

HIS 711
The Twentieth Century South

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This course will explore the South's social, economic, political, and cultural development in the twentieth century. Among the topics that will be addressed are the changing status of African Americans in the region; political developments during the period (from one-party rule by the Democratic party in the early twentieth century to the re-emergence of the Republican party during the second half of the twentieth century); and the transformation of the South from an overwhelmingly agricultural, rural society to a region identified in the years following World War II with the phenomena of Sunbelt urbanization and industrialization, as well as increasing globalization.

Since the time of the Civil War, various Southerners and non-Southerners have proclaimed the coming of a New South--one in which the defeated Confederacy would rejoin and ultimately resemble the rest of the nation. Thus, this course will also attempt to answer the following questions: When, if ever, did a New South develop? What factors made the South distinctive from other American regions in the twentieth century? When did these unique characteristics disappear, or are they still present today?

In addition to looking at how historians have interpreted this century of change in the South, this course will also examine how Southerners themselves have explained these changes through the rich tradition of southern autobiography.

Required Readings (available at the University Bookstore or many other outlets):

Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction* (Oxford University Press, 1993)

Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920* (University of North Carolina Press, 1990)

Jeanette Keith, *Rich Man=s War, Poor Man=s Fight: Race, Class, and Power in the Rural South during the First World War* (University of North Carolina Press, 2004)

Jacqueline Hall et al., *Like A Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000)

James N. Gregory, *The Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America* (University of North Carolina Press, 2005)

Patricia Sullivan, *Days of Hope: Race and Democracy in the New Deal Era* (University of North Carolina Press, 1996)

Neil R. McMillen, ed., *Remaking Dixie: The Impact of World War II on the American South* (University Press of Mississippi, 1997)

Dan T. Carter, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics*, 2nd ed. (Louisiana State University Press, 2000)

James C. Cobb and William Stueck, eds., *Globalization and the American South* (University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

Timothy B. Tyson, *Blood Done Sign My Name: A True Story* (Three Rivers Press, 2005)

Tony Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War* (Vintage, 1999)

Additional required course readings are included on the course schedule and will be available on Blackboard or other electronic sites.

Schedule:

August 15: Introduction

August 22: The South after Reconstruction

Assignment: Read Ayers, *The Promise of the New South*; Howard N. Rabinowitz, "The Origins of a Poststructural New South" *Journal of Southern History*, 59 (August 1993): 505-515. Available through JSTOR: <http://www.jstor.org/>

August 29: Gender, Religion, and Change in Turn-of-the-Century South

Assignment: Read Ownby, *Subduing Satan*; Mary E. Frederickson, "Each One Is Dependent on the Other": Southern Churchwomen, Racial Reform, and the Process of Transformation, 1880-1940, in Hewitt and Lebsack, eds., *Visible Women* (available on Blackboard).

September 5: World War I

Assignment: Read, Keith, *Rich Man=s War, Poor Man=s Fight*

September 12: Economic Change in the Early Twentieth Century

Read Hall et al., *Like a Family*; Daniel Letwin, "Interracial Unionism, Gender, and Social Equality" in the Alabama Coalfields, 1878-1908, *Journal of Southern History* 61 (August 1995): 519-54. Available through JSTOR: <http://www.jstor.org/>

September 19: The Great Migrations

Read, Gregory, *The Southern Diaspora*

September 26: Cultural History

Read one of the following books: Thomas Brothers, *Louis Armstrong=s New Orleans*; Paul Conkin, *The Southern Agrarians*; David Herbert Donald, *Look Homeward: A Life of Thomas Wolfe*; Grace Elizabeth Hale, *Making Whiteness*; Thomas S. Hines, *William Faulkner and the Tangible Past*; Richard King, *A Southern Renaissance*; Jack Temple Kirby, *Media-Made Dixie*; Alan Lomax, *The Land Where the Blues Began*; Bill Malone, *Country Music USA* (2nd rev. ed.); Donald M. Marquis, *In Search of Buddy Bolden*; Ted Ownby, *American Dreams in Mississippi*; Robert Palmer, *Deep Blues*; Helen Taylor, *Circling Dixie*; Elijah Wald, *Escaping the Delta: Robert Johnson and the Invention of the Blues*; Betram Wyatt-Brown, *The House of Percy*.

October 3: The 1930s

Read Sullivan, *Days of Hope*

October 17: World War II

Read McMillen, ed., *Remaking Dixie*; Dominic J. Capeci, Jr., "The Lynching of Cleo Wright: Federal Protection of Constitutional Rights During World War II," *Journal of American History* 72 (1986): 859-887. Available through JSTOR: <http://www.jstor.org/>

October 24: The Civil Rights Movement

Read one of the following: Charles Bolton, *The Hardest Deal of All*; Taylor Branch, *At Canaan's Edge*; Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters*; David Celeski, *Along Freedom Road*; William Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights*; David Chappell, *Inside Agitators*; Connie Curry, *Silver Rights*; John Dittmer, *Local People*; Adam Fairclough, *Race and Democracy*; David Garrow, *Bearing the Cross*; Steven Lawson, *Running for Freedom*; Charles Marsh, *God's Long Summer*; James Patterson, *Brown v. Board of Education*; Charles Payne, *I=ve Got the Light of Freedom*; Timothy Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie*.

Also read Charles Payne, "Debating the Civil Rights Movement: The View From the Trenches," in Lawson and Payne, eds., *Debating the Civil Rights Movement, 1945 -1968*, 2nd ed. (available on Blackboard).

- October 31: Race and Politics in the Recent South
- Read Carter, *The Politics of Rage*; David Goldfield, *No Broad Highways: Class and Race in the South since 1976*, in Goldfield, *Black, White, and Southern*. Available on Blackboard.
- November 7: Economic and Social Change in the Recent South
- Read Cobb and Stueck, eds., *Globalization and the American South*
- November 14: Southern Autobiography
- Read Tyson, *Blood Done Sign My Name*
- November 21: Southern Autobiography, pt. 2
- Read one of the following: Rick Bragg, *All Over But the Shoutin*; Septima Clark, *Echo in My Soul*; Edward Cohen, *The Peddler's Grandson*; Harry Crews, *A Childhood*; Mamie Fields, *Lemon Swamp*; Aaron Henry/Constance Curry, *Aaron Henry*; Florence King, *Confessions of a Failed Southern Lady*; Charlayne Hunter-Gault, *In My Place*; Charles Marsh, *The Last Days*; Melton McLaurin, *Separate Pasts*; Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*; Willie Morris, *North Toward Home*; Noel Polk, *Outside the Southern Myth*; Theodore Rosengarten, *All God=s Dangers*; Richard Wright, *Black Boy*.
- November 28: What Makes the South Still Southern?
- Read Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic*; Reed, *The South: What Is It? Where Is It?* in Reed, *My Tears Spoiled My Aim*. (available on Blackboard).

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the history of the twentieth-century South broadly (in terms of social, economic, political, and cultural developments).
2. Analyze how historians and Southerners themselves have described the history of the twentieth-century South.

Assignments:

The major assignment for this class is to do the weekly reading and come prepared to discuss the material. A sizeable part of your grade will be determined by your class participation. Non-participation or weak participation will obviously result in a low grade. Attendance at and participation in all class meetings is essential. Any unexcused absences will adversely affect a student's grade. However, if you do have to miss a class, you need to let me know before class begins if at all possible.

Each student should write four essays (4-5 pages) for four of the ten weeks when the class has common readings. These essays should represent your analysis or commentary on the issue(s) and/or argument(s) raised by the readings. These should be thought pieces, designed to demonstrate your serious reflections on what you are reading. You should neither merely summarize the readings nor ramble incoherently. Address particular themes or theses. Feel free to bring in any other material you are familiar with to help compare and contrast the author's approach to a historical question. Or, deal with what you have read in some other creative and brilliant way. Whatever you do, remember that your essays should relate to the assigned readings in some meaningful way and should not focus too narrowly on some trivial point(s). For the three weeks that we will all be reading different books, each student should prepare a 2-page precis of the book they have read for that week. You should choose a book you have not previously read. All your essays and summaries, of course, should be well written and well organized.

All essays and summaries are due at the class meeting in which the topic is covered (no exceptions!) Everything should be typed and double-spaced, with a standard 12-point font and one-inch margins; you can use a parenthetical notation style for these writhing assignments.

Finally, there will be a take-home final examination for this class. The question(s) will be distributed at our last class meeting on November 28 and will be due the following week.

Grading:

Grades will be based on class participation (35 %), four essays (35 %), three summaries (10 %), and the take-home exam (20 %).

Academic Honor Code:

All students are expected to know and abide by the UNCG Academic Honor Code. On all course work, each student shall add the following statement:

"I have abided by the UNCG Academic Honor Policy on this assignment or examination."

_____ Signature _____ Date.