

Imagining America: The United States since 1865 HIST 2112

MWF 2:30-3:20

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Office Hours: Mon. and Wed. 3:30-4:30, or by appointment

Themes and Goals

What is America's story? Who is an American? And who gets to decide? This survey of modern United States history is premised on the idea that there have been many different ways of imagining this nation. We will ask these questions of a wide range of people and historical moments, from the Emancipation Proclamation (what nation did the freed slaves imagine?) to the War on Terror (how did neoconservatives conceive of America?). The answers, as we will discover, are not always straightforward. So stay tuned.

If you do, you'll find that American history is both important and fascinating. Regardless of your experience with history courses in the past, if you engage with this course, you should come away with:

- 1) a deeper, broader knowledge of the key people, places, events and ideas of the last 150 years in the United States;
- 2) a practical knowledge of the discipline of history, and why some people (me included!) care so much about it; and
- 3) an improved ability to think deeply, read intelligently, and write lucidly.

Plan of the Course

Generally speaking, we will have three kinds of classes over the course of the semester. On lecture days, I will be leading you through a set of topics and events, and you will be taking notes and asking and responding to questions. On workshop days, we will be encountering the "raw past" — documents from the time period under study. You will usually read the documents in advance and complete an assignment (essay, analytical question, concept map, etc.) which will then serve as the basis for class discussion. On colloquium days, we will read historians' differing interpretations of the period under study. You will come to class ready to take a brief quiz which tests how well you have grasped the authors' main points. Toward the end of the semester, as you master these historical thinking skills, your own work will take center stage: you will propose, draft, and present your own histories based on oral history interviews.

Readings

Required:

1. Eric Foner, ed., *Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History*, vol. II, 3rd edition (W.W. Norton, 2010) [VOF in course schedule]

2. Mark Schultz, *The Rural Face of White Supremacy: Beyond Jim Crow* (University of Illinois Press, 2006) [Schultz in course schedule]
3. Additional readings (links and pdfs) will be posted on eLearning Commons

If you wish to use a textbook, let me know and I can recommend a few.

Assignments

Oral History Project: Over the course of the semester, you will propose a topic and a person to interview, take notes on the interview and outline a paper that uses the oral history as a primary source, turn in a rough draft, and present your findings to the class.

Exams: The midterm and final exam will test your comprehension of lectures, discussions, and readings through short answer questions.

Workshop Assignments: Prior to workshop classes, you will complete an assignment based on the readings. These assignments are designed to help you develop your historical thinking skills and focus your reading.

Colloquia Quizzes: On colloquium days, you will take a brief quiz focusing on the authors' main points.

Grading

Mid-Term Exam: 10%

Final Exam: 20%

Participation and Attendance: 10%

Workshop Assignments: 20%

Colloquia Quizzes: 15%

Oral History Project: 25%

Attendance and Classroom Expectations

1) Attendance is mandatory, and I will note your presence or absence as part of your participation grade. However, you have TWO FREE PASSES for the semester—no questions asked—in case of illness, job interview, or some other unavoidable conflict. Anything beyond those two absences will mean a lower grade. That said, if something serious comes up during the semester that will cause you to miss more than two days, talk to me about it as soon as you know about it.

2) Professionalism is expected. College is your job right now, so come prepared. Turn off all cell phones, PDAs, beepers, and similar devices. Don't read newspapers or any non-class material, and don't eat food (drinks are fine). Dress appropriately. Any behavior that in my judgment interferes with the learning environment of the class is out of line, and students may be asked to leave if they continue in such behavior.

3) Come prepared to learn. Assignments are due at the beginning of class, unless otherwise noted. A letter grade (a B- will be a C+) will be deducted for every day late,

beginning with the first day. (If you turn in a paper at the end of the class period, it is late.)

4) Come without your laptop or tablet. That's right: NO LAPTOPS in class. This is a relatively small class and a short block of time, and I expect you to be listening attentively and participating regularly. Laptops and tablets are great tools for communication and learning, but not always in the classroom.

Communication

Email (wtoke@uga.edu) is the best way to get in touch with me. However, please understand that I respond to email only during the day (8am to 4pm), and not on weekends. Generally speaking, I will get back to you within 24 hours during the week. Also, please note that I may not be able to answer questions about an assignment on the day it is due.

Please feel free to drop by during office hours. It is always a good idea to email me in advance to set up a time, in case I have other students to see.

Academic Honesty

The rules are pretty straightforward: 1) Don't cheat on exams or quizzes. 2) Don't plagiarize. That is, don't use anyone's words or ideas without giving them credit. This includes words and ideas from books and articles, fellow students, and yourself. You may be required to give an oral defense of assignments you turn in, and your performance on this oral defense may affect your grade on the assignment and in the class. It is much better to ask permission than forgiveness in this case, so if you have any doubts, contact me by the day before the assignment is due.

All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty" at http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/academic_honesty.htm. You are responsible to inform yourself about those standards before performing any academic work. Any infringement of the University's Academic Honesty Code—no matter how minor— will result in an automatic zero.

Accommodations

If you have registered, or plan to register, with the Disability Resource Center for help taking notes, extra time on exams, or other accommodations, please contact me at the beginning of the semester. It is your responsibility to schedule exam appointments with the DRC .

Schedule of Classes

I. Growth and Pain 1863-1906

Week 1

Jan 9: Introduction: What is America's Story?

Jan 11: Nation of Freedmen

Jan 13: *Workshop*: Reconstruction (VOF 15)

Week 2

Jan 18: A Nation Redeemed

Jan 20: *Colloquium*: Interpreting Reconstruction

Week 3

Jan 23: Nations of Natives: The Conquest of the West

Jan 25: Industrious Nation: Big Business and Big Industry

Jan 27: *Workshop*: America's Gilded Age (VOF 16)

Week 4

Jan 30: Worker Nation: Immigration and Organized Labor

Feb 1: Agrarian Nation: The Farmers' Movements

Feb 3: *Workshop*: Freedom's Boundaries (VOF 17)

Week 5

Feb 6: Imperial Nation: Spain, Cuba, Puerto-Rico, the Philippines, and the United States

Feb 8: Frontier Nation: The Rise of Conservation

II. What Kind of Nation? (1906 –1941)

Feb 10: *Colloquium*: The Frontier and the American West

Oral History Proposal Due

Week 6

Feb 13: Model Nation: Progressive Reform and the Transatlantic Exchange

Feb 15: Soldier Nation: The Great War and American Citizenship

Feb 17: *Workshop*: WWI and The Progressive Era (VOF 18, 19)

Week 7

Feb 20: Separate Nations: Jim Crow America and the Great Migration

Feb 22: Modern Nation? Interwar America

Feb 24: ***Midterm Exam***

Week 8:

Feb 27: Liberal Nation: Depression and New Deal

Feb 29: *Colloquium*: Schultz, *The Rural Face of White Supremacy*

Mar 2: *Colloquium*: Schultz, *The Rural Face of White Supremacy*

III. The American Century (1941-1980)

Week 9:

Mar 5: The Empire of Liberty: WWII and the Early Cold War

Mar 7: Green Revolutions

Mar 9: *Workshop*: The Affluent Society (VOF 24)

[Mar 12-16 Spring Break]

Week 10:

Mar 19: The Nation as Beloved Community: Civil Rights I

Mar 21: The Nation as Beloved Community: Civil Rights II

Mar 23: *Colloquium*: Interpreting the Civil Rights Movements

Week 11:

Mar 26: Lost Nation: The Vietnam War and the High Tide of Liberalism

Mar 28: A Nation of Equals: Rights Revolutions

Mar 30: *Workshop*: The Sixties (VOF 25)

Week 12:

Apr 2: Polluted Nation: The Environmental Movement

Apr 4: Polyester Nation: the 1970s

Apr 6: ***Peer Editing Workshop: Oral History Notes and Outline Due***

IV. The Conservative Resurgence (1980 - Present)

Week 13:

Apr 9: Free Market Nation: Conservatism I

Apr 11: Christian Nation: Conservatism II

Oral History Rough Draft Due

Apr 13: *Workshop*: Conservatism (VOF 26)

Week 14:

Apr 16: The Nation Alone: Reagan and the End of the Cold War

Apr 18: Immigrant Nation? The Nuevo South and

Apr 20: *Workshop*: The U.S. and the Middle East (VOF 28)

Week 15:

Apr 23: *Oral History Presentations*

Apr 25: *Oral History Presentations*

Apr 27: *Oral History Presentations*

Week 16:

Monday, Apr. 30: What Is America's Story?

Final Oral History Project Due