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### **American Popular Cultures, 1945-2001**

21:512:235

Spring 2022

Location: 110 Warren Street, 410 (formerly Bradley Hall)

Class Meeting Time: Tuesdays, 2:30-5:10

#### **Summary:**

Welcome!

This Core class in U.S. History course investigates popular cultures in the United States from the end of World War II in 1945 until 2001 in relation to particularly significant political developments and social movements. With a focus on television, music, and film, we ask how consuming popular culture mattered to the cold war, to the civil rights movement, and to the rise of the conservative right in the 1970s and 80s. What do television, music and films tell us about changing cultural and social values in a given time period? What role did popular culture play in social movements and state policies?

#### **Format and Technology:**

As of this writing, we will be meeting on zoom for the first two weeks of the semester, and thereafter we will meet each week in person. You **must** have your cameras on for our zoom meetings to be counted as present for the day, unless you are in touch with me in advance and receive permission to have cameras off.

If we need to modify the current plans for reasons of public health, we will adapt and have weekly synchronous meetings on zoom. We will make other adjustments accordingly.

To prepare for our weekly class meetings (on zoom and then in person), you must complete weekly reading, watching, listening, and writing assignments in advance of each class session. Plan to spend at least two hours a week on homework for this class. Online weekly discussion questions are due on Canvas by Monday night, 10 pm.

In contrast to most high school history classes, there is no single text book. Instead, our focus is primary sources from the periods we are studying, and secondary scholarship by historians about those sources. All required readings and viewings will be available on Canvas, organized in modules by date. It is important that you have the required readings with you during our discussions. We prefer that you print out hard copy if possible, but if you have your laptop open during class, you should only be looking at class-related materials. Students who we see texting, shopping, or doing anything online unrelated to class during our meetings will be marked as absent for that day.

I will be using announcements and email through Canvas to communicate. Please make sure that you are able to receive these emails and announcements. If you are not receiving my communications and announcements through Canvas, please reach out ASAP, so that we can address. You are always free to email me not through Canvas, at [feldst@rutgers.edu](mailto:feldst@rutgers.edu).

If you are new to Canvas, please take some time to “poke around” and get more comfortable. There are online tutorials for students as well.

#### **Grading and Requirements:**

- Attendance and class participation. **15%**
  - o This includes: showing up prepared; consistent and thoughtful participation; completing individual and group work that we will be doing in class.
- **Three** in-class exams. **40%**
  - o Feb 15 (15%, including a 3-page take home essay due that day)
  - o March 15 (15%, including a 3-page take home essay due that day)
  - o April 12 (10%, no take home essay component)
- One 5-6 page essay. **20%**
  - o Due Friday April 29; revised and expanded from one of the take home essays
- Weekly required online work. This may include weekly discussion questions and/or annotation of required sources, to be completed by Monday night, 10 pm. **15%**.

- Project. More TBA. **10%**.
  - o Due April 19

**1. Attendance and Class Participation. (15%)** This crucial component of the course includes:

- Showing up to our class meetings prepared. Attendance *combined with* consistent and thoughtful participation in class discussions and smaller group discussions, and in-class written work is required. To repeat, while we are on zoom, you **must** have your cameras on for our zoom meetings to be counted as present for the day, unless you are in touch with me in advance and receive permission to have cameras off.

- Your comments must suggest that you've completed all of the weekly requirements. This class is *not* a passive learning environment, and simply showing up is not enough to succeed in this component of the course. Because participation is so important, missing more than two classes without an excused absence will affect your final grade. If you miss one meeting, that will be an excused absence, no questions asked. If you miss more than one, you must be in touch with me for it to be an excused absence. To repeat, more than **two unexcused absences total** will affect a final grade. **Any student who misses four or more class sessions --through any combination of excused and unexcused absences-- may not earn credit in this class.** Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F. Please silence cell phones and put all other devices away.

- All of that being said, communication is key: Please feel free to be in touch at any time to let me know what's going on that may be having an impact on your participation and attendance in the class. It's always best to be in touch earlier about problems or potential problems rather than waiting until later.

**2. Three in-class exams. (40%, combined)** The class is divided into three chronological units. At the end of each unit, there will be an in-class exam with a focus on factual material from that unit. These exams will consist of identifications and short answer question; the first two exams will also include a take-home essay (3-4 pages). You will get several topics from which to choose a week in advance. The take home is due on canvas by the time you come to class on exam day to take the test. The exam for Unit III does NOT include a take home essay.

- o Feb 15 (15%, including a 3-page take home essay due that day)
- o March 22 (15%, including a 3-page take home essay due that day)... **Exact date TBD.**
- o April 12 (10%, no take home essay component)

**3. One 5-6 page essay. 20%**

- Everyone will choose one of their take-home essays from one of the first two exams to revise and expand into a final essay. The final revised/expanded essay will give you an opportunity to improve on the work that you've done and will require you to engage with additional sources from the syllabus. Your grade will be based on how you engage with the process as a whole and not just your final essay. This is not a research paper and you will not be drawing on any materials that are not already required on the syllabus.

- o A one-on-one meeting with either Larry or me is required in the week or two before this essay is due.
- o Due Friday April 29; revised and expanded from one of the take home essays.

**4. Weekly required online work (15%).** See the discussion board on canvas for your weekly written assignments. This may include weekly discussion questions and/or annotation of required sources. You will receive a  $\surd$ ,  $\surd+$ ,  $\surd-$  on these assignments and not letter grades, but together, this online work counts toward 15% of your final grade. These must be completed and online by Monday night at 10 pm.

**5. Project. (10%)** More TBA, but this will be an opportunity to engage with the material and themes from the class through powerpoint or video presentations (and not traditional academic essay-writing); it will also be a way to connect the material that we are studying from the past to your current lives.

- o Due April 19.

**Finally-**

Please keep in mind that this syllabus is a work in progress. We will likely make some changes along the way, and make definite some of what it still open-ended. Especially during these first two weeks of online learning, we all need to be flexible and patient—with ourselves and with each other. Again, communication is key. Please always feel free to reach out with any questions and concerns you may have.

**Citizenship, Accommodations, and Support:**

--Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. **Failure to quote or cite properly is plagiarism, whether intentional or not.** We will discuss this in class during the semester, but at any time, if you are uncertain about these matters, consult me. In ALL of your written work—graded essays, response papers, and weekly written assignments-- you must cite and provide a reference for all language **and/or** ideas that are not your own. The essays for this class are based ONLY on required readings on the syllabus. You need not—and indeed should not—be going to any sources beyond the syllabus as you write your papers. However, should you make the choice to look at other sources, you still **must** cite those sources. Violations of the university honor code will be prosecuted to the full extent that is permitted.

- The department **requires** that the following honor pledge is written and signed on every exam, paper, or other major course assignment that is submitted for grading (for our purposes, this includes two take-home essay components of the exams and your final revised/expanded essay):

**“On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).”**

- For more information about academic integrity, see:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>

--Note that lectures and materials utilized in this course, including but not limited to videocasts, podcasts, visual presentations, assessments, and assignments, are protected by United States copyright laws as well as Rutgers University policy. As the instructor of this course, I possess sole copyright ownership. You are permitted to take notes for personal use or to provide to a classmate also currently enrolled in this course. Under no other circumstances is distribution of recorded or written materials associated with this course permitted to any internet site or similar information-sharing platform without my express written consent. Doing so is a violation of the university's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

These copyright protections extend to original papers you produce for this course. In the event that I seek to share your work further, I will first obtain your written consent to do so. Finally, as the instructor for this course, I have the responsibility to protect students' right to privacy. Classroom recordings of students will therefore be treated as educational records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the U.S. federal law that governs access to educational information and records. Instructors and students must provide notification if any part of online sessions are going to be recorded; such recordings cannot be circulated outside the course.

--This class welcomes all learners, and Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students and the University as a whole.

- For support and accommodations, please see: [student accommodations and support statement](#).

--RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

- **For Individuals with Disabilities:** The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, ODS will send a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) to both the student and to faculty. If you need accommodations please plan accordingly and leave time; this should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at [ods.rutgers.edu](http://ods.rutgers.edu). Contact ODS at (973)353-5375 or via email at [ods@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:ods@newark.rutgers.edu).

- **Remote tutoring** is available at the writing center, and I may advise you to seek additional support for your final essays especially. For the writing center, please see: <http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter>.

- **For Individuals who are Pregnant:** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy. Students may contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance at (973) 353-1906 or via email at [TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu).

- **For Absence Verification:** The Office of the Dean of Students can provide assistance for absences related to religious observance, emergency or unavoidable conflict (e.g., illness, personal or family emergency, etc.). Students should refer to [University Policy 10.2.7](#) for information about expectations and responsibilities. The Office of the Dean of Students can be contacted by calling (973) 353-5063 or emailing [deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu).

• **For Individuals with temporary conditions/injuries:** The Office of the Dean of Students can assist students who are experiencing a temporary condition or injury (e.g., broken or sprained limbs, concussions, or recovery from surgery). Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury should submit a request using the following link: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>.

• **For English as a Second Language (ESL):** The Program in American Language Studies (PALS) can support students experiencing difficulty in courses due to English as a Second Language (ESL) and can be reached by emailing [PALS@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:PALS@newark.rutgers.edu) to discuss potential supports.

• **For Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment:** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance can assist students who are experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking. Students can report an incident to the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance by calling (973) 353-1906 or emailing [TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu). Incidents may also be reported by using the following link: [tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm](https://tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm). For more information, students should refer to the University's Student Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence, Relationship Violence, Stalking and Related Misconduct located at <http://compliance.rutgers.edu/title-ix/about-title-ix/title-ix-policies/>.

• **For support related to interpersonal violence:** The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance can provide any student with confidential support. The office is a **confidential resource** and does *not* have an obligation to report information to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Students can contact the office by calling (973) 353-1918 or emailing [run.vpva@rutgers.edu](mailto:run.vpva@rutgers.edu). There is also a confidential text-based line available to students; students can text (973) 339-0734 for support.

• **For Crisis and Concerns:** The Campus Awareness Response and Education (CARE) Team works with students in crisis to develop a support plan to address personal situations that might impact their academic performance. Students, faculty and staff may contact the CARE Team by using the following link: [tinyurl.com/RUNCARE](https://tinyurl.com/RUNCARE) or emailing [careteam@rutgers.edu](mailto:careteam@rutgers.edu).

• **For Stress, Worry, or Concerns about Well-being:** The Counseling Center has confidential therapists available to support students. Students should reach out to the Counseling Center to schedule an appointment: [counseling@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:counseling@newark.rutgers.edu) or (973) 353-5805. If you are not quite ready to make an appointment with a therapist but are interested in self-help, check out *TAO at Rutgers-Newark* for an easy, web-based approach to self-care and support: <https://tinyurl.com/RUN-TAO>.

• **For emergencies,** call 911 or contact Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD) by calling (973) 353-5111.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE:**

### **UNIT I: The Cold War**

#### **Tuesday, Jan 18. Introductions and Preliminary Questions**

##### **Required Reading and Watching (before our first REMOTE meeting):**

• Read: the syllabus in its entirety. Please come to class with any question you may have- either about content or organization.

• Watch: *Father Knows Best*, "Lesson in Citizenship" (October 10, 1954, Peter Tewksbury, director). The link to this episode is on canvas, under modules- organized by date.

• Complete the *Father Knows Best* watching guide, also on canvas; you may post your answers under discussions.

**Note:** Complete this work if you are able to do so before our first class meeting.

## **Tuesday, Jan. 25. Television Families, Ethnicity and Gender in the Cold War**

### **Required Reading, Viewing, and Listening:**

- Watch: *I Love Lucy*, “Job Switching” (September 15, 1952, William Asher, director)
- Read: Gustavo Perez Firmat, *Life on the Hyphen: The Cuban-American Way* (Texas, 1994), chapter one, “I Love Ricky,” pp. 23-45.

• **OPTIONAL:** Listen: Sonari Ginton, “How Desi Invented Television,” *National Public Radio* (Planet Money), Jan 22, 2021. <https://www.npr.org/2021/01/22/959609533/how-desi-invented-television>

### **Required Online Work:**

- See the discussion board.

## **Tuesday, Feb. 1. Television, News, and Entertainment**

### **Required Reading, Viewing:**

- Read: Thomas Doherty, *Cold War, Cool Medium: Television, McCarthyism, and American Culture* (NY: Columbia, 2003):
  - chapter 8, “Edward R. Murrow Slays the Dragon of Joseph McCarthy,” pp. 161-178 (the paragraph that ends “television grabbed the glory at the finish line”), and 184-188;
  - chapter 9, “The Army-McCarthy Hearings,” pp. 189-214 (but focus on pp. 204-214).

• Read: Edward R. Murrow, “A Report on Senator Joseph R. McCarthy,” (March 9, 1954), written transcript: [https://www.matermiddlehigh.org/ourpages/auto/2009/12/3/56937061/Edward%20R\\_%20Murrow-%20A%20Report%20on%20Senator%20Joseph%20R\\_%20McCarthy.pdf](https://www.matermiddlehigh.org/ourpages/auto/2009/12/3/56937061/Edward%20R_%20Murrow-%20A%20Report%20on%20Senator%20Joseph%20R_%20McCarthy.pdf)

• Watch: Edward R. Murrow, “A Report on Senator Joseph R. McCarthy,” (March 1954): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K8lji1075AY>

- Read: the “Army-McCarthy Hearings” (1954), excerpts: <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6444>;
- Watch: Excerpt, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Po5GIFba5Yg>

### **Required Online Work and Source Annotation:**

- See the discussion board.

## **Tuesday, Feb 8. Horror- Screening Cold War Fears**

### **Required Reading and Viewing:**

- Read: Matthew W. Dunne, *A Cold War State of Mind: Brainwashing and Postwar American Society* (Amherst MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013), chapter 2: “The Many Faces of the Communist Enemy,” pp. 52-59, pp. 69-73 (beginning with the last paragraph on p. 69).
- Read: Cyndy Hendershot, *Paranoia, the Bomb, and 1950s Science Fiction Films* (Bowling Green OH: Bowling Green State University Press, 1999), “Introduction,” pp. 1-2; AND Chapter 3: “The Invaded Body: Paranoia and Radiation Anxiety in *Invaders from Mars*, *It Came from Outer Space*, and *Invasion of the Body-Snatchers*,” pp. 43-50. (beginning with the second full paragraph on p. 43).

- Watch: *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956)

Click above or use the following link to go directly to the Library page with access to the film: <https://bit.ly/3i0ev2E>. Then click on "Swank Digital Campus" next to the link icon to open the film on your computer. You will need to sign in to your library account to watch. To watch on a phone or tablet you may have to download the Swank Media Player app from your app store.

### **Required Online Work:**

- See the discussion board.

### **Tuesday, Feb. 15:**

In-class exam

Take home essay due on canvas BEFORE class.

Transition to Unit II

## **UNIT II: Music and Civil Rights**

### **Tuesday, Feb. 22. Jazz and Civil Rights**

#### **Required Reading, Listening, Viewing**

- Read: “Fables of Faubus, by Charles Mingus,” *The Music Aficionado*, December 14, 2016: <https://musicaficionado.blog/2016/12/14/fables-of-faubus-by-charles-mingus/>
- .. • Read: Marc Anthony Neal, “Max Roach’s *Freedom Now Suite*: An Early Soundtrack to Black Lives Matter,” North Carolina Arts Council, Feb. 20, 2019.
- Read: Martin Luther King, speech written for the 1964 Jazz Festival in Berlin: <https://jazzineurope.mfmedia.nl/2019/01/martin-luther-king-at-the-berlin-jazz-fest-in-1964/>

#### **4 SONGS:**

- Watch **and** listen **and** read lyrics: Charles Mingus, “Fables of Faubus”:
  1. on the album, *Mingus Ah Um* (1959): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l24FZCmtY0Q>
  2. on the album released a year later, *Charles Mingus Presents Charles Mingus* (1960): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QT2-iobVcdw>
 Read lyrics: <http://www.bluesforpeace.com/lyrics/fables-of-faubus.htm>
- Watch **and** listen **and** read lyrics: Max Roach and Abbey Lincoln, *We Insist!: Max Roach’s Freedom Now Suite* (1960)
  1. “Triptych: Prayer/Protest/Peace” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kMaUDAeiSIY;>
  2. “Driva Man” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EpTKLan7Mm4&list=PL2A4FA867F958DFF8>
 Lyrics: <https://genius.com/Max-roach-driva-man-lyrics>
- Read: Ira Gitler, “Abbey Lincoln: Review,” (of the album *Straight Ahead*), *Down Beat*, November 9, 1961, pp. 35-36.

#### **Required Online Work:**

- See the discussion board.

### **Tuesday, March 1. “We Shall Overcome” and Freedom Songs**

#### **Required Reading, Listening, Viewing**

- Listen: David Bianculli, "Bernice Johnson Reagon on Leading Freedom Songs During the Civil Rights Movement," *Fresh Air*, June 19, 2020: <https://www.npr.org/2020/06/19/880245261/bernice-johnson-reagon-on-leading-freedom-songs-during-the-civil-rights-movement>
- Listen: Scott Simon, "'Songs of Salvation': Remembering Fannie Lou Hamer's Music," *Weekend Edition Saturday*, July 18, 2015 [https://www.npr.org/2015/07/18/423605660/songs-of-salvation-remembering-fannie-lou-hamers-music:](https://www.npr.org/2015/07/18/423605660/songs-of-salvation-remembering-fannie-lou-hamers-music)

• Listen **and** Read: Fannie Lou Hamer, “Testimony Before the Credential Committee, Democratic National Convention,” August 22, 1964.

-<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRCUUzpfV7k>

-<http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/sayitplain/flhamer.html>

#### **4 SONGS:**

• Listen **and** Watch: “We Shall Overcome,” TWO versions.

- Pete Seeger, “We Shall Overcome”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1osKWCDX140>

- Freedom Singers, “We Shall Overcome”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZrpmwWG2fC4>

• Listen **and** Watch: “This Little Light of Mine,” TWO versions:

- The Freedom Singers, “This Little Light of Mine,” *Newport Broadside: Topical Songs at the Newport Folk Festival, 1963*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOZJg2KyP5M>

- Sam Cooke, “This Little Light of Mine, Copacabana, NY, 1964:

<https://www.npr.org/2010/01/18/99315652/songs-of-the-civil-rights-movement> (scroll down, it’s the 4<sup>th</sup> recording).

#### **Required Online Work:**

• See the discussion board.

### **Tuesday, March 8. Beyond “Freedom Songs”: Nina Simone as Case Study**

#### **Required Reading, Viewing, Listening**

• Read: Tammy L. Kernodle, “‘I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to be Free’: Nina Simone and the Redefining of Freedom Songs in the 1960s,” *Journal for the Society of American Music* 2 (no.3, 2008): 295-317, focus on:

- From the start of essay through the second-to-last-paragraph on p. 298 (finishing with the sentence, “Nevertheless...”)

- p. 302, second paragraph (“Simone’s transition”) through last full paragraph on p. 305... BUT, you don’t need to focus much on her musical breakdown of the song.

- p. 313, last paragraph (starting with “In late 1968”) to the end.

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/S1752196308080097>

• Listen: Nina Simone, “Mississippi Goddam” (1964, performance at Carnegie Hall):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4tHYGfRot5w>

• Read lyrics: <https://genius.com/Nina-simone-mississippi-goddam-lyrics>

• Read: Martin Luther King, *Why We Can’t Wait* (NY: Signet Books, 1964), excerpts.

#### **Required Online Work and Source Annotation:**

• See the discussion board.

### **Tuesday, March 15:**

Spring break, no class

### **Tuesday, March 22:**

In-class Exam 2

Take home essay due in class

Transition to Unit III.

**NOTE: FINAL DATE FOR EXAM 2, TBD; WE WILL DISCUSS AT OUR FIRST CLASS MEETING**

### **UNIT III: The “New Right” and Film**

#### **Tuesday, March 29: Backlash? “Small” Films, Racial Politics and Ethnicity**

##### **Required Reading, Viewing**

- Thomas Sugrue and John Skretny, “The White Ethnic Strategy,” in Bruce Schulman and Julian Zelizer, eds., *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s* (Cambridge: Harvard, 2008), pp. 171-192.

- Watch: *Rocky* (1976, John Avildsen, dir.).

##### **Required Online Work:**

- See the discussion board.

#### **Tuesday, April 5: Backlash? Liberation Movements, “Family Values,” and the Right**

##### **Required Reading, Viewing, Listening:**

- Read: Gillian Frank, “Discophobia: Antigay Prejudice and the 1979 Backlash against Disco,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (May 2007), read pages 276-292.

- Watch: footage of Disco Demolition Night, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqDkBM9vxx8>

Watching just these segments will give you a pretty full picture of the event: 00:00-00:35, 11:00-13:00, 32:25-41:00, 46:35-49:20.

- Watch: *All in the Family*, “Archie’s Helping Hand,” (Norman Lear, director, October 19, 1974).

<https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/rutgers313400/watch/6778209FE8361C32?referrer=direct>

- Watch: Village People, “YMCA” official video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CS9OO0S5w2k>

##### **Required Online Work:**

- See the discussion board.

#### **Tuesday, April 12: Blockbuster Films and the Reagan Era**

##### **Required Reading, Viewing**

- Read: William Chafe, ed., *A History of Our Time: Readings on Postwar America*, (NY: Oxford, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, 2003), chapter 7, overview, pp. 351-353.

- Read: Jimmy Carter, “Crisis of Confidence” (1979)

- Read: Ronald Reagan “Farewell Address” (1989)

- Watch: *Jaws* (Steven Spielberg, director, 1975). Link to stream [Jaws](https://bit.ly/2SMTL5S) from the Rutgers Library <https://bit.ly/2SMTL5S>

##### **Required Online Work:**

- See the discussion board.

#### **Tuesday, April 19:**

TBA

#### **Tuesday, April 26:**

In-class Exam 3 (no take-home essay)

TBA

Final Essay Due: Friday April 29.