

HISTORY 18
History of the United States since 1877

Spring 2011

MWF

Course Description:

This course studies American history from post-Civil War Reconstruction to the present. We will devote attention to several spheres of action, from politics and economics to social change and individual identity. Historical essays and primary source documents will give us the opportunity to examine many episodes in American history from multiple perspectives and to compare and assess conflicting historical interpretations. One special feature is the analysis of American social diversity as it evolved through emancipation, immigration, women's rights movements, and twentieth-century cultural and sexual revolutions. Another special feature is an internationally comparative approach to American history, by which we will be examining similar or connected developments in other countries in order to place U.S. history in a broader context. To assist us in this task and in our exploration of American diversity, we will also be reading the commentary of "outside" observers of American life, including newly-arrived immigrants and foreign journalists. There will be lots of class discussion based on the readings, documents, and a few videos. The main written work consists of three exams and three papers based upon historical essays and documents.

Course Objectives:

History 18 uses American history to introduce students to the study of college-level history. This means students refine a variety of skills: defining historical terms and concepts, identifying origins and effects, following scholarly debates, evaluating evidence critically, identifying causality, explaining and locating historical context, and gathering and interpreting evidence from primary sources. Students hone their critical reading and writing skills, focusing on developing historical interpretations and arguments. Finally, students attend to the diversity of American society by studying the ramifications of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and religion.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Place American history from 1877 to the present in an accurate and coherent chronological sequence. **(Social, Historical, Cultural Understanding, #1)**
2. Identify major political, economic, social, and cultural trends and issues of this period. **(Social, Historical, Cultural Understanding, #1)**
3. Understand the complexity of historical explanation, including concepts of causation, contingency, convergence, and individual agency. **(Social, Historical, Cultural Understanding, #2)**
4. Analyze how social categories such as race, class, gender, religion, cultural/ethnic identity, and sexual orientation have shaped individual and collective experience. **(Social, Historical, Cultural Understanding, #2; American Diversity)**
5. Learn how to gather an appropriate array of documents (primary sources) as evidence about historical events or movements. **(Social, Historical, Cultural Understanding, #3)**

6. Assess the intent and credibility of primary sources (historical documents) and apply those sources to address an historical issue, problem, or interpretation. **(Social, Historical, Cultural Understanding, #3)**
7. Examine historical issues/problems within their period-appropriate context, and from multiple historical points of view. **(Social, Historical, Cultural Understanding, #4)**
8. Identify and evaluate an historical thesis or interpretation embedded in an historical essay or book. **(Social, Historical, Cultural Understanding, #4)**
9. Compare and contrast conflicting historical interpretations and weigh their arguments and evidence. **(Social, Historical, Cultural Understanding, #4)**
10. Write persuasive and accurately documented historical essays. **(Social, Historical, Cultural Understanding, #3 and 4)**

Assessment/ Grading:

Please note: **Document reports, reading responses, and take-home sheets on videos** will count toward the participation component of grades, as will your contribution to class discussion.

Grade distribution:

15% First exam	25% Papers
20% Second exam	20% Class participation (including document report)
20% Final exam	

Exams and Other Writing Assignments:

Exams

All exams, including the final exam, will be composed of identification questions and interpretive essays. They will not be cumulative. Study questions from which the exam material will be drawn will be distributed in class one week prior to the test dates. **These exams are designed to assess your mastery of learning outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4 (American Diversity), 7, 8, 9, 10.**

Document Report:

This three-page paper and oral report requires you to select a primary source from the collection, *Major Problems in American History Volume 2: Since 1865*, edited by Hoffman and Gjerde, and to use it to illuminate a specific historical question or issue. See details at the end of this syllabus.

This report is designed to assess your mastery of learning outcomes 5 and 6.

Paper #1: American Workers Respond to Industrialism

This five-page paper asks you to analyze political, economic, ethnic, and class-based theories of “why there was no socialism in America,” then to use a detailed account of the dramatic Lattimer Coal Mine strike of 1897, in which Irish, Slavic, and Italian workers collaborated, to assess the validity of these theories. **This paper is due on February 23 and is intended to support outcomes #2, 3, 4 (American Diversity), 7, 8, 9, 10.**

Paper #2: The Controversy over the “New Woman” in the 1920s

This five-page paper, based on a collection of documents from the 1920s, requires you to analyze the raging debate over the “New Woman” as a way to discern the causes of change in gender roles, the bases of arguments over gender and sexuality among diverse social groups, and the limits and consequences of the “revolution in manners and morals” during that modernizing era. **This paper is due on March 18 and is intended to support outcomes #2, 3, 4 (American Diversity), 5, 6, 7, 10.**

Paper #3: The Greensboro and Nashville Sit-in Movement and the Campaign for Civil Rights

This five-page paper, based on a collection of documents inside and outside the Civil Rights movement, requires you to examine the “complex diversity” of the movement, its connection with individual ideas and identities, and its challenges to racial discrimination and structures of power in the American South. **This paper is due on April 13 and is intended to support outcomes #2, 3, 4 (American Diversity), 5, 6, 7, 10.**

Blackboard site:

The course Blackboard site will archive copies of the syllabus, assignment sheets, and exam study guides. As the semester proceeds I will also add readings, images, and PowerPoint slides seen in class. To access the site, go to <http://blackboard.stmarys-ca.edu/>, type your SMC email username (the part before @) as the username) and type your 7-digit SMC ID# as your password.

Attendance Policy:

Students will be allowed *three* absences during the semester. Absences beyond that, no matter what the reason, may require make-up assignments: you must consult with me individually on this. More than *six* absences will result in mandatory grade penalties.

Student Disability Policy:

Reasonable and appropriate accommodations, that take into account the context of the course and its essential elements, for individuals with qualifying disabilities, are extended through the office of Student Disability Services. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Student Disability Services Coordinator at (925) 631-4164 to set up a confidential appointment to discuss accommodation guidelines and available services. Additional information regarding

the services available may be found at the following address on the Saint Mary's website: <http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/academics/academic-advising-and-achievement/student-disability-services.html>

Academic Honesty:

This course operates under the premises of the Saint Mary's academic honor code, by which students pledge to do their own work in their own words, without seeking inappropriate aid in preparing for exams or assignments. See your *Student Handbook* for details about definitions, policies, and procedures. I am available to discuss issues of academic integrity in general as well as specific information about plagiarism, appropriate citation, and collaboration for this course.

Required Texts:

Carl J. Guarneri, ed. *America Compared: Essays on American History in International Perspective*,

2nd ed., Vol. II [AC]

Wheeler and Becker, *Discovering the American Past: A Look at the Evidence*, 7th ed., v.2 [W+B]

Greenfield and Buenker, *Those United States: Outsider Perspectives on American History*, vol. II [G+B]

Selected reprints to be distributed.

Class and Assignment Schedule

I Introduction

**M Feb. 7 Course Objectives, Themes, and Format
Getting Started on Reconstruction**

II The South and West after the Civil War

W Feb. 9 Emancipation, Reconstruction, and Retreat
Documents: "Reconstructing Reconstruction: Political Cartoons" (W+B, Ch. 1)

F Feb. 11 Race Relations in the New South: White Supremacy, Black Responses
Documents and homework: "The Road to True Freedom: African American Alternatives in the New South" (W+B, Ch. 2)

M Feb. 14 Dispossessing Native Peoples on the Frontier
Essay: Nichols, "Indian Societies Under Siege in the U.S. and Canada" (AC,

#3)

W Feb. 16 Frontier Myths vs. Frontier Realities

Essay: Brown, "Gridded Lives: Why Montana and Kazakhstan Are Nearly the Same Place" (AC, #4)

III Business and Labor in the Industrial Age

F Feb. 18 Railroads, Robber Barons, and Corporations

Film and homework: "Money on the Land"

M Feb. 21 Alternative and Comparative Perspectives on Big Business

Essay: Blackford, "The Rise of Big Business in the U.S., Great Britain, and Japan" (AC, #5)

W Feb. 23 American Workers Respond to Industrialism

Essay: Zolberg, "Why is There No Socialism in the United States?" (AC, #6)

Essay: Novak, "The Guns of Lattimer"--reprint

Document: "America is Capitalism's Land of Promise," B+G, pp. 9-15

(Sombart)

PAPER #1 DUE

IV The Age of Cities: Immigrants, the Middle Class, and Mass Society

F Feb. 25 European and Asian Immigrant Experiences in Comparative Perspective

Essay: Nugent, "The Great Transatlantic Migrations" (AC, #7)

Document: "Arguing against Chinese Exclusion" B+G, pp. 44-49 (Yow)

M Feb. 28 The City Profitable vs. the City Beautiful

Essay: Rybczynski, "The City in the Land of the Dollar" (AC, #8)

Document: "Politics as a Vocation," B+G, pp.54-58 (Weber)

Document: "Whiskey and Politics" B+G, pp. 58-63 (Stead)

W Mar. 2 Mass Consumption and Cultural Transformation

Documents: "Selling Consumption, 1890-1930" (W+B, Ch. 3)

V The United States Becomes a World Power

F Mar. 4 The Spanish-American War and the Workings of Empire

Essay: Winks, "American Imperialism in Comparative Perspective" (AC, #9)

Essay: Boudreau, "America's Colonial Rule in the Philippines" (AC, #10)

M Mar. 7 Conflicting Views of U.S. Intervention in Latin America

Document: "America and the Panama Canal" B+G, pp. 76-81

(D'Estournelles)

Document: "A Brazilian Views the Monroe Doctrine." B+G,

pp. 76-84 (Lima)

Document: "Villa's Raid on New Mexico" B+G, pp. 84-87

W Mar. 9 FIRST EXAM

VI The Progressive Movement and World War I

F Mar. 11 Women's Activism, Woman Suffrage, and Progressive Reform

Essay: Sklar, "Women and the Creation of the American Welfare State" (AC, #12)

Documents: "Child labor Reform and the Redefinition of Childhood, 1880-1920"

(W+B, Ch. 4)

M Mar. 14 America's Entry into World War I

Documents: "Homogenizing a Pluralistic Culture: Propaganda during World War I" (W+B, Ch. 5)

Essay: Dawley, "Wilson and the Progressives' Failure at Versailles" (AC, #12)

VII The Twenties

W Mar. 16 Cultural Collisions in the "Jazz Age"

Essay: Sklar, "Americans, Europeans, and the Movies" (AC, #13)

Essay: Jackson, "The Meanings of American Jazz in France" (AC, #14)

F Mar. 18 The Debate over Changing Women's Roles

Documents: "The New Woman" (W+B, Ch. 6)

PAPER #2 DUE

VIII Depression America

M Mar. 21 The Origins and Impact of the Great Depression

Essay: Hobsbawm, "Into the Economic Abyss" (AC, #15)

Documents: "Eyewitnesses to the Depression and the New Deal," B+G, pp.154-168 (Hamilton, Davila)

W Mar. 23 Political Responses to the Crisis: The New Deal in Global Perspective

Essay: Garraty, "Roosevelt and Hitler: New Deal and Nazi Reactions to the Depression" (AC, #16)

Documents: "Mussolini and Mao on the New Deal." B+G, pp.168-177 (Vaudagna, Shusheng)

IX World War II and the Cold War

F Mar. 25 From Neutrality to Intervention: The U.S. Path to War

Essay: Dimberly and Reynolds, "The Anglo-American Alliance on the Eve of War" (AC, #17)

M Mar. 28 Race War on the Home Front

Essay: Dower, "Race War: American and Japanese Images of the Enemy" (AC, #18)

Documents: "Japanese Internment and the *Korematsu* Case" (W+B, Ch. 8)

W Mar. 30 The Decision to Drop the Atomic Bomb

Film and homework: "World at War: The Bomb"

Document: "Japanese vs. American Perceptions of the A-Bomb." B+G, pp. 201-205 (Sadao)

F Apr. 1 SECOND EXAM

M Apr. 4 The Cold War in Europe: U.S. and Soviet Views

Essay: Gaddis, "The American and Soviet Cold War Empires" (AC, #19)

W Apr. 6 Wars of Containment in Asia: Korea and Vietnam to 1954

Documents: "Hot Spots in a Cold War." B+G, pp.233-252 (Davis, U Thant, Hsu)

F Apr. 8 Cold War Culture at Home

Documents: "The House Un-American Activities Committee Investigates Hollywood"--reprint

X The Turbulent 1960s

M Apr. 11 The Civil Rights Movement in Global Context

Essay: Fredrickson, "Resistance to White Supremacy in the U.S. and South Africa" (AC, #21)

Document: "Africa and Afro-America." B+G, pp.224-227 (Mboya)

W Apr. 13 From Civil Rights to Black Power

Documents: "The 1960 Student Campaign for Civil Rights" (W+B, Ch.9)

PAPER #3 DUE

F Apr. 15 The Youth Movement and the Global Counterculture

Film and homework: "Young Blood: 1968"

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- W Apr. 27 The Revival of Feminism in the 1960s and 1970s**
Essay: Banks, "The New Feminism in America and Great Britain" (AC, #22)
Document: "Equal Employment Opportunities for Women," B+G, pp. 279-
- F Apr. 29 The U.S. War in Vietnam: Its Origins and History**
Essay: Jespersen, "Imperial Responses to Revolution in Vietnam" (AC, #20)
- M May 2 Assessing the Legacy of Vietnam**
Oral History documents: "A Generation in War and Turmoil: The Agony of Vietnam" (W+B, Ch. 10)

XI The U.S. Since 1973: The End of the American Dream?

- W May 4 Watergate and the Political Culture of Scandal and Cynicism**
Timeline: "A Watergate Summary and Chronology"--reprint
Document: "The Clinton-Lewinsky Affair," B+G, pp. 290-292
- F May 6 The New Global Immigration and Multicultural America**
Oral History documents: "A Nation of Immigrants: The Fourth Wave in California" (W+B, Ch. 11)
Essay: Walzer, "What Does it Mean to be an American?"--reprint
- M May 9 The "Reagan Revolution" and its Consequences**
Documents: "America Moves to the Right, 1969-1989"—reprint
- W May 11 The New Globalization: America's Hegemony or Decline?**
Essay: Ferguson, "Imperial Denial" (AC, #23)
Essay: Nye, "Globalization and American Power" (AC, #24)
- F May 13 War in Iraq, War on Terrorism: New Challenges, Old Response?**
Essay: Keaney, "War and Terror: U.S. Perspectives and Policies"--reprint

FINAL EXAM: Monday, May 16, 2-4 pm

History 18 Document Essay and Class Presentation

After signing up to work on a specific document from the *Major Problems* book (on reserve

at the SMC Library), read the document carefully. Check out how the editors introduce the document in the section labeled “Documents” at the beginning of the document section of the relevant chapter. Be sure also to consult the other assigned readings that are due the same day as your document will be discussed. These may help provide background information and give you clues as to how to interpret your document in light of other events. To help identify the author of the document, you can do a simple Google search. If this search turns up no information, that probably means that the document comes from an “average” person, which is important information in itself.

After you have taken notes and thought about your document, write a **3-page, double-spaced essay on what it can tell us about the topic under discussion.** (Notice the topic next to your due date.)

Here are some questions to consider as you analyze your document. Your essay should cover these, although not necessarily in the exact same order.

Who is the author? Does the author’s gender, occupation, location, political stand, or social situation matter?

When was the source composed? What is the historical context in which the source was written and read?

Who is the intended audience? Is the document public or private, official or informal?

What was the purpose of the document? Was it intended to provide information? To persuade others? To gain sympathy? To get the listener or reader to do something?

What assumptions, emotions, or arguments are embedded in the source? What can you see or learn from the document that the author was perhaps unaware of?

And finally, the most important: What useful information and/or interpretations does the document give us about the person, issue, or event it relates to? How can it help us to interpret this episode in American history?

****Due date: Your essay is due on the day we discuss the document—see the sign-up sheet for this.**

****Documentation: no footnotes are necessary. Simply provide the page number in parenthesis whenever you use a quotation.**

****Oral presentation: On the due date you will be asked to tell the class briefly and informally what you learned from the document. Do not read your paper to us, but try to summarize your main points and point out key passages in the document for the class to notice or discuss. Hopefully, we’ll take it from there.**