American Society Since 1877

This course explores the modern legacy of the Civil War; the effects of industrialization on social, economic, and political life; and the repercussions of westward expansion in both Euro-American and Native American culture. We also examine the meanings of Progressivism, the effects of world war and economic depression on society, and the United States' changing role in the global community. Within these contexts, race, gender, ethnicity, and class will be addressed as variables in a people's historical experience.

Course Structure
Class time will include lecture, discussion, and small group workshops. Periodically, guest speakers and films will add further dimension.

Purpose
1) To familiarize you with key developments in recent American history.
2) To encourage critical thought, by asking you to develop your own interpretations, and to support them with evidence and explanation.
3) To introduce you to how historians work, through analysis and contextualization of primary sources.

Required Texts
James Henretta et al., America's History; Volume II Since 1865 (Worth Publishers, 1997).
Robert Marcus & David Burner, America Firsthand; Volume II (St. Martin’s Press, 1995).
Bruce Schulman, Lyndon B. Johnson and American Liberalism (St. Martin’s Press, 1995).

The Henretta text provides a clear chronological narrative of events. Think of it as a reference, to orient yourself in place and time. The Marcus & Burner collection features original documents, including letters, diaries, oral histories, editorials, and transcripts of Congressional testimony. These lend immediacy to the past, bringing us the voices and experience of individual Americans.

The supplemental readings allow you to explore certain topics in more depth. Fools Crow portrays life among the Blackfeet people before the disappearance of the bison from the northern plains. First Person America is a collection of personal narratives from the Great Depression. Lyndon B. Johnson and American Liberalism serves up a critical evaluation of President Johnson’s political career, as well as documents which offer insight into his character and motivation.

Readings and Participation
On the average we will read 80-90 pages per week, so it is wise not to fall behind. When reading, viewing films, or listening to lectures, **take notes**. You will create a valuable record of ideas, evidence, and questions to which you can refer during discussion, or when studying for exams.

Once a week, we will spend the entire class period in discussion or workshop. **On days marked Discussion or Workshop, come to class prepared; that is, having done the required reading or seen the required film.** Participation in discussions and workshops will require your full attention, and amount to **25% of your final grade**.
Course Requirements
1) Consistent attendance and participation. Over three absences will lower your average by

2) Completion of assigned work, on time. Late papers will be averaged a grade lower than

3) All work, unless otherwise indicated, is assumed to be pledged under the Honor Code. Use of materials written by another student during a previous semester of this course (such as

Assignments
Below is a complete list of assignments for this course:

1) Full participation in scheduled discussions. Short quizzes at the beginnings of discussions will be factored into this grade. (25%)  

2) A summary of findings from two in-class workshops, to be factored into your class

3) An in-class essay exam on the period from 1877 through World War I. (25%)  

4) An in-class essay exam on the period from the close of World War I to the close of World War II. (25%)  

5) A take-home final exam on post-World War II American society. (25%).

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COURSE OUTLINE

W Jan 13 Introduction to the Course

RACE RELATIONS IN THE POST-RECONSTRUCTION SOUTH

F Jan 15 The "Redeemed" South

Reading: The Grimes Family & Swindell Brothers Contracts, America Firsthand, pp.50-53.

Caleb Forshey et al., “White Southerners Reactions to Reconstruction,” America Firsthand, pp.35-42.


Henretta, pp.604-12, 662.
M Jan 18  **Martin Luther King Day Observance**

W Jan 20  **Discussion: African-American Strategies for Advancement**

Reading: Booker T. Washington, "Atlanta Exposition

W.E.B. DuBois, "The Niagara Movement: Declaration of


"A Sharecrop Contract," pp.7-8. (Handout)


Henry McNeal Turner, "The American Negro and His

**THE GILDED AGE**

F Jan 22  **Industrial Expansion and Corporate Consolidation**

Reading: Andrew Carnegie, “Lecture to Young Men,”
American Firsthand, pp.118-24.

“George Rice Loses Out to Standard Oil,”

Henretta, pp.551-62.

M Jan 25  **Census Workshop: Mining and Steel Industry in the South**

Reading: Henretta, pp.563-66.

W Jan 27  **Immigration, the Factory Workday, and Organized Labor**

Reading: Pauline Newman, "Conditions at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory"


Henretta, pp.566-67, 569-81.
F Jan 29 Individualism, Social Darwinism, and the Rise of Fraternal Organizations

Reading: Henretta, pp.616-22, 636-44.

M Feb 1 The New Woman: Reform, College, Wages, and Dance Halls

Reading: Margaret Sanger, “My Fight for Birth Control,” America Firsthand, pp.188-94.

Henretta, pp.568-70, 594-95, 653-61.

W Feb 3 Discussion: Industrial Growth and American Identity


Henretta, pp.623-26, 630-36.

**Begin reading Fools Crow.**

IRON HORSES, BLUE COATS, & BUFFALO DREAMS

F Feb 5 The Mining Frontier & Native American Resistance


Henretta, pp.519, 535-42.

M Feb 8 Cattlemen and Homesteaders

Reading: James Welch, Fools Crow.

Henretta, pp.521-34, 543-48.
W  Feb 10  **Discussion**: When Worlds Collide

  Reading:  James Welch, *Fools Crow*. 
F Feb 12  Populism & Pow-Wows: Grassroots Politics in Two Cultures

   Reading: Luna Kellie, "A Prairie Populist,"  
   America Firsthand, pp.97-103.

   Zitkala-Sa, "The School Days of an Indian Girl,"  
   America Firsthand, pp.90-96.

   Henretta, pp.596-603.

**FIRST ESSAY EXAM QUESTIONS HANDED OUT**

THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

M Feb 15  Muckraking and Local Progressivism

   Reading: Henretta, pp.627-29, 648-52, 659.

W Feb 17  National Progressivism: Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson

   Reading: Henretta, pp.663-74.

F Feb 19  **FIRST ESSAY EXAM**

M Feb 22  Discussion: The Benefits and Costs of Imperialism

   Reading: Henretta, pp.677-701.

THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN AMERICA

W Feb 24  The First World War

   Reading: Lewis Ranlett, "Life in the Trenches," America  
   Firsthand, pp.173-79.

   Henretta, pp.702-20.

F Feb 26  Wartime Changes at Home/The Treaty of Versailles
Reading: Henretta, 721-30.
M March 1  Discussion: The Great Migration
Reading: Emmet J. Scott, "Letters From the Great Migration"  
*America Firsthand*, pp.169-72.


**W March 3**  
1920s Culture: Backing into the Future


**F March 5**  
Film: "A Job at Ford's." (Burrow Library Viewing Room)

Reading: Henretta, pp.744-45.

**March 6-14**  
**SPRING BREAK**


**DEPRESSION AND WAR**

**M March 15**  
From Black Thursday to the First Hundred Days

Reading: Henretta, pp.774-80, 781-85, 787-96.

**W March 17**  
The Great Depression and the New Deal


Henretta, pp.797-801, 803-06, 807-18.

**F March 19**  
**Discussion**: Brother Can You Spare a Dime?

Reading: Banks, *First Person America*, pp.51-92, 123-35,
March 22 World War II


**QUESTIONS FOR 2ND ESSAY EXAM HANDED OUT**

W March 24  **Film:** "Rosie the Riveter." (Burrow Library Viewing Room)

F March 26  **Discussion:** Gender, Ethnicity and Race in Wartime

Reading: Fanny Christina Hill, “Rosie the Riveter,” America Firsthand, pp.222-29.

Ben Yorita et al., "Memories of the Internment"

M March 29  **2ND ESSAY EXAM**

POST-WORLD WAR II AMERICAN SOCIETY

W March 31  **The Cold War**


Henretta, pp.862-77.

April 1-4  **EASTER BREAK**

M April 5  **The Red Scare**


Henretta, pp.878-89.

W April 7  **Checked Aprons and Gray Flannel Suits: Gender in the Fifties**

Reading: Sloan Wilson, “Life in Gray Flannel,”
America Firsthand, pp.251-59.

Henretta, pp.893-901, 902-05, 912-22.
F April 9  Grassroots Movement for Civil Rights: The Montgomery Bus Boycott

Reading: JoAnn Gibson Robinson, "Launching the pp.260-67.
Henretta, pp. 909-11, 934-39.

M April 12 JFK as Cold Warrior: Vietnam on the Horizon

Reading: Henretta, pp.926-31, 960-62.

**Begin reading Schulman, LBJ and American Liberalism.

W April 14 Discussion: LBJ and the Great Society

Reading: Bruce Schulman, Lyndon B. Johnson and American Liberalism, pp.1-55, 81-124.
Henretta, pp.939-40, 941-46.

F April 16 Vietnam: LBJ’s Nemesis

Reading: Bruce Schulman, Lyndon B. Johnson and American Liberalism, pp.125-65.
Henretta, pp.963-67, 973-78.

M April 19 Film: “LBJ and the American Presidency.”
(Meet at Burrow Viewing Room)

W April 21 Discussion: Vietnam and the Meanings of War

Reading: Jim Pitzen, "The Village," pp. 13-17. (Handout)
General Westmoreland et al., “Cover-Up and Outcome,” America Firsthand, pp.278-86.

F April 23 Cultural Rebellion


Henretta, pp. 946-52, 969-71.

**Film:** "Berkeley in the Sixties," (On Reserve)

M April 26   The Women's Movement: Behind the Stereotypes


Henretta, pp.952-56, 1004-06, 1039.

W April 28   Nixon, China, and Watergate: A Mixed Legacy

Reading: Henretta, pp.979-81, 989-97.

F April 30   Environmental Politics: The Love Canal Controversy


Henretta, pp.999-1003.

**TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM HANDED OUT**

F    May 7   **TAKE-HOME FINAL DUE**
Please bring to my office (301 Clough) by Noon.