

History 202 – The United States, 1877-Present

Office: Building 94, Room 369

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday from 1:00-2:00, and by appointment

email: cgbates@csupomona.edu

website: <http://www.csupomona.edu/~cgbates/202/index.html>

Course Themes

This course is meant to allow you to engage with historical issues and methods in an advanced fashion. When you leave this class, you will ideally take the following things with you:

1. A sense that history is not just found in written words and the speeches of great men, but is instead all around us, and that things like movies and paintings and songs are very important, too.
2. An understanding that history is not just about memorizing facts, but about figuring out what things mean and why things happened the way they did.
3. Familiarity with the most important themes and events of modern U.S. history.

Reading

There are two required books for this course. They are:

- *Farewell to Manzanar*, by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston
- *Fast Food Nation*, by Eric Schlosser

The due date for these books is listed later in the syllabus. In most weeks, there will also be 5-30 pages of required reading material placed online in PDF format. This online reading can be found on the course webpage.

There is no textbook for this course. If you would like to buy one for reference, let me know, and I can suggest one. You are also encouraged to email me or see me in office hours if you have any questions.

Grades and Assignments

Your grade will be divided into four parts:

- 20% Quizzes (10 points each): There will be four quizzes given over the course of the quarter. They will be in-class, and will be given without prior warning. They will focus on the reading and on the “key terms” from lecture. If you miss a quiz, there will be an opportunity to take a makeup quiz on the last day of class in Week 10. This is the **ONLY** makeup option; please do not ask for any others.
- 20% Exams (20 points each): This course is divided into two parts. At the end of each part, there will be a take-home exam. The exams will require you to analyze two pictures and a passage. The due dates for these midterms are listed later in the syllabus.
- 20% Short Papers (20 points each): You will be required to write a short response to each of the two books that have been assigned for this course. Please see the course webpage for the questions and for more instructions. You may submit the papers in class on the day they are due, or via email **by 11:59 p.m. on the day before they are due**.
- 40% Final Project (80 points): In place of a final exam, you will submit a 1000-word paper that will involve some original research on your part. It is due at 11:59 p.m. on Thursday of finals week (December 10).

Detailed information about all of these assignments can be found on the course website. Final grades will be awarded on this scale: 188-200 points: A 180-187 points: A- 174-179 points: B+ 167-173 points: B
160-166 points: B- 154-159 points: C+ 147-153 points: C 140-146 points: C- 120-139 points: D

Academic Honesty

If any part of your work is presented as your own, and is not, this is plagiarism. It is the most serious of academic offenses, and should be avoided at all times. If you use a quote from a book or a website—which should be done sparingly—then you must attribute it. And you should never borrow from the work of friends or classmates. Any violations of this policy will be detected and penalties will be quite serious.

Schedule of Classes

PART I: FROM CIVIL WAR TO WORLD WAR, 1877-1950

September 27: Course Introduction

September 29: "The Shame of the Cities" - The Gilded Age

October 5: "Wizards of Oz" - The Populists and The Progressives

October 7: "The White Man's Burden" – America Becomes an Empire

Due Monday, October 5: Week 2 online readings

October 12: "The War to End All Wars" - World War I

October 14: "We Have Nothing to Fear But Fear Itself" - The Great Depression and New Deal

Due Monday, October 12: Week 3 online readings

October 19: "The Good War" - World War II from the Rise of Hitler to Operation TORCH

October 21: "Rosie the Riveter" - World War II on the Homefront, and from TORCH to V-J Day

Due Monday, October 19: Week 4 online readings

October 26: "An Iron Curtain Has Fallen" - The Politics of the Cold War

October 28: "Invasion USA" – The Culture of the Cold War

Due Monday, October 26: *Farewell to Manzanar* (whole book) and Short Paper #1

PART II: MODERN AMERICA, 1950-2009

November 2: "Do You Believe in Miracles?" – Sports in America

November 4: "The Boob Tube" - America in the Television Age

Due Monday, November 2: Week 6 online readings, Exam #1

November 9: "Swords into Frisbees" - The Rise of Consumer Culture

November 11: No Class. Veterans' Day Holiday.

Due Monday, November 9: *Fast Food Nation* (Introduction and Part I) and Short Paper #2

November 16: "The Devil's Music" - Rock and Roll

November 18: "We Shall Overcome" - The Civil Rights Movement (and beyond)

Due Monday, November 16: Week 8 online readings

November 23: "Good-bye My Sweetheart, Hello Vietnam" - Vietnam and the Counterculture

November 25: No Class. Enjoy your Thanksgiving.

Due Monday, November 23: Week 9 online readings

November 30: "I Am Not a Crook" - Watergate and Modern Politics

December 2: "True Lies" – America and the Middle East

Due Wednesday, December 2: Exam #2