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**HIS 511A, Fall 2014 - Seminar in Historical Research and Writing**  
**"Popular Movements, Reform, and Conservative Reaction in the 1930s and the 1960s"**  
**Writing and Speaking Intensive**

**Rev. Jackson Preaches: "If you are never willing to risk saying something dumb, you'll never learn to say anything smart." -- Rev. Jackson**

In the twentieth century, contemporaries and some historians have labeled two periods of popular agitation, reform, and reaction the third "American Revolution." Largely, these terms have fallen out of modern memory and historians' practice. But what made so many people conclude at the time that they were living through revolutionary times? Why has American memory and historical representation mellowed? Or was the radicalism of each time period whitewashed? In the 1930s, how did the vast protests and organization of farmers, the unemployed, the elderly, and industrial workers force liberal reformers in the direction of a "second" New Deal? Was the social contract, the relationship between citizen and government, actually re-written in those crucial years of the mid-1930s? For whom? How did women and minorities fare as the nation prepared for and waged World War II? How did conservative groups increasingly mobilize money and ideas in opposition to the New Deal? Did their efforts make the New Deal less revolutionary in the long run than was thought at the time?

And what did these conservatives have in common with those who opposed the "Civil Rights Revolution" that followed 20-30 years later? How did that movement address the shortcomings of the New Deal order, even as it drew upon certain ideals and organizations defined and formed in the earlier time? Who made the civil rights revolution happen? What were the real issues that made the civil rights movement a mass revolt in the streets around 1963? This movement of African Americans from 1960-1964 forced the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations to propose and pass the most far-reaching legislation affecting race relations in a century. It inspired rebelliousness and rights consciousness among women, young people, and other minorities and identity groups. This was also a period of intense dissent from American foreign policy in Southeast Asia, mass student protest, and violent uprisings in northern and western cities by the late 1960s. But what did the sixties achieve, at what cost, with what ideals and talent and appeals to America's "revolutionary" tradition?

ONE of these questions, a more modest and manageable version, or some others that you formulate in the first month of the semester will give you a cutting edge to get you through this capstone history research and writing experience. I and your classmates will help you make these questions *interesting, focused, researchable, and answerable*. Overall, the class will lead you through various stages of discovering a "burning question" of interest to you and others, finding provocative scholarship and lively primary source material relevant to that question, organizing your research and writing into a **20-30 page paper with coherence and a manageable scope**, and advancing a solid line of explanation. Pick something fun and interesting. You're going to live with it for some months and you'll want to come out with something you can be proud of.

We will begin the class with two rich, though demanding, weeks of reading from scholars and historical figures, two books that cover this ground differently. We come to burning questions either through puzzling through the scholarship or encountering surprising people in the past that challenge what we thought we knew. For the first four weeks, including the first meeting, we will analyze texts, see films, discuss research strategies and search engines, and relentlessly pose questions!

Our sources are especially rich on presidential decision-making and crisis management, movements for security, civil rights and economic justice, and the paths chosen by three administrations and Congress in making the

American middle class secure and the world “safe for democracy” in very different places!

**Undergraduates will write a 22-30 page paper; graduates will write a 30-35 page paper.**

**Half of your grade** will be determined by the originality and persuasiveness of your final paper. This will be based mainly on primary source analysis, but it will also be shaped and guided by existing scholarship and your own imaginative questioning. In this case "originality" means “derived persuasively from original primary sources” rather than “bold new discovery no one ever considered before.”

**The other half of your grade** will reflect how well you complete the step-by-step assignments, the quality of your class participation, your oral reports under the SI requirement, and the thoroughness and thoughtfulness of your peer reviews after you break into “affinity groups.”

To clarify and repeat, the final paper must be based principally upon *primary sources* that you have located, with my help, the help of the Jackson Library staff, and the help of your peers. We will use secondary sources (mostly, peer-reviewed scholarly literature) to help you refine your topic, develop an informed set of research questions, and important research leads.

One good method: “follow the footnotes.”

Another: get nimble in the research library and online search engines.

Another: relentlessly ask questions.

Another: sample the political rhetoric of the day and find out what language resonates with you or intrigues you.

Another: pick an issue with contemporary implications – immigration, health care, police-community conflicts – and follow how it played out in the past.

Another: do not regard research and writing as separate and sequential.

Finally: Start writing early in the game, and be ready to revisit your sources to strengthen your claims.

To clarify your sense of where the history department is coming from on this one, please read the 2 rubrics appended to this syllabus for faculty evaluation of such papers:

- 1) The American Association of Colleges and Universities "Inquiry and Analysis VALUE Rubric," and
- 2) HISTORY DEPARTMENT RUBRIC FOR HIS-511 (to assess learning goals 3 and 4).

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

Appreciate the pivotal social and political developments of the 1930s, early 1940s, and 1960s, what many took to be revolutionary moments in economic and race relations.

Improve your information literacy, becoming nimble and resourceful at finding answers to questions in University research libraries and reliable online repositories of information.

Identify and frame questions around a *focused, researchable, and significant* issue that contemporaries grappled with and subsequent historians debated.

Compile, evaluate, and extract usable information from historical primary and secondary scholarly sources, citing them in standard historical footnote and bibliographic form (Chicago Manual of Style, 16<sup>th</sup> ed. as embodied in Kate Turabian’s style guide).

Analyze thoughts and decisions of historical actors through close analysis of primary sources and placement in meaningful historical context.

Research, write, and report on an important historical question using the above sources and techniques.

Please familiarize yourself with the "**Subject Guide for History**," and the specific guide for HIS 511A. Put this on your bookmarks toolbar: <http://uncg.libguides.com/his>

**Every single class will devote time to finding and assessing sources. So if you have a laptop or a tablet with**

**Wi-Fi, please bring it. Turn off your phones and don't text or do distracting things with your computers.**

**Course Requirements:**

**Required Reading:**

Polenberg, Richard D. *The Era of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933-1945: A Brief History with Documents*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000. Polenberg edited a superb collection of documents from the political culture between 1932 and 1945. One way to find a burning question is through direct exposure to primary sources.

Mackenzie, G. Calvin, and Robert Weisbrot. *The Liberal Hour: Washington and the Politics of Change in the 1960s*. Penguin Books, 2009. Unlike Polenberg, a synthesis of recent scholarship on 1960s liberalism. Find an interesting topic, turn it into a burning question, follow the footnotes into scholarship and primary sources.

Turabian, Kate, Booth, Wayne C., and Gregory G. Colomb. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Eighth Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. Eighth Edition. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2013. How to do it from soup to nuts. Hereafter referred to as: Turabian, *Manual for Writers*.

PDFs on Blackboard for in class assignments.

**Optional surveys of the periods:**

Kennedy, David M. *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*. Reprint edition. Oxford University Press, 2001. Pulitzer prize winning survey. Check it once you settle on a topic.

Isserman, Maurice, and Michael Kazin. *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*. 4 edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. This one is more detailed on the grassroots and radical movements of the decade.

Lytle, Mark Hamilton. *America's Uncivil Wars: The Sixties Era from Elvis to the Fall of Richard Nixon*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. Another more detailed on the social movements than Weisbrot and MacKenzie.

**Optional writing guides**, but terrific, and available through the bookstore or Internet:

Marius, Richard, and Melvin E. Page. *A Short Guide to Writing About History*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Pearson, 2012, or 7th ed. New York: Longman, 2010

Also useful: Presnell, Jenny L. *The Information-Literate Historian : A Guide to Research for History Students*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Marius and Page are good on guiding you to discover what matters to you in history, what makes for good historical writing and presentation, and what major pitfalls students encounter in their search for valuable insights and stories. They are more hand-holders than Turabian. Hint: Everybody bites off more than they can chew at first!

**Optional Historiographical Essays and Microfilm Reel Guides.**

I have large Google Drive folders with all manner of book reviews and historiographical essays that will be useful to each of you as you refine your topics. Additionally, I have a wealth of digitized material from Lexis-Nexis microfilm collections that the Library does not have, and can make this available on request. See the Google Drive folders.

**Attendance and Participation:**

This class has a strong collaborative dimension, though we do not meet every week. Attendance is mandatory (unexcused absences will hurt your grade – excuses are limited to medical or family emergency, not competing work obligations, travel plans, or extra-curricular conflicts).

**I. Reading, Preparation, Speaking, and Class Citizenship: 20%.** Active participation is essential to class citizenship and creating a learning environment that no single instructor can create. I will evaluate your contributions to in-class discussions and your peer reviews of each other's proposals and first drafts. The criteria for evaluating peer reviews will be consistency and quality, pertinence and constructive critique. The best critiques mix searching challenges (questions, counter-arguments) with appreciation of strengths in argument, plus imagination in suggesting lines of argument and sources of evidence. I will see evidence of peer reviews mainly in blackboard posts in response to weekly assignments (find them in on Blackboard under "Course Information," and "Lessons," and post on "Discussion Board.") **Give feedback in 1-2 page peer-reviews of rough drafts and first drafts of papers in your affinity group.**

**Oral Reports** on research findings at the end of the semester, as well as periodic updates along the way constitute the Speaking Intensive component. We will have a workshop on speaking and summarizing findings when I can schedule it.

**II. Research process: 20%.**

Since the goal is to write a coherent paper with a developed point of view, each student will proceed through a series of assignments:

- 1) Short response pieces on Blackboard Discussion Board or in-class, analyzing common readings and primary and secondary sources (Credit/No Credit)
- 2) A preliminary statement of your burning question and initial sources that sparked your formulation of that question (due Monday September 22, Letter Grade)
- 3) A fully-fledged 5 page *proposal* outlining a sharp set of questions that can be answered with *readily available secondary and primary sources*, and that states a *working hypothesis*, and is followed by an annotated bibliography of *selected* secondary and primary sources (Due September 29, Letter Grade). I will provide a **rubric**. See Blackboard. Annotations should not provide general or exhaustive summaries, rather focused synopses of key claims and evidence discernible in the sources, pertinent to your questions.
- 5) A first draft to be peer-reviewed and critiqued by me (Due
- 6) a final draft. I will divide the class into working "affinity" subgroups to provide support, dialogue, information, and feedback.

**III. First draft: 18-20 pages, including footnotes. 10% Drop Dead Deadline November 3 9AM sharp.**

Simply an incentive to get writing and hand in a decent draft that I and your peer reviewers can critique constructively.

**IV. Final draft: 22-25 pages, not including endnotes and bibliography. 50%.**

**Due December 4 at 5 PM in my office and Safe Assign on Blackboard.**

**Grading Scale:** A+: 98-100; A: 93-97; A-: 90-92; B+: 87-89; B: 83-86; B-: 80-82; C+: 77-79; C: 73-76; C-: 70-72; D+: 67-69; D: 63-66; D-: 60-62; F: 59 and lower

**Academic Honor Code:** I remind you that the URL for the University's Academic integrity policy is <http://saf.dept.uncg.edu/studiscp/Honor.html>. If you have not read it, please do so thoroughly. Turabian, ch. 25 on "Quoting Accurately and Avoiding Plagiarism."

**Course policy on use of electronic devices in class and general etiquette:**

Turn cell phones off unless you are a caretaker or emergency responder. No text messaging will be permitted. Laptops should be used for activities exclusively related to class. The energy of the class visibly declines when people are distracted. Give the class your full attention. Audible private conversations really can distract your classmates and your professors.

## Schedule of Meetings and Assignments

### 8/23: Introductions

#### **Discussion of Sources and Best Practices for Locating Primary and Secondary Materials.**

As soon as possible and definitely by the end of September you will have settled upon a focused research problem and be busy as bees compiling your bibliography of relevant primary and secondary materials. Remember, just because there is an interesting secondary literature does not guarantee that Jackson library or a local repository or the Internet contains primary materials rich enough to satisfy the requirements of an original research paper.

### **8/30: Overview of the “Roosevelt Era” – The first weeks carry a heavy reading load. Get on top of this and you will be glad you did!**

#### **Read:**

Carl N. Degler, “The Third American Revolution,” from *Out of Our Past* (1959, 1970). Degler defined the New Deal for a generation. **On Blackboard.**

Barton J. Bernstein, “The Conservative Achievements of Liberal Reform,” Barton J. Bernstein, ed., *Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History*. New York: Random House, 1969. **Blackboard.**

Polenberg, Richard D. *The Era of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933-1945: A Brief History with Documents*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2000. **Entire.**

**Assignment:** The themes and general questions ought to be clear. How transformative was this period? For whom? What people or events seem most fruitful to give you insights into what catches *your* attention? Write 400-500 words on at least three questions that grabbed you. Post on Blackboard Discussion Board. In this case where our introductory book has a lot of primary sources, quote selectively from the *language* of the historical actors most likely to give insight into the changes or continuities you see as most important.

### **9/2: Introduction to Kennedy-Johnson Liberalism and the Movements of the 1960s**

#### **Read:**

Mackenzie, G. Calvin, and Robert Weisbrot. *The Liberal Hour: Washington and the Politics of Change in the 1960s*. Penguin Books, 2009. **Entire.**

**Assignment:** Again, with 400-500 words on Blackboard Discussion Board, define three questions worth pursuing, something intriguing that you had not known or does not square with what you thought you knew! Be specific as to the principal players and why their actions or ideas need explaining. If your primary interest lies in social movements, you may substitute one of the recommended texts for this one. But get it quickly.

### **9/9: Nineteen Sixty-Three—An Invitation**

This pivotal year is the subject of my second book. I am immersed in almost everything that happened in 1963, although my main focus is on the mass nonviolent uprisings of African Americans and the rapidly changing media of mass communication. These readings expose us to various sources and key questions around the 1963 March on Washington that our texts may have breezed over. As a group you will practice contextualizing different primary sources, reckoning with their contradictions and puzzles. **Assignment:** We will have various in-class primary source exercises, so come prepared to write about and discuss all primary sources. This is not a lengthy reading assignment.

#### **Reading:**

A Philip Randolph, National President, Negro American Labor Council, "Why the Emancipation March on Washington for Jobs?" May 15, 1963. *Papers of a Philip Randolph (microfilm)*, reel 29.

John Kennedy, “Address to the Nation,” June 11, 1963. Video and transcript:

<http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/speech-3375>

Rosenberg, Jonathan, and Zachary Karabell, eds. *Kennedy, Johnson, and the Quest for Justice: The Civil Rights*

*Tapes*. New York: Norton, 2003, "Meeting May 20, 1963," and "Meeting on Civil Rights," August 28, 1963 in pp. 120-140. Pay close attention to the provisions of each Title of the Kennedy bill, and why Title II became the centerpiece. What does the civil rights leadership really want?

Tom Kahn, "March's radical demands point way for struggle," *New America*, 9/24/63,

Malcolm X, "Message to the Grass Roots," November 1963, in George Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks* (NY: 1965), pp. 12-17.

John Lewis, "Address at the March on Washington," Bill Moyer's Vimeo. <http://vimeo.com/70657416> Transcript

Was this a March to ensure passage of the Kennedy bill? What will happen if Title III is not included (1:24)?

Jay Richard Kennedy, "Transcript of 'March on Washington . . . Report by the Leaders,'" Metropolitan Broadcasting Television, August 28, 1963, in *Civil Rights During the Kennedy Administration (Microform) Reel 3, frame 0618*, ProQuest History Vault (Accessed May 2012). Anything about this, the only televised interview program with the March leadership, that might be consistent with Harry Belafonte's claim two days later with Martin Luther King that Jay Kennedy was working for the FBI?

**Read also:**

Turabian, *Manual for Writers*, chs. 1-2, 4. **Start narrowing your questions**, checking available sources with the tools you know and those I am sharing in each class.

**9/16: Posing Questions—Finding Sources**

**Assignment:** Commit yourself to a topic, and turn it into a researchable set of questions. Ransack the bibliographic essays I have reproduced or you have found. Consult the microfilm reel guides that I uploaded to Blackboard in PDF form. Look at one or more of the MANY bibliographies that I have compiled. **Be prepared to announce your commitment and your questions to the class.**

**Workshop at 5 PM:** After an hour we will head to the CITI lab in Jackson library to enjoy a tutorial in the higher arts of searching Library databases relevant to your interests. Conducted by History Library Liaison Kathryn Crowe.

**Reading:** Turabian, *Manual for Writers*, ch. 3. Don't cheat Kate, even if we don't always talk about her!

**9/22: Monday before Class- Your preliminary statement of your burning questions, the scope of your study, and the sources that led you there. On Blackboard. 400 words.**

**9/23: Discussion – Affinity Groups – Exercises TBA on Blackboard**

**9/29: Absolute drop dead deadline for a polished proposal for a research project well underway that can be safely completed within two months! Check Blackboard for Rubric on just what a good proposal does.**

**9/30: Discussion – Affinity Groups – Any Exercises TBA on Blackboard**

**10/7: No class—Research**

**Fall Break – Research! That's what I'll be doing in DC!**

**10/21: It's Coming Together! Updating and Hashing out Issues**

**Read:** Turabian, *Manual for Writers*, ch. 5.

**10/28: No Class—Research and Outlining-Drafting**

Turabian, *Manual for Writers*, chs. 6-7. Do not avoid this assignment. VERY valuable information!

**11/3: Monday, 9AM Sharp: Absolute Drop Dead Hand It In Or Else Deadline for First Draft to Your Peer Reviewers and Me**

**MUST** be submitted in paper to my office and electronically to your peer reviewers. Sorry but there can be no exceptions, and remember, this is 10% of your grade. I already moved it from Friday Oct 31, and I am going to be reading like CRAZY. And you must allow your peer reviewers time to respond. 9AM Sharp!

**11/4: Discussion in Class of Feedback**

**11/11: Revisions – No Class – Or Individual Conferences with Professor**

Turabian, *Manual for Writers*, chs. 9-10. These are really important chapters, and you should make the best use of them indeed.

**11/18: Penultimate Class--Reports**

**11/25: Final Class – Reports** – This is close to the Thanksgiving Holiday – Do not make travel plans before Tuesday evening – Sorry, I did not make the schedule!

**12/4: Thursday – Final Revised Drafts Due in My Office and SafeAssign**