

America in World Civilizations III: The Twentieth Century

History 13700, Spring 2019

Tuesday/Thursday 12:30-1:50 PM

Wieboldt Hall 408

Professor Destin Jenkins
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Office Hours: Tuesday 2:30-4:30 PM
Harper East Tower, Room 687

Course Description

What conditions have shaped inclusion and exclusion from the category “American” in the twentieth century? Is political equality the same as social equality? Who has claimed citizenship, and under what conditions were such claims realized and negated? The third quarter of America in World Civilization focuses on multiple definitions of Americanism in a period characterized by empire, transnational formations, and America's role in the world. We explore the construction of social order in a multicultural society; culture in the shadow of war; the politics of race, ethnicity, and gender; the rise and fall of new social movements on the left and the right; the emergence of the carceral state; the seemingly endless wars on crime, drugs, and terror; and the role of climate breakdown in shaping imagined futures.

Course Objectives

1. To master the principles of historical thought, including facility with textual reading; understanding and use of evidence; and historical argumentation.
2. To probe how ideas emerge from specific historical contexts, and to master the contextualization of historical texts and forms.
3. To identify the central historical questions and problems posed by primary sources.
4. To master the construction and craft of a short historical essay.
5. To define and explore some of the major issues and trends in American history.

Evaluation

Students are responsible for completing assigned readings prior to class, regular attendance, and active participation. Written requirements include three short historical essays (6 pages each) due by the end of the third week, sixth week, and at the end of the quarter. Course grades will be based on attendance, participation, and the papers.

Teaching Intern

Nicholas Foster (nfoster@uchicago.edu). Office hours by appointment.

Course Materials

- Course packet/Canvas readings: The course packet is divided into three volumes for your convenience. You are required to bring a hard copy of all readings to class.
- Textbook: Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore and Thomas J. Sugrue, *These United States* (Norton, 2015). This book is available for purchase as an e-book or in hard copy at the Seminary Co-op. It is also available online and at many bookstores, and older

editions, used copies, and ebooks will satisfy our purposes for this course (although pagination may vary). We won't consult this book in class, but will use it to contextualize our primary sources. It will also provide a common source of historical context for writing essays.

Weekly Schedule and Assignments

UNIT I.

Week 1: Empire

Gilmore & Sugrue: 41-58

A. Race and Empire

- Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden" (1899)

B. Democracy and Empire

- Theodore Roosevelt, "The Strenuous Life" (1899)
- W.E.B. Du Bois, "To the Nations of the World" (1900)
- William James, "The Philippines Tangle" (1901)
- Mark Twain, "To the Person Sitting in Darkness" (1901)

Week 2: Progress?

Gilmore & Sugrue: 31-37, 99-109, 112-119

A. Equality

- Excerpts from *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896)
- Ida B. Wells-Barnett, *The Red Record*, selection (1895)

B. Labor

- *Muller v. Oregon* (1908)
- Frederick W. Taylor, excerpts from *Shop Management* (1911)
- Henry Ford, "Why I Favor Five Days' Work with Six Days' Pay" (1926)

Week 3: Violence

Gilmore & Sugrue: 24-27, 30-32, 92-99

(First paper due at end of Week 3, April 19, 2:00 PM)**

A. At War

- Randolph Bourne, "War Diary" (1917)
- W.E.B. Du Bois, "Riddle of the Sphinx" (1920)
- John Dos Passos, selections from 1919 (1932)

****In-class Peer Review: bring two copies of your thesis statement for the first paper****

B. At Home

QUIZ: *Birth of a Nation*

- Film: D.W. Griffith, *Birth of a Nation* (1915)
- H.W. Evans, “The Klan’s Fight for Americanism” (1926)
- Mark Twain, “United States of Lyncherdom” (1923) [To be circulated]

UNIT II.

Week 4: Crisis

Gilmore & Sugrue: 134-135, 151-156, 187-195, 198-200

A. The Crisis of Mass Democracy

- Selections from *I’ll Take My Stand* (1930)
- Angelo Herndon, selections from *You Cannot Kill the Working Class* (c. 1934)
- Ralph Ellison, “A Party Down at the Square” (c. late 1930s)

B. Capitalism in Crisis

- Franklin Roosevelt, “The Commonwealth Club Address” (1932)
- Huey P. Long, “Sharing the Wealth” (1935)
- Dorothy Thompson, “In What Do We Believe?” (1938)
- Franklin Roosevelt, “An Economic Bill of Rights” (1944)

Week 5: War and Postwar

Gilmore & Sugrue: 284-307

A. The American Century

- Henry Luce, “The American Century” (1941)
- Henry Wallace, “The Century of the Common Man” (1943)
- *Korematsu v. United States* (1944)

B. Legacies of War

- Walter Reuther, “Our Fear of Abundance (1945)
- Harry Truman, “Special Message to the Congress on Greece and Turkey” (1947)

Week 6: Anxiety

Gilmore & Sugrue: 260-261, 307-311, 314-321

(Second paper due at end of Week 6, May 10th at 2:00 PM)**

A. Human Rights Across Borders

- We Charge Genocide (Petition to the United Nations) (1951)
- Leonard Nadel, photographs of the Bracero Program, selections (1956) [Canvas]

B. Duck and Cover

- NSC-68 (1950)
- FILM: *Atomic Café* (1982)

UNIT III.

Week 7: Revolt

Gilmore & Sugrue: (one of) 327-339, 344-346, 349-357, 380-383, 386-390, 416-431

A. Challenging the State

- Students for a Democratic Society, “Port Huron Statement” (1962)
- Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (1963)
- Malcolm X, “The Ballot or the Bullet” (1964)
- “Redstockings Manifesto” (1969)
- Statement of John Kerry, Vietnam Veterans Against the War, U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (1971)

B. Challenging Society

- Audre Lorde, “Who Said It Was Simple” (1973)
- James Baldwin, “My Dungeon Shook” (1963)
- Allen Young, “Out of the Closets” (1972)
- The Equal Rights Amendment (1972)
- *Roe v. Wade* (1973)

Week 8: Retrenchment

Gilmore & Sugrue: (one of) 390-395, 403-405, 464-475, 478-479, 540-544

A. The Politics of Morality

- Barry Goldwater, selections from *The Conscience of a Conservative* (1960)
- Jerry Falwell, “Rise Up Against the Tide of Permissiveness and Moral Decay” (1980)
- Ronald Reagan, Address to the Republican National Convention (1984)
- Phyllis Schlafly, “A Short History of the E.R.A.” (1986)
- Patrick Buchanan, “Culture War Speech: Address to the Republican National Convention” (1992)

B. Globalization

- Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History?” (1989)
- Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, 6th Declaration of the Selva Lacandona (1995)

Week 9: Para/militarization

Gilmore & Sugrue: 510-511, 514-516, 582-597

A. The Carceral State

- George H.W. Bush, “Address to the Nation on the National Drug Control Strategy” (1989)
- Public Enemy, “9-1-1 is a Joke” (1990) [listen on Canvas]
- Eric Schlosser, “The Prison-Industrial Complex” (1998)

B. War on Terror

- “The National Security Strategy of the United States of America” (2002)
- Ani DiFranco, “Self Evident” (2002) [listen on Canvas]
- The Abu Ghraib Photographs (2004) [Canvas]

Week 10: Legacies and Imaginaries

(No Gilmore & Sugrue)

- Junot Díaz, “Apocalypse: What Disasters Reveal” (2011)
- Ta-Nahesi Coates, “The Case for Reparations” (2014)
- Rebecca Solnit, “The Longest War” (2013)

Final essay due: Tuesday, June 11, 2:00 PM**

Final essay for graduating seniors due: TBD**

(In both cases, you will receive the prompt one week prior to the deadline)

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Policies and Resources

Discussion: This class engages serious and complicated material. Because the goal of this course is to foster critical engagement and lively discussion, I expect spirited, rigorous, and respectful participation.

Attendance: Attendance at all classes is mandatory. Chronic absence or flagrant disregard of the syllabus will result in an automatic F in the course at my discretion. If you miss class, you should get notes from a classmate and find out what discussion topics and work you have missed before contacting your professor or intern about the possibility of makeup assignments. In-class work can be made up only for excused absences. Content will never be re-delivered or posted online; you can make up course content only by getting notes from a classmate. All medical absences will be excused with a doctor’s note or health center verification.

E-mail and Canvas: You are responsible for reading any e-mail communications and/or Canvas announcements in a timely fashion; they often contain crucial information.

Grading: Late assignments lose one grade per day (your A paper submitted two days late will receive a B+; your B- paper submitted one day late would receive a C+). Extensions are sometimes possible with advance notice and my written consent. Failure on any one

assignment, including failure to complete an assignment, constitutes failure in the course; all late work must be made up even if it can no longer earn credit. I do not give reminders, and I may require documentation of emergencies (including technological glitches). Withdrawal from this course after Week 8 may be subject to a “WF” designation in accordance with course policies.

Style: Please use *The Chicago Manual of Style* to determine proper language use, citation format, and other stylistic questions that may arise during this course. We will accept assignments in Times New Roman 12-point font, double-spaced, with standard 1-inch margins and numbered pages. Your name and the date should appear on the upper left-hand corner of the first page.

Accessibility: *If you need any special accommodations or academic adjustments, please provide your professor with a copy of your Accommodation Determination Letter (provided to you by the Student Disability Services office) as soon as possible so that you may discuss with them how your accommodations may be implemented in this course.*
<http://disabilities.uchicago.edu/>

Technology: You are allowed to use computers, tablets, and the like. This policy is subject to change if I find students abusing the privilege. The use of audio or visual recording devices is prohibited without advance written permission.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism, and to familiarize yourself with the appropriate sections of the *Student Manual of University Policies and Regulations*. Procedures for dealing with plagiarism are mandatory, complicated, and severe. Some consequences of plagiarism include failing the assignment, failing the class, suspension, and expulsion. All work submitted in this class must be your own.