

History 101.4  
Clough 304  
T,Th, 9:40-11: 10am

Dee Garceau  
Clough 301, X-3290  
Ofc Hrs: MW, 2-4pm

## **INTRODUCTION TO HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION: POSTWAR AMERICA, 1945-1963**

### Course Description:

The years following World War II have a curious reputation. Some characterize the Fifties as an era of innocence and simplicity, a period of relative calm before the turbulent Sixties. Others recall an era of “Happy Days” when the nation prospered, its social life distinguished by little more than a series of harmless fads: the hula hoop, tailfined cars, and chlorophyll gum.

At the same time, scholars of Fifties culture point to troubling political and social tensions such as the Cold War and the Red Scare. The consensus is that the Fifties exhibited a kind of cultural fundamentalism --a return to simpler definitions of order through patriotism, domesticity, and the pursuit of material security.

How accurate are these views of the 1950s? We can test these assumptions by exploring the mood of post-World War II America through its political life, gender relations, race relations, literature, music, and film. Through each of these lenses we will investigate the period from 1945 to 1963, keeping in mind the following questions: What did it mean to be “American”? If there were challenges to the status quo, what forms did they take, and why? How did race and gender shape the way individuals understood their relationship to the larger society? How did Americans reconcile their needs for individualism and community? Finally, within the larger context of twentieth-century American history, what elements of change and continuity are present in Fifties culture?

### Course Requirements:

Most important are consistent attendance and participation. Come to class having done the reading listed for that day on the syllabus. Good discussion depends upon your preparation. Class participation counts as 25% of your grade. Over two absences will lower your average by a full letter grade.

Written assignments include a 7-8 page synthetic essay, a 4-5 page critical review, and a short research paper of 10-12 pages. The synthetic essay will focus on a conceptual unit in the course, drawing on course readings and classroom discussion. The critical review will focus on one book or journal article of your choice, about a topic covered by the course. The research paper will be an original investigation using primary sources. This paper will go through two drafts, the first due April 10 and the final version due May 2. Time has been set aside for student presentations of research on the last day of class.

Required Texts:

Ralph Ellison, Invisible Man (1947).

Lawrence Ferlinghetti, A Coney Island of the Mind (1958).

Anne Moody, Coming of Age in Mississippi (1968).

Richard Rovere, Senator Joe McCarthy (1959).

Elaine Schrecker, Ed. The Age of McCarthyism: A Brief History with Documents (1994).

Sloan Wilson, The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit (1955).

Coursepack: This xeroxed collection of articles and documents will be handed out in class. Students pay a lab fee for this packet.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

Th Jan 11      Introduction to the Course

Miller & Nowak, "Introduction," *Coursepack*, pp.3-20.

Vance Packard, "A Classless Society?" *Coursepack*, pp.31-36.

Stephanie Koontz, "American Families in the 1950s," *Coursepack*, pp.23-41.

**UNIT I: ORDERING THE POSTWAR WORLD**

The Cold War and the Red Scare

T Jan 16      Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism*. pp.1-40.

Th Jan 18      Fried, "Electoral Politics and McCarthyism: The 1950 Campaign," *Coursepack*, pp.192-222.

Schrecker, "The World of American Communism: Party Members Talk About Their Experiences," *Age of McCarthyism*, pp.95-105.

The Politics of Fear

- T Jan 23        Rovere, *Senator Joe McCarthy*.
- Th Jan 25        Schrecker, *Age of McCarthyism*, pp.70-94, and 203-30.
- T Jan 30        Miller & Nowak, "Learning to Love the Bomb," *Coursepack*, pp.43-83.
- Miller & Nowak, "Showdown at the Little Red Schoolhouse,"  
*Coursepack*, pp.248-68.

### The Well-Adjusted Man

- Th Feb 1        Film: "The G.I. Bill: The Law That Changed America."  
**Class meets in Burrow Library Viewing Room.**
- T Feb 6        William H. Whyte, "Belongingness," *Coursepack*, pp.32-46;
- William H. Whyte, "Togetherness," *Coursepack*, pp.46-59.
- Vance Packard, "Emerging: A Diploma Elite," *Coursepack*, pp.42-9.
- Vance Packard, "Pecking Orders in Corporate Barnyards," *Coursepack*,  
pp.80-6.
- Th Feb 8        Film: "Twelve Angry Men" (1956-57).  
**You must see this film before coming to class.**  
Film will be shown Wed, Feb 7, at 7pm in Burrow Viewing Room.
- T Feb 13        Wilson, *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit* (1955).
- Th Feb 15        Mailer, "The White Negro," *Coursepack*, pp.1-18. Excerpts from  
"Playboy Magazine" (1958-59), *Coursepack*..

### The Well Adjusted Woman

- T Feb 20        Film: "Rosie the Riveter." **Class meets in Burrow Viewing Room.**
- Baxandall et al. , "America's Working Women," *Coursepack*,  
pp.245-47.
- Augusta Clawson, "Shipyard Diary of a Woman Welder," *Coursepack*,  
pp.251-53.
- "Accommodating the Working Woman," *Coursepack*, pp.255-57.

“Postwar Plans,” *Coursepack*, pp.261-63.

Th Feb 22 “The Feminine Mystique: Why I Quit Working,” *Coursepack*, pp.299-302.

“I Denied My Sex,” *Coursepack*, pp.263-69. ‘Working Mothers and Delinquency,’ *Coursepack*, pp.269-70.

**\*FIRST ESSAY ASSIGNMENT HANDED OUT\***

T Feb 27 May, “The Reproductive Consensus in the Postwar Era,” *Coursepack*, pp.415-20.

Vanek, ‘Time Spent in Housework,’ *Coursepack*, pp.499-506.

Cowan, “The Industrial Revolution in the Home: Household Technology and Social Change in the Twentieth-Century,” *Coursepack*, pp.383-93.

Friedan, “The Problem That Has No Name,” *Coursepack*, pp.15-32.

Th March 1 Film: “Rebel Without a Cause.”  
**You must see this film *before* class.**  
Film will be shown Wed, Feb.28 at 7pm in Burrow Viewing Room

**\*FIRST ESSAY ASSIGNMENT DUE, FRIDAY MARCH 2\***

Spring Break: March 3-11.

## **UNIT II: AFRICAN-AMERICAN PROTEST**

### The Literature of Invisibility

T March 13 Ellison, *Invisible Man*, “Prologue” and chapters 1-12.

Th March 15 Ellison, *Invisible Man*, chapters 13-25 and “Epilogue.”

### The Struggle for Equality

- T March 20      Lecture: "The Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955."  
                       \*SECOND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT HANDED OUT\*
- Th March 22     In-Class Writing Workshop:  
                       Patricia N. Limerick, "Dancing With Professors," *Coursepack*..
- T March 27      Guest Speaker: Luther Ivory, "The Role of Martin Luther King in the  
                       PostWar Desegregation Movement."  
                       Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter From a Birmingham Jail," *Coursepack*,  
                       pp.182-95.  
                       \*SECOND ESSAY DUE\*
- Th March 29     Sitkoff, "Bigger Than a Hamburger," *Coursepack*, pp.61-87.  
                       Sitkoff, "The Long Journey," *Coursepack*, pp.88-117.
- T April 3        Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, Parts 1 and 2.
- Th April 5       Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, Parts 3 and 4.

### **UNIT III: CROSS-CURRENTS IN THE CULTURE**

#### Rock and Roll

- T April 10      Film, "Memphis Dreams: Elvis Presley and the Birth of Rock."  
                       **Class meets In Burrow Viewing Room.**  
                       Miller & Nowak, "More Than a Music," *Coursepack*, pp.291-313.  
                       \*FIRST DRAFT, RESEARCH PAPER DUE\*

EASTER BREAK: April 12-15

#### Poetry: Critical Vision

- T April 17      Lawrence Ferlinghetti, *A Coney Island of the Mind* (1958).

#### Film: America's Dream Life

- Th April 19     Film: "On the Waterfront."  
**You must see this film *before* class.**  
 Film to be shown Wed, April 18, at 7pm in Burrow Viewing Room.
- Miller & Nowak, "Hollywood in Transition," *Coursepack*, p.314-43.
- T April 24     Making Sense of It All: Synthesis and Reflection
- Th April 26     Student Presentations

Wednesday, May 2: FINAL DRAFT, RESEARCH PAPER DUE

### MOVIE SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Film</u>
Th Feb 1	in class	Burrow Library Viewing Room	"The G.I. Bill"
W Feb 7	7pm	Burrow Library Viewing Room	"Twelve Angry Men"
T Feb 20	in class	Burrow Library Viewing Room	"Rosie the Riveter"
W Feb 28	7pm	Burrow Library Viewing Room	"Rebel Without a Cause"
T April 10	in class	Burrow Library Viewing Room	"Memphis Dreams"
W April 18	7pm	Burrow Library Viewing Room	"On the Waterfront"