

HIST 114: United States Since 1865

Spring 2012
Tuesdays/Thursdays
305 Comenius Hall
Professor: Jane Berger



Bethlehem Steel works, May 1881, Watercolor by Joseph Pennell



Mike Mergen, Bloomberg News, *USA Today*, 5/27/09

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Course Description:

This course provides a general introduction to U.S. history since 1865. We will focus in particular on four interrelated themes:

- 1.) The Economy: We will discuss how Americans have been shaped by and have attempted to shape the tremendous power of corporate capitalism. How have Americans tried to balance the pursuit of profits with the ideal of democratic participation in society? What roles have Americans believed the government should play in regulating the economy and why?
- 2.) Politics: We will consider the multiple forms that political participation has taken. How have people in the U.S. attempted to shape the future through political participation? How responsive have government officials been to the voices of members of the population?
- 3.) Culture: We will discuss the attempts different groups of people have made during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries to define what it means to be American. How have various groups of Americans responded to the diversity of the nation? How have Americans attempted to expand or limit what it means to be American?
- 4.) International connections: We will consider the roles the United States has played on the world stage and the implications of U.S. foreign policy for people at home and abroad. What connects and divides Americans and others in the world?

We will enrich our study of modern U.S. history by studying not just history books but also historical materials (primary sources) from the years we discuss. Historians rely on primary sources—such as documents, photographs and artifacts—to make sense of the past. We will spend considerable time learning and practicing the ways historians interpret primary sources. The papers you write for the course will involve primary-source analysis, and, at the end of the semester, you will have the opportunity to further hone your skills by interpreting a primary source from your own family's history. Because in this course you will be learning about and using the methodologies employed by historians, the class satisfies the M1 LinC requirement.

This is a college-level history course, and, as such, it differs in many ways from high school classes. In particular, *the reading load is heavy*. You should anticipate spending at least 3 hours before each class meeting reading your assignment—sometimes more. You will read various types of materials for the course, and we will discuss in class techniques for reading each type effectively. Please arrive at each class prepared to discuss the readings assigned for that day.

Learning Goals:

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

- 1.) Identify chronologically major events in modern U.S. history. The first step to understanding and interpreting history is knowing what happened and the order in which major events happened. You will not be required to memorize dozens of dates in this class, but you will be expected to recall and describe significant events and list major events in chronological order.

- 2.) Describe and analyze the often conflicting responses diverse groups of people living in the U.S. have had to changes and key events in American economic, political, cultural and diplomatic history.
- 3.) Analyze and interpret primary sources. You will gain experience approaching documents, photographs, artifacts and other primary sources with a critical eye, mindful of the types of questions historians ask of sources to interpret their significance and attentive to what they reveal about the course of history.
- 4.) Write thesis-driven essays composed of paragraphs with identifiable and logically-linked arguments that incorporate knowledge gleaned from primary historical sources.
- 5.) Articulate your opinions clearly in the presence of your peers. We will spend some of our class time engaging in discussion. Over the course of the semester you should become increasingly comfortable expressing your opinions publicly and describing them effectively.
- 6.) Think and read critically. As you analyze primary sources, you will have to think carefully about the assumptions their creators 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.

Required Readings:

1.) Books:

George Tindall and David Shi, *America: A Narrative History (Brief Eighth Edition) (Vol. 2)* [Paperback] (W.W. Norton and Company, most recent edition).

Thomas Bell, *Out of This Furnace* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976).

Melba Beals, *Warriors Don't Cry: A Searing Memoir of the Battle to Integrate Little Rock's Central High* (Washington Square Press, 1995).

Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* (Holt Paperbacks, 2008).

The following text is **not** required for the course: David Shi and Holly Mayer, *For the Record: A Documentary History of America: From Reconstruction through Contemporary Times (Fourth Edition) (Vol. 2)* [Paperback] (W.W. Norton and Company, most recent edition).

2.) Blackboard readings and handouts

Assignments and Exams:

Paper One: 10%
Midterm: 20%
Paper Two: 20%
Virtual Family Album: 5%
John Lewis Lecture Response Paper: 5%
Final: 25%
Participation and Reading Quizzes: 15%

Attendance, Make-Up Exams 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.).

There will be no make-up exams unless arranged *in advance* with the professor. Make-ups will only be administered in cases of personal or medical emergencies. Except in exceptional circumstances, reading quizzes cannot be made up.

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 should 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

Jan. 17: **Introduction: The U.S. in the Late Nineteenth Century**

Jan. 19: **The Second Industrial System**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 590-604 (until “Labor Conditions and Organization”)
- Primary Documents: Andrew Carnegie, “The Gospel of Wealth” (Distributed in class and available on Blackboard).
- Supplemental Reading: *Out of This Furnace*, 1-48.

Week Two

Jan. 24: **The New Immigrants and Urban America**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 618-635.
- Supplemental Reading: *Out of This Furnace*, 48-90.

Jan. 26: **The Industrial System Moves South**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 520-551.
- Primary Documents: Ida B. Wells, “A Red Record,” (1895)
http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/learning_history/lynching/wells2.cfm
- Supplemental Reading: *Out of This Furnace*, 90-117.

Week Three

Jan. 31: **The Industrial System Moves West**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 572-587.
- Supplemental Reading: *Out of This Furnace*, 119-162.

Feb. 2: **Crises of the 1890s: Farmers and Workers**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 559-572, 604-615, and 663-677.
- Primary Documents: Items in “Three Approaches to Unionism” and Eugene V. Debs, “Outlook for Socialism in the United States” (1900).
- Supplemental Reading: *Out of This Furnace*, 162-178.

<p>Paper One due by email on Monday, Feb. 6 at 5 pm. Hardcopies due in class on Tuesday, Feb. 7.</p>
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Feb. 7: **The U.S. in the Age of Imperialism**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 685-711.
- Primary Documents: Albert Beveridge from *The March of the Flag*; “Platform of the Anti-Imperialist League (1899); “Sumner Denounces American Imperialism;” “Aguinaldo Declares Philippines Independence;” and “Theodore Roosevelt Justifies Philippine Colonization on the Basis of America’s History of Westward Expansion, 1900”
- Supplemental Reading: *Out of This Furnace*, 179-217.

Feb. 9: **Progressivism**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 640-647 and 712-743
- Supplemental Reading: *Out of This Furnace*, 218-250.

Week Five

Feb. 14: **World War I**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 744-775
- Primary Documents: Articles 10 Through 16 of the League of Nations Covenant, 1919; Wilson Defends the Peace Treaty and League, 1919; Senator Henry Cabor Lodge Proposes Reservations to the League Covenant, 1919; A. Mitchell Palmer, “The Case Against the Reds,” <http://chnm.gmu.edu/courses/hist409/palmer.html>; William Allen White, “The Red Scare is Un-American” (1920); “The Most Brainiest Man,” <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/4980>; “Sailor Wounds Spectator,” <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/4981>
- Supplemental Reading: *Out of This Furnace*, 250-282.

Feb. 16: **The Collapse of Progressivism and the 1920s**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 776-797
- Supplemental Reading: *Out of This Furnace*, 283-325.

Week Six

Feb. 21: **The Great Depression and the New Deal**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 798-823
- Primary Documents: “President Franklin D. Roosevelt Says Government Must Act, 1933;” “A Business Cynic on the NRA;” W.P. Kiplinger Argues, ‘Why Businessmen Fear Washington,’ 1934;” “The New Deal is No Revolution;” “Communists Lament the Futility of the New Deal, 1934;” “The Communist Party Argues for a ‘Popular Front,’ 1938; “President Roosevelt Outlines Social Security for Congress, 1935” all on Blackboard.
- Supplemental Reading: *Out of This Furnace*, 325-362.

Feb. 23: **The New Deal**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 824-861
- Supplemental Reading: *Out of This Furnace*, 362-413.

Week Seven

Feb. 28: **Midterm**

March 1: “Rosie the Riveter”

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 862-885.

Week Eight

Spring Break

Please use the break to get a jump start on: *Warriors Don’t Cry*. Read at least: Author’s Note, Introduction, and 1-66.

Week Nine

March 13: **World War II**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 886-921
- Supplemental Reading: *Warriors Don’t Cry*, 67-115.

March 15: **The Cold War Abroad**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 927-953
- Primary Documents: Mr. X, from “The Sources of Soviet Conduct” (1947) <http://www.historyguide.org/europe/kennan.html>; “Telegram from N. Novikov, Soviet Ambassador to the US, to the Soviet Leadership,” 1946: http://legacy.wilsoncenter.org/va2/index.cfm?topic_id=1409&fuseaction=home.document&identifier=952E8C7F-423B-763D-D5662C42501C9BEA&sort=collection&item=Cold%20War%20Origins
- Supplemental Reading: *Warriors Don’t Cry*, 116-175.

Week Ten

March 20: **The Cold War at Home**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 954-994
- Supplemental Reading: *Warriors Don’t Cry*, 176-220.

March 22: **The Civil Rights Revolution**

Reading Assignment:

- John Lewis, *Walking With the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement* (Simon and Schuster, 1998) 255-290. Available as a pdf on Blackboard

Week Eleven

March 27: **The Civil Rights Revolution**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 994-1012
- Primary Documents: “Southern Declaration on Integration” (1956); Student newspaper website: http://aam.govst.edu/projects/mwysocki/primary_sources.htm; Dwight D. Eisenhower, “The Situation in Little Rock” (1957); Mother’s League Get Out the Vote poster: <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=718#>; Richard M. Weaver, “Integration is Communization” (1957).
- Supplemental Reading: *Warriors Don’t Cry*, 221-312.

March 29: **The Great Society**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 1012-1025
- Primary Documents: TBA

Week Twelve

April 3: **The US War in Vietnam**

Reading Assignment:

- Supplemental Reading: *Nickel and Dimed*, 1-49.

April 5: **Vietnam and the Collapse of the New Deal Era**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 1025-1035
- Primary Documents: The Port Huron Statement; The Sharon Statement; A Bill of Rights for Women; Phyllis Schlafly, “What’s Wrong with ‘Equal Rights’ for Women (Feb. 1972).

Paper Two due by e-mail on Monday, April 9 at 5 pm. Hardcopy due in class on Tuesday, April 10.

Week Thirteen

April 10: **The Third Industrial System in Crisis**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 1036-1069
- Primary Documents: Watch an episode of “All in the Family” on YouTube.
- Supplemental Reading: *Nickel and Dimed*, 51- about 80.

April 12: **The Conservative Ascendancy**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 1070-1093
- Supplemental Reading: *Nickel and Dimed*, about 80-119.

Week Fourteen

April 17: **“Is Wal-Mart Good for America?”**

Reading Assignment:

- Supplemental Reading: *Nickel and Dimed*, 121-about 160.

April 19: **Globalization and the Twenty-First Century**

Reading Assignment:

- Text: 1094-1141
- Supplemental Reading: *Nickel and Dimed*, about 160-191.

Week Fifteen

April 24: **VFA Presentations**

Reading Assignment:

- Supplemental Reading: *Nickel and Dimed*, 193-238.

Virtual Family Album project due by email on April 24.
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April 26: **Wrap-Up**

Reading Assignment:

The Final Exam will be take-home and will be due at the time and on the day our final exam is scheduled to begin. Early papers will be accepted.
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