

HSTAA 303: **MODERN AMERICAN CIVILIZATION SINCE 1877**

University of Washington; Spring 2010

TTh 10:30-11:50 – 121 Raitt Hall

<http://faculty.washington.edu/momara/HSTAA303.html>

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This course surveys the history of the United States from the end of Reconstruction to the age of Obama. Particular focus is given to the evolving role of government in the lives of individual citizens, the social effect of economic and technological changes, changing patterns of production and consumption, patterns of migration within and immigration from without, and America's changing role in the world. Successful completion of this course will provide a refined understanding of how governments, markets, and individuals and groups have functioned as agents of historical change; the contingencies and complexities shaping America's transition from an agrarian nation to an industrial and post-industrial superpower; sharpened critical thinking and writing about history; and an awareness of the historical roots of present-day political, economic, and social structures. The course will feature two 80-minute lectures plus one discussion section per week.

READINGS

BOOKS are all in paperback and are available for purchase at the Bookstore and on 2-hour reserve at Odegaard Undergraduate Library.

1. Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation, Vol. II* (textbook providing overview of major events and figures; not required but recommended, especially for students without extensive American History background)
2. Theodore Dreiser, *Sister Carrie*
3. Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*
4. Buzz Bissinger, *A Prayer for the City*

A COURSEPACK OF ARTICLES AND PRIMARY DOCUMENTS can be purchased at Ave Copy (4141 University Ave). If you prefer to print off documents yourself, registered students may access electronic copies via the course website. As close reading of primary source materials is a critical component of the course, you are expected to bring printed copies of the readings with you to every discussion section.

You also will receive discussion questions for each required reading that will help you interpret and respond to key issues raised. Come to section each week having read the items listed under that week on the schedule.

Any students for whom purchasing books presents a severe financial hardship should consult with the professor about alternative means of obtaining access to readings.

ASSIGNMENTS

PARTICIPATION (20% of grade) includes: attendance at two lectures and one section per week; completion of required readings prior to section; regular review and contribution to the HSTAA 303 GoPost discussion board; active participation in section; completion of any ungraded assignments given within and outside of section.

TWO SHORT PAPERS (15% each, for a total of 30% of grade): clearly organized and sharply written essays of five pages each, one due in the third week of class and the other due in the eighth week. Assignment options will be distributed and posted on the course web site the first week of the quarter. Due at section **April 17** and **May 22**.

TAKE-HOME MIDTERM (25%) and BLUE BOOK FINAL (25%): examinations consisting of essays, identification questions, and multiple choice questions. Exams should be reviewed for style, grammar, and accurate spelling prior to submittal. If the Midterm is turned in electronically, it should be in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format. Midterm due 10:30AM on **May 4**. Final will be held from 10:30AM-12:20PM on Monday, **June 7** in Raitt 121.

GRADING STANDARDS, PAPER-WRITING GUIDELINES, AND OTHER POLICIES are available on my web site at <http://faculty.washington.edu/momara/Courses.html>. I encourage you to read and refer to these as needed. Your grade on an assignment will be reduced by one grade point every five minutes it is late (i.e. turning in midterm or paper after the start of lecture will decrease your grade). Incapacitation because of illness or another crisis must be documented with a note from a doctor, employer, or similarly authoritative source. Scheduled absences due to prior university obligations or significant family events should be discussed with your TA as early in the term as possible. In all assignments you are expected to adhere to the standards of academic integrity outlined by the University of Washington Student Conduct Code. For clarification of these standards and disciplinary penalties, see <http://depts.washington.edu/grading/conduct/honesty.html>. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the UW Disability Resources for Students Office. If you have a letter from their office indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me so we can discuss the accommodations that you might need in this class.

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 – The Gilded Age

Tu March 30 Course intro; world's fairs and the idea of Modern America
Th April 1 Railroads; corporations; the federal government and the West

READING: *Sister Carrie*, Chapters 1-23
Platform of the People's Party, 1892
Louise Palmer, "How We Live in Nevada"

WEEK 2 – The Progressive Era

Tu April 6 Urban life; immigration; women and men
Th April 8 Markets and corruption; Progressivism; order and efficiency

READING: *Sister Carrie*, Chapters 24-47
Josiah Strong, "Perils of the City"

Samuel Gompers, Letter on Immigration, 1921
Ida Tarbell, "John D. Rockefeller: A Character Study"

WEEK 3 – The World Becomes Modern

Tu April 13 America and the world; empire and race; war and profit
Th April 15 The Roaring '20s; leisure and mass culture

READING: Gary Gerstle, "Theodore Roosevelt and the Divided Character of American Nationalism"
W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, Ch. 1 & 2
Ida Tarbell, "What a Factory Can Teach a Housewife"
Christine Frederick, "The Growing Recognition of Need for Consumer Study"
"The Rev. John Phelan Assesses Movies in Toledo, Ohio, 1919"

FIRST PAPER DUE AT FRIDAY'S SECTION

WEEK 4 – The Great Depression and New Deal

Tu April 20 The Great Depression; Hoover vs Roosevelt; dissident politics
Th April 22 The New Deal and its legacy; American life in the 1930s

READING: Franklin D. Roosevelt, First Inaugural Address, 1933
Letters to President Roosevelt on the Fireside Chats
Huey Long, "Share the Wealth," 1935

AUDIO: Roosevelt, Fireside Chat on the Government and Capitalism, 1934
Father Charles Coughlin, "Somebody Must Be Blamed," 1937

WEEK 5 – The World at War

Tu April 27 The march to war; the wartime economy; the experience of wartime
Th April 29 The atomic bomb; the Marshall Plan; postwar internationalism

READING: Eleanor Roosevelt, "Race, Religion, and Prejudice," 1942
Hugo Black and Frank Murphy, "Korematsu v United States," 1944
Henry Stimson, Press Release on the Dropping of the Atomic
Bomb, August 1945
Richard Kirkendall, "The Boeing Company and the Metropolitan-Military-Industrial
Complex, 1945-1953"

ONLINE: Read "Historical Context" and browse ONE of the primary document collection categories at the
Japanese American Relocation Digital Archive
(<http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu/jarda/>)

TAKE-HOME MIDTERM DISTRIBUTED AT FRIDAY'S SECTION

WEEK 6 – Cold War Politics

Tu May 4 America in the postwar world; McCarthy and 'subversion'; liberals and conservatives
TAKE-HOME MIDTERM DUE AT START OF CLASS
Th May 6 The Cold War at home; civil defense; family lives; immigration and citizenship

READING: May, *Homeward Bound*, 1-119
Christian G. Appy, "Eisenhower's Guatemalan Doodle, or: How to Draw, Deny,
and Take Credit for a Third World Coup"

WEEK 7 – The New American Landscape

Tu May 11 urban crisis; suburban migration; segregation and integration
Th May 13 Cold War science and the high-tech future; industrial realignment; rise of the Sunbelt

READING: May, *Homeward Bound*, 119-209
John Keats, *The Crack in the Picture Window*, selections
William H. Whyte, "Are Cities Un-American?"

WEEK 8 – Making Sense of the 1960s

Tu May 18 liberals and conservatives; government and taxes; rights and revolt
Th May 20 Vietnam and its legacies
Th May 20 – MOVIE NIGHT, 5:30-7:30 – *The Fog of War*

READING: Barry Goldwater, Speech to the 1964 Republican Convention
Bruce Schulman, "'That Bitch of a War': LBJ and Vietnam"

VIDEO: Ronald Reagan, Speech in Support of Barry Goldwater, 1964

SECOND PAPER DUE IN FRIDAY'S SECTION

WEEK 9 – Appreciating the 1970s

Tu May 25 Industrial realignment; cities vs suburbs; globalization
Th May 27 Watergate and government reform; religion and politics; popular culture
Th May 27 – MOVIE NIGHT, 5:30-7:30 – *All the President's Men*

READING: Bissinger, *A Prayer for the City*

WEEK 10 – The New World Order

Tu June 1 the Reagan years; privatization; the fall of the Berlin Wall; the Clinton years
Th June 3 9/11 and beyond; technology and the global economy; the meaning of Barack Obama

READING: E.J. Dionne, "Jimmy Carter and the Not-so-Vital Center," from *Why Americans Hate Politics*
Jerry Falwell, "Strengthening Families in the Nation"
Ronald Reagan, "Free Enterprise"
Lawrence Wright, "The Counter-Terrorist"

FINAL EXAM WILL BE HELD 10:30-12:20 P.M. ON MONDAY, JUNE 7 IN RAITT 121.