

HISTORY 702: Colloquium in American History since 1865
Spring 2017
Bolton

Office: MHRA 2111
Office Hours: 12:30 – 1:30 M, 11-12 W, 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):

Gary Gerstle, Liberty and Coercion
Charles Lane, The Day Freedom Died
William Cronon, Nature's Metropolis
Thomas Andrews, Killing for Coal
Daniel Okrent, Last Call
Christopher Cappozzola, Uncle Sam Wants You
Mae Ngai, Impossible Subjects
Ira Katznelson, Fear Itself
Kevin Kruse, One Nation Under God
Lizabeth Cohen, A Consumers' Republic
Melvyn Leffler, For the Soul of Mankind
Danielle McGuire, At the Dark End of the Street
Joseph Crespino, Strom Thurmond's America

The other readings mentioned in the syllabus are available electronically either on Canvas (under Modules—eReserves) or through JSTOR.

Schedule

January 30: American History Since 1865: An Overview

Gerstle, Liberty and Coercion

February 6: Reconstruction

Lane, The Day Freedom Died; Fitzgerald, “Reconstruction Politics and the Politics of Reconstruction” (Canvas)

February 13: Western Settlement and the Frontier

Cronon, Nature’s Metropolis; Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” (Canvas)

Additional reading: Louis Warren, Buffalo Bill’s America

February 20: Industrialization and Workers

Andrews, Killing for Coal

Additional reading: Charles Postel, The Populist Vision

February 27: Reform Movements

Okrent, Last Call; Johnston, “The Possibilities of Politics,” (Canvas)

Additional Reading: Daniel Rodgers, Atlantic Crossings

March 6: World War I

Cappozzola, Uncle Sam Wants You

Additional reading: David Kennedy, Over Here

March 20: Immigration

Ngai, Impossible Subjects

Additional reading: John Bodnar, The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America

March 27: The New Deal

Katznelson, Fear Itself; Cowie and Salvatore, "The Long Exception: Rethinking the Place of the New Deal in American History," International Labor and Working-Class History 74 (Fall 2008): 1-32 [JSTOR]

Additional reading: Lizabeth Cohen, Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939

April 3: Religion and Politics in 20th Century America

Kruse, One Nation Under God

Additional Reading: David Chappell, A Stone of Hope

April 10: The Cold War

Leffler, For the Soul of Mankind; Hopkins, "Continuing Debate and New Approaches in Cold War History," The Historical Journal 50 (December 2007): 913-934 [JSTOR]

Additional reading: Ellen Schrecker, Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America

April 17: Consumer Culture

Cohen, A Consumers' Republic

Additional reading: Nelson Lichtenstein, The Retail Revolution

April 24: Civil Rights

McGuire, At the Dark End of the Street; Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past" Journal of American History 91 (March 2005): 1233-1263 [JSTOR]

Additional reading: Tim Tyson, Radio Free Dixie

May 1: American Conservatism

Crespino, Strom Thurmond's America; Phillips-Fein, "Conservatism" (Canvas)

Additional reading: Bruce Schulman, The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics

Assignments

Each student should write three essays (4-5 pages) on three different topics listed in the syllabus. These essays—thought pieces—should represent your *analysis* and *commentary* on the ideas and/or arguments raised by the readings. You may also want to explore how the readings fit within the larger historiography for that week's topic. You should neither merely summarize the readings nor ramble incoherently. You can discuss any subject, but your essays should focus on the assigned readings and should not focus too narrowly on some trivial point. All essays should be well written and well organized. They should be typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins; you need to use correct Chicago Manual of Style citation in your essays. All essays are due at the class meeting in which the topic is covered—no exceptions! You cannot write an essay during the same week you complete your additional book assignment.

Each student will be assigned a book from the additional reading lists and, for that week, will complete an assignment that will draw on the book's content and arguments. Additional information about this assignment will be provided in a separate handout.

One of the major assignments for this class is to do the weekly readings and engage with the material you encounter. Non-participation or weak participation during class discussion of the weekly readings will obviously result in a low class participation grade. I define participation qualitatively, not quantitatively, so speaking a lot is not automatically a sign of effective participation. In addition to participating in our weekly class discussions, you can discuss the readings on weekly discussion threads I will set up on Canvas. I will read all the posts, and I encourage whatever participation in this format people would like to contribute. Canvas discussion is not required, but I will factor any contributions through this format into the final class participation grade. At the mid-point of the semester, I will give you a chance to offer a self-evaluation of your participation in the class.

There will be an in-class final exam for this class, which will, of course, be comprehensive.

Grading:

Grades will be based on class participation (20 percent), writing assignments (30 percent), additional reading assignment (20 percent) and the final exam (30 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 all the assigned readings for any week you miss class (due the following class meeting). Failure to complete these make-up summaries will count against your final class participation grade.

Academic Integrity Policy:

All students are expected to know and abide by the UNCG Academic Integrity Policy.