

**History 332**  
**The Origins of Modern America, 1877-1918 - Fall, 1998**

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**Course Description and Objectives:**

This course deals with the social, economic, political, and constitutional development of the United States from the Reconstruction era through World War I. We will pay special attention to the attempts of late nineteenth century Americans to deal with the enormous changes unleashed by the Civil War and Reconstruction, i.e., how victorious northerners, defeated southerners, and newly-freed African Americans came to terms with the recent past and charted their respective futures. Moreover, we will examine how early twentieth century reformers began to think about society and government in new ways and how their vision for the nation was affected by American involvement in World War I. As we cannot cover everything that occurred during this era in a single semester, we will devote relatively little attention to the history of the West, Native Americans, or foreign policy.

This course is a seminar. That means that each student must complete the assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss them. This is not a lecture class, and class participation is key to the seminar's (and your) survival.

After completing this course, students should have a broad understanding of the historical roots of modern America, as well as improved oral, written, and critical thinking skills.

**Readings:**

Nell Irvin Painter, Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877-1919, 1987.

Alan Trachtenberg, The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age, 1992.

Stephen Hahn, The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry, 1850-1890, 1983.

Brook Thomas, ed., Plessy v. Ferguson: A Brief History with Documents, 1997.

Nina Silber, The Romance of Reunion: Northerners and the South, 1865-1900, 1993.

Robert M. Crunden, Ministers of Reform: The Progressives' Achievement in American Civilization, 1889-1920, 1982.

Frederick Winslow Taylor, The Principles of Scientific Management, 1911.

Supplementary Course Packet, available in the Department of History, 308 Clough Hall.

**Assignments and Grading Policies:**

There will be two critical essays, a book review, an oral presentation, a mid-term examination, a final examination, and a term paper in this course.

Attendance is mandatory; if you must miss class because of illness, please notify me immediately, either by phone or by e-mail. Final grades will reflect both participation and attendance. You may assume that your final grade in this class will be no higher than the percentage of classes you attend. Final grades will be determined as follows:

Critical Essays/Book Review/Oral Presentation - 25%  
Research/historiographical paper (12-15 pages) - 15%  
Mid-term Examination - 20%  
Final Examination - 20%  
Seminar participation - 20%

Detailed explanations of all these assignments will follow. The requirements for students taking this course for regular credit and those taking it as part of their senior seminar are identical, with the exception of the paper assignment. Copies of this syllabus, as well as all handouts and assignment sheets, will be available on the Academic Volume in the file marked "Huebner."

Late papers will be accepted one **day** (not one class period) after the due date, with a one letter-grade penalty. Papers will not be accepted more than one day after the due date. All work, unless otherwise indicated, is pledged under the Rhodes College Honor Code.

**Class Assignments:**

**1. The Reconstructed Union**

(Painter, ix-35)

Aug. 27 - Introduction to course/The Civil War

Sept. 1 - Reconstruction

(Silber, 1-65)

**2. The North and Rise of Incorporation**

(Painter, 36-109)

Sept. 3 - "Northernizing" the West

(Trachtenberg, 3-37; "President Chester Arthur Aims to Turn Indians into U.S. Citizens")

\*Sept. 8 - Labor  
(Trachtenberg, 38-100; "Purposes and Program of the Knights of Labor")

Sept. 10 - Capital  
("Andrew Carnegie on the Triumph of America")

\*Sept. 15- Immigration and Urbanization - **CRITICAL ESSAY #1 DUE**  
(Trachtenberg, 101-139; "Frederick Law Olmstead Describes the Social Benefits of Central Park")

Report Reading:

John Garraty, The New Commonwealth, 1877-1890, 1968.

Leon Fink, Workingmen's Democracy : The Knights of Labor and American Politics, 1983.

### **3. The South and the New Order**

Sept. 17 - Social Transformation and the Agrarian Movement  
(Hahn, 1-238, 269-289)

\*Sept. 22 - The New South Creed  
(Grady, "The New South" )

\*Sept. 24 - The Lost Cause Myth  
(Foster, "Ceremonial Bereavement," "Confederate Tradition in Transition")

\*Sept. 29 - The Race Question  
(Woodward, "Forgotten Alternatives"; Blair, Prosperity of the South)

Report Reading:

Charles Reagan Wilson, Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920, 1980.

Paul M. Gaston, The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking, 1976.

Howard Rabinowitz, Race Relations in the Urban South, 1865-1890, 1978.

### **4. Crisis, Reunification, and Expansion**

(Painter, 110-169)

\*Oct. 1 - The Crisis: 1893-1895  
(In re Debs, U.S. v. E.C. Knight, Pollack v. Farmers' Loan and Trust)

\*Oct. 6 - Political Parties and the Election of 1896  
("People's Party Platform"; Bryan, "The Cross of Gold")

Oct. 8 - Racism and Reunion  
(Silber, 93-158; Woodward, "Capitulation to Racism"; Thomas, 41-60, 119-126)

\*Oct. 13 - War, Reunion, Expansion - **CRITICAL ESSAY #2 DUE**  
(Silber, 159-196; Trachtenberg, 208-234; Roosevelt, "Reunited People")

Oct. 15 - Summary and Review

Report Reading:

Arnold M. Paul, Conservative Crisis and the Rule of Law: Attitudes of Bar and Bench, 1887-1895, 1960.

Robert McMath, American Populism: A Social History, 1877-1898, 1993.

Walter LaFeber, The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansionism, 1860-1898, 1963.

**(Oct. 20 - Fall Break)**

**Oct. 22 - Mid-term Examination**

## **5. The New Values and Progressive Reform**

(Painter, 170-215, 231-282)

\*Oct. 27 - Pragmatism, Social Science, and the Social Gospel  
(Crunden, ix-89; James, "Pragmatism's Conception of Truth"; Rauschenbusch, "Christianity and the Social Crisis," "Christianizing the Social Order")

Oct. 29 - Efficiency  
(Taylor, Principles of Scientific Management)

Nov. 3 - Socialism and Racialism  
(Debs, "The Socialist Party's Appeal"; DuBois, "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others," "The Niagra Movement")

Nov. 5 - Feminism  
(Muller v. Oregon; Sanger, "...Knowledge of Contraception")

\*Nov. 10 - Progressivism: Roosevelt and Taft  
(Crunden, 163-199; Roosevelt, "Radical Movement under Conservative Direction")

\*Nov. 12 - Progressivism: The Election of 1912 and Wilson  
(Crunden, 200-224; "Progressive Party Platform"; "Socialist Party Platform"; Wilson, "The Emancipation of Business")

Report Reading:

Henry May, The End of American Innocence: A Study of the First Years of Our Own Time, 1912-1917, 1959.

David Chalmers, The Social and Political Ideas of the Muckrakers, 1964.

Gabriel Kolko, The Triumph of Conservatism: A Reinterpretation of American History, 1900-1916, 1963.

Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R., 1955.

## **6. The Great War and the New America**

(Painter, 283-390)

\*Nov. 17 - Managing Liberty and Economy - **CRITICAL ESSAY #3 DUE**  
(Wilson, "War Message to Congress"; Espionage Act)

\*Nov. 19 - Men and War  
(Percy, Lanterns on the Levee; Video: "All Quiet on the Western Front")

Nov. 24 - Women and War  
(Video: "One Woman, One Vote")

### **(Nov. 26 - Thanksgiving Holidays)**

\*Dec. 1 - Social Upheaval  
(“Socialist Party Convention”; Video: “Influenza Epidemic”)

Dec. 3 - The New World Order  
(Crunden, 225-273; Wilson, "Fourteen Points," “League of Nations”)

Dec. 8 - Summary and Review

Report Reading:

Paul Murphy, World War I and the Origin of Civil Liberties in the United States, 1979.

Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory, 1975.

James Grossman, The Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration, 1989.

\*Indicates that a student book presentation will be given.

**FINAL EXAMINATION: WEDNESDAY, DEC. 16, 8:30-11:00 A.M.**