

HSTAA 303: **THE AMERICAN CENTURY**  
University of Washington; Spring 2013  
TTh 10:00-11:20 – 201 Gowen 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: all in paperback and available for purchase at the Bookstore and on 2-hour reserve at Odegaard Undergraduate Library.

1. Theodore Dreiser, *Sister Carrie* (also available as a free e-book on Kindle)
2. Eric Rauchway, *The Great Depression & New Deal: A Very Short Introduction*
3. Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic*
4. Bruce Schulman, *Lyndon B. Johnson and American Liberalism*
5. Jason DeParle, *American Dream*

There also will be some articles and primary documents that registered students may access electronically via the course website. As close reading of source materials is a critical component of the course, you are expected to bring your books and printed copies of the readings with you to every discussion section.

This course does not have a textbook. If you are interested in purchasing one for your reference, I recommend Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation, Vol. II*. This is an affordable and accessible reference for anyone interested in the period, provides detail on people and events that we do not have time to fully cover in a quarter-long course, also useful for students without extensive American History background.

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.

### **PODCASTS**

Digital audio recordings of the lectures for this class are available at <http://www.css.washington.edu/course/HSTAA303A>. You will be prompted to logon with your UWNetID when accessing the web page where the recordings are located. You can listen to the lectures by clicking on the "audio recording" links.

## **CLASS COMMUNICATIONS**

Rather than take up class time with announcements and administrative matters, the professor and TA will broadcast all course announcements via the HSTAA303A email listserv, to which all enrolled students are subscribed. You are responsible for checking your email on a regular basis to stay on top of class news and critical reminders. In addition, the course web site is a repository and portal for all class information, important links, and handouts.

The best way to contact the professor and TA is via email or by visiting their office hours. Expect email responses during regular business hours, M-F. Before contacting the professor or TA via email with administrative or logistical questions, make sure to read through all of the other email communications, syllabus, and other materials. Very often, the answer to your question will be found there.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

**PARTICIPATION (25% of grade)** includes: engaged attention during two lectures and one section per week; completion of required readings prior to section; regular review of and contribution to the HSTAA 303 GoPost discussion board; active participation in section, including section-specific assignments given by your TA; completion of any ungraded assignments given within and outside of section and lectures.

**THREE PAPERS (15% each, for a total of 45%):** these assignments ask you to examine closely and give a written analysis of a primary text or texts, helping you develop one of the key skills of historical research. Each assignment presents a different kind of textual or visual source and asks you to interrogate its purpose and meaning. The first two papers are 4-5 pages each (double spaced, 12-point font, standard margins) and examine one primary source assigned by the professor. The third paper is 5-6 pages in length and asks you to consider one of the primary sources examined in papers 1 or 2 in comparison and contrast with another primary source assigned by the professor (i.e., this paper considers two documents, one of which you have written about before). The third paper should respond to the comments and feedback you received in the earlier papers. These should be typed in readable font, printed, and handed into your TA at Friday section on **April 19, May 17, and May 31**.

**MIDTERM MINI-EXAM (10%):** short electronic examination consisting of identification questions and multiple-choice questions, covering class content from the first half of the quarter. Midterm will be made available via Catalyst on Friday, May 3, at 12:30PM and must be completed before **Tuesday, May 7**, at 10:00AM.

**FINAL EXAM (20%):** The final is a traditional blue book examination with IDs, multiple choice, and longer essays. It will be held **Monday, June 10** from 10:30-12:20 in Gowen 201.

## **SCHEDULE**

### **WEEK 1 – The Gilded Age**

Tu April 2                      Course intro; industrialization  
Th April 4                      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”

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### **WEEK 2 – The Progressive Era**

Tu April 9                      Urban life; immigration; women and men  
Th April 11                     Markets and corruption; Progressivism; order and efficiency

READING:            *Sister Carrie*, Chapters 24-47  
Josiah Strong, “Perils of the City”  
Ida Tarbell, “John D. Rockefeller: A Character Study”

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### **WEEK 3 – The World Becomes Modern**

Tu April 16                     America and the world; empire and race; war and profit  
Th April 18                     The Roaring ‘20s; leisure and mass culture

READING:            Gary Gerstle, “Theodore Roosevelt and the Divided Character of American Nationalism”  
Theodore Roosevelt, “The Strenuous Life”

ASSIGNMENT:    **PAPER #1 DUE IN SECTION**

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### **WEEK 4 – The Great Depression and New Deal**

Tu April 23                     The Great Depression; Hoover vs Roosevelt; dissident politics  
Th April 25                     The New Deal and its legacy; American life in the 1930s

READING:            Rauchway, *The Great Depression and New Deal*  
Huey Long, “Share the Wealth,” 1935  
Father Charles Coughlin, “Somebody Must Be Blamed,” 1937

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### **WEEK 5 – The World at War**

Tu April 30                     The march to war; the wartime economy; the experience of wartime  
Th May 2                        The atomic bomb; the Marshall Plan; postwar internationalism

READING:            Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic*, pp. 5-109

ASSIGNMENT:    **MINI-MIDTERM AVAILABLE ON CATALYST FRIDAY 12:30PM; DUE TUESDAY 10:00AM**

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**WEEK 6 – Cold War Politics**

Tu May 7                      America in the postwar world; McCarthy and ‘subversion’; liberals and conservatives  
Th May 9                      The Cold War at home; civil defense; family lives; immigration and citizenship

READING:           Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic*, pp. 111-192  
                  Canwell Hearings, State of Washington, 1948:  
                  Testimony of Angelo Pelligrini and Affidavit of Henry Kariel

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**WEEK 7 – The New American Landscape**

Tu May 14                    urban crisis; suburban migration; segregation and integration  
Th May 16                    Cold War science and the high-tech future; industrial realignment; rise of the Sunbelt

READING:           Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic*, pp. 193-344

ASSIGNMENT: **PAPER #2 DUE IN FRIDAY SECTION**

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**WEEK 8 – Making Sense of the 1960s**

Tu May 21                    liberals and conservatives; government and taxes; rights and revolt  
Th May 23                    Vietnam and its legacies

READING:           Shulman, *LBJ and American Liberalism*, pp. 57-161, 233-246

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**WEEK 9 – Appreciating the 1970s**

Tu May 28                    Industrial realignment; cities vs suburbs; globalization  
Th May 30                    Watergate and government reform; religion and politics; popular culture

READING:           DeParle, *American Dream*, pp. 3-100

ASSIGNMENT: **PAPER #3 DUE IN FRIDAY'S SECTION**

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**WEEK 10 – The New World Order**

Tu June 4                    the Reagan years; privatization; the fall of the Berlin Wall; the Clinton years  
Th June 6                    9/11 and beyond; technology and the global economy; the meaning of Barack Obama

READING:           DeParle, *American Dream*; pp. 101-221

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Mon June 6                 Final exam will be held **10:30-12:20 P.M.** in **Gowen 201.**

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**CLASS POLICIES**

GRADING STANDARDS AND PAPER-WRITING GUIDELINES can be found on the course website.

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS:** Your grade on an assignment will be reduced by one-tenth of a grade point every five minutes it is late. We do not give extensions for any causes other than severe or incapacitating illness or family emergency.

**ABSENCES:** Success in this course will depend on your being present and engaged in the lectures and sections. Please alert the TA to any expected absences well ahead of time so that we can make arrangements for makeup assignments. In cases of unexpected absences (illness, family emergencies), you must contact us within a week of the absence to be considered for makeup credit.

**ILLNESS:** Please follow common-sense guidelines in order to protect yourself and your fellow students. Please stay home if you have a fever or any malady that might be easily communicated to those sitting near you in the lecture hall. Doctor's notes are not required for occasional absence, but are required in cases of debilitating illnesses that result in missing a significant stretch of class sessions.

**LECTURE HALL ETIQUETTE:** I allow **laptop computers** and electronic note-taking devices (iPads, etc) in the lecture hall but ask that all users seat themselves in the "laptop zone" at the front corner of the room. As use of laptops for anything other than taking class notes is a distraction and a discourtesy to your classmates, the TA will join you in the laptop zone to ensure that laptops are being used for class purposes. Repeated violations will result in a laptop ban for the entire class. Please remember to turn off **cell phone** ringers prior to lecture. Texting or any other cell phone use during class will be noted and will adversely affect your participation grade. If you are right-handed, please leave the **left-handed desks** for those who are. Your professor and her fellow lefties thank you.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** In all assignments you are expected to adhere to the standards of academic integrity outlined by the University of Washington Student Conduct Code. In an age of internet-based research and writing, the standards for plagiarism and academic dishonesty can become unclear, and I strongly encourage all students to read the statements and guidelines found on my website that outline acceptable practices and procedures.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** 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 that requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to the professor at the start of the quarter so we can discuss the accommodations that you might need in this class. Letters presented later in the quarter may come too late to allow proper accommodations for examinations and other assignments.