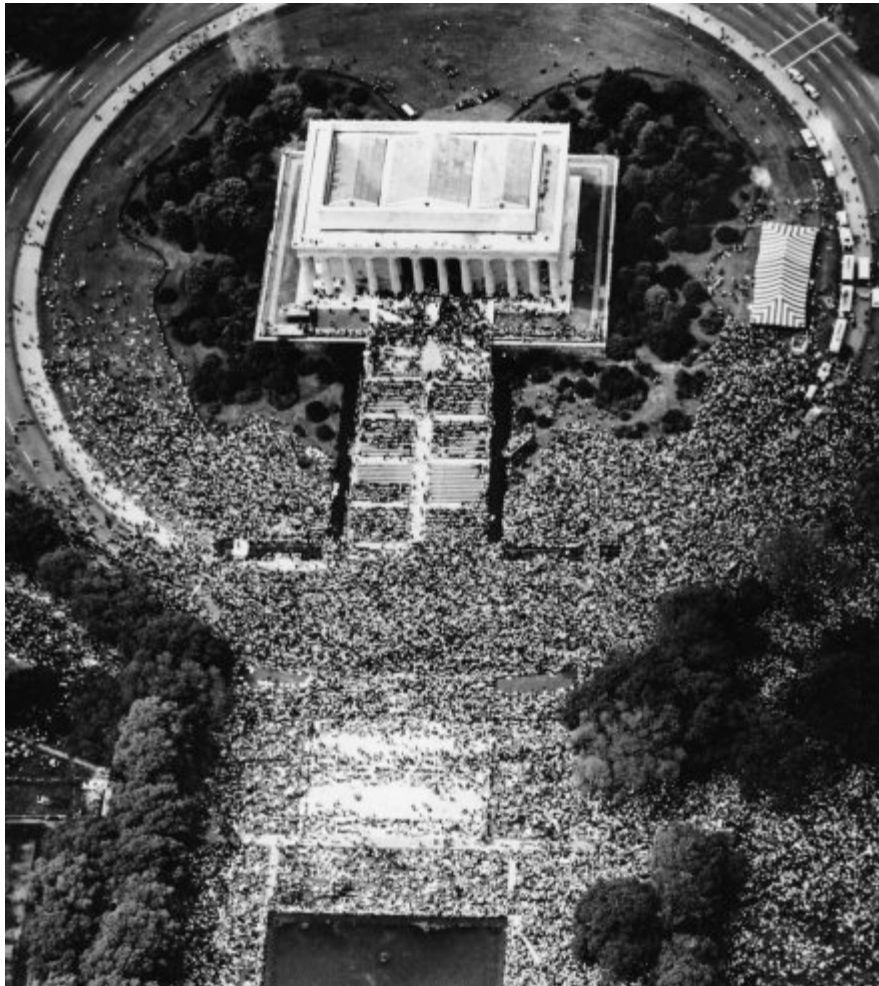


HIST 297: Politics and Protest in Twentieth-Century America

Fall 2011
Tuesdays/Thursdays: 8:55-10:05
305 Comenius Hall

Professor: Jane Berger



Office: 301 Comenius Hall
Office hours: M/W 10:15-11:45,
T 11:30-12:30

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Course Description and Goals:

This course explores competing efforts by diverse groups of Americans to define visions of fairness and justice for the nation. We will study, in other words, the variety of ideas that make up modern U.S. political thought. We will focus in particular on the shifting meanings and influence of “liberalism” and “conservatism,” but we will consider as well the role of right- and left-wing radicalism. Questions we will explore in the course include: What ideas concerning the economy, cultural issues and foreign policy have Americans considered to be conservative, liberal and radical during different time periods? How and why have liberalism and conservatism as political movements changed and remained the same over the decades? Why have various groups of Americans found liberal and conservative ideas more or less appealing at particular times in history? We will also consider ways groups in the nation have attempted to influence the national agenda. What forms has political activism taken during the twentieth century? On behalf of what issues have people in the nation mobilized politically? What explains the emergence of various social movements? How responsive have elected officials been to social movements and other forms of popular protest?

As we learn about the narrative of political history, we are also going to attend to the ways that the historians whose work we are reading are attempting to shape our understanding of the past and convince us that their interpretations of history are correct. Prior to most classes, you will read several essays or excerpts from history books (both called secondary sources) that focus on the same topic or time period. You will quickly discover that the historians whose work you are reading do not share interpretations of the topic or period they are studying. In some cases, their views differ because they hold divergent theoretical and/or ideological beliefs. This will not simply be a matter of liberals being sympathetic to liberal ideas, and conservatives being sympathetic to conservative ideas (although we will certainly interrogate what we read for political perspective). Conservative scholars do not all agree with one another; nor do liberal scholars. Moreover, regardless of their political affiliations, historians approach their work informed by multiple theories about what causes historical change. And in some cases, as a consequence of their research, they propose causes of change they believe other historians have overlooked. One of our goals for the semester is to figure out what theories the historians we read are using and/or asserting as they interpret the past.

We will also be attentive to other types of perspective that influence historical writing. The narrative of U.S. political history looks different depending on whose point of view and what issue(s) a scholar prioritizes. People of different races, classes and genders have not all experienced history in the same way, nor have all individuals within any one demographic group. What’s more, a time period evaluated by one criterion, let’s say by the extent of its economic growth, might warrant one assessment, but the same period when evaluated by other criteria, for example its progress towards environmental sustainability, might compel a different interpretation. As we evaluate our class readings, we will consider not only theoretical and ideological perspectives but these other, often overlapping, perspective issues as well.

Learning Goals:

By the end of the course, students should have improved their ability to:

- 1.) Identify major themes in modern U.S. political history. You should be able to articulate how and why you think American liberalism and conservatism have changed and remained the same over the course of the century in regards to issues including as the role the government should play in regulating the economy, the role the government should play in regard to cultural issues, and the role the government should play in world affairs.
- 2.) Identify why liberal, conservative and radical ideas have been more or less popular at different times in modern U.S. history and why the shifts in popularity occurred.
- 3.) Describe the roles everyday people; social-movement leaders; elected officials; culture, ideas and values; and the economy and economic relations have played in modern U.S. political history.
- 4.) Analyze secondary sources (articles and books) written by historians for the theoretical arguments their authors make about the causes of historical change.
- 5.) Critically evaluate secondary sources written by historians by identifying perspectives their authors develop well and overlook.
- 6.) Write thesis-driven essays composed of paragraphs with identifiable and logically-linked arguments that incorporate knowledge gleaned from secondary historical sources.
- 7.) Articulate your opinions clearly in the presence of your peers. Much of our class time will be dedicated to discussion. Over the course of the semester you should become increasingly comfortable expressing your opinions publicly and describing them effectively.
- 8.) Think and read critically. As you analyze secondary sources, you will have to think carefully about the assumptions the scholars you are reading have made and the points of view they are trying to convince you to believe. The critical thinking and reading skills you develop should help you become more discerning interpreters of the information you encounter in all aspects of your life.

Students are expected to have completed the readings assigned for each class by the start of the class meeting.

Required Readings:

- 1.) Books:

Elizabeth Hobbs-Coffman, *Major Problems in American History, Volume II* (Major Problems in American History Series) [Paperback, 3rd edition] (Wadsworth Publishing, 2011).

- 2.) Blackboard readings (E-reserve).

3.) Journal articles

Assignments and Exams:

Paper One: 10%

Paper Two: 25%

Take-Home Final: 25%

Reading Journal: 25%

Participation: 15%

Attendance and Late Papers:

Class attendance is critical to your performance in this class. Attendance will be monitored, and unexcused absences will be frowned upon and imperil students' participation grade. Students who accrue three or more unexcused absences run the risk of having their final grade lowered a full step (i.e. A to B, B to C, etc.).

Students will be penalized for turning in papers late. Grades will be lowered by 1/3 of a grade for each day a paper is late. In other words, an A paper will become an A- paper if it is one day late, a B+ paper if it is two days late, etc.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism or any other form of academic misconduct will be dealt with in accordance with Moravian College's Academic Honesty Policy as described in the Student Handbook.

Laptop and Handheld-Devices Policy

As the use of laptops in the classroom has increased in recent years, so too has the temptation for students to use them for purposes unrelated to the course. Students who succumb to the lure of games or the internet, however, miss important course material, distract their classmates and frustrate their professors. As a result, the participation grade of students found to be using laptops for purposes not related to the course will be lowered a full letter grade for each infraction. Similarly, the participation grade of students found to be using hand-held devices for non-emergencies will be lowered a full grade for each infraction. Let's spend the short time we're in class together analyzing, discussing and learning about history.

Disability Policy:

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At the appointment we can discuss the course format, anticipate your needs and explore potential accommodations. Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability also must contact Mr. Joe Kempfer, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street (extension 1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the office of Learning Services.

Class Schedule:

** Reading assignments must be completed before the start of each class **

Week One

August 30: **Introduction**

September 1: **“American” Culture in the Gilded Age**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) *Major Problems in American History, Volume II*, “Introduction: How to Read Primary and Secondary Sources,” xvii-xx.
- 2.) Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007) Preface and Chapter 3: Capital and Labor (3-10, 70-100).

Week Two

September 6: **The Gilded Age from the Left and the Right**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) Howard Zinn, *A People’s History of the United States* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2005) Chapter 11: Robber Barons and Rebels (253-296). (Blackboard)
- 2.) Larry Schweikart and Michael Allen, *A Patriot’s History of the United States* (Sentinel Trade, 2007) **pages TBA**. (Blackboard)

September 8: **The Gilded Age and the Linguistic Turn**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) Alun Munslow, “Andrew Carnegie and the Discourse of Cultural Hegemony,” *Journal of American Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Aug. 1988) 213-224. (Please be forewarned: this article is dense with jargon. Just try your best, and we’ll discuss it in class.)

Week Three

September 13: **The New South and Defining Race Politics in the Age of the “New Negro”**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) *Major Problems in American History*, “Essays,” 18-36. Please note: Whenever you read essays in *Major Problems* please also read the introduction to the chapter that includes the essays. The introduction will remind you of the history of the period the essays discuss. Also read the introduction to the essays you are about to read, which will put the readings in perspective.
- 2.) *Major Problems in African-American History*, 102-115 and 170-183. (Available on Blackboard.)

September 15: **How the West Was Won and Lost**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) *Major Problems in American History*, “Essays,” 50-68.
- 2.) George Miles, “To Hear an Old Voice: Rediscovering Native Americans in American History,” in *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America’s Western Past*, eds. William Cronon and George Miles (1992) 52-70.

Week Four

September 20: **The Farmers' Revolt**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) Thomas Frank, "The Leviathan with Tentacles of Steel: Railroads in the Minds of Kansas Populists," *The Western Historical Quarterly* (February 1989) 37-54.
- 2.) Jeffrey Ostler, "The Rhetoric of Conspiracy and the Formation of Kansas Populism," *Agricultural History* Vol. 69, No. 1 (Winter, 1995), pp. 1-27.

Paper One due by email on Sept. 21 at 5 pm. Hard copy due in class on Sept. 22.

September 22: **The Workers Revolt**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) Roseanne Currarino, "The Politics of 'More:' The Labor Question and the Idea of Economic Liberty in Industrial America," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 93, No.1 (2006) 17-36.
- 2.) Philip Foner, "The IWW and the Black Worker," *Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 55, no. 1 (Jan. 1970) 45-64
- 3.) Jacob H. Dom, "In Spiritual Communion: Eugene V. Debs and the Socialist Christians," *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, vol. 2, no.3 (July 2003) 303-325.

Week Five

September 27: **Imperialism**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) *Major Problems in American History*, 115-131.
- 2.) Lars Schoultz, *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy Towards Latin America*, Preface and 152-175. (Available on Blackboard.)

September 29: **Progressivism**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) *Major Problems in American History*, 147-155.
- 2.) *Major Problems in American Women's History*, 310-330. (Available on Blackboard.)

Week Six

October 4: **Suffrage and Feminism**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) Ellen Dubois, "Woman Suffrage: The View from the Pacific," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 69, No. 4 (2000) 539-551.
- 2.) Elizabeth McRae, "Caretakers of Southern Civilization: Georgia Women and the Anti-Suffrage Campaign, 1914-1920" *The Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 82., no. 4 (Winter 1998) 801-828.

October 6: **World War I**

Reading Assignments:

- 1.) *Major Problems in American History*, 177-192.

- 2.) Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2005) Chapter 14: "War is the Health of the State," 377-407.

Week Seven

October 11: FALL RECESS- COLLEGE CLOSED

October 13: **The 1920s and the Culture Wars**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) *Major Problems in American History*, 207-227.
- 2.) *Major Problems in the History of American Sexuality*, 320-336, 348-365. (Available on Blackboard.)

Week Eight

October 18: **Midterm**

October 20: **The New Deal**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) *Major Problems in American History*, 244-263.
- 2.) *Major Problems in the History of American Workers*, PAGES. (Available on Blackboard.)

Week Nine

October 25: **World War II: The Zoot Suit Riots**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) *Major Problems in Mexican American History*, 315-323. (Available on Blackboard.)
- 2.) Eduardo Obregan Pagan, "Los Angeles Geopolitics and the Zoot Suit Riot, 1943," *Social Science History*, vol.24, no.1 (2000) 223-256.

October 27: **The Cold War Abroad**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) *Major Problems in American History*, 312-329.
- 2.) Max Holland, "Private Sources of U.S. Foreign Policy: William Pawley and the 1954 Coup d'Etat in Guatemala," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 7, no. 4 (Fall 2005) 36-73.

Week Ten

November 1: **The Cold War at Home**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) *Major Problems in American History*, 344-360.
- 2.) *Major Problems in the History of American Sexuality*, 384-393. (Available on Blackboard.)
- 3.) Jennifer Klein, "The Politics of Economic Security: Employee Benefits and the Privatization of New Deal Liberalism," *Journal of Policy History*, volume 16, no. 1 (2004) 34-65.

November 3: **The Southern Civil Rights Movement: Top-Down or Bottom-Up**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) *Major Problems in American History*, 377-394.

- 2.) *Major Problems in African American History*, 295-311. (Available on Blackboard.)
- 3.) Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics and the Black Working Class* (Free Press, 1994) pages TBA.

Week Eleven

November 8: **The Rights Revolution**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) Stephanie Gilmore, "The Dynamics of Second-Wave Feminist Activism in Memphis: Rethinking the Liberal/Radical Divide," *NWSA Journal*, vol. 15, no. 1 (Spring 2003) 94-117.
- 2.) David Gutierrez, "Sin Fronteras? Chicanos, Mexican Americans, and the Emergence of the Contemporary Mexican Immigration Debate, 1968-1978," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 10, no. 4 (Summer 1991) 5-37.

November 10: **The New Left and the Vietnam War**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, "The Failure and Success of the New Radicalism," in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989) 212-242.
- 2.) Judy Wu, "Journeys for Peace and Liberation: Third World Internationalism and Radical Orientalism During the U.S. War in Vietnam," *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 76, no.4 (November 2007) 575-584.
- 3.) *Major Problems in American History*, 439-461.

Week Twelve

November 15: **Reckoning with the Environment**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) Kent Curtis, "From Love's Canal to Love Canal: Reckoning with the Environmental Legacy of an industrial Dream," in *Beyond the Ruins: The Meanings of Deindustrialization*, eds. Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003) 112-135.
- 2.) J. R. McNeill, "The Environment, Environmentalism, and International Society in the Long 1970s," in *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective*, eds. Niall Ferguson, Charles Maier, et. al. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010) 263-278.

November 17: **The Conservative Ascendancy**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) *Major Problems in American History*, 475-495.
- 2.) Julian Zelizer, "Reflections: Rethinking the History of American Conservatism," *American Historical Review*, vol. 38, no. 2 (June 2010) 367-392.

Week Thirteen

November 22: **The Conservative Ascendancy**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) Alice O'Connor, "Financing the Counterrevolution," in *Rightward Bound*, ed. Bruce Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008) 148-168.
- 2.) Daniel Williams, "Jerry Fallwell's Sunbelt Politics: The Regional Origins of the Moral Majority," *Journal of Policy History*, vol. 22, no. 2 (2010) 125-147.

November 24: THANKSGIVING- COLLEGE CLOSED

Week Fourteen

November 29: **Champions of Neoliberalism?**

Assignment:

- 1.) Iwan Morgan, "Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and the New Democratic Economics," *The Historical Journal*, vol. 47, no. 4 (December 2004) 1015-1039.
- 2.) William C. Berman, *America's Right Turn: From Nixon to Clinton* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 2001) 164-190.

December 1: **Globalization and Terrorism**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) *Major Problems in American History*, 510-523.
- 2.) Richard Kohn, "The Danger of Militarization in an Endless 'War' on Terrorism," *Journal of Military History*, vol. 73, no.1 (Jan. 2009) 177-208.
- 3.) David Noon, "Cold War Revival: Neoconservatives and Historical Memory in the War on Terror," *American Studies*, vol. 48, no. 3 (Fall 2007) 75-99.

Week Fifteen

December 6: **Wrap-Up**

Reading Assignment:

- 1.) Something on Michele Bachman
- 2.) Something on the Tea Party
- 3.) Something on Wisconsin