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Fall 2012
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# HISTORY 101-221: THE UNITED STATES SINCE 1865

The Civil War united the American nation once and for all, but just what kind of nation it would be remained unclear. How to balance individual rights and communal needs? the desire for liberty and the demands for equality? the call of progress and the appeal of the past? History 221 will explore these and other dilemmas, as we survey a period that witnessed extraordinary economic growth punctuated by dramatic cultural and political crises.

## Required Books Available for Purchase at the McGill Bookstore

Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made it
Sara M. Evans, Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America
John Kasson, Amusing the Million: Coney Island at the Turn of the Century
George F. Kennan, American Diplomacy, 1900-1950
William Leuchtenberg, The Perils of Prosperity, 1914-1932
Martin Luther King, Why We Can't Wait
David Brooks, Bobos in Paradise
Gil Troy, The Reagan Revolution: A Very Short Introduction
Gil Troy, Why Moderates Make the Best Presidents, 2nd ed.

## Conferences, Assignments, and Grading

There will be weekly sections to discuss the readings and the lectures. Participation in the conference will constitute 10 percent of the grade -- the instructor of each conference will determine just how participation will be assessed. A take-home midterm due on Monday, October 15 will constitute 20 percent; a ten-page research paper due on Wednesday, November 14 will constitute 35 percent; and a final examination will constitute the remaining 35 percent of the grade. Late papers will be penalized. Failure to submit the paper or write either of the exams will warrant a "J" grade.

## Office Hours

The instructors will announce their office hours soon. My office hours are Monday 3:35 and by appointment.

## Internet Use in Research

We will discuss this further in class, but students are not prohibited from using Internet sources – however, students are warned to assess the credibility and authority of sources on the Internet judiciously, intelligently – as elsewhere. And copying from the Internet – or from books – without attribution and without your own contribution – is never acceptable.

**University Policies**

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

**Academic Integrity statement [approved by Senate on 29 January 2003]:** McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

**Schedule of Topics and Readings**

**Week 1:**

Wed. Sept. 5: Distribution of Syllabus, Conference Sign up.

WEEK 1 READING on myCourses: **Reconstruction**

Troy, Moderates Make the Best Presidents, Preface and pp. 1-74.

**Week 2:**

Mon., Sept. 10: Introduction: The Stillness of Appomattox, the Revolution of Reconstruction?

Wed., Sept. 12: 1876: Consensus and Conflict

Fri., Sept. 14: The Changing Face of America: The Boat

WEEK 2 READING on myCourses: **A Gilded Age?**

Evans, Born for Liberty, pp. 1-6, 119-143

"The Spoilsmen: An Age of Cynicism," Chapter VII in Hofstadter, American Political Tradition, pp. 211-239

**Week 3:**

Mon. Sept., 17: Populism

Wed. Sept., 19: The Managerial Revolution

Fri. Sept., 21: The Rise of the Leisure Class

CONFERENCE II: POPULISM

William Jennings Bryan: The Democrat as Revivalist," in Chapter VIII in Hofstadter, American Political Tradition

WEEK 3 READING on myCourses: **Populism**

**myCourses SHOWDOWN: THE POPULISTS:** Pollack, The Populist Response to Industrial America, pp. 1-24, (also on reserve) versus Hofstadter.

**Week 4:**

Mon., Sept. 24: Frontiers West and East

Wed., Sept 26: The Middle Class Revolt

CONFERENCE III PROGRESSIVISM Kasson, Amusing the Million (all)

"Theodore Roosevelt: The Conservative as Progressive," Chapter IX in Hofstadter, American Political Tradition, pp. 265-305.

WEEK 4 READING on myCourses: **Progressivism**

Evans, Born for Liberty, pp. 145-173

Troy, Moderates Make the Best Presidents on TR, pp. 75-91.

**Week 5:**
Mon., Oct. 1 – Exercise – Looking Backward, Looking Forward… seeing Obama through the eyes of history
Wed., Oct. 3: Presidents as Supermen
CONFERENCE IV: WOODROW WILSON: PROGRESSIVE WARRIOR
"Woodrow Wilson: The Conservative as Liberal," Chapter X in Hofstadter, American Political Tradition, pp. 307-365.
Kennan, American Diplomacy, Chapters I and IV, pp. 3-20, 55-74.
WEEK 5 READING on myCourses: **Woodrow Wilson**

**Week 6:**
Mon., Oct. 8: THANKSGIVING
Wed., Oct. 10: From Splendid Wars to World Wars
**TAKE HOME MIDTERM.** NO CONFERENCES THIS WEEK/Midterm due Oct. 15

**Week 7:**
Mon., Oct. 15: The New World -- Flappers, Cynics, Exiles and those Left Behind -- Blacks, Farmers, and Workers
Wed., Oct. 17: VIDEO: "The Grapes of Wrath"
CONFERENCE IV: THE TWENTIES:
Leuchtenberg, Perils of Prosperity, pp. 1-10, 84-240
Evans, Born for Liberty, pp. 175-197
WEEK 7 READING on myCourses: **The Twenties**

**Week 8:**
Mon., Oct. 22: The Great Crash and the Revolution that Wasn't
Wed., Oct. 24: Dr. New Deal
CONFERENCE VI: THE GREAT DEPRESSION
Evans, Born for Liberty, pp. 197-219
WEEK 8 READING on myCourses: **The Great Depression**
myCourses: Misery in America
Troy, Moderates Make the Best Presidents, on FDR, pp. 93-121.

**Week 9:**
Mon., Oct. 29: Dr. Win the War
Wed., Oct. 31: Truman, Eisenhower and the American Century
CONFERENCE VII: FDR IN PEACE AND WAR
Leuchtenberg, Perils of Prosperity, pp. 241-273
Herbert Hoover and Franklin Roosevelt, Chapters, XI and XII in Hofstadter, American Political Tradition, pp. 367-456.
WEEK 9 READING on myCourses: **FDR in Peace and War**
**myCourses SHOWDOWN**: FDR: B. Bernstein, "The Conservative Achievements of Liberal Reform," vs. A Defender of FDR
HINT: START READING: Brooks, Bobos in Paradise, pp. 9-53, 103-139

**Week 10:**
Mon., Nov. 5: The Cold War
Wed., Nov. 7: The Supreme Court and the Conservative Revolution
CONFERENCE VIII: THE COLD WAR
Kennan, American Diplomacy, Chapter V, VI and Part II, pp. 74-154;
Evans, Born for Liberty, pp. 219-263.
WEEK 10 READING on myCourses: **The Cold War**
Troy, Moderates Make the Best Presidents, on Ike and Truman, pp. 123-145.

**Week 11:**
Mon., Nov. 12: From Civil Rights to Black Power
Wed., Nov. 14: Cracks in the Consensus
CONFERENCE IX: CIVIL RIGHTS
King, Why We Can't Wait (all)
Steve Greenberg, "Otis Redding and the Integrationist Dream," liner notes, pp. 24-32 from "Otis! The Definitive Otis Redding," Four CD Set (New York: Rhino Records, 1993). (on myCourses)
WEEK 11 READING on myCourses: **Civil Rights**
**PAPER DUE WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 14**

**Week 12:**
Mon., Nov. 19: The Sixties in Stereo and Video
Wed., Nov. 21: From Women's Liberation to Feminism
CONFERENCE X: THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE NEW LEFT: THEN AND NOW
READING: Evans, Born for Liberty, pp. 263-314
WEEK 12 READING on myCourses: **The Men and Women of the New Left**
Brooks, Bobos in Paradise, pp. 54-102, pp. 140-273
Troy, Moderates Make the Best Presidents, pp. 147-200

**Week 13:**
Mon., Nov. 26: Paradise Lost: Richard Nixon, Vietnam, and Jimmy Carter's Malaise
Wed., Nov. 28: Conservative Era/Error? From Reagan's Morning in America to Clinton's Triangulation
CONFERENCE XI: WAS THERE A REAGAN REVOLUTION?
**myCourses showdown**: REAGAN: THUMBS UP OR DOWN?
Gil Troy, The Reagan Revolution: A Very Short Introduction, all.
WEEK 13 READING on myCourses: **Was There a Reagan Revolution?**

**Week 14:**
Mon., Dec. 3: FINALE: From Bush to Obama, from Civil War to Uncivil Wars, from Reconstruction to Globalization
Troy, Moderates Make the Best Presidents, pp. 200-300.

To: History 221B
From: Gil Troy
Re: Sections and Readings

The sections are designed to help you make sense out of the mass of reading and lecture information you receive each week. The challenge for any historian is to learn how to assimilate large amounts of data and then make coherent patterns from them -- what we call interpretations or arguments. To keep up with this course, it is essential that you not fall behind in the readings and that you take the time to make sense of them, to look at the big picture that emerges amid all the facts and anecdotes.

Just as the instructors and I take a few minutes before each section to collect our thoughts, so should you. To that end, the "admission ticket" for sections will be a short one-page essay based on the week's reading. These assignments can either summarize the particular reading, or they can answer any of the major questions that emerge from the reading or the lectures that week. Alternatively, you can link one or two of the primary source readings in the myCourses readings to the broader themes addressed by the authors or in the lectures. Feel free to search out contradictions and alternative voices -- you need not accept my interpretation of events.

These need not be works of art. Rather, think of them as works in progress, a series of memoranda to yourself that will help you digest all the material as the course moves along and could be useful when you study for the midterm and final.

What follows is a list of questions you could (but need not) answer for each week:

**Week 1:** RECONSTRUCTION: What did Reconstruction accomplish? What limited its accomplishments? What, if anything, was the secret to its success? the reason for its failure? How do you account for the different interpretations advanced over the years?

**Week 2:** A GILDED AGE? -- Was the industrial revolution a blessing or a curse for the U.S.? Was there "distress" among the "laboring classes" at the time? (Are the myCourses documents representative or distorted?) Were the "Robber Barons" knaves or heroes? Does the Gilded Age mark a continuation of, or a dramatic break from, earlier American history?

**Week 3:** POPULISM: -- Who were the populists? What did they accomplish? Was the Populist platform moderate or radical? Why was the Cross of Gold Speech so popular? Is Pollack or Hofstadter correct? Which interpretation do the primary sources support?

**Week 4**: PROGRESSIVISM: LEISURELY REVOLT? Is the Coney Island experience unique or is it representative of other, broader trends? How can a "bungalow" be "progressive." Just how revolutionary was this twentieth-century culture that Kasson describes? Was Theodore Roosevelt a reaction to this new twentieth century culture? Was Progressivism? How?

**Week 5**: WOODROW WILSON: PROGRESSIVE WARRIOR: Who was the better Progressive Wilson or Roosevelt? Who was the better President? What was Progressivism? What did it accomplish? What is the relationship (if any) between Progressivism and Imperialism? Did Progressivism propel the U.S. into the Spanish-American War? Into the Great War? Was it wise for the U.S. to enter World War I? What was the effect of U.S. involvement in the war?

**Week 6**: NO CONFERENCES

**Week 7**: THE TWENTIES: Were the twenties as "roaring" as everyone claims? Do the twenties really mark the start of the modern twentieth-century American experience? Was the 1928 campaign a harbinger of future political change or an exceptional moment in history?

**Week 8**: THE GREAT DEPRESSION: What can you find that is particularly American in the response to the Great Depression depicted in "The Grapes of Wrath" or in the other readings? How did the Great Depression transform the U.S.? Why Wasn't there a revolution? Is there any connection between Eleanor Roosevelt's emergence as a force in her own right and the Depression?

**Week 9**: FDR IN PEACE AND WAR: What caused the Great Crash? What did the New Deal accomplish? Are you more struck by the continuities or the discontinuities between the Hoover and Roosevelt administrations? What was the secret to FDR's success?

**Week 10**: THE COLD WAR: Did World War II traumatize or liberate the U.S.? Was the Cold War avoidable? What impact did the Cold War have on American culture? Why?

**Week 11**: CIVIL RIGHTS: Why did the Civil Rights movement emerge when it did? Was it successful? Would there have been a Civil Rights movement without Dr. King? What effect, if any, did Otis Redding and other black entertainers have on race relations in the U.S.?

**Week 12:** THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE NEW LEFT: THEN AND NOW: Why did the women's movement emerge when it did? Was it successful? Compare and contrast the movements for civil rights and for women's liberation. What was the impact of the Vietnam experience on civil rights? What was the great mistake (if any) of 1960s liberals? of the black community? What is the most devastating and accurate critique Brooks offers about modern American culture? What is the most devastating and accurate critique he offers about your own life? How does Brooks link the 60s and the 90s?

**Week 13:** WAS THERE A REAGAN REVOLUTION?: Did Reagan succeed or fail? Where his policies revolutionary or more marked by continuity? What is his greatest accomplishment? His greatest failure? How long did the Reagan Revolution last? What is the relationship between politics and culture in general? What is the link between politics and culture when looking at the Bill Clinton Administration?

## Schedule of Topics and Conferences

**Week 2:**
Mon., Sept. 10: Introduction: The Stillness of Appomattox, the Revolution of Reconstruction?
Wed., Sept. 12: 1976: Consensus and Conflict
Fri., Sept. 14: The Changing Face of America- The Boat
CONFERENCE I: A GILDED AGE?

**Week 3:**
Mon., Sept. 17: Populism
Wed., Sept. 19: The Managerial Revolution
Fri., Sept. 21: The Rise of the Leisure Class
CONFERENCE II: POPULISM

**Week 4:**
Mon., Sept. 24: Frontiers East and West
Wed., Sept. 26: The Middle Class Revolt
CONFERENCE III: Progressivism

**Week 5:**
Mon., Oct. 1 – Exercise – Looking Backward, Looking Forward… seeing Obama through the eyes of history
Wed., Oct. 3: Presidents as Supermen
CONFERENCE IV: Woodrow Wilson: Progressive Warrior

**Week 6:**
Mon., Oct. 8: THANKSGIVING
Wed., Oct. 10: From Splendid Wars to World Wars
NO CONFERENCE THIS WEEK- **TAKE HOME MID-TERM**

**Week 7:**
Mon., Oct. 15: The New World
Wed., Oct. 17: VIDEO- The Grapes of Wrath
CONFERENCE VI: THE TWENTIES

**Week 8:**

Mon., Oct. 22: The Great Crash and the Revolution that Wasn't

Wed., Oct. 24: Dr. New Deal

CONFERENCE VII: THE GREAT DEPRESSION

**Week 9:**

Mon., Oct. 29: Dr. Win the War

Wed., Oct. 31: Truman, Eisenhower and the American Century

CONFERENCE VIII: FDR IN PEACE AND WAR

**Week 10:**

Mon., Nov. 5: The Cold War

Wed., Oct. 7: From Civil Rights to Black Power

CONFERENCE IX: THE COLD WAR

**Week 11:**

Mon., Nov. 12: The Supreme Court and the Conservative Revolt

Wed., Nov. 14: Cracks in the Consensus

CONFERENCE X: CIVIL RIGHTS- **PAPER DUE**

**Week 12:**

Mon., Nov. 19: 60s Movie

Wed., Nov. 21: From Women's Liberation to Feminism

CONFERENCE XI: THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE NEW LEFT: THEN AND NOW

**Week 13:**

Mon., Nov. 26: Paradise Lost: Richard Nixon, Vietnam and Jimmy Carter's Malaise

Wed., Nov. 28: The Conservative Era/Error? From Reagan's Morning in America to Clinton's Triangulation

CONFERENCE XII: WAS THERE A REAGAN REVOLUTION?

**Week 14:**

Mon., Dec. 3: FINALE: From Bush to Obama, from Civil War to Uncivil Wars, from Reconstruction to Globalization