

History 152: United States, late nineteenth century to present
(Spring 2008)

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Meeting place: Shaw 204
Meeting time: MWF, 10:00-10:50

Course objectives:

The major objective of this course is to provide students with a general understanding of the significant factors that have shaped American social, cultural, political and economic life since the end of the Civil War. We will study how industrialization, urbanization, immigration, war and cold war, the expansion of political rights to previously excluded groups of Americans, and the increased role of the federal government in society and the economy have shaped modern American history. An additional objective of the course is to enhance students' analytical skills by critically examining the causes and consequences of historical developments and the stories that various historical figures have constructed about those developments. For historical knowledge is not the rote memorization of events and dates. Rather, it is the critical understanding of complex social, economic, cultural, and political change; of how individuals and groups influenced historical processes as they were simultaneously shaped by those processes; and of various historical figures' interests in and explanations of historical developments.

Required books available at the campus bookstore:

Gary Nash et al., *The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society*, volume II: since 1865, seventh edition, Longman. Hereafter referred to as "Nash".

Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman and Jon Gjerde, editors, *Major Problems in American History*, 2nd. edition, volume II: since 1865, Houghton Mifflin. Hereafter referred to as "H & G".

James West Davidson and Mark Hamilton Lytle, eds. , *After the Fact: the Art of Historical Detection*, fifth edition, McGraw Hill. Hereafter referred to as "D & L".

Lary May, *Screening Out the Past: the Birth of Mass Culture and the Motion Picture Industry*, University of Chicago Press. Hereafter referred to as "May."

Photocopied materials provided by Professor Schultz.

Documentaries on reserve at the Ames Library:

The Great Depression, vol. 1, "A Job at Ford's." VID. E806.G731993.V.1.

Making Sense of the Sixties, vol. 1, "Seeds of the Sixties."
VID.HN59.M351991.V.1

Vietnam: a Television History, vol. 1, "The Roots of War." VID.DS557.7.V5.V.1

The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara
DVD.E840.4.M46F642004

Grades:

Your course grade will be based on the following requirements:

Quizzes20% of course grade.
 First midterm exam.20% of course grade.
 Second midterm exam.30% of course grade.
 Final exam30% of course grade.

A note on quizzes and exams:

The multiple-choice quizzes will be administered randomly throughout the semester and will usually consist of six questions based on the assigned readings and documentaries. Quizzes are not comprehensive; they do not include questions on all information we read and discuss between quizzes unless the time that has elapsed between quizzes is only one class meeting. If I give you a quiz on a Monday, for example, it could include questions on information from documentaries and films we viewed on Friday and from materials listed on the syllabus for Monday; the quiz would not include questions on materials that should have been read or viewed earlier. I will drop your worst two quiz scores and base your grade on the remaining scores. Quizzes cannot be made up except in those instances where students are away from campus for university activities such as a road game for the women's volleyball team or for operations and other demonstrable medical emergencies for which the university receives formal notification. I drop two quiz scores to cover common illnesses and to give you a couple of days for when you just can't get to class for some reason, including court appearances for traffic tickets, weddings, funerals, and other such personal matters.

I will provide you with a list of study questions for the midterm and final exams. Essay questions will be taken from these study questions. You will be expected to write coherent essays to answer exam questions. These essay questions will test your ability to synthesize information from lectures, readings and documentaries and to use the information to demonstrate a command of the questions. The essay questions will account for 60 percent of the total points on each exam. The other 40 percent will be based on what I refer to as "identification-significance" questions. These questions will test your knowledge of key events and people that we read about and discuss in class. For example, I might ask you to identify and discuss the historical significance of Andrew Carnegie, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Houdini, Cesar Chavez or Stokely Carmichael. I might also ask you to identify and discuss the historical significance of the Populist Party, Wounded Knee, the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision, or the Tet Offensive that occurred during the Vietnam War. Each such question will be worth 20 percent of your test grade, two such questions will appear on each exam, and I will let you choose which two items to write on out of a list of three or four possibilities. I will not provide you with a list of these questions to study, but throughout the semester, and especially when we review for exams, I will help you understand what I'm looking for in your answers. The final exam will follow the same format as the midterms but may include an additional comprehensive essay question.

Daily schedule:

Following is a reading schedule that includes exam dates. **The exam dates cannot be negotiated.** All readings must be completed by the dates they are listed. For example, the chapter in the Nash text listed for January 09 must be read by the beginning of class on that day. Readings in the Nash text and in the Davidson and

Lytle book are listed by chapter titles. Readings in the May book and in the Hoffman and Gjerde book are listed by page numbers. Documentaries must be viewed before class on the dates they are listed.

Week 1

- Jan 07 Course introduction.
- Jan 09 Reading: Nash, chapter 16: The Union Reconstructed.
- Jan 11 Reading: H & G, 1-15; D & L, chapter 8: The View from the Bottom Rail.

Week 2

- Jan 14 Reading: Nash, chapter 17: Rural America: The West and the New South.
- Jan 16 Reading: H & G, 34-44, 50-59.
- Jan 18 Reading: Nash, chapter 18: The Rise of Smokestack America.

Week 3

- Jan 21 Reading: H & G, 60-74; D & L, chapter 9: The Mirror with a Memory.
- Jan 23 Nash, chapter 19: Politics and Reform.
- Jan 25 Reading: May, vi-21; handouts entitled Congressional Report on Chinese Immigration (1892), Andrew Carnegie's Triumphant Democracy (1886), and documents on True Women and New Women.

Week 4

- Jan 28 Reading: Nash, chapter 20: Becoming a World Power.
- Jan 30 Reading: H & G, 87-103; handout, Senator Albert Beveridge, "America's Destiny" (1900); May, 22-42.
- Feb 01 **First exam.**

Week 5

- Feb 04 Reading: Nash, chapter 21: The Progressives Confront Industrial Capitalism.
- Feb 06 Reading: H & G, 110-122; May, 43-59.
- Feb 08 Reading: D & L, chapter 10: USDA Government Inspected; May, 60-95.

Week 6

- Feb 11 Reading: Nash, chapter 22: The Great War.
- Feb 13 Reading: H & G, 135-147; May, 96-146.

Feb 15 Reading: Nash, chapter 23: Affluence and Anxiety; handouts, Margaret Sanger, "My Fight for Birth Control" and "Happiness in Marriage."

Week 7

Feb 18 Reading: H & G, 162-173; D & L, chapter 11: Sacco and Vanzetti; May, 147-166.

Feb 20 Reading: May, 167-199.

Feb 22 Reading: Nash, chapter 24: The Great Depression and the New Deal. **View the documentary *The Great Depression*, vol. 1, "A Job at Ford's," before today's class meeting.**

Week 8

Feb 25 Reading: H & G, 192-205.

Feb 27 Reading: May, 200-241; H & G, 206-215.

Feb 29 Reading: Nash, chapter 25: World War II. **Last day to drop a class.**

Week 9

March 03 Reading: H & G, 222-237.

March 05 Reading: D & L, chapter 13: The Decision to Drop the Bomb.

March 07 **Second exam.**

Week 10

March 10 Reading: Nash, chapter 26: Postwar America at Home, 1945-1960.

March 12 Reading: D & L, chapter 14: From Rosie to Lucy.

March 14 Reading: H & G, 282-294, 304-312. **View the documentary *Making Sense of the Sixties*, vol. 1, "Seeds of the Sixties," before today's class meeting.**

Week 11

March 17 **Spring break.**

March 19 **Spring break.**

March 21 **Spring break.**

Week 12

March 24 Reading: Nash, chapter 27: Chills and Fever during the Cold War, 1945-1960.

March 26 Reading: H & G, 253-265. **View the documentary *Vietnam: a Television History*, vol. 1, "The Roots of War," before today's class meeting.**

March 28 Reading: Nash, chapter 28: Reform and Rebellion in the Turbulent Sixties, 1960-1969.

Week 13

March 31 Reading: H & G, 313-335.

April 02 Reading: D & L, chapter 16: Where Trouble Comes.

April 04 Reading: Nash, chapter 29: Disorder and Discontent, 1969-1980.

Week 14

April 07 Reading: H & G, 344-356, 365-384.

April 09 Reading: D & L, chapter 15: Breaking into Watergate; handout, Harry Blackmun, *Roe v. Wade* (1973).

April 11 Reading: Nash, chapter 30: The Revival of Conservatism, 1980-1992.

Week 15

April 14 Reading: H & G, 403-432.

April 16 Reading: Nash, chapter 31: The Post-Cold War World, 1992-2005; "Ghost of a Kennedy-CIA Plot Has Come Back to Haunt Clinton" (*NYT*, 1994).

April 18 D & L, chapter 17: The Body in Question. Review for final exam.

Week 16

The final exam is scheduled for Thursday, April 24, 3:30-5:30.