

HIST 501A: Contours of U.S. History since 1930

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HHB 120

Course Description:

This course will explore the central themes of U.S. history since 1930, through the reading of recent scholarship and conduct of original research. As a graduate seminar, it aims to sharpen the essential skills of the historian's craft, such as critical reading, primary research, and effective writing. But it also aims for a dynamic engagement with key issues in today's world. As members of the class, you are expected to participate extensively in discussions. This will require not only reading carefully but also arriving every week with a cogent set of thoughts to be shared with the rest of the class.

In addition to readings and discussion, you will submit a research prospectus, deliver a short research presentation, and complete a research paper (20-25 pages) based on primary sources.

Requirements:

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| 1. Attendance and participation | 30% |
| 2. Research Prospectus and Bibliography | 10% |
| 3. Class Presentations | 10% |
| 4. Research Paper | 50% |

Readings and Discussion:

Weekly readings will usually include one major book as well as articles and primary sources. Discussion marks will be based on the quality of your participation.

Research Prospectus and Bibliography:

You are required to submit a short research prospectus (3-4 pages of double-spaced text), which will identify the topic and explain the approach of your research paper. The prospectus must include a discussion of the central questions you will explore and the relationship between those questions and available sources. It also must include a *preliminary* bibliography with ten primary and ten secondary sources. The prospectus is due on 20 February.

Research Paper:

Research topics must have some thematic connection to the course. Nevertheless, I encourage you to approach the research paper as an integral part of your overall graduate program and to select topics that relate closely to your research interests. Despite this flexibility, your research paper must address existing historiography and utilize primary sources extensively. Each paper will be evaluated on the effectiveness of its argument, the depth of the research, and the quality of the writing. All papers are due in the History Office no later than 4:00 p.m. on 12 April. Late papers will be penalized 5% for each day late.

Website:

The Moodle website will be a crucial component of this course. In addition to links to articles and primary sources for class readings, it will include useful links for research.

Required Texts:

Borstelmann, *The 1970s* (2011)
Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic* (2003)
Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt* (2010)
Gilmore, *Defying Dixie* (2009)
Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White* (2005)
Kazin and Isserman, *America Divided* (2003)
McCartin, *Collision Course* (2011)
Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart* (2010)
Tyson, *Blood Done Sign My Name* (2005)

Course Schedule and Readings

- 9 January INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW
Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic*, 5-191
Cowie and Salvatore, "The Long Exception" (link on Moodle)
"The Wagner Act" (section 1) (link on Moodle)
Roosevelt, "The Four Freedoms" (link on Moodle)
- 16 January RACE AND RADICALISM
Gilmore, *Defying Dixie*
Civil Rights Commission, "To Secure These Rights" (1947)
Holiday, "Strange Fruit" (link on Moodle)
- 23 January NATION OF THINGS
Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic*, 194-410
Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White*
- 30 January YOU SAY YOU WANT A REVOLUTION?
Kazin and Isserman, *America Divided*
SDS, "Port Huron Statement" (1962)
YAF, "Sharon Statement"
King, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"
- 6 February HISTORY AND THE PERSONAL
Tyson, *Blood Done Sign My Name*
- 13 February **Reading Break—No Class**
- 20 February WOMEN AND THE NATION
Bailey, "She 'Can Bring Home the Bacon'" in Bailey, Farber
Turk, "Out of the Revolution, into the Mainstream"
(primary sources to be announced)
- 27 February THE GLOBAL DECADE
Borstelmann, *The 1970s* **Research Prospectus Due**
Carter, "Crisis of Confidence Speech" (link on Moodle)
- 5 March ROOTS OF THE CONSERVATIVE REVOLUTION
Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*

12 March THE STRIKE HEARD ROUND THE WORLD
McCartin, *Collision Course*
Reagan, PATCO Strike Press Conference (link on Moodle)

19 March **Research Time—No Class**

26 March CORPORATION NATION
Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart*

2 April Class Presentations

Final Paper Due in History Office on 12 April by 4 p.m.