

History 245: America Since 1945 Moravian College, Spring 2010

Dr. Francis Ryan

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Office Hours: Monday 10-12, and by appointment.

History 245 gives a detailed survey of the most significant emerging historical interpretations of American society from 1945 to 1974.

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Mr. Joe Kempfer, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street (ex 1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Office of Learning Services.

Please be aware of Moravian College's standard for grades. It is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for an assignment or for the course. I reserve the right to change the syllabus at any time throughout the semester.

Required Texts:

The following books are available for purchase at the Moravian College Bookstore:

Paul Boyer, *Promises to Keep: The United States Since World War Two*.

George Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight: Labor and Culture in the 1940s*.

Kathy Dobie, *The Only Girl in the Car*.

Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism*.

Robert Cohen, *Freedom's Orator: Mario Savio and the Radical Legacy of the 1960s*.

Other selected readings will be placed on hold in the College library as indicated in class.

Graded Assignments and Exams:

Participation: 10% As this class is discussion based, it is important that you attend each meeting period. Excessive absences will negatively impact your final grade.

Diner Paper 15% The first written assignment will involve a critique of diners as distinct social institutions. Details will follow in a separate handout.

Mid-term Exams 30% (15% Each) This course will have two exams on the dates specified.

Final Exam: 20% A cumulative final exam will be held at a time and place designated by the College Registrar.

Historiographical Paper: 25% Each student will write a 15-20 page paper focusing on how historians have interpreted a specific issue related to the period under study. I will provide a selection of possible topics to choose from in the first week of class. Students are encouraged to begin research on this project as soon as possible, as they may want to take advantage of interlibrary loan services in securing the necessary secondary source materials (books, articles). The paper must be appropriately documented according to Chicago style guidelines (footnotes), it must adhere to the rules and principles of Standard American English (grammar, spelling, usage, and rhetoric), and it must use a *minimum* of ten scholarly sources. Additional information will follow. Out of justice to the class, all late papers will be downgraded one letter grade for each day of lateness. An exception to this would be serious illness verified by a physician. Also, cases of plagiarism will result in an "F" grade.

"The House I Live In:" America in the late 1940s

Jan 19-Jan 21

Reading: Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight*, 1-15, Chapter 1-2.
Boyer, Chapter 1.

Class Discussion: Abbot and Costello, "Who's on First?" (1944)
Frank Sinatra, "The House I Live In"

Unrest at Home: Labor Militancy and the Rise of Corporate Liberalism

Jan 26-Jan 28

Readings: Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight*, Chapters 4-7

Andrew Hurley, "From Hash House to Family Restaurant: The Transformation of the and Post-World War Two Consumer Culture," *Journal of American History* (March 1997): 1282-1308

[Access via JSTOR.](#)

The Origins of the Cold War

Feb 2-Feb 4

Readings: Boyer, Chapter 2. Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight*, Chapter 8.
Robert J. McMahon, "Cold War Strategy and U.S. Intervention."

Suburban Shifts in Post-war America

Feb 9-Feb 11

Reading: Boyer, Chapters 3-4.

Elaine Tyler May, "Cold War-Warm Hearth: Politics and the Family in Postwar America," in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980*.

In Class Screening: *I Love Lucy* "Job Switching," 1952

Midterm Week

Feb 16: Overview

Feb 18: Midterm 1

Feb-23-Feb 25 Youth Culture and Rebellion in the Eisenhower Era

Readings: Boyer, Chapter 5.

Lipsitz, "Aint Nobody Here But Us Chickens: The Class Origins of Rock and Roll."

The Beat Movement: Literary and Cultural Critiques in the 1950s.

Lipsitz, "Corporate Culture, Conformity and Commodities."

In class screening: *Happy Days* "The Lemon." (1974)

March 2-4: The Civil Rights Movement

Reading, Boyer, Chapter 8.

Clayborne Carson, "Martin Luther King, Jr.: Charismatic Leadership in A Mass Struggle," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 74. September 1987, 448-454.

Cohen, *Freedom's Orator*, Introduction, Chapters 1-3

In class documentary: *Eyes on the Prize: America in the Civil Rights Years*

March 9-11 Spring Break

March 16-March 18: The Early 1960s

Reading: Cohen, *Freedom's Orator*, Chapters 4-9.

Boyer, Chapter 7.

March 23: Midterm 2

March 25: New Interpretations: The Great Society

Readings, Boyer, Chapter 7.

Ira Katznelson, "Was the Great Society a Lost Opportunity?" in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980*.

March 30-April 1: The Vietnam War

Readings: Boyer, Chapter 6, 10.

Robert Dallek, "Fear, Ambition, Politics," Fredrik Logevall, "Choosing War," Robert K. Brigham, "An Unwinnable War."

April 6-April 8: The Anti-War Movement and The New Left

Readings, Boyer, Chapter 9.

Kenneth Cmiel, "The Politics of Civility," *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber, 263-290

April 13-15: New Interpretations of the Counterculture: Culture and Consumerism

Reading: Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism*.

April 15: Library Exercise: *Life Magazine* and the Historiography of American Advertising.

April 20-22: The Late 1960s

Readings: Boyer, Chapter 11.

Gael Graham, "Flaunting the Freak Flag: 'Karr v. Schmidt' and the Great Hair Debate in American High Schools," *Journal of American History* 91:2 (2004): 522-543 [JSTOR](#)

Beth Bailey, "Sexual Revolution(s)" in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber, 235-262.

Film: Easy Rider (1969) Time and location to be determined.

Changes Come to Main Street: Into the 1970s

April 27-April 29

Reading: Dobie, The Only Girl in the Car.

In class screening: All in the Family (1971)

List of suggested historiographical topics for paper:

U.S. Politics

Historical Views of the Truman Administration

Historical Views of the Eisenhower Administration

Historical Views of the Kennedy Administration

Historical Views of the Nixon Administration

Historical Views of the Ford Administration

Historical Views of the Carter Administration

Historical Views of the Reagan Administration

Historical Views of the George H. Bush Administration

Historical Views of the William J. Clinton

Kennedy and the Bay of Pigs Crisis
Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis
Harry Truman and Civil Rights
Eisenhower and Civil Rights
John Kennedy and Civil Rights
Lyndon Johnson and Civil Rights
Richard Nixon and Civil Rights
Richard Nixon and Environmentalism
The Nixon Administration and Foreign Policy
The Watergate Scandal
John Kennedy's Vietnam Policy
President Reagan's economic policies

Historical views of The Dixiecrats
Historical views of Robert Kennedy
Historical views of George Wallace
Historical views of Barry Goldwater
Joseph McCarthy
Hubert Humphrey
Harry S. Truman and the Decision to Use Atomic Weapons
Robert McNamara
Henry Kissinger
US policy and the Irish "Troubles"
The Marshall Plan
The Korean War
The Equal Rights Amendment
The Gulf of Tonkin Incident
Robert Kennedy and the 1968 presidential campaign
Eugene McCarthy and the 1968 presidential campaign
Ronald Regan and the 1976 campaign
George Wallace and the 1968 election
George McGovern and the Presidential Election of 1972
Strom Thurman and the Dixiecrat Rebellion of 1948
Henry Wallace and the 1948 presidential election.
Barry Goldwater and the 1964 Presidential Election
President Truman, General Douglas McArthur and the Korean War
President Eisenhower's Policy in Vietnam

Social and Cultural Themes

Jackie Robinson and the Integration of Baseball
The Beat Writers and 1950s America
Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers Movement

Stonewall and the Gay Rights Movement
The Birmingham Bus Boycott
Malcolm X and Black Power
The 1964 Civil Rights Act
Martin Luther King and Organized Labor
Martin Luther King and the Vietnam War
The Sexual Revolution
Thurgood Marshall, the Supreme Court and Civil Rights
Environmentalism
Historical Interpretations of the 1970s
Historical interpretations of the 1980s.
Historical Views of American Sports (Football, Baseball, etc)
The New Left
Young Americans for Freedom
1960s student radicalism
Folk Music
Rock music and the Counterculture
Jimmy Hoffa and the Teamsters Union
Walter Reuther, the United Autoworkers and Post-War liberalism
Women and Labor since 1945
Organized Labor and the Civil Rights Movement
The Rise and Impact of Baseball Unionism
The Women's Movement
Television in the Post War Period
Latino/Latina Movements since 1945
Stonewall and Gay Liberation
Fanny Lou Hamer and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party
A.Philip Randolph
Post-War Environmentalism
African Americans and Communism

The 1968 Democratic Convention
Bob Dylan and the 1960s Counterculture
Folk Music and the New Left
The Students for a Democratic Society
The Yippies
The Black Panthers
Allen Ginsberg and 1960s Radicalism
The Weathermen Underground
Rock music and the Counterculture
The Young American for Freedom and the Rise of the "New Right"
The Red Scare and Hollywood
Betty Friedan and Modern Feminism
Women and Basketball

The Campaign for the Equal Rights Amendment
Roe v. Wade
Lyndon Johnson and Urban Policy
The Urban Riots of the 1960s
The rise of the New Right

Politics and Diplomacy

Robert A. Taft and Post-War Foreign Policy
Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy
John Foster Dulles and American Foreign Policy
Robert McNamara and the Vietnam War
U.S. politics and the Irish "Troubles"
The Gulf of Tonkin Incident
The Marshall Plan
U.S.-Israeli Relations in the Eisenhower Administration
U.S.-Israeli Relations in the Kennedy Administration
U.S.-Israel Relations in the Johnson Administration
U.S. Israeli Relations in the Nixon Administration
U.S. Israeli Relations in the Carter Administration
Japanese Internment during World War Two
U.S. and Puerto Rican relations since 1945