

HISTORY 17B: U.S. HISTORY, 1865-PRESENT
Section 3: MWF, 11:00-11:50
DR. PHILIP C. DIMARE

OFFICE: BENICIA 1011

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday, 12:00-1:15 and 4:30-5:45; Wed. 12:00-2:00;
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Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure.

Abraham Lincoln, *Gettysburg Address*

COURSE DESCRIPTION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Oriented around lectures, discussions, and readings, this course is designed to introduce students to major themes in United States history from 1865 until the present. A fascinating mix of political, economic, technological, religious and cultural factors marks the “second half” of the history of the United States. During this period our country was forced to ask questions about issues such as race relations, women’s rights, war, and our economic and political responsibility in an increasingly global community.

During the course of the 150-year Colonial period, the Europeans who settled the New World built upon the well-established ideas that they had carried with them across the sea to America, ultimately creating the context for the newly emerging Republic. By the time of the American Revolution, they no longer thought of themselves as merely colonists, but now began to conceive of themselves as “citizens” of a unique society predicated on “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” This idea of the individual as “citizen” became a foundational element of the American Revolution. Victorious over England, the representatives of the new Republic produced and ratified their Constitution and began to fulfill their “Manifest Destiny.” From the very first, however, the Republic would be stained by dissent and discord, and the “citizens” of the now “United States” would move inexorable toward their own, great Civil War. As the U.S. progressed from the Civil War toward the 20th century it grew less and less agrarian and more and more industrialized, ultimately becoming one of the most powerful nations in the world. While

this rapid industrialization created the possibility of the development of great cities and the accumulation of great wealth, it also gave rise to poverty, political corruption, and an often disturbing sense of cultural divisiveness.

This course will focus on America's attempt to define and abide by the principles of freedom and equality that were laid out in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. After the end of the "great civil war" of Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address*, the Nation was faced with "reconstructing" a union in which African Americans, women, and others were still being denied the possibility of experiencing the "life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness" promised to all by the Founding Fathers. With this in mind, we will explore the triumphs and failures of the U.S. as it ultimately became the "last great superpower," focusing on: the rise of industry; progressivism; the horrors of the World Wars; the Cold War; the legacy of Vietnam; and the "new conservatism" of the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

COURSE GOALS:

The course has two main goals: 1) To provide students with a foundational understanding of the chronology of the history of the United States from 1865 to the present; 2) To allow students to understand that the "facts and figures" of history have a richness that is not only extremely interesting but profoundly significant in relation to present day America. In order to accomplish the first goal, we will examine the historical evolution of America. In other words, we will learn when and where the major events in U.S. history took place, as the chronology is vastly important. But history is so much more than just "facts and figures"; and thus, in order to accomplish the second goal, we will use our historical chronology as a context within which to explore the ideas, values, mythologies, and prejudices of U.S. history. In this way, we will come to understand that our own experience of America is shaped by a legacy that is both visionary and at times chillingly shortsighted.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

With the above goals in mind:

- Students will develop a better understanding of the chronology and pivotal issues and themes of U.S. history from 1865 until the present.
- Students will develop an understanding of and appreciation for the significance of region and geography in shaping the nation's history.
- Students will develop an understanding and appreciation of the contributions, perspectives and agency of ethnic, racial and cultural populations, including Native American, African and African American, Asian American, and Latinos in U.S. history.
- Students will develop an understanding of and appreciation for the contributions, diverse perspectives, and agency of women in U.S. history.
- Students will become acquainted with the use of primary sources.
- Students will become acquainted with historical analysis and sharpen their critical thinking skills.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Eric Foner: *Give Me Liberty!: An American History*
 Eric Foner: *Voices of Freedom*
 Robert Maddox: *American History: Reconstruction through the Present*

REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) You are required to do all readings and come to class prepared to discuss the material assigned for that session.
- 2) You will be given ten quizzes during the semester. These quizzes will cover the material in *Give Me Liberty!*, *Voices of Freedom*, and *American History*, and be worth 10 points each, for a total of 100 points..
- 3) There will be two in-class, “mid-term” exams, which will cover the material from *Give Me Liberty!*, *Voices of Freedom*, and *American History*. These exams will be worth 50 points each, for a total of 100 points. I will hand out study sheets for these exams one week prior to the exam date.
- 4) You will have a final exam (not cumulative) that will be worth 100 points. I will hand out study sheets for this exam at least one week prior to the exam.
- 5) Although I do not have a formal participation grade, I am a big fan of discussion, and your questions and comments may convince me that you deserve a higher grade if you are on the borderline.

GRADING:

Quizzes: 50 points
 Mid-term Exams: 100
 Final Exam: 100
Total Points: 300

EXAM DATES

First Exam: Friday, March 2
 Second Exam: Friday, April 13
 Final Exam: Wednesday, May 23

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

300-285: A
 284-270: A-
 269-264: B+
 263-255: B
 254-240: B-
 239-234: C+
 233-225: C
 224-210: C-
 209-204: D+
 203-195: D
 194-180: D-
 179-0: F

QUIZ DATES:

Friday, February 9
 Friday, February 16
 Friday, February 23
 Friday, March 16
 Friday, March 23
 Friday, March 30
 Friday, April 20
 Friday, April 27
 Friday, May 4
 Friday, May 11

COURSE OUTLINE:**Week One: January 29 – February 2****Introduction to Course****Read:** *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 15: What is Freedom?: Reconstruction

*Voices of Freedom*Chapter 15: What is Freedom?: Reconstruction (all chapters in *Voices of Freedom* have the same titles as their companion chapters in *Give Me Liberty!*)*American History*

“The New View of Reconstruction”

Topics for discussion:

- Reconstruction Politics
- Amending Freedoms
- Johnson’s Impeachment
- Compromise 1877

Week Two: February 5 – 9 (cont. readings from Week One)**Read:** *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 15: What is Freedom?: Reconstruction

Voices of Freedom

Chapter 15: What is Freedom?: Reconstruction

American History

“1871 War on Terror”

Topics for discussion:

- Reconstruction Politics
- Amending Freedoms
- Johnson’s Impeachment
- Compromise 1877

Week Three: February 12 - 16**Read:** *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 16: America’s Gilded Age

Voices of Freedom

Chapter 16

American History

“Little Bighorn Reborn”

“The Spark of Genius”

“A Day to Remember: November 18, 1883”

Topics for discussion:

- Agriculture and Industry
- Expanding Railroads
- Immigration and Migrants
- “Assimilating” Natives
- Industry and Urbanization
- Women in Society

Week Four: February 19 - 23**Read:** *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 17: Freedom's Boundaries

Voices of Freedom

Chapter 17

American History

"Lockwood in '84"

"Where the Other Half Lived"

"The Murder of Lucy Pollard"

Topics for discussion:

- Political Corruption
- Labor
- Jim Crow Laws
- Women's Suffrage
- The "People's Party"
- Cuba and War with Spain

Week Five: February 26 – March 2**Read:** *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 18: The Progressive Era

Voices of Freedom

Chapter 18

American History

"T.R.'s Virtuoso Performance"

"And Still Champion"

"The Fate of Leo Frank"

"The Ambiguous Legacies of Women's Progressivism"

Topics for discussion:

- Imperial Notions
- The Panama Canal
- Wilsonian Idealism

First Midterm Exam, Friday, March 2**Week Six: March 5 - 9****Read:** *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 19: Safe for Democracy in the United States

Voices of Liberty

Chapter 19

American History

"American Biography: Edith Galt Wilson"

"The Home Front"

Topics for discussion:

- Progressive Reform
- Class, Ethnicity, Race
- Wilson the Scholar

(week Six cont.)

- The Road to War
- Combat

Week Seven: March 12 - 16

Read: *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 20: From Business Culture to Great Depression

Voices of Freedom

Chapter 20

American History

“Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?”

“A Promise Denied”

Topics for discussion:

- Unrest and Reaction
- Cultural Ferment
- Women’s Rights
- The Dominance of Business
- Civil Liberties

Week Eight: March 19 - 23

Read: *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 21: The New Deal

Voices of Freedom

Chapter 21

American History

“A Monumental Man”

“We Need to Reclaim the Second Bill of Rights”

“The Biggest Decision: Why We Had to Drop the Atomic Bombs”

Topics for discussion:

- Free Fall Economy
- Herbert Hoover
- F.D.R. and the Creation of the New Deal
- The First Hundred Days

Spring Recess: March 26- April 1, no classes

Week Nine: April 2 - 6

Read: *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 22: Fighting for the Four Freedoms

Voices of Freedom

Chapter 22

Topics for discussion

- Good Neighbor Policy
- Nazi Aggression
- Isolationism

(week Nine cont.)

- Outbreak of War
- War in Europe
- War in the Pacific
- Changing Economies
- Defeat of Germany

Week Ten: April 9 - 13**Read:** *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 23: The United States and the Cold War

Voices of Liberty

Chapter 23

American History

“The Tangle Web: America, France, and Indochina, 1947-1950”

Topics for discussion:

- The Atomic Bomb
- Foreign and Domestic Concerns
- The Marshall Plan
- National Security
- The rights of “Others”

Second Midterm Exam, Friday, April 13**Week Eleven: April 16 - 20****Read:** *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 24: An Affluent Society

Voices of Freedom

Chapter 24

American History

“From Rosie the Riveter to the Global Assembly Line: American Women on the the World Stage”

“The Split-Level Years”

Topics for discussion:

- An Uncertain War
- The Fall of MacArthur
- Eisenhower, the World, and Cold War Beginnings

Week Twelve: April 23 - 27**Read:** *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 25: The Sixties

Voices of Freedom

Chapter 25

American History

“The Rise of Conservatism Since World War II”

“The of ‘68”

“The Cold War and Vietnam”

(week Twelve cont.)

Topics for discussion:

- The Election of 1960
- Kennedy and the Soviets
- Civil Rights
- Johnson and the “Great Society”
- Vietnam

Week Thirteen: April 30 – May 4

Read: *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 26: The Triumph of Conservatism

Voices of Freedom

Chapter 26

Topics for discussion:

- 1968: A Politics of Protest
- Nixon and Watergate

Week Fourteen: May 7 - 11

Read: *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 27: Globalization and Its Discontents

Voices of Freedom

Chapter 27

Topic for discussion:

- Legacies of Vietnam
- New economic realities
- A new enemy

Week Fifteen: May 14 - 18

Read: *Give Me Liberty!*

Chapter 28: Epilogue: September 11 and the Next American Century

American History

“Soft Power: Reagan the Dove”

“The Tragedy of Bill Clinton”

Topics for discussion:

- Ford after Nixon
- Carter and a Brief Liberalism
- A Divided Society
- The Rise of the Christian Right
- The Reagan Legacy
- The End of the Cold War
- The Gulf War
- Clinton and the “New Democrats”

Week Sixteen: Finals Week, May 21 – 25

Final Exam, Wednesday, May 23: 10:15 – 12:15