

**HIS 102**  
**U.S. History, Civil War – Present**  
**Fall 2012 Syllabus**

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Office Hours: Wed. 12-2

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**Course Aims:**

This course is designed for undergraduates as a general survey course in post-Civil war American history, 1865 to the present. As is the case in most survey courses, we will examine historical developments in broad strokes, including social, political, cultural, economic and intellectual changes over time. We will approach the course largely through the lens of worldviews, especially in the selection of readings. For the most part, the students will read very personalized accounts of history in the form of multi-biographical monograph, memoir, essay, and single-subject biography. The readings are intended to help students understand and relate to historical problems by perceiving them through the eyes of individuals who made meaning out of their world in the process of everyday life. By understanding the worldviews of historical actors, students will begin to make connections between the past and the present, as they recognize that both historical and current events are interpreted through cultural assumptions and personal perspectives, including their own.

**Assignments and Grading:**

In-Class Midterm – 25%	Due: Fri. October 12
Film Analysis Paper – 25%	Due: Mon. November 12
Final Exam – 25%	TBD
Participation – 25 %	

**Grading:**

92-100% A  
87-91.9% AB  
82-86.9% B  
77-81.9% BC  
72-76.9% C  
67-71.9% D  
0-66.9% F

- Note: Earning an A for any assignment in this class requires excellent writing and organizational skills as well as creativity and a demonstration of knowledge of course material. Therefore, As will be awarded sparingly. Please refer below for guidelines.

Grading standards for written work.

a. Organization:

- (1) Does the essay begin with an effective introduction that (a) engages the reader, (b) Identifies the historical problem under consideration, and (c) posits the student's **thesis**?
- (2) Do paragraphs comprise discrete ideas defined by identifiable topic sentences?
- (3) Does the student make effective use of transitions (especially between paragraphs)?
- (4) Does the student arrange his or her paragraphs (ideas) in a logical sequence that furthers the argument while maintaining a coherent, chronological narrative?
- (5) Does the student conclude with a summary of the paper's most salient findings and (if appropriate) an allusion to their broader significance?

b. Use of sources:

- (1) Is the student's research adequate?
- (2) Does the student make appropriate use of the *best available* sources?
- (3) Does the student effectively use evidence from these sources to further his or her argument?
- (4) Does the student make excessive or inappropriate use of direct quotations?

c. Overall:

- (1) Does the student present an original, compelling argument substantiated by appropriate historical evidence? Would a general, educated reader find the argument compelling?
- (2) Does the student demonstrate mastery of the subject matter?
- (3) Is the essay well written? Would a general, educated reader understand it and enjoy reading it?
- (4) Is the essay properly formatted and free of errors?

**Required Books (5):**

Barry Werth, *Banquet at Delmonico's: Great Minds, the Gilded Age, and the Triumph of Evolution in America* (2009/2011)

Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House* (1912).

Michael Kazin, *A Godly Hero: the Life of William Jennings Bryan* (2006).

Martin Luther King, Jr., *The Autobiography*, ed. by Clayborne Carson (1998).

Sean Wilentz, *The Age of Reagan: A History, 1974-2008* (2008).

## **Weekly Agenda:**

**Week 1:** Reading: Barry Werth, *Banquet at Delmonico's*, Introduction, [skip Prologue], and Chapters 1 - 4

Wednesday, Sept. 5 – Introduction and Syllabus

Friday, Sept. 7 – Reconstruction after the Civil War

**Week 2:** Reading: Werth, *Banquet at Delmonico's*, Chapters 6 – Epilogue, [skip Chapt. 5]

Monday, Sept. 10 – Big Government and Big Business

Wednesday, Sept. 12 – Expanding the American Frontier

Friday, Sept. 14 – Socialism and Populism

**Week 3:** Reading: Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, Chapters 4 – 9.

Monday, Sept. 17 – Christian Mission

Wednesday, Sept. 19 – The Spanish-American War, 1898

Friday, Sept. 21 – Problems of Imperialism

**Week 4:** Reading: Addams, *Hull House*, Chapters 11, 13, 15-18

Monday, Sept. 24 – The Progressive Movement

Wednesday, Sept. 26 – Teddy Roosevelt

Friday, Sept. 28 – Wilson as Interventionist

**Week 5:** Reading: Michael Kazin, *A Godly Hero*, Introduction, Chapters 3, 8, 10.

Monday, Oct. 1 – Wilson and World War I

Wednesday, Oct. 3 – The World War I Debate

Friday, Oct. 5 – The League of Nations Debate

**Week 6:** Reading: Kazin, *A Godly Hero*, Chapters 11, 12, Epilogue.

Monday, Oct. 8 – Reconstruction after World War I

Wednesday, Oct. 10 – Internationalists in the 1920s

Friday, Oct. 12 – In-Class Midterm

**Week 7:** Reading: Selections from David Shannon, *The Great Depression* [available online]

Monday, Oct. 15 – Causes of the Great Depression

Wednesday, Oct. 17 – The Crash and the American People

Friday, Oct. 19 – Franklin D. Roosevelt

**Week 8:** Reading: Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, “The Atlantic Charter” (1941); Henry Luce, “The American Century” (*Life* 1941); Henry Wallace, “The Century of the Common Man” (1942); A. Philip Randolph, "Call to Negro America to March on Washington for Jobs and Equal Participation in National Defense," *Black Worker* 14 (May 1941) [available on-line]

Monday, Oct. 22 – The New Deal

Wednesday, Oct. 24 – The Causes of World War II

Friday, Oct. 26 – Defending the American Way of Life

**Week 9:** Reading: Selections from Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness: A Vindication of Democracy and a Critique of its Traditional Defense* (1944); selections from Arthur S. Schlesinger Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (1949); and two essays by Mary McCarthy, “America the Beautiful” (1947), and “Contagion of Ideas” (1952) in *On the Contrary* (1961). [available online]

Monday, Oct. 29 – Reconstruction after World War II

Wednesday, Oct. 31 – Communist Containment

Friday, Nov. 2 – Cold War Hot Spots

**Week 10:** Reading: Martin Luther King, Jr., *The Autobiography*, Chapters 1-3, 7-10, 14, 15.

Monday, Nov. 5 – The Nuclear Weapons Debate

Wednesday, Nov. 7 – The Civil Rights Movement

Friday, Nov. 9 – The New Left and the Lessons of World War II

**Week 11:** Reading: King, *Autobiography*, Chapters 17-21, 23-25, 27, 29-32

Monday, Nov. 12 – The Origins of the Vietnam War

Film Analysis Paper Due

Wednesday, Nov. 14 – Lyndon Johnson’s Wars

Friday, Nov. 16 – The Rise of the New Right

**Week 12:** No Reading

Monday, Nov. 19 – The Vietnam War Debate

Wednesday, Nov. 21 – No Class

Thanksgiving Break

**Week 13:** Reading: Sean Wilentz, *The Age of Reagan*, Prologue, Chapters 2-4

Monday, Nov. 26 – Hope and Rage in 1968

Wednesday, Nov. 28 – Richard Nixon at Home and Abroad

Friday, Nov. 30 – Personal Politics

**Week 14:** Reading: Wilentz, *The Age of Reagan*, Chapters 5-7

Monday, Dec. 3 – Crises of American Power

Wednesday, Dec. 5 – Ronald Reagan and the Remaking of American Power

Friday, Dec. 7 – Reaganomics and Culture Wars

**Week 15:** Reading: Wilentz, *The Age of Reagan*, Chapters 8-9.

Monday, Dec. 10 – The End of the Cold War

Wednesday, Dec. 12 – Reconstruction after the Cold War

Friday, Dec. 14 – The War on Terror

Final Exam: TBD

