

**History 398**  
**The United States Since 1945**  
**Fall 2006**

**Lectures:** Tuesday & Thursday, 1:00-2:15

**Lecture Location:** 1121 Humanities

**Professor** William P. Jones

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**Office Hours:** T/TH 2:30-3:30

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Over the past half-century, the United States has played a leading part in constructing, defending, and dismantling a global political, economic, and social order that touched the lives of nearly every human being. This course traces the origins of that order to efforts to address the Great Depression and the Second World War. Students will learn why leaders of the United States responded to those crises by creating a strong liberal state and by linking national power to networks of liberal governments in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. They will examine the contradictory impact of this new liberalism, which sought to overcome economic differences among some citizens even as it exacerbated race and gender distinctions among others. They will also examine efforts to advance liberal political and economic models and to fight the spread of alternatives during the Cold War. Finally, they will evaluate the forces that have undermined the liberal order—including a backlash against the liberal state, evolving patterns of family and sexuality that challenged liberal notions of society, and changes to the global economic and political orders. Students are expected to complete the course with a sense of how these events shaped the nation and the world in which they now live.

**Requirements:** Weekly assignments for this course include two lectures, one discussion section, and 100-200 pages of reading. The purpose of discussion is to evaluate student's understanding of lecture and reading materials so it is critical that they attend all lectures and complete the weekly assignment before their section meeting. Students are encouraged to ask questions during lectures, but they should also bring questions about lecture or reading material for discussion during sections.

**Evaluation:** Students will be graded according to their participation in discussion sections (25%), a short paper (25%), a midterm (25%), and a final exam (25%). Participation will be measured by a combination of attendance, preparation and contribution to discussions. Every student must answer one of the five short paper questions listed on the syllabus. They will be evaluated for content, argument and style. Exams will consist of two parts; identification of names, places or concepts defined in lectures and essays on lectures and required readings. Essays will be evaluated primarily according to content and argument, although sloppy writing can make it hard to appreciate strong evidence.

**Required Reading:** There are seven required books for this course. They can be purchased at A Room of One's Own Feminist Bookstore, 307 W. Johnson St. (257-7888). They are all available in paperback and students can purchase used copies where they are available. Reserve copies are also available for 3 hour loan at College Library.

Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (Vintage Books, 2003)

Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (University of Chicago Press, 2004)

Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (University of North Carolina Press, 2003)

Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton University Press, 2002)

Mahmood Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, The Cold War, and the Roots of Terror* (Three Leaves Press, 2005)

John D'Emilio, *The World Turned: Essays on Gay History, Politics, and Culture* (Duke University Press, 2002)

Mike Davis, *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the US City* (Verso, 2001)

**Optional Reading:** There is no required textbook for this course, but students who would like an introductory narrative can turn to one of several college level textbooks on the United States Since 1945. A few copies of William H. Chafe's *The Unfinished Journey: American Since World War II* are available for 3 hour loan at College Library and for purchase at A Room of One's Own.

**Academic Conduct:** Students will be held to the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Instances of Academic Misconduct (including cheating and plagiarism) will be prosecuted according to the "Student Academic Misconduct Campus Procedures" of the UW System Administrative Code. Please familiarize yourself with those procedures and their definition of Academic Misconduct:  
<<http://www.wisc.edu/students/conduct/uws14.htm>>

**Abilities:** Students who need special accommodation due to a disability should contact me privately. Please also contact the Mcburney Disability Resource Center <<http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/>> at 608-263-2741 (phone); 263-6393 (TTY); 263-2998 (FAX); [FrontDesk@mcb.wisc.edu](mailto:FrontDesk@mcb.wisc.edu) to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

## **Week 1            The Rise of the Liberal Order**

Tuesday, September 5 – Depression

Thursday, September 7 - War

Section:            Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 1-191

**Week 2 “Century of the Common Man”**

Tuesday, September 12 - Reconversion

Thursday, September 14 - Stratification

Section: Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers’ Republic*, 195-410

**Short Paper #1 Due:** What is the difference, according to Lizbeth Cohen, between the “citizen consumer” and the “purchaser as citizen?” How does she explain the shift from one to the other and what consequences does she attribute to that shift? Use examples from the book to illustrate her argument.

**Week 3 “The American Century”**

Tuesday, September 19 – Origins of the Cold War

Thursday, September 21 – The Hot War in the Cold War

Section: Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre*, 1-132

**Week 4 The Cold War at Home**

Tuesday, September 26 – Nuclear Families

Thursday, September 28 – The Decline of Organized Labor

Section: Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre*, 133-198

**Short Paper #2 Due:** What does Greg Grandin see as the source of democracy in Latin America during the Cold War, and how does his view differ from that which shaped U.S. foreign policy? Provide evidence to support each point of view.

**Week 5 The Civil Rights Revolution**

Tuesday, October 3 – The Long Civil Rights Movement

Thursday, October 5 – The Short Civil Rights Movement

Section: Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker*, 1-195

**Week 6 A Movement of Movements**

Tuesday, October 10 – Feminism

Thursday, October 12 – Gay Liberation

Section: Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker*, 209-374

**Week 7 Vietnam**

Tuesday, October 17 – **Midterm Exam**

Thursday, October 19 – Origins of the War

Section: Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*,

**Week 8 New Left/New Right**

Tuesday, October 24 – The Anti-War Movement

Thursday, October 26 -- The Forgotten Majority

Section: Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*,

**Short Paper #3 Due:** How does Lisa McGirr define conservatism and how does she explain its popularity in Orange County during the 1960s?

**Week 9        The Late Cold War**

Tuesday, October 31 – The Cold War and Global Trade

Thursday, November 2 – The New Immigration

Section:        Mahmood Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*, 1-118

**Week 10       The End of History**

Tuesday, November 7 – Perestroika

Thursday, November 9 – The Reagan Revolution

Section:        Mahmood Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*, 119-260

**Short Paper #4 Due:** Why did the United States fight “proxy wars” in Africa and the Middle East in the 1970s and 1980s and what, according to Mahmood Mamdani, were the consequences of those wars for the United States and the regions in which they were fought?

**Week 11       The End of Liberalism?**

Tuesday, November 14 – The New Economy

Thursday, November 16 - The End of “Welfare”

Section:        John D’Emilio, *The World Turned*

**Week 12       The Culture Wars**

Tuesday, November 21 – Who Are We and Why Do We Give Thanks?

Thursday, November 23        Thanksgiving – No Class

No Section Meeting

**Week 13       The New American Family**

Tuesday, November 28 – AIDS and Gay Liberation

Thursday, November 30 – The “family crisis”

Section:        John D’Emilio, *The World Turned*

**Short Paper #5 Due:** Why does John D’Emilio attribute the alarm over same-sex marriage to the decline of the liberal welfare state? What does he see as a solution to the “family crisis?”

**Week 14       What did 9/11 change?**

Tuesday, December 5 – Globalization and its Discontents

Thursday, December 7 – Nationalism and its Lack of Content

Section:        Mike Davis, *Magical Urbanism*, xi-76

**Week 15 – Where Do We Go From Here?**

Tuesday, December 12 – Assessing the American Century

Thursday, December 14 – Review

Section:        Mike Davis, *Magical Urbanism*, 77-149

**Friday, December 22        Final Exam @ 12:25PM**