

HIST 436 – Origins of Modern America

Saxe - Section #10260, Buckman 325, 2-4:30 M

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Office Hours – 11-12 MF or by appointment, 307 Clough

Required Texts:

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Herland*

Linda Gordon, *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction*

Tera Hunter, *To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors after the Civil War*

Robert C. McMath, *American Populism*

David Montgomery, *Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History of Work, Technology, and Labor Struggles*

Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*.

The professor will provide additional readings throughout the course.

Course Requirements:

Class Participation

Active participation in class discussions over readings and other topics. This also includes presenting one week's readings. Students prepare a list of discussion questions that will help lead the class for that week. 20% of final grade.

Exams

Midterm – October 12. 15% of final grade.

Final – December 14. 20% of final grade

Essays

All essays should be typed, double-spaced, and should contain the following at the top of the first page: name, word count, date, and a meaningful title. In addition, any use of sources must be cited using Chicago-style footnotes (see http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html for help or you may ask the instructor). A title page and works cited page are not necessary. At the end of each essay, the Rhodes pledge should be printed and signed.

Short Essays

Students will write a series of short essays throughout the semester. 15% of final grade.

Final Essay

Research paper of approximately 4500 words. This paper must be a work of original research. The most difficult challenge of this kind of essay is to decide on a workable topic. A quick survey of the required readings may help to narrow down an area of interest. Another approach is to look at the types of sources that are both available and interesting to the writer and develop a topic from that point. The nature of the topic of

this paper is wide open, but it will need to be related to the theme of the course. Race relations, labor relations, popular culture and the Great War can all be fruitful areas of research for papers for this course, and students are encouraged to pursue their own individual interests when designing their topics. Specific guidelines for papers will be handed out in the coming weeks and discussion time will be dedicated to answering research questions and problem solving with peers. Students are encouraged to meet with the professor to discuss any questions with finding or shaping a topic. 30% of final grade.

List of deadlines for the final essay:

September 21 – Introductory paragraph and bibliography

This is a 200-300 word abstract of your proposed topic in as detailed form as possible. You will also need to include a preliminary list of primary and secondary sources. This needs to be a hard copy turned that I receive in class

2. October 5 – Final Bibliography

The final list of all the sources you will include in your essay.

3. November 16 – Final draft of essay

The last draft of your essay is due. It needs to be typed and double-spaced, and it must include a bibliography. It should be footnoted using the *Chicago Manual of Style* as its guide. Due, in class, and an email copy must be sent to me, as well.

4. December 7 – Revised draft

After receiving comments from the professor, students will have the option of revising their draft and turning it in December 7. Students can improve their paper grade up to one full letter grade through revision. Due, in my office by 5, and an email copy must be sent to me, as well as the previous draft of the paper with comments.

Course Policies:

Class attendance is mandatory. Students are allowed one absence without penalty. Students are required to find out what they missed in class on the day of their absence. If students miss more than one class, they are required to meet with the professor to discuss their absences. Failure to do so will result in the lowering of a student's final grade by one grade point for every absence over one. Please consider this policy when planning for extracurricular activities (sports, mock trial, etc.)

Due dates and times for writing assignments are fixed. All assignments are due in class, not in the professor's mailbox. Late assignments will receive a failing grade. All assignments must be turned in to the professor. Failure to complete an assignment will result in a failing grade for the class.

The professor supports the Rhodes College Honor Code. To demonstrate commitment to the Code, each student must write “pledged” and sign his/her name on every assignment. If you have questions about plagiarism, please talk to me directly.

Course Calendar

August 31

Introduction; The End of Reconstruction; the Closing of the West
(Hunter, Ch 1, 2; Trachtenberg, Preface, Ch. 1)

September 7

Labor Day – no class

September 14

Agrarian Revolt
(McMath, all)

Short Essay #1: Write a 500-1000 word essay deciding whether the Populists were radical or conservative. Cite specific examples from the text or the sources.

September 21

The Gilded Age and the Rise of the City
(Trachtenberg, Ch. 4-7)

Introductory paragraph and bibliography due

September 28

Work and Workers in Industrial America
(Montgomery, Ch. 1-5; Trachtenberg, Ch, 2, 3; “Knights of Labor Constitution,”
<http://www.historytools.org/sources/knights.html>; “IWW sites
<http://www.workerseducation.org/crutch/pamphlets/obu1919.html>
<http://www.workerseducation.org/crutch/pamphlets/ettor.html>
<http://www.workerseducation.org/crutch/pamphlets/jersey.html>)

October 5

The Rise of Jim Crow and the African-American Response
(Hunter, Ch. 3-6, 9)

Final bibliography due

October 12

Midterm Exam

October 19

Fall Break

October 26

Not all Fun and Games: Amusement and Reaction

(Hunter, Ch. 7, 8; Roy Rosenzweig, "The Rise of the Saloon;" Lawrence Levine, "William Shakespeare and the American People: A Study in Cultural Transformation;" selections from Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements*)

Short Essay #2: Write a 750-1000 word essay about these articles. Focus on two – chapters or articles – and pick the one that worked for you the most and one that worked the least. Justify your choice. In writing your essay, think about the strengths and pitfalls in using sources from popular culture.

November 2

What is Progressivism?

(Peter Filene, "An Obituary for the Progressive Movement," AQ 22 (1970); Daniel Rodgers, "In Search of Progressivism," *Reviews in American History* (Dec. 1982); Paula Baker, "The Domestication of Politics: Women and American Political Society, 1780-1920," AHR 89 (1984))

November 9

Immigration and Taming the West

(Gordon, Preface, Ch. 1-4)

November 16

A White Man's Country

(finish Gordon)

Final draft of essay due

November 23

Gender Equality and a Feminist Utopia

(*Herland*, all)

Short Essay #3: After reading *Herland*, identify three major themes in American society on which the author is commenting. Cite specific examples. Is this an effective attempt at social critique? 750-1000 words.

November 30

The Great War and the Making of Modern America

(Hunter, Ch. 10; Woodrow Wilson, "The 14 Points;" Randolph Bourne, "War is the Health of the State")

December 7

Final Thoughts

Revised draft due

Monday, December 14, 2PM

Final Exam