

History 152-2, Fall 2010
United States since 1877 (21303)

M/W 5:30-6:45, WTHR 320

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Course Description:

This course surveys the expanse of social, political, economic, and cultural forces that shaped the development of the United States in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To this end, this course not only attempts to draw attention to the broad trends and key figures of these times but to examine their impact on ordinary Americans. Topics to be covered in this course include global expansion, modernization and industrialization, World Wars I and II, the Great Depression and the New Deal, the Cold War at home, the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights movement, and the rise of conservative America. Questions asked and debated during class and in our readings will include: What social, cultural, and political realities define “America”? What does it mean to be “modern” in America? Was (and is) America “exceptional” in its encounter with modernity? And most importantly, what does it mean to embrace democracy and freedom in America? How has the American experiment with liberty been both a constructive and contested one, on both a domestic and international level?

Exploring the notion, possibilities, and limitations of “liberty” in modern America is the first objective of this course. Our second objective is learning how to think like historians. The vast majority of you will not pursue history as a career, but historians have a unique way of approaching problems that should be beneficial to you, whatever your field or discipline. For this reason, we will spend some time on the processes of interpreting and writing history. In this course you will read the works of historians first hand, and then practice historical analysis by interpreting “primary” and “secondary” source materials on your own.

Assigned Texts:

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty: An American History, Vol. 2* (Second Seagull Edition; W.W. Norton and Company, 2009) ISBN 13:978-0-393-93257-7

Eric Foner, *Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History, Volume 2* (W.W. Norton and Company) ISBN 0-393-92504-8

John Kasson, *Amusing the Million: Coney Island at the Turn of the Century* (Hill and Wang) ISBN 0-8090-0133-0

Timothy Egan, *The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dustbowl* (Mariner Books, 2006) ISBN 13:978-0618773473

Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal* (Harper Perennial) ISBN 13:978-0-06-0838

Course Requirements and Policies:

Attendance:

Although no official attendance will be taken for this class, students should understand that they are responsible for all material covered in this course. The quizzes and exams in this class are specifically designed to test students’ mastery of the lecture material, films, and assigned readings. It will not be possible to do well in this course without regularly attending class.

Quizzes:

There will be **eight quizzes** given in class based on assigned readings in *Give Me Liberty* and *Voices of Freedom*. The **top six quiz scores will be counted** toward your final grade. These quizzes are meant to encourage you to stay on track with attendance and the readings. They will consist of either multiple choice or short answer questions and will be issued either on the Monday or Wednesday of the designated week. Some (if not most) of these quizzes will be open-book, and a few (if not most) will be completed in consultation with your seat neighbors.

Exams:

There will be **three (3) exams** for this course. The first two exams will be taken during our regular 75-minute class time, the third during exam week. These three exams ARE NOT cumulative; in other words, they will deal only with material covered in the designated 1/3 of the course. Each exam will typically consist of three sections (with some flexibility allowed): a matching or multiple-choice section, identification or short-answer section, and essay section. Questions in the first two of these sections will be drawn from lecture material, in-class films, and the textbook and reader (*Give Me Liberty* and *Voices of Freedom*) and the three books (*Amusing the Million*, *The Worst Hard Time*, and *Fast Food Nation*). You will also be required to write an essay response to the three assigned books, *Amusing the Million* in Exam 1, *The Worst Hard Time* in Exam 2, and *Fast Food Nation* in Exam 3. You will receive the exam's essay questions one week in advance so that you can adequately prepare.

Grading:

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|---------|-----------|--------------|
| Quizzes | 60 Points | Deadline: |
| Exam 1 | 80 Points | TBA |
| Exam 2 | 80 Points | September 27 |
| Exam 3 | 80 Points | November 8 |
| | | TBA |

Total Possible Points: 300

Other Notes:

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism is the appropriation by any means of another's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written work offered for credit. Cheating is not only a violation of university policy, but it is also dishonest, contemptuous of education, and harmful to your fellow students and the value of your diploma. I will not tolerate it.

Late Policy: There are no make-up quizzes, regardless of the circumstances. There are no make-up exams except for those who have documented proof of medical issues, special needs, or family tragedy.

Communication: Please direct all immediate questions and concerns to your assigned teaching assistant. I welcome the chance to meet with any of you during my office hours and would be happy to talk with you about any concerns or questions you have that cannot be addressed by your TA.

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. You will get information about changes in this course through our course site on Blackboard and/or through class emails. You may also contact me for further information.

Class Schedule (subject to slight alterations during the semester):

Week One: America Circa 1890Assigned Reading:

Text: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 17, "Freedom's Boundaries, at Home and Abroad, 1890-1900"

Mon., Aug. 23 Course Introduction

Wed., Aug. 25 America Engages the World

Week Two: Cosmopolitan VisionsAssigned Reading:

Text: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 18, "The Progressive Era, 1900-1916"

Reader: *Voices of Freedom*, Chapter 18

Mon., Aug. 30 America Resists the World

Wed., Sep. 1 The Rise of the Metropolis

Week Three: ProgressivismAssigned Reading:

Text: *Give Me Liberty* Chapter 18, "The Progressive Era, 1900-1916" (con't)

Mon., Sep. 6 **NO CLASS**

Wed., Sep. 8 Reforming Society

Week Four: World War I

Assigned Reading:

Text: *Give Me Liberty* Chapter 19 “Safe for Democracy: The United States and World War I, 1916-1920”

Reader: *Voices of Freedom*, Chapter 19

Mon., Sep. 13 War at Home and Abroad

Wed., Sep. 15 Postwar Turns

Week Five: The Roaring Twenties

Assigned Reading:

Text: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 20, “From Business Culture to Great Depression: The Twenties, 1920-1932”

Exam Book: *Amusing the Million*

Mon., Sep. 20 The Roaring Twenties

Wed., Sep. 22 Culture Wars

Week Six: The Great Depression

Assigned Reading:

Text: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 21, “The New Deal, 1932-1940”

Mon., Sep. 27 **Exam 1**

Wed., Sep. 29 The Great Depression

Week Seven: Roosevelt’s Era

Assigned Reading:

Text: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 21, “The New Deal, 1932-1940” (con’t)

Reader: *Voices of Freedom*, Chapter 21

Mon., Oct. 4 The New Deal

Wed., Oct. 6 The End of the New Deal

Week Eight: Fall Break

Assigned Reading: N/A

Mon., Oct. 11 **NO CLASS**

Wed., Oct. 13 **NO CLASS**

Week Nine: World War II

Assigned Reading:

Text: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 22, “Fighting for the Four Freedoms: World War II, 1941-1945”

Mon., Oct. 18 World War II at Home

Wed., Oct. 20 World War II Abroad

Week Ten: America in the Cold War

Assigned Reading:

Text: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 23, “The United States and the Cold War, 1945-1953”

Reader: *Voices of Freedom*, Chapter 23

Mon., Oct 25 Cold War Origins

Wed., Oct. 27 Cold War Culture

Week Eleven: Affluent Society

Assigned Reading:

Text: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 24, “An Affluent Society”

Exam Book: *The Worst Hard Time*

Mon., Nov. 1 Eisenhower’s America

Wed., Nov. 3 The Other Side of the Fifties

Week Twelve: The SixtiesAssigned Reading:Text: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 25, “The Sixties, 1960-1968”Mon., Nov. 8 **Exam 2**

Wed., Nov. 10 John F. Kennedy and Student Radicals

Week Thirteen: The Great SocietyAssigned Reading:Text: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 25, “The Sixties, 1960-1968” (con’t)Reader: *Voices of Freedom*, Chapter 25

Mon., Nov. 15 Civil Rights

Wed., Nov. 17 The Rise and Fall of the Great Society

Week Fourteen: The Silent MajorityAssigned Reading:Text: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 26, “The Triumph of Conservatism, 1969-1988”

Mon., Nov. 22 Richard Nixon and the Southernization of America

Wed., Nov. 24 **NO CLASS****Week Fifteen: Triumph of Conservatism**Assigned Reading:Text: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 26, “The Triumph of Conservatism, 1969-1988” (con’t)Reader: *Voices of Freedom*, Chapter 26

Mon., Nov. 29 Jimmy Carter’s Tough Times

Wed., Dec. 1 Ronald Reagan’s Revolution

Week Sixteen: New World OrderAssigned Reading:Text: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 27, “Globalization and Its Discontents, 1989-2000”Exam Book: *Fast Food Nation*

Mon., Dec. 6 After the Wall

Wed., Dec. 8 New World Order

Dec. 13-18 **FINAL EXAM** (TBA)