

HISTORY 702: Colloquium in American History since 1865
Spring 2014
Bolton

Office: MHRA 2135
Office Hours: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. M, or by appointment
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This class will introduce students to some of the major interpretations and works about American history since 1865.

Student Learning Outcomes:

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

1. Discuss some of the major themes of United States history since 1865.
2. Analyze how historians have described the history of various topics of United States history since 1865.

Readings

Available at the UNCG Bookstore (and many other locations):

David Blight, Race and Reunion
Jacquelyn Dowd Hall and others, Like a Family
Patricia Limerick, The Legacy of Conquest
Emily Rosenberg, Spreading the American Dream
Daniel Okrent, Last Call
Mae Ngai, Impossible Subjects
David Kennedy, The American People in the Great Depression
Lizabeth Cohen, The Consumer's Republic
Melvyn Leffler, For the Soul of Mankind
Adam Rome, The Bulldozer in the Countryside
Hasan Jeffries, Bloody Lowndes
Ruth Rosen, The World Split Open (rev. ed.)
Darren Dochuk, From Bible Belt to Sunbelt

The other readings mentioned in the syllabus are available electronically either on blackboard or through one of UNCG's electronic databases.

Schedule

January 27: Race and Reunion after the Civil War

Blight, Race and Reunion; Foner, “The Making of Radical Reconstruction” (blackboard)

Additional Reading: Edward Blum, Reforging the White Republic

February 3: The New South

Hall et al., Like a Family

Additional Reading: Crystal Feimster, Southern Horrors

February 10: Western Settlement and the Frontier

Limerick, Legacy of Conquest; Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” (blackboard)

Additional reading: William Cronon, Nature’s Metropolis

February 17: American Imperialism

Rosenberg, Spreading the American Dream; Williams, “Imperial Anticolonialism” (blackboard); Paul A. Kramer, “Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule between the British and United States Empires, 1880-1910,” Journal of American History 88 (March 2002): 1315-1353 (JSTOR)

Additional reading: Gail Bederman, Manliness and Civilization

February 24: Reform Movements

Okrent, Last Call; Postel, “Modern Times” (blackboard)

Additional Reading: Robert D. Johnston, The Radical Middle Class

March 3: Immigration

Ngai, Impossible Subjects

Additional reading: John Bodnar, The Transplanted

March 17: The New Deal

Kennedy, The American People in the Great Depression; Bernstein, “The Conservative Achievements of Liberal Reform” (blackboard)

Additional reading: Lizabeth Cohen, Making a New Deal (2nd ed.)

March 24: Consumer Culture

Cohen, A Consumer’s Republic

Additional reading: Nelson Lichtenstein, The Retail Revolution

March 31: The Cold War

Leffler, For the Soul of Mankind

Additional reading: John Fousek, To Lead the Free World

April 7: Suburbanization

Rome, The Bulldozer in the Countryside

Additional reading: Kenneth Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier

April 14: Civil Rights

Jeffries, Bloody Lowndes; Hall, “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past” Journal of American History v. 91 (March 2005): 1233-1263 (JSTOR); Ward, “‘A War for States’ Rights’” (blackboard)

Additional reading: Martha Biondi, To Stand and Fight

April 21: American Women’s Movement

Rosen, The World Split Open; Schafly, “What’s Wrong with ‘Equal Rights’ for Women?” (blackboard)

Additional reading: Alice Kessler-Harris, In Pursuit of Equity

April 29: American Conservatism

Dochuk, From Bible Belt to Sunbelt

Additional reading: Kevin Kruse, White Flight

Assignments

Each student should write four essays (three of 4-5 pages and one of 6-7 pages) on four different topics listed in the syllabus. Essays are due at the class meeting in which the topic is covered (no exceptions!). The longer essay should be written for the week you are assigned an extra book to read. These essays should represent your analysis and commentary on the issues and/or arguments raised by the readings. You should neither merely summarize the readings nor ramble incoherently. For the longer essay, you will most certainly want to compare and contrast how the two books you read approach the particular historical question(s) we are examining. Overall, you should address what you have read in some creative and brilliant way. You can discuss any subject, but your essays should obviously focus on the assigned readings and should not focus too narrowly on some trivial point. Of course, your essays should be well written and well organized. Essays should be typed, double-spaced; you need to use correct Chicago Manual of Style citation in your essays. For the week in which you have the extra book to read, you will also need to prepare a one-page précis for the extra book that should be distributed to me and the remainder of the class by 5 p.m. on the Friday before the Monday class in which that topic will be discussed.

One of the major assignments for this class is to do the weekly reading and engage with the material you encounter. A sizeable part of your grade will be determined by your participation in discussion opportunities. Non-participation or weak participation will obviously result in a low grade. I define participation qualitatively, not quantitatively. In addition to participating in our weekly class discussions, you will have a chance to discuss the readings on blackboard. Also, for the week that you have the extra book to read, you will serve as class discussion leader that week, which will include initiating the discussion about that week's readings. At the mid-point of the semester, I will give you a chance to offer a self-evaluation of your participation in the class.

A take-home final exam will be given for this class, which will, of course, be comprehensive.

Grading:

Grades will be based on class participation, including performance as discussion leader (30 percent), writing assignments (45 percent), and the take-home exam (25 percent).

Attendance:

Attendance at all class meetings is expected. If you have to miss class, you need to let me know before class begins if at all possible. Also, you will need to prepare a written summary on the readings for any week you miss class (due the following class meeting).

Academic Honor Code:

All students are expected to know and abide by the UNCG Academic Honor Code.