

History 152: US History since 1877
Spring 2009
MWF (9:30 – 10:20)

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Office Hours: MW 10:30-11:30
or by appointment

Course Description:

Who built America? Modern America emerged in the years that followed 1877 when an influx of immigrants fueled massive economic growth. But racial prejudice, gender discrimination, and class conflict characterized the United States' transformation into a world power. After World War I the American government assumed new responsibilities to resolve economic and social problems, yet simultaneously assumed an increasingly interventionist role on the world stage. This course is designed to provide students with a social, cultural, and political history of the United States since 1877. Using the theme of history as a lived experience, it portrays contemporary US history through the eyes of "ordinary" Americans.

This class consists of lectures, discussions, exams, and reading and writing assignments that consider the role of race, class, and gender in the construction and transformation of modern America. Using these materials throughout the semester, you will (hopefully): 1) Gain an appreciation for multiple perspectives through the examination of how men and women like you struggled to build their country; 2) Learn how to think critically as you are introduced to the craft of history; and 3) Start to apply what you learn in this course to everyday life.

Books:

Bailey, Beth. *Sex in the Heartland*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Larson, Erik. *Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair that Changed America*. New York: Vintage Books, 2003.

Jones, Jacqueline, et al. *Created Equal: A Social and Political History of the United States, Brief Edition, Volume II (from 1865)*, Second Edition. New York: Pearson/Longman, 2008.

* Please also buy three blue or green exam booklets (one for each exam).

* Articles and Primary Documents will be assigned throughout the semester and made available in class and/or on BlackBoard.

Attendance and Behavior:

Attendance in this class is not mandatory. That being said, you are adults. College is expensive. Assignments and exams will be heavily based on lecture and reading materials, so for your own benefit, come to class, take notes, do the readings, and participate in discussion.

Reading Responses:

You are expected to read both of the books assigned for discussion. You will be required to write one (1) response for the Larson book and two (2) for Bailey. For *each* response you will have the option of writing on one (1) of two (2) questions. Be sure to engage reading and lecture material in your answer, using specific examples to illustrate your main points and support your argument. Each paper should be 2-3 pages in length, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font. Questions will be handed out in class at a later date. Reading responses are worth 20 points each, a total of **60 points**.

Discussion Meetings:

I will warn you upfront that these books may be challenging. Therefore, I have scheduled discussion sections for each text during our regularly scheduled class. You will have three (3) opportunities to earn five (5) discussion points at each meeting, combined for a total of **15 points**. I will circulate a few questions before each discussion so you will have time to prepare responses and contribute to the conversation.

Exams:

There will be three (3) exams throughout the semester. Each exam will consist of two parts: a short-answer section and an essay. In each section you will be asked to use lecture and reading material to support your answer. Make-ups will be *considered* for special situations. Each exam is worth 50 points for a total of **150 points**. Be sure to bring a blue or green exam booklet to the exam.

In Class Responses:

You will be given several opportunities throughout the semester to respond spontaneously and informally to class material. These will be *unannounced* and worth a total of **15 points**. No make-ups.

Expectations:

Grading Scale (probably)

In Class Responses	15 points	240 - 232 points = A+	191 - 184 points = C+
3 Discussion Meetings	15 points	231 - 222 points = A	183 - 175 points = C
3 Reading Responses	60 points	221 - 216 points = A-	174 - 168 points = C-
3 Exams	150 points	215 - 208 points = B+	167 - 160 points = D+
	-----	207 - 198 points = B	159 - 150 points = D
	240 total	197 - 192 points = B-	149 - 143 points = D-
			142 - 0 points = F

Calendar of Classes

(Probably)

January 12-16: Transformation of the Trans-Mississippi West

* See chapter 15 in *Created Equal*.

January 19-23: Economy and Society at the Turn of the Century

- * No Class on Monday, January 19 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
- * Start reading *Devil in the White City*
- * See chapters 16-18 in *Created Equal*.

January 26-30: Gilded Age Politics

- * Continue reading *Devil in the White City*
- * See chapters 16-18 in *Created Equal*.

February 2-6: Progressivism

- * Continue reading *Devil in the White City*
- * See chapter 19 in *Created Equal*.

February 9-13: The Great War

- * Continue reading *Devil in the White City*
- * See chapter 20 in *Created Equal*.

February 16-20: The Roaring '20s

- * For Monday: Finish reading *Devil in the White City* for discussion. Paper 1 due at the beginning of class.
- * See chapter 21 in *Created Equal*.

February 23-27: America in the Depression

- * See chapter 22 in *Created Equal*.

March 2-6: The Road to War

- * Friday: EXAM 1
- * See chapter 23 in *Created Equal*.

March 9-13: WWII

- * Start reading the first half of *Sex in the Heartland*.
- * See chapter 23 in *Created Equal*.

March 16-20: Spring Break

- * No Class this week

March 23-27: The Postwar, Cold War

- * Continue reading the first half of *Sex in the Heartland*.
- * See chapter 24 in *Created Equal*.

March 30-April 3: 1950s Society and Culture

- * For Monday: Finish reading the first half of *Sex in the Heartland* for discussion. Paper 2 due at the beginning of class.
- * Start reading the second half of *Sex in the Heartland*.
- * See chapter 25 in *Created Equal*.

April 6-10: The Tumultuous Sixties

- * Monday: EXAM 2
- * Continue reading the second half of *Sex in the Heartland*.
- * See chapters 25-26 in *Created Equal*.

April 13-17: Vietnam and “Tricky Dick”

- * Continue reading the second half of *Sex in the Heartland*.
- * See chapter 26 in *Created Equal*.

April 20-24: The 1970s: An Era of Cultural Transformation

* For Monday: Finish reading *Sex in the Heartland* for discussion. Paper 3 due at the beginning of class.

* See chapters 27-28 in *Created Equal*.

April 27-May 1: The Conservative Resurgence, the 1980s

* (Dead Week)

* See chapters 28-30 in *Created Equal*.

May 4-9: Finals Week

* FINAL (TBA)

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated and result in automatically failing the assignment. *University Regulations, Section III-B states*: Cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University are examples of dishonesty. The commitment of the acts of cheating, lying, stealing, and deceit in any of their diverse forms (such as the use of ghost-written papers, the use of substitutes for taking examinations, the use of illegal cribs, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) is dishonest and must not be tolerated. Moreover, knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts is in itself dishonest.

Students with Disabilities:

If you have a disability that may require modification of seating, class requirements or whatever, please see me as soon as possible so we can make the appropriate arrangements. Please note that in order for Purdue University to accommodate your needs you will need to provide appropriate written documentation and have it on file with Adaptive Services.

Disclaimer:

In the event of a major campus emergency, the above requirements, deadlines and grading policies are subject to changes that may be required by a revised semester calendar. Any such changes in this course will be posted as soon as they can be made available or obtained by contacting the instructor.

