



HSTY 112 US History Since Reconstruction

Course Information:

Semester	: December 22, 2022 – January 16, 2023
Credit	: 4
Teaching Hours	: 50 Hours
Location	: Online
Professor	: Randall Geller
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Course Description:

Welcome! This is a 4-week survey course on American History from 1865 to the present. As such, we will cover the Reconstruction of the United States following the Civil War, a period in which the defeated Southern slave-holding states were conditionally re-integrated into the United States after slavery had ended. We will explore the complexities of the Reconstruction period (1865-1877), including the lives of both blacks and whites in the South and the manner in which the victorious North attempted to change the culture of black-white relations in the South as well as resistance to such efforts. We will explore the American settling of the West after the conclusion of the Civil War, the conflict with and treatment of native peoples leading to the reservation system by the late 1870s, the tremendous growth of industry that took place in the mid and late 19th centuries that transported citizens from the east to the west coast of the United States by 1873 in less than 4 days, but also led to the massive depletion of natural resources and the near extinction of many native species in this country, including buffalo, grizzly bears, wolves, deer, elk and beaver. We will explore the history of mass immigration from Europe from 1881-1924, the fascinating story of Chinese immigration to the west coast, the tremendous growth of cities that led to unbelievable opportunities for many; it also led to overcrowded tenement housing, public health hazards, worker safety issues, and vast inequalities for so many of the urban poor by the turn of the 20th century. We will explore the question of American participation in World War I and World II in considerable depth, and how such participation permanently transformed this country and the world's perception of it.

While World War II catapulted the United States out of the Great Depression and into a position of world leadership, there was little time to celebrate the defeat of Nazism; the Soviet Union emerged determined to challenge the United States, democracy, and capitalism as part of the global Cold War. We will spend time discussing how the Cold War played out in Korea, the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, and America's involvement in Vietnam through the mid 1970s. We will also explore how the United States was transformed domestically after World War II. While fighting for democracy and against the pernicious effects of ethnic, religious, and racial hatreds in World War II, the United States was forced to confront the remaining legacy of its own treatment of non-dominant minorities within its own borders. This was most glaring in the



American South, where Jim Crow laws maintained African Americans in a subordinate, disadvantaged, and often threatened position through the mid 1960s. Many native Americans only received full citizenship status in the turbulent 1960s as well; the 1960s also brought women's rights and feminism into the forefront of the national consciousness. We will explore the challenges and achievements of the Civil Rights era of the 1950s and 1960s, and how the legacy of the Civil Rights era continues to impact this country today. We will conclude the course by exploring the challenges and opportunities of America in a globalized world from the 1970s to the present.

I will regularly be posting recorded lectures, and approximately once a week we will hold a coordinated Zoom session in which everyone will participate.

Course Requirements:

Due to the fact that this is an online class we will not have exams. Instead, we will have a lively discussion board focusing on the Eric Foner textbook, the documents, and the lectures. Everyone should post their answers to the assigned questions, which will be posted at the beginning of the week, by the end of weeks 1 and 2. In week 3 a research paper will be due, and in week 4 a short paper plus several discussion questions will be due. I will provide the questions and paper topics at the beginning of the course.

Grading will be calculated on the following basis:

Discussion board posts 50%

Paper 1 – 30%

Paper 2 – 20%

Textbooks -

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty!: An American History* (Volume 2, Since 1865), 5th or 6th Edition

Eric Foner, *Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History* (Volume 2), 5th or 6th Edition

Highly Recommended:

John Mack Faragher, Mary Jo Buhle, Daniel H. Czitrom, and Susan H. Armitage, *Out of Many: A History of the American People, Volume II, 8th Edition* (Pearson, 2016)



Week 1 Thursday Dec. 22 – Wednesday Dec. 28: Reconstruction, Expansion West, Mass immigration and American Cities, the Spanish-American War, 1898

Readings:

Foner Textbook, Chapters 15-17

Erika Lee, “Defying Exclusion: Chinese Immigrants and Their Strategies During the Exclusion Era,” in *Chinese-American Transnationalism: The Flow of People, Resources*, Sucheng Tan, Editor (Temple University Press, 2006).

Foner Documents, Chapters 15-17

Recommended:

John Mack Faragher, et al, Chapters 17-21

Week 2 – Dec. 29 – Jan. 4 – The Progressive Era, World War I, and the Roaring Twenties

Readings:

Foner Textbook, Chapters 18 – 20

Foner Documents, Chapters 18-20

Recommended:

John Mack Faragher, et al, Chapters 22-23

Week 3 (Jan. 5 - 10) – The Great Depression and World War II

Foner Textbook, Chapters 21-22

Foner Documents, Chapters 21-22

Recommended:

John Mack Faragher, et al, Chapters 24-25

Paper 1 due Sunday, January 8



Week 4 (Jan. 11 – Jan. 16) – The US in the Global Age – 1950s to the present

Foner textbook, Chapters 23-28

Foner Documents, Chapters 23-28

Short Paper due Sunday, January 15