

Contemporary US History - 21:512:371 01

Instructor: Matthew Friedman
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Office: Conklin 337 | Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 2:30-3:30 pm

Class Time and Location: Monday and Wednesday 10:00 am – 11:20 am, Engelhard Hall 209

Following the Second World War, the United States emerged as the world's preeminent superpower. It was a period of unprecedented economic growth, affluence and technological innovation. But for all the material benefits enjoyed by Americans in the four decades after the Second World War, it was also a time of crisis and conflict, as the nation confronted unresolved issues of race and poverty and faced new challenges of changing gender roles, redefinitions of values and the America's position in the world through the Cold War and beyond.

This course will explore how Americans met those challenges and how their society and culture were transformed in the process.

We will focus on a number of themes: Race, the family, gender and sexuality; class, economic growth and consumer capitalism; and, above all the negotiation of the idea of "America" in the spaces around social, conceptual and cultural frontiers.

Students will develop their analytical skills in the written assignments and the class discussions by identifying the course readings' main theses, supporting arguments, evidence, assumptions, and rhetorical strategies. Students will apply these skills in the final research paper and employ primary and secondary sources in an analysis of the historical context of a contemporary political, social or cultural issue.

READINGS

The required text for the course is: William H. Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since World War II*, 7th edition.

Other required readings are in a course pack available at Porta Print Publishing at 33 Halsey Street in Newark.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to attend every class, arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class. Students may be excused for illness, family emergency and similar extreme situations, and religious observance. Absences for work, job interviews and similar events will not be excused. Unexcused absences will be penalized one (1) mark (out of ten) of the student's attendance grade.

Six unexcused absences will result in an automatic failing grade. Students who miss eight or more sessions through *any* combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw from the course.

Participation: Everyone is both expected and required to participate in class discussions. The participation grade will reflect the quality and quantity of your in-class participation.

Response Papers: Students will write four 3-4-page response papers summarizing and contextualizing the readings for four classes from the second class onward. (Due at the beginning of the relevant class)

Film Review: Students will write a 2-3-page film review on *Rebel Without a Cause* due 22 on September.

Research Paper: Each student will write a 7-10-page paper research paper using primary and secondary sources. A detailed research proposal is due on 3 November, The final paper is due on 8 December.

Midterm Exam: A midterm exam will be held in class on 22 October.

Final Exam: There will be a final exam on...

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|----------------------------|-------------|
| Attendance | 5% |
| Class Participation | 10% |
| Response Papers | 20% |
| Film Review | 5% |
| Midterm Exam | 15% |
| Final paper Proposal | 5% |
| Paper..... | 20% |
| Final exam..... | 20% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

CLASS SCHEDULE

3 September – Lecture 1: The Second World War

- Chafe, Chapter 1

8 September – Lecture 2: The Cold War

- Chafe, Chapter 2
- United States National Security Council, *NSC-68*, 1950.
- George F. Kennan, *The Long Telegram*, 1946
- JoAnne Brown, "A Is for Atom, B Is for Bomb": Civil Defense in American Public Education, 1948-1963"

10 September – Lecture 3: National In/Security

- Chafe, Chapter 3
- Benjamin Fine, "Majority of College Presidents are Opposed to Keeping Communists on their Staffs," *New York Times*, Jan 30, 1949
- Joseph McCarthy, *Wheeling, WV Speech*, 9 February 1950
- Whittaker Chambers Testimony before HUAC
- Alger Hiss Testimony before HUAC

15 September – Lecture 4: The Culture of Conformity

- Chafe, Chapter 4
- Irving Howe, "This Age of Conformity"
- Arthur Schlesinger, "The Crisis of American Masculinity"
- Billy Graham, *America's Hour of Decision* (1951), excerpts

17 September – Lecture 5: Consumer's Republic

- Chafe, Chapter 5
- Henry A. Bowman, *Marriage for Moderns*, Chapter 1.
- *Harper's Magazine*, "After Hours"

22 September – Lecture 6: Youth Culture

- Film: Rebel Without a Cause
- Arthur Miller, "The Bored and the Violent"
- Richard A. Peterson, "Why 1955? Explaining the Advent of Rock Music"

Film review deadline

24 September – Lecture 8: The Politics of Race

- Chafe, Chapter 6
- John Herbers, "Mississippi: A Profile of the Nation's Most Segregated State," *New York Times*, Jun 28, 1964
- Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"

29 September – Lecture 7: Urban Decay

- Russell Lynes, "The Erosion of Detroit"
- Thomas J. Sugrue, "Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and the Reaction against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940-1964."

1 October – Lecture 9: The Camelot Paradox

- Chafe, Chapter 7
- John F. Kennedy, Speech of 12 September 1962, Rice University, Houston.
- Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, Chapter 15.

6 October – Lecture 10: The Great Society

- Chafe, Chapter 8
- Lyndon B. Johnson, Speech of 22 May 1964, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
- Charles Mohr, "Goldwater says not all the poor merit public aid," *New York Times*, Jan 16, 1964
- Robert M. Collins, "Growth Liberalism in the Sixties: Great Societies at Home and Grand Designs Abroad"

8 October – Lecture 11: Vietnam I

- Chafe, Chapter 9
- Pentagon Papers: 83-103
- Lyndon B. Johnson, "Report on the Gulf of Tonkin Incident"
- The Tonkin Gulf Resolution

13 October – Lecture 12: Vietnam II

- Chafe, Chapter 10
- Film: Hearts and Minds
- William Shawcross, "The Secret Bombing of Cambodia"
- Henry Kissinger, "In Defense of the Nixon Policy"

15 October – Lecture 13: Counterculture Revolution

- Chafe, Chapter 11
- Jack Kerouac, "About the Beat Generation"
- Tom Wolfe, *The Electric Kool-Ade Acid Test*, Excerpt.
- "In Search of a Frame"

20 October – Lecture 14: Radicalism and 1968

- Chafe, Chapter 12
- C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite*, Introduction
- Students for a Democratic Society, "The Port Huron Statement"
- Mike Klonsky, "Toward a Revolutionary Youth Movement"

22 October – **Midterm Exam**

27 October – Lecture 15: The "Silent Majority"

- Chafe, Chapter 13
- Richard M. Nixon, "Silent Majority Speech"
- *Time Magazine*, "Man and Woman of the Year: The Middle Americans"

29 October – Lecture 16: The 1970s

- Chafe, Chapter 14
- Daniel Yergin, "OPEC Imperium"
- Edward Teller, "The Energy Disease"

3 November – Lecture 17: Gender Revolutions

- Martha Shelley, "Gay is Good"
- Charlotte Curtis, "Miss America Pageant Is Picketed by 100 Women," *New York Times*, Sep 8, 1968
- Donald T. Critchlow, and Cynthia L. Stachecki, "The Equal Rights Amendment Reconsidered: Politics, Policy and Mobilization in a Democracy"

Research Proposal deadline

5 November – Lecture 18: Post-Imperial America

- Chafe, Chapter 15
- Thomas A. Sancton, William Drozdiak and Gregory Wierzynski, "An Answer For Tehran: The U.S. responds to Iran's hostage demands as a stalled war drags on"
- Nicholas Burnett, "Zahedi's Affairs"

10 November – Lecture 19: Technological Change

- Vannevar Bush, "Science: The Endless Frontier"
- *Time Magazine*. "Machine of the Year: The Computer Moves In"
- Matthew Friedman, *Fuzzy Logic: Dispatches from the Information Revolution*, Chapter 2.

12 November – Lecture 20: Reagan

- Chafe, Chapter 16
- Ronald Reagan, "Address to the Nation on Defense and National Security"
- Congressional Report on Iran-Contra

17 November – Lecture 21: New World Order

- George H.W. Bush, "Toward a New World Order"
- Douglas Little, *American Orientalism*, Chapter 7

19 November – Lecture 22: Culture Wars

- Chafe, Chapter 17
- The Republican Party, *The Contract With America*, 1994.
- Karen Finley, *The Constant State of Desire*
- William H. Honans, "Congressional Anger Threatens Arts Endowment's Budget," *New York Times*, Jun 20, 1989

1 December – Lecture 23: Globalization/Anti-Globalization

- North American Free Trade Agreement, Preamble and Part I
- George Katsifias, "Seattle Was Not the Beginning"
- Evelyn Hu-Duhart, "Globalization and its Discontents"

3 December – Lecture 24: The New World of 9/11

- Chafe, Chapter 18
- James Petras, "9/11: One Year of Empire-Building"
- Ivan Greenberg, "The FBI and the Making of the Terrorist Threat"

8 December – Lecture 25: Crisis

- The Economist, "Carping About the TARP: Congress Wrangles Over How Best to avoid Financial Armageddon"
- Glenn Beck, *Common Sense* (Introduction)
- Ruth Rosen, "The Tea Party and Angry White Women"
- Naomi Klein, "Occupy Wall Street: The Most Important Thing in the World Now"

Final paper deadline

10 December – Lecture 26: The Politics of Race in "Post-Racial" America

- Raina Kelley, "A Letter to my Son on Election Night"
- Ta-Nehisi Coates, "Fear of a Black President"
- Elijah Anderson, "Emmett and Trayvon"

CITATION FAQ

What do you need to cite?

Any phrase, sentence or paragraph that you have taken from another source, even if it's a sentence fragment. For example, if you use the phrase "to be or not to be: that is the question," you *must* provide a citation to the relevant page in a published edition of William Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*. As a general rule, if you are using words that someone else wrote, you *must* cite. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism.

Any information that you found in another source (and isn't common knowledge), even if you paraphrase. For example, if you write something like "almost ten per cent of the adult males in the United States in 1924 were members of the Ku Klux Klan," you have to say where you got that information. If you don't, how do I know that you're not making it up?

As a general rule, you don't have to provide citations for information that we covered in class.

What happens if you don't cite?

It depends. The highest grade that a term paper without citations will receive is C+. If you quote substantially from another source and do not (a) indicate that it is a quote and (b) indicate *where* the quote came from, I will consider this plagiarism. You will receive a zero (0) on the paper and I will submit it to the Dean's office for review.

If you don't know whether you should cite a passage, quote or information, err on the side of caution and cite it.

What do you need?

As a general rule, you will need a bibliography page, and footnotes or parenthetical notes in text for all of your references. Please use either the University of Chicago/Turabian citation style (footnotes) or MLA (parenthetical notes). I prefer Chicago/Turabian, since this is what historians use.

For information on how to cite according to these styles, please see <http://newarkwww.rutgers.edu/guides/cite.htm>.

SUBMISSION POLICY

All assignments must be submitted *in hard copy* by the beginning of class and to **turnitin.com** on Blackboard. No assignments will be accepted after the deadline, *except with prior arrangement*. If you miss a class – and a deadline – due to illness or other excused absence, you *must* inform me, and submit the assignment to **turnitin.com** (to be followed with hard copy at the earliest opportunity).

Assignments must be typed double-spaced in 12-point Times on white paper, stapled or bound in a cover. Handwritten submissions will not be accepted.

All students are required to sign the Rutgers Honor Code Pledge. To receive credit, every assignment must have your signature under the following phrase: "On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination / assignment."

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES

Historians refer to primary and secondary sources. A primary source is a document, speech, or other sort of evidence written, created or otherwise produced during the time under study, or by a participant. Primary sources offer an inside view of a particular event. Secondary sources provide interpretation and analysis of primary sources. Secondary sources are usually (though not always) written by professional historians and are one step removed from the original event.

