books:

- Robyn Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890-1935* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). HV741 .M82 1991
- Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920* (New York: Free Press, 2003). E661 .M415 2003

Feb. 21: Consumer Culture

Common readings:

- Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Knopf, 2003). HC110.C6 C537 2003
- Susan Strasser, "Making Consumption Conspicuous: Transgressive Topics Go Mainstream," *Technology and Culture* 43 (October 2002): 755-770. Project Muse

Review books:

- Rowland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). HF5813.U6 M26 1985
- Gary Cross, *An All-Consuming Century: Why Commercialism Won in Modern America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000). HC110.C6 C76 2000

Feb. 28: Gender and Sexuality

Common readings:

- George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male Underworld, 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994). HQ76.2.U52 N53 1994
- Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91 (December 1986): 1053-1075. JSTOR

Review books:

- Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1940* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995). HQ1075.5.U6 B43 1995
- James B. Gilbert, *Men in the Middle: Searching for Masculinity in the 1950s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). HQ1090.3 .G55 2005

March 6: Technology and Culture

Common readings:

- David Nye, *Electrifying America: Social Meanings of a New Technology, 1880-1940* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990). HD9685.U5 N94 1990

- Thomas P. Hughes, “Technological Momentum” in Merritt Roe Smith and Leo Marx, eds., *Does Technology Drive History? The Dilemma of Technological Determinism* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994). T14.5 .D64 1994

Review books:

- David F. Noble, *America by Design: Science, Technology, and the Rise of Corporate Capitalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979). T14.5 .N6 1979
- Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave* (New York: Basic Books, 1983). TX23 .C64 1983

March 13: New Deals

Common readings:

- Alan Brinkley, *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995). E806 .B747 1995
- Barton J. Bernstein, “The New Deal: The Conservative Achievements of Liberal Reform,” in Barton J. Bernstein, ed., *Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1968). E175 .B46

Review books:

- Ellis W. Hawley, *The New Deal and the Problem of Monopoly: A Study in Economic Ambivalence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966). HD3616.U46 H33
- Sidney M. Milkis, *The President and the Parties: The Transformation of the American Party System since the New Deal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). JK2261 .M55 1993

March 27: Total War

Common readings:

- John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986). D767.9 .D69 1986
- Mark Stoler, “A Half-Century of Conflict: Interpretations of U.S. World War II Diplomacy,” in Michael J. Hogan, ed., *America in the World: The Historiography of American Foreign Relations since 1941* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 166-205. E744 .A486 1995

Review books:

- David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980). D570.1 .K43
- William L. O’Neill, *A Democracy at War: America’s Fight at Home and Abroad in World War II* (New York: Free Press, 1993). D769 .O64 1993

April 3: Cold War

Common Readings:

- John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). D843 .G24 1998
- Melvyn P. Leffler, "What Do 'We Now Know'?" *American Historical Review* 104 (April 1999): 501-524. JSTOR

Review books:

- George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 4th ed., 2001).
- Peter J. Kuznick and James Gilbert, eds. *Rethinking Cold War Culture* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001). E169.12 .R475 2001

April 10: Civil Rights and Race

Common readings:

- Charles Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). E185.93.M6 P39 1995
- Mary Dudziak, "Brown as a Cold War Case," *Journal of American History* 91 (June 2004): 32-42.

Review books:

- Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003). E185.97.B214 R36 2003
- Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). F574.D49 N4835 1996

April 17: Old Left to New

Common readings:

- John Patrick Diggins, *The Rise and Fall of the American Left* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992). HN90.R3 D556 1992
- Rick Perlstein, "Who Owns the Sixties? The Opening of a Scholarly Generation Gap" *Lingua Franca* (May/June 1996). <http://linguafranca.mirror.theinfo.org/9605/sixties.html>

Review books:

- John Kenneth Galbraith, *American Capitalism: The Concept of Countervailing Power* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, rev. ed., 1956). HB501 .G3 1956
- Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1987). E841 .G57 1987

April 24: Second Wave Feminism

Common readings:

- Alice Echols, *Daring to be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989). HQ1421 .E25 1989
- Martha F. Davis, "Welfare Rights and Women's Rights in the 1960s," *Journal of Policy History* 8 (1996): 144-165. JSTOR

Review books:

- Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Viking, 2000). HQ1421 .R68 2000
- Benita Roth, *Separate Roads to Feminism: Black, Chicana, and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004). HQ1421 .R684 2004

May 1: Labor

Common readings:

- Nelson Lichtenstein, *State of the Union: A Century of American Labor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002). HD8066 .L53 2002
- Susan Porter Benson, "'The Customers Ain't God': The Work Culture of Department-Store Saleswomen, 1890-1940," in Michael H. Frisch and Daniel J. Walkowitz, eds., *Working-Class America: Essays on Labor, Community, and American Society* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983). HD8066 .W65 1983.

Review books:

- Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Verso, 1996). E169 .D425 1996
- Melvyn Dubofsky, *The State and Labor in Modern America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994). HD8072 .D848 1994

May 8: Postwar Conservatism

Common readings:

- Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001). E839.5 .M32 2001
- Alan Brinkley, "The Problem of American Conservatism," *The American Historical Review* 99 (April 1994): 409-429. JSTOR

Review books:

- Donald T. Critchlow, *The Conservative Ascendancy: How the GOP Right Made Political History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).
- Thomas Byrne Edsall and Mary D. Edsall, *Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991). JK524 .E28 1991