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**History 212-01-04, Spring 2010**  
**The United States Since 1865:**  
**Freedom and Equal Rights (WI)**

Since the Civil War, groups of Americans – in competition, conflict, and coalition – continually debated the meanings of freedom and equal citizenship. What did Americans mean by Liberty? Why so often did it seem that one group's freedom come at the expense of another's? Who at any given time could be included in the circle of "We the People," and on what terms? What kind of social and economic conditions provided fertile ground for the expansion of freedom for all citizens? What rights – civil, political, cultural, economic and social should American citizens (and newcomers) enjoy as a free people? How should these rights be defended or expanded? Were American freedoms somehow dependent upon the expansion of freedom and human rights abroad? And a question especially relevant to the 20th century: *What actions should government take (or avoid) to make these rights real for everyone?* What role did popular movements play in expanding and redefining American rights (such as labor unions or protest organizations)? How did various groups use languages of American freedom and equal rights to protect their interests?

This Writing Intensive course will cover a lot of ground, but at the same time invite you to reflect in a sustained way on the meanings Americans have given to concepts of freedom and equal rights. Ex-slave holders and ex-slaves, nineteenth-century capitalists and laborers, supporters and opponents of women's suffrage and mass immigration at the turn of the 20th century -- all of these people fought for resources and recognition and legal change. They drew on languages of freedom and equal rights found in foundational documents such as the Declaration of Independence and the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> amendments to the Constitution. Often you find groups in coalition as well as conflict. One group's struggle for full citizenship has often helped expand citizenship boundaries for others. The civil rights movement of the 1960s led Congress to abolish the 1920s era "National Origins Quota System" that excluded entire categories of immigrants, for example. Discriminatory in the extreme, the system made most Asians ineligible for citizenship for decades. Another example of how rights reverberated historically between groups: Women gained rights to employment under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, a direct result of African-American protest.

Though concerned with politics and ideas, this is also a *social* history course, concerned with the dreams and experiences of ordinary Americans. We will read the writings and speeches of educated elite Americans: reformers, politicians, Supreme Court justices, and conservative defenders of the status quo. Equally, we will capture the voices of ordinary people, laborers, women, minorities and political dissenters. People who have been compelled to fight for the full exercise or expansion of their rights *within* this country have much to teach U.S. Americans about their meaning, I believe.

NB: With its focus on struggles and debates over the meaning of freedom and equal rights, this course necessarily will neglect many stories, explanations, and controversies some of you might expect in a survey course. So please survey my detailed outline and decide whether these issues fit your interests.

**Course objectives.** At the end of this course, you should be able to:

Place the events, decisions, ideologies, and trends of history in a context that rises above mere remembrance of facts and dates to the level of *interpretation*. You will be able to identify important events, decisions, and trends accurately, because they will become part of larger explanations about

evolving and contested interpretations of freedom and equal rights.

Discuss and debate the merits of differing interpretations offered by those who lived history *and* by historians who write about it. Write short essays that explain the points of view expressed by historical actors. Capture, compare and contrast these viewpoints in historical context.

Through consistent writing, bring together critical tools of analysis and reliable evidence. The case studies especially will ask you to analyze 1) *primary documents* from the past (testimonies, speeches, letters, songs, images) and 2) *secondary historical scholarship* (articles or sections from books written by professional historians who explain, interpret and tell stories derived from their own research).

Through regular writing exercises, take some of the stress out of writing, and learn how to use writing to discover what you think.

Substantially revise and expand upon an early paper to produce an in-depth examination of how one or a couple of specific groups expressed their aspirations in terms of freedom and equal rights.

**Syllabus As Contract:** Please think of this syllabus as a contract. Most of your questions will be answered if you read it carefully. If you feel the need for any clarification, do not hesitate to ask me until you are satisfied that you have a clear idea of what we expect and what your rights are.

### Course Requirements

#### Reading:

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty! An American History*, vol. 2 (New York: Norton Seagull Edition, 2006)

**Textbook Website:** [www.wwnorton/foner](http://www.wwnorton/foner) has chapter summaries and help with key concepts, interviews with the author, supplementary primary source text, audio, and video. You will earn extra points on participation if you can reference some of the primary sources here relevant to the specific day's discussion. For the final paper, I am asking you to research these and other sources relevant to your interests.

**Course Reader available only at Copy King, 611 W. Lee St., Greensboro, ph. 333-9900 (CALL THEM FIRST). Guaranteed ready by Tuesday. This is *only* available at Copy King, and is an excellent low cost alternative to published collections.** I assign several short excerpts each week that speak to themes of equal rights and freedom. Purchasing this convenient reader ensures you will always bring pertinent texts to class.

#### Attendance and Class Preparation:

To make fullest sense of the texts and the historical experiences and interpretations they reveal, you will need to come to class prepared, engage in discussion, and strive to master the main questions and themes. Lectures, discussions, and readings are all legs of a stool. Each class broadens and deepens your individual *and* group understanding of American freedom and equal rights. The class as a whole gets better at understanding and thinking if everyone brings a clear voice to the chorus. If you all make an effort to interact with the professor and each other, the learning process becomes more than the sum of its parts. Miss more than two classes for any reason in your grade will go down.

*You have the right* to my prompt and honest feedback and timely evaluation of your work, and you have the right to honest answers to questions involving class content and methods. If your status becomes problematic, I will inform you prior to the deadline to drop courses without penalty.

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

## **Assignments and Evaluation:**

**Preparation and Class Participation: 20 %.** Bring all of your readings to each class. **How to do well:** Offer an interpretation with reference to relevant evidence (Source, page, person speaking). Or pose good and pertinent questions. Try to stay on topic. Engage each other -- not just the professor -- critically but respectfully. Balance listening and talking (these are obviously equally important to good discussion). It goes without saying that you should respect everyone's opinions and their settled convictions. We are all works in progress. But we will not shy away from critical inquiry into the validity of these opinions and convictions. Sometimes what we think are settled convictions are really only our opinions. But that does not mean that everyone's opinion is equally reasonable and supported by evidence. I think reason and evidence are the ways in which we forge and in fact earn our settled convictions.

### **Quizzes and Short In-class Essays: 20 %.** (Your TEN best will count).

Expect to spend 15 minutes each week at various times demonstrating your understanding of key events and concepts that inform the American equal rights tradition. **Identifications** will ask for short paragraphs explaining the historical significance of something, such as the "14th amendment." **Multiple-choice** questions will measure your ability to make accurate distinctions and understand consequences. **Short essays** will ask focused questions that readings and lectures will prepare you to answer (, i.e. "compare the views of Albert Beveridge and William Graham Sumner on the wisdom of America's imperial acquisition of the Philippines."

**"Freedom Blogs" Under Blackboard "Assignments": 20%. (Your EIGHT best will count). These are due the Saturday preceding each class at NOON. I'll need time to consider them as I strategize for the next class.**

**250-300 words. You will receive A, B, C, or N/C, no credit.** This is the place for your sustained and focused reflections on how different Americans have understood and pursued freedom and equal rights. (These will be either group or individual blogs, depending on how this group works). Satisfactory essays (B grade) will offer generalizations or observations and support them with evidence gleaned from the *voices of past actors* and other forms of evidence. Excellent essays (A grade) do this as well, but also analyze at a higher level, seeing comparisons and contrasts among groups, seeing connections between the various rights people fought for, raising important questions about how rights and freedoms came into conflict. Draw upon the textbook and especially the rich course pack readings. These readings capture in weekly case studies the language and direct experiences of historical actors. Optional but impressive: if a document from the textbook web site proves especially pertinent, include it in the discussion.

### **Two Longer Essays on Two Case Studies – 4-5 Pages Each at 10% Each = 20% (Sign up for one before and one after 3/12 – DUE the day of the discussion )**

These should answer the same questions posed in advance for the week, but in a more systematic way, and in a way that brings into the dialogue several extra sources available on the textbook website or posted on Blackboard or discovered in your research. In no way should you quote another textbook, website author, or God forbid, Wikipedia. Get it from the "horse's mouth" through websites with documentary sources or any number of documentary collections.

### **Final Essay: 20%.**

Do some extra research or start a whole new topic based on some of the questions that came up in class. This is an opportunity for you to go deeper, gather more primary source materials, resolve some of the interpretive problems and questions from the earlier essay. Further instructions to come. See my writing evaluation rubric on the last page.

**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; N/C: 0 (as in No Credit in cases of failure to hand in any work or take the quizzes and final).

**Conferences:** I am here to help with questions, to guide you in developing your ideas and writing strategies, and to give you careful honest evaluation of your work. Do not hesitate to visit my office hours or schedule an appointment if that is not convenient. When appropriate, I will refer you to the Writing Center, an invaluable resource for sharpening your language tools.

**UNCG's Academic Integrity Policy** (<http://saf.dept.uncg.edu/studiscp/Honor.html>).

Violations of this policy include, but are not limited to 1) Cheating on exams; 2) Plagiarism on written work. Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy will be handled in accordance with University procedures (see link above). **Know the definition of plagiarism and the rules of quoting, citing, and paraphrasing sources.** Memorize the library's definition and then take the research tour:

<http://library.uncg.edu/depts/ref/tutorial/integrate/plagdef.asp>

**Rev. Jackson Preaches:** "I firmly believe that the better you *read*, the better you *write*, and vice versa. Both these skills will be central to your worldly success, your wisdom, and the quality of what you give back to the world -- which sorely needs your quality!"

**Course policy on sustainability:**

Campus-wide policies are being adopted that require students, staff and faculty to act in ecologically conscious ways while at UNCG. While in the classroom and while performing required course activities, students should strive to: recycle plastic bottles or bring filtered or tap water in reusable bottles; turn off lights and projectors; recycle office paper, newspapers, and cardboard; try to print papers on two-sided paper; use scratch paper for quizzes. Of course there is no grade, no points for this, just the grade the biosphere gives us at the end of the third millennium! Here are a few links to sustainability information at UNCG, including a recycling guide.

<http://sustain.uncg.edu/> ; <http://www.uncg.edu/student.groups/uncgreen/index.htm>

<http://www.uncg.edu/rcy/index.htm>

**Course policy on use of electronic devices in class:**

All cell phones must be turned 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. This is not meant to curtail "freedom," rather to protect the energy of the class, which visibly declines when people are distracted.

## Schedule of Class Meetings and Assignments

### 1/25: Introductions

#### Personal History and Collective History

#### Boundaries of Freedom in the Early Republic

### 2/1: Reconstruction and African American Rights

Foner, *Give me Liberty!* Ch. 15, 520-555.

1) "To My Old Master, Colonel P.H. Anderson," August 7, 1865, from Leon F. Litwak, *Been in the Storm So Long*, 333-334, by Jourdon Anderson.

2) Excerpts, *Voices of Freedom*, Eric Foner, ed. (NY:2005), 3-9: "Colloquy with Colored Ministers (1865); "Petition of Committee in Behalf of the Freedmen to Andrew Johnson (1865).

3) Richard H. Cain, "An Advocate of Federal Aid for Land Purchase (1868)", in McSevny, ed., *Selected Historical Documents* ((NY, 2001) 17-20.

4) Excerpts, *Black Voices from Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1997), by John David Smith, "Organizing for Equal Rights," 88-97; "The Right to Vote," 98-103.

**Questions:** How did the freedmen define freedom for themselves? Jordan Anderson was an exceptional man who escaped to the North and worked for wages. How did his experience and dreams of freedom compare with the majority of African American ex-slaves who remained behind to work in Southern fields? **Why was land ownership so important** to newly freed African Americans? Why did ex-slaves resist working for wages on plantations? Several of the voices in Smith *Black Voices from Reconstruction* give us clues as to why many African Americans saw **voting as a cornerstone freedom** upon which many other rights depended. What rights and benefits were thought to flow from voting? Finally, what freedoms did whites feel they were losing while blacks gained rights and power under the authority of the Federal Government?

## **2/8: Industrial America and the Republic of Labor**

Foner, *Give me Liberty!* Ch. 16: America's Gilded Age, 1870-1890, 556-596.

John Hollitz, "Craftsman and Buccaneers in an Industrial Age: Terence Powderly and Jay Gould," in *Contending Voices*, Volume 2 (New York, 2007) 22-43.

"Andrew Carnegie on the Triumph of America, 1885" (from *Triumphant Democracy*), "Henry George and the Paradox of Capitalist Growth, 1879" (from *Progress and Poverty*), in Leon Fink, ed., *Major Problems in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* (1993), 1-7, 10-11.

## **2/15: The Crucible of the 1890s and the American Empire**

Foner, *Give me Liberty!* Ch. 17: Freedom's Boundaries at Home and Abroad, 1890-1900, 596-636, Elliot Gorn, et. al., "Building an Empire: America and the Philippines," in *Constructing the American Past*, v. 2 (NY 2005), 81-101.

## **2/22: Progressivism, Women's Rights and Sexual Freedom**

Foner, *Give me Liberty!* Ch. 18: The Progressive Era, 1900-1916, 637-677.

1) Victoria Bissell Brown, "Jane Addams, Progressivism, and Woman Suffrage: An Introduction to 'Why Women Should Vote' (and Text by Jane Addams)." In *One Woman, One Vote*, pp. 194—201.

2) Speeches of Caroline Lowe and Leonora O'Reilly, 1912 in "On Behalf of 7,000,000 Wage Earning Women," from *One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage*, eds. Anne Firor Scott and Andrew MacKay Scott, 122-128.

3) Adela Hunt Logan, "Colored Women As Voters," 1912 in *The South in the History of the Nation*, eds. Link and Wheeler, 117-118.

4) Elliot Gorn, et. al., "The Woman Rebel: Margaret Sanger and the Birth Control Movement," in *Constructing the American Past*, v. 2 (NY 2005), 103-113, 120-123.

## **3/1: World War I and the Right to Say Unpopular Things**

Foner, *Give me Liberty!* Ch. 19: Safe for Democracy: the United States and World War I, 1916-1920, 678-718, and "The Birth of Civil Liberties," 735-738.

1) "Justice Holmes' Civil Liberties Opinions," compiled from *Great American Court Cases, v. 1* (Gale, 1999), 169-175, *Schenck v. United States*, 1919; *Abrams v. United States*, 1919.

2) The following speech ended Eugene Debs in prison under the Espionage Act: "Eugene Debs Lashes Out against World War I," Professor Jackson's excerpts from Debs' Canton Ohio speech, June 15, 1918.

3) Justice Louis Brandeis, Concurring Opinion, *Whitney v. California* 24 U.S. 357, May 16, 1927.

(Though upholding Whitney's conviction, Brandeis laid the groundwork for subsequent civil liberties law – the opinion was finally overturned in 1968).

## **Spring Break**

### **3/15: The 1920s -- Automotive and Aeronautical Freedom -- Civil Liberties**

Foner, *Give me Liberty!* Ch. 20: From Business Culture to Great Depression: the Twenties, 1920-1932, 719-748.

"Sacco and Vanzetti," Chapter 11 from James West Davidson and Mark Hamilton Lytle, *After The Fact: the Art of Historical Detection*, volume 2, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000), 262-284.

"A Statement Defining the Position of the American Civil Liberties Union on the Issues of the United States Today," (1921), from Foner, *Voices of Freedom*, 118-122.

### **3/22: The Great Depression and the New Deal**

Foner, *Give me Liberty!* 748-755 and Ch. 21: The New Deal, 1932-1940, 756-795.

Robert S. McElvaine, ed., *Down and Out in the Great Depression: Letters from the Forgotten Man* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983), selected letters: 1, 2, 11 (Hoover years debate), 38, 43, 54 (racial politics of relief), 56, 73-5 (elderly and children), 81, 82, 83 ("idleness," alcoholism, pride), 104-108 (varieties of conservatives), 140-143 (radicals), 170-171 (the grateful and hopeful).

### **3/29: Freedom Wars: World War II and International Human Rights [This is a comparatively heavy reading week – advance notice – very crucial to your vocabulary of rights!]**

Foner, *Give me Liberty!* Ch. 22-23 (part) 796-860.

1) "FDR's 1944 State of the Union Address," 11 January 1944 (excerpt), in *Bringing Human Rights Home*, eds. Soohoo, et. al., 164-167, 171-173.

2) Elizabeth Borgwardt, "FDR's Four Freedoms and Wartime Transformations in America's Discourse of Rights," in *Bringing Human Rights Home, Volume 1: A History of Human Rights in the United States*, eds. Cynthia Soohoo, et.al. (Westport Connecticut: Praeger, 2008), pp. 32-39.

3) Hope Lewis, "New Human Rights: US Ambivalence toward the International Economic and Social Rights Framework," in *Bringing Human Rights Home*, eds. Soohoo, et. al., 103, 108-121.

4) The United Nations "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights," in Foner, ed. *Voices of Freedom*, 186-191.

### **4/5: What Price Liberty? Cold War, Consumer Society, and the Limits of the New Deal Coalition**

Foner, *Give me Liberty!* Ch. 23-24: 860-899.

Thomas J. Sugrue, "Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and the Reaction against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940-1964," *Journal of American History* (September 1995), 551-552, 564-578.

**4/8: One month until final paper is due. Give me one page on who or what you wish to research and write about today. Post on Blackboard Discussion Board.**

### **4/12: Freedom Now! The Black Freedom Struggle and the Spirit of the 1960s**

Foner, *Give me Liberty!* 899-956 (skip material on feminism and Vietnam for next week).

Thomas F. Jackson, "Bread of Freedom: Martin Luther King Junior and Human Rights," *OAH Magazine of History* (April 2008), 14-16.

Michael Honey, "Forty Years since King: Labor Rights Are Human Rights," *OAH Magazine of History* (April 2008), 18-20.

Martin Luther King, Jr., "If the Negro Wins, Labor Wins," December 11, 1961, in Washington, ed., *A Testament of Hope*, Harper, 1986, pp. 201-207.

Martin Luther King, Jr. "Testimony," December 15, 1966, in U.S. Senate, Subcommittee on Executive Reorganization, Committee on Government Operations, *Federal Role in Urban Affairs* (Washington, GPO, 1967), pp. 2967-2977, 2980-82, 2996.

### **4/19: Men and Women: Vietnam and the Women's Movement**

Foner, *Give Me Liberty!* Ch. 25, material on Vietnam and Feminism

John Hollitz, "The Battles of Vietnam: Robert McNamara and Jan Barry," in *Contending Voices*,

v. 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2007), 231-252.

John Hollitz and A. James Fuller, "From Mystique to Militance: Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem," in *Contending Voices*, volume 2 (NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2003), 247-65.

"The Politics of Housework" privately published by Pat Mainardi of Redstockings

#### **4/26: The Rise of Conservatism**

Foner, *Give me Liberty!* Ch. 26: The Triumph of Conservatism, 1969-1988, 957-995.

John Hollitz, "Conservatism and the Limits of Consumer Capitalism: Irving Kristol and Ralph Nader," in *Contending Voices* v. 2 (New York, 2007), 292-314.

"Pat Robertson Launches His Presidential Bid, September 17, 1986, in Gorn, et.al. *Constructing the American Past*, v. 2., 314-19

P.J. O'Rourke, "Speech Given to Libertarians, May 6, 1993," 319-20.

#### **5/1: Reviewing the 1990s and Discussion of Student Revisions**

Foner, *Give Me Liberty!* Ch. 27.

**5/8: Final revised paper** due during the exam period, 10 PM, hard copy to me as well as electronic submission to Blackboard SAFE ASSIGN (program checking originality of writing and preventing intentional or inadvertent plagiarism).

#### **Appendix**

A typology of freedom -- Useful terms

Free labor -- owning oneself and buying and selling one's labor on an open market is the best way to "better one's condition" and "reap the fruits of our labor." -- Abraham Lincoln

Business freedom -- "liberty of contract" between individuals; "rights of property" unfettered by government or trade unionism

"Landed independence" -- ownership of land as the basis of independent citizenship

Freedom as equal political participation (only possible of course in collective efforts) -- voting rights and more -- evident in the woman suffrage era (1848-1919), Reconstruction, civil rights and war on poverty (the 1960s)

"Labor Republicanism" -- 19th century trade unions ideas of "cooperative commonwealth" and free association and bargaining through trade unions -- workers' rights

Immigration, settlement and cultural freedom (Indians, immigrants)

Imperial freedom and civilization -- idea that the "American race" has a destiny and duty to "uplift" backward peoples as a way of spreading freedom (and American interests) abroad

Personal freedom, sexual freedom, privacy rights (Margaret Sanger, birth control, contemporary abortion debates)

Civil rights -- the idea that all citizens should have free and equal access to private and public accommodations and institutions that make life comfortable and allow people to thrive.

Civil liberties -- free speech, free press, artistic freedom (against the power of government, powerful corporations, or self-appointed patriotic mobs)

Consumer freedom -- the idea that the cornerstone of freedom is freedom of choice in a growing market of consumer goods

Progressive freedom -- the idea that an activist government is not a threat but an enhancement in protecting the public interest (especially child welfare, maternal health) against powerful industrial and commercial "interests."

"Freedom from Want" -- the idea that citizens have a right to "security," and that freedom cannot flourish unless society meets the basic needs of everyone -- The Popular Front, the New Deal

"The free world" -- idea grounded in Woodrow Wilson's vision of an international order where all nations can be self determining and free trade will bring prosperity to all, boiled down during the Cold War to a defense of "free enterprise" in the face of worldwide communist threats.

Rubric for Evaluation of Written Work

	Poor	Needs Work	Good	Great
<b>Sentence composition:</b> Are the sentences complete and grammatical, the words well-chosen?				
<b>Paragraph Composition:</b> Does each paragraph have a controlling idea and does it move our understanding forward in a clear direction? Are there transitions between paragraphs that make for a cohesive essay that develops in a clear way?				
<b>Argumentation and evidence:</b> Do you paraphrase well the viewpoints of various historical actors, and integrate the best direct quotes into your prose? Does the evidence support what you are saying?				
<b>Relevance:</b> Are the points you make directly pertinent to important questions raised by that week by the instructor or your peers in the other posts?				
<b>Imagination:</b> Are you able to combine intellectual comprehension with emotional empathy for the experiences and actions of past actors? Can you draw connections or parallels across time with other periods or with today?				