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Class Hours: M-F 1-3 PM
& some AMs for Films-
Marked by asterisks*

HIS 354: THE U.S. SINCE 1940
Term I - September 2006

*"We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time."* T.S. Eliot

The United States' involvement in World War II created numerous upheavals in American society by setting the stage for its involvement in a number of other "wars" both abroad and on the homefront - wars which would be waged in the name of democracy. World War II acted as the catalyst for a number of social revolutions which would dramatically transform the nature of American society and national identity during the latter half of the Twentieth Century. Alongside Cold War battles against Communist regimes in Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam, Americans on the domestic front were fighting over the very ideals of the American nation. From the mid-1940s through the 1990s, Americans from the political left and right continued to engage in bitter struggles over issues of American foreign policy, the role of government in American lives, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and the values Americans should share. In many ways, the current debates over "family values," affirmative action, multiculturalism, prayer in the schools, bilingual education, immigration policy, health care, taxation, sexual orientation, and the military industrial complex, are outcomes of the foreign and civil wars fought by Americans in the name of democracy since 1940.

Through our examination of ongoing contemporary debates within the field of historical inquiry over momentous events, or "turning points," in twentieth-century American history, students will have the opportunity to examine competing sides of seminal historical problems. In order to gain a historical understanding of the importance of these outcomes, and why they still remain the subject of vociferous debate, we will delve into a variety of historical sources, including: eyewitness testimony of those who participated in these events firsthand; documents both written and visual (some old and some new, which have recently come to light); and competing scholarly interpretations by eminent historians, as well as the public's (or laypeople's) perceptions of these historical events and the meaning they hold for our future. All of these sources have contributed to the continuing controversies over the significance and meaning of events such as the decision to drop the atomic bomb, Vietnam and other American Cold War interventions, McCarthyism, the Women's Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, Watergate, and the rise of Neoconservatism. As all of the participants in these dialogues realize, how we interpret the lessons of the past directly shapes our actions for the future.

We will also consider the inherent difficulties involved in commemorating and memorializing momentous and tragic episodes in American history. At the heart of such efforts at healing and reconciliation lie fundamental questions about historical interpretation and revision: How can we move beyond the polarization that often arises between the understandable emotionalism of commemoration and the objectivity that historical analysis strives to provide? How can we seek to close the ever-widening gap in interpretation that exists between those who witnessed historic events first-hand, and

scholars who gain access to relevant documents often decades after the event occurred? The global impact of events that took place during the "American Century" divided the American public, and also posed significant challenges for the scholars who seek to write that history- **challenges which remain unresolved.**

REQUIRED TEXTS (In order of appearance):

Robert Griffith, Ed., Major Problems in American History Since 1945

Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique

Alex Haley, Ed., The Autobiography of Malcolm X

Richard Rodriguez, Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez

There will also be a number of xeroxed articles which will be distributed in class.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS, PARTICIPATION, AND GRADES

A word to the wise: This course covers a substantial amount of fairly complex readings which we will be analyzing through daily class discussions. Although there will be lectures on a regular basis, because HIS 354 is an upper-level course, a certain amount of class time will be focused upon a discussion of the salient issues raised by the readings. Therefore, your preparedness, daily attendance, and active participation are essential. Daily attendance will not be officially recorded, but there is a participation component for the final course grade.

Please Note: The discussions and debates are an opportunity to explore difficult topics that remain the subject of much controversy among American scholars, politicians, and the American public. Most still stir heated and passionate responses, but open, lively dialogues are an indication of a healthy democracy, as long as they remain civil and all participants are united by a shared commitment to the attainment of greater knowledge and understanding. As you'll see in the documentaries we will be viewing, scholars can (at times) be very uncivil indeed when engaging in intellectual debates. However, in this classroom respect for all participants is a must. Although I have formed my own opinions on many of these issues as a historian, I do not wish you to unquestioningly accept my opinions or interpretations, but you do need to be informed, thoughtful and critical in addressing and considering these topics.

I. Discussion and In-Class Writing Assignments (15%)

Your participation and engagement with the assigned readings and daily discussions will be evaluated in two ways. You should come to class prepared to discuss and reflect upon the day's readings. It is strongly suggested that you take notes on the readings as this will help you to remember the central points of each text. In addition to your participation in class discussion, I will spot-check preparedness by administering a series of random, short, in-class writing assignments. You will be expected to respond to a question which addresses the day's topic and readings. These will be graded "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory" and will not be returned.

II. Debate Facilitators (10%)

Working in self-selected groups of four, students are expected to lead one class discussion by presenting and debating a central polemic raised by the readings. I will hand out a sign-up sheet with a choice of topics and dates later this week. Students will be graded on their ability to grasp the salient issues and questions raised by the assigned readings, their comprehension of the material and the quality of their presentation based upon clarity, originality, and sophistication. Each group will receive

two separate grades - one from the professor worth 5% and one averaged from their peers' evaluations also worth 5%. If you have questions regarding your presentation, you should see me no later than the day **before** you are scheduled to lead discussion.

III. Two Reading Assessment Papers (10% each = 20%)

These two short paper assignments (3 pages each) are designed to improve your ability to identify a scholar's central thesis or argument, and critically evaluate its strengths and/or weaknesses upon the basis of historical evidence. I will hand out a list of topics and deadlines early this week; most will focus on various units in Major Problems in American History. Your paper should contain **three** parts: **first**, you should introduce the reading and identify each author's interpretation of the historical issue or problem; **second**, based upon an evaluation of the evidence, you should explain which scholar's argument you find most compelling and convincing, and why; **third**, and lastly, you should choose one primary document and explain how it supports or contradicts the scholarly interpretation. These should be typed and double-spaced, and are due at the beginning of class. There will be two other options for fulfilling this assignment: a website assessment and an oral history interview. The deadlines and guidelines for these will be explained in class.

IV. Two Analysis Papers (15% and 20% respectively = 35%)

All students will write two papers analyzing two of the three political manifestoes. For the first paper, you will have a choice between Friedan's The Feminine Mystique or Malcolm X's Autobiography. For the second paper, on Rodriguez' Hunger of Memory, you will have two different topics to choose from. These papers will be based upon a central study question or questions handed out in-class a week prior to the deadline. Both papers must be 5-6 pages, typed, and double-spaced, and are due at the beginning of afternoon class. Students who have difficulty with written assignments are strongly encouraged to take their work to the Writing Studio before submitting it for evaluation.

V. Take-Home Final Exam (20%)

The assignment for the take-home final essay examination will be handed out in-class on Monday, September 20th. Students will be expected to compose an analytical essay [5-7 pages in length] answering one of the assigned questions by drawing upon relevant course material in the form of readings, lecture notes, discussions, and films. Typed examination essays will be due in my office by noon on Wednesday, September 27th.

WEEK I

FOREIGN AFFAIRS: WARS FOR DEMOCRACY ABROAD

Mon. Sept. 4: Introduction

***Tue. Sept. 5: World War II - Legacies**

MEET at 10:00 AM in HEDGES for Film: "*The Men Who Brought The Dawn*"

MEET at 1:00 PM for Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

Xerox: Eric Foner, "Preface" from Who Owns History? Rethinking the Past in a Changing World, [pp. ix-xix].

Xerox: Richard Kohn, "History and the Culture Wars: The Case of the Smithsonian Institution's Enola Gay Exhibition," [pp. 1036-1063] Journal of American History (Dec. 1995).

Major Problems: Ch. 2, "WWII to the Cold War," Documents (**choose one**) and Essays, [pp. 36-68].

WEEK I cont.

***Wed. Sept. 6: The Cold War: Foundations for Vietnam - McCarthyism and Korea**

MEET at 10:00 AM in HEDGES for Film: "*McCarthyism*"

MEET at 1:00 PM for Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

Major Problems: Ch. 1, Paterson, "Origins of Postwar International System" [pp. 1-16];

Ch. 3, "The Cold War Begins," Documents (**choose two**) and Essays, [pp. 70-118].

Xerox: W. Chafe, "Vietnam: The Early Years," [pp. 247-272].

Xerox: Matthew Rothschild, "The New McCarthyism," and "Comment: Assault on the Constitution," [pp. 18-23; pp. 8-9] The Progressive (Jan. 2002).

***Thurs. Sept. 7: Americans and Soviets Abroad: Crises in Cuba**

MEET at 9:30 AM in HEDGES for Films: "*Bay of Pigs: 1961*" & "*Cuban Missile Crisis*"

MEET at 1:30 PM for Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

Major Problems: Ch. 5, "J.F.K., the Cuban Revolution, and Cold War," Documents (**choose one**) and Essays, [pp. 158-212].

Xerox: Robert McNamara, "Appendix: The Nuclear Risks of the 1960s and Their Lessons for the Twenty-first Century," [pp. 337-346] from In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam (1995).

***Fri. Sept. 8: Lessons From Vietnam**

MEET at 10:00 AM in HEDGES for Film: "*Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision*"

MEET at 1:00 PM for Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

Major Problems: Ch. 8, "Vietnam and the Crisis of American Empire," Documents (**choose one**) and Essays, [pp. 281-320].

Xerox: Robert McNamara, "The Lessons of Vietnam," [pp. 319-335] from In Retrospect.

Xerox: Maya Lin, "May 15th, 1982" - Reflections on the Vietnam Memorial from her autobiography, Boundaries.

Xerox: Louis Menand, "The Reluctant Memorialist: Maya Lin and the World Trade Center," The New Yorker (July 8, 2002).

Sat. Sept. 9: Website Assessment Option Due by 3PM via E-Mail (Microsoft Word)

WEEK II

THE COLD WAR AND "DOMESTIC" AFFAIRS: WARS FOR DEMOCRACY AT HOME

***Mon. Sept. 11: Women and World War II**

MEET at 10:00 AM in SHAW for Film: "*Rosie the Riveter*"

MEET at 1:00 PM for Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

Friedan, The Feminine Mystique, Intro. [pp. 3-7], Ch. 1-4 [pp. 15-102], Ch. 8 [pp. 182-205].

Major Problems: Ch. 10, "From the Feminine Mystique to the New Feminism," Intro. [p. 367].

WEEK II cont.

Tue. Sept. 12: Atomic Fears and Female Sexuality

Readings:

Friedan, Feminine Mystique, Ch. 7 [pp. 150-181], Ch. 9-11 [pp. 206-281].

Major Problems: Ch. 4, "Congress Investigates Homosexuals as Subversives, 1950" [pp. 131-134],

"Graphic Illustrations of How to Respond in a Nuclear Attack, 1950" [pp. 135-136];

Ch. 10, "A Redbook Magazine Reader Discovers Consciousness Raising, 1973" [pp. 381-384].

***Wed. Sept. 13: The Women's Movement - Success or Failure?**

MEET at 9:00 AM in HEDGES for Film: "*Firing Line: The Women's Movement Was Disastrous*" (1993 Roundtable Debate with Betty Friedan and William Buckley, et al.)

MEET at 1:00 PM for Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

Friedan, Feminine Mystique, Ch. 13-14 [pp. 310-378], Epilogue [pp. 379-395], and "Metamorphosis: Two Generations Later" [pp. xv-xxxiv].

Major Problems: Ch. 10, "NOW Statement of Purpose, 1966" [pp. 371-373], "Redstockings Manifesto, 1970" [pp. 379-381], "Phyllis Schlafly Proclaims the Power of the Positive Woman" [pp. 384-388].

Xerox: "Phyllis Schlafly Attacks the ERA, 1982."

Thu. Sept. 14: African Americans and World War II

Readings:

Malcolm X, Autobiography, Ch. 1-6 [pp. 3-124].

Major Problems: Ch. 7, "Intro." [pp. 249-251].

***Fri. Sept. 15: The Civil Rights Movement - FRIEDAN PAPER DUE AT 1 PM**

MEET at 10:00 AM in HEDGES for FILM: "*Eyes on the Prize: Bridge to Freedom*"

MEET at 1:00 PM for Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

Malcolm X, Autobiography, Ch. 7-11 [pp. 125-219].

Major Problems: Ch. 7, "Brown v. Board of Ed." [pp. 252-254], "Franklin McCain Remembers the First Sit-in, 1960" [pp. 254-256], Martin Luther King, Jr., "I Have a Dream, 1963" [pp. 256-259].

Xerox: Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail."

Xerox: "Old Sem Captured By Students: Demonstration Rocks the Hilltop," The Cornellian (1968).

WEEK III: REQUIEMS FOR WAR AND PEACE - THE COUNTER-CULTURE CONFRONTS AUTHORITY

Mon. Sept. 18: Black Separatism and Black Power: Rebels With a Cause

MEET at 10:00 AM in SHAW for FILM: "*The Promised Land: Black Consciousness in Chicago*"

MEET at 1:00 PM for Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

Malcolm X, Autobiography, Ch. 12-16 [pp. 220-440].

Major Problems: Ch. 7, "Stokely Carmichael Explains Black Power, 1967" [pp. 259-263]; Thomas Sugrue, "The Continuing Racial Crisis" [pp. 272-278].

Xerox: SNCC, "We Want Black Power," and Black Panther Party's "What We Want, What We Believe."

WEEK III cont.

Tue. Sept. 19: From Outlaws to Martyrs - Re-Remembering King, Malcolm X, the Vietnam War and the Great Society

Readings:

Malcolm X, Autobiography: Ch. 17-19 [pp. 366-440] and Alex Haley, "Epilogue" [pp. 441-523].

Major Problems: Ch. 7, "Senate Committee Reports on the FBI's Campaign Against Martin Luther King, Jr., 1976" [pp. 263-265]; Vincent Harding, "King as a Disturber of the Peace" [pp. 265-272]

***Wed. Sept. 20: Anti-War Protest and Election '68 - MALCOLM X PAPER DUE AT 1 PM**

MEET at 9:00 AM in HEDGES for FILM: "*The Democratic Convention of 1968*"

MEET at 1:00 PM for Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

Xerox: James Kunen, The Strawberry Statement [pp. TBA]

Major Problems: Ch. 9, "The New Left and the Politics of the 1960s," Documents (**choose one**) and Essays, [pp. 323-365].

THE RISE OF THE RIGHT

Thu. Sept. 21: Watergate - Crisis in Democratic Governance

MEET at 1:00 PM for Lecture and Discussion and Film clip: "*David Frost Interviews Nixon on Watergate*"

Readings:

Rodriguez, Hunger of Memory, Prologue and Ch. 1-2 [pp. 2-73].

Major Problems: Ch. 11, "Richard Nixon, Watergate, and the Crisis of the 'Imperial' Presidency," Documents (**choose one**) and Essays, [pp. 414-447].

Fri. Sept. 22: Neoconservatism

MEET at 1:00 PM for Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

Rodriguez, Hunger of Memory, Ch. 3-5 [pp. 76-195].

Xerox: Stephen Steinberg, "Affirmative Action and Liberal Capitulation," [pp. 164-175].

Xerox: "Speaking for English as the Official Language: A U.S. Senator Explains," and "Against Official English: A U.S. Representative Explains."

WEEK IV

A NEW WORLD ORDER

***Mon. Sept. 25: Right-Wing Revolutions- RODRIGUEZ PAPER DUE AT 1 PM**

MEET at 10:00 AM in SHAW for FILM: "*GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ROUNDTABLE: POLITICALLY CORRECT SPEECH AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES*"

MEET at 1:00 PM for Lecture and Discussion

Readings:

Major Problems: Ch. 12, "The Reagan Revolution and After: Politics and Political Economy in the New Era," Documents (**choose one**) and Thomas Byrne Edsall Essay, [pp. 449-477]; (**See Next Page**)

WEEK IV cont.

Mon. Sept 25th Readings cont.:

Major Problems: Ch. 13, "The Empire Strikes Back: Ronald Reagan and the Cold War," Documents (**choose one**) and Essays by John Lewis Gaddis and R. Lebow/J. Stein, [pp. 498-521]; Ch. 14, "Brave New World: The U.S. and the Global Era" Documents (**choose one**) and Essays by Benjamin Barber and Ronald Takaki, [pp. 531-562].

Xerox: Barry Goldwater, "The Conscience of a Conservative."

Xerox: "The Conscience of a Conservative Christian," "Rev. Jerry Falwell Organizes the Moral Majority, 1979," "A University President Denounces Conservative Coercion, 1981."

Tue. Sept. 26: The End of the American Century?

MEET at 10:00 AM for Review – HEDGES

Wed. Sept. 27: Final Exam due at Noon in my Office, College Hall 208