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HIST 233-03, Change and Continuity in the "American Century", Fall 2006

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HIST 233- 03 US in the 20th Century
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Change and Continuity in the “American Century”

Course Description:

The 20th Century was a tremendous period of change for the United States, as the country became the world’s military and economic leader. This course will survey US history from 1900 to the present and will approach historical issues from a variety of perspectives. Economic and political developments will be addressed, but there will also be discussions of social and cultural changes over the course of the last century. Students will be encouraged to analyze how historical narratives are constructed and to offer their own understanding of historical events. In addition to completing the reading and written assignments for the course, students will be expected to be active participants in class discussions. At the semester’s end, students will be asked to make conclusions about changes in the United States over the 20th Century and hypothesize about possible directions for the nation’s future.

Required Texts:

Alan Brinkley and Ellen Fitzpatrick, *America in Modern Times*
Richard Polenberg, *The Era of Franklin Roosevelt, 1933-1945*
Carl T. Rowan, *South of Freedom*
Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*
Hunter S. Thompson, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*

There will be other readings throughout the semester.

Course Requirements:

Exams

Midterm Exam, October 5 – 20% of final grade
Final Exam, December 8 – 25% of final grade

Essays

Essay 1, due in class September 21– 20% of the final grade
Essay 2, due in class December 5 – 25% of the final grade

Class Participation

Active participation in class discussion and completion of short writing assignments – 10% of final grade. Students may also improve their participation grade by meeting with the professor during office hours or by appointment.

Course Policies:

Class attendance is mandatory. Students are allowed three absences without penalty. Students are required to find out what they missed in class on the day of their absence. If students miss more than three classes, they are required to meet with the professor to discuss their absences. Failure to do so will result in the lowering of a student's final grade by one third grade point for every absence over three. Please consider this policy when planning for extracurricular activities (sports, mock trial, etc.)

Due dates and times for writing assignments are fixed. All assignments are due in class, not in the professor's mailbox. Assignments will be lowered one third grade point for each class that an assignment is late. Simply turn things in on time and you can avoid this elaborate system. Dates and times for exams are fixed.

The professor supports the Rhodes College Honor Code. To demonstrate commitment to the Code, each student must write "pledged" and sign his/her name on every assignment. If you have questions about plagiarism, please talk to me directly. Please inform the instructor of any special needs early in the term.

Course Calendar:

August 24

Introduction; Defining "Progressive"
(Brinkley/Fitzpatrick, Ch. 1-3)

August 29, 31

How "Progressive"? – The Progressive Era and Reform
(Brinkley/Fitzpatrick, Ch. 5, 6, 120-131)

September 5, 7

Changing America – Imperialism and Industry
(Brinkley/Fitzpatrick, Ch. 4, 137-145; **Sinclair, all**)

September 12, 14

Great Dreams and Hard Truths - Woodrow Wilson and World War I; 1919
(Brinkley/Fitzpatrick, 132-136, Ch. 8)

September 19

Return to Normalcy and The Roaring 20s
(Brinkley/Fitzpatrick, Ch. 9-12)

September 21

Fighting Fear Itself – The Great Depression and the New Deal
(Brinkley/Fitzpatrick, Ch. 13-14; **Polenberg; 1-23, 37-183**)

1st Essay – due in class, September 21

September 26

The “Good War” - World War II and Its Effects
(Brinkley/Fitzpatrick, 15-17; **Polenberg, 24-36, 184-227**)

September 28

No class

October 3

WWII continued

First Exam - October 5

October 10, 12

Better Dead than Red - Cold War at Home and Abroad
Rise to Greatness? – The Fifties
(Brinkley/Fitzpatrick, 18-20, 22)

October 17

Fall Break

October 19

Fifties continued

October 24, 26

New Dreams – The Great Society, The Liberal Consensus, and the African-American
Freedom Struggle
(Brinkley/Fitzpatrick, Ch. 21; 463-478; **Rowan, all**)

October 31, November 2

Falling Apart – Black Power and Vietnam
(Brinkley/Fitzpatrick, 478-483, 490-508, 531-7)

November 7, 9

The End of the Liberal Consensus – SDS, the Feminist Movement, and the Social
Movements of the Sixties
(Brinkley/Fitzpatrick, 509-530)

November 14, 16

Redefinition – Watergate; the Rise of Conservatism; Carter and Malaise
(Brinkley/Fitzpatrick, 537-565; **Thompson, all**)

November 21

James Barrett talk – no class

November 23

Thanksgiving Break

November 28, 30

The Schizophrenic 80s - The Reagan Revolution and End of the Cold War;
Televangelism and MTV
(Brinkley/Fitzpatrick, 565-607)

December 5

America at Century's End

2nd Essay – due in class, December 5

Final Exam –December 8, 8:30