

HIUS142B: United States History post-1945
MWF 11am-11:50am / PCYNH 120
Nancy H. Kwak

Introduction:

Post-1945 American history is rich with controversy and meaning. During these five short decades, the United States has risen to economic dominance; its government has engaged in peacekeeping missions and has instigated war and international turmoil. While citizens of this country have struggled to define the nation's role in the world, it has also faced internal tumult: Americans of all backgrounds have demanded their place in the national narrative, and sexual mores, family values, and gender norms have likewise been thoroughly transformed in these decades.

The themes of human rights, Americans' perceptions of their role in the world, and internal contestations of power and identity will be the focus of this course.

Grading:

The requirements for this course are as follows --

Paper 1: 25%

Paper 2: 25%

Fake midterm: 0%

Comprehensive final exam: 50%

Late papers will be marked down 1/3 step for every day the paper is late. (Saturday and Sunday = two days.)

Required reading:

1. Mary Dudziak, *Cold War, Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton UP, 2002) 0691095132.
2. Jeffrey Frieden, *Global capitalism: its fall and rise in the twentieth century* (Norton, 2006) 0393058085.
3. Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* (Penguin Press, 2006) 1594200823.

Fun reading (not required):

4. Jeff Chang, *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip Hop Generation* (Picador Press, 2005) 0312425791.
5. Melani McAllister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and US Interests in the Middle East, 1945-2000* (UC Press, 2005) 0520244990.

Paper questions:

1. **CHOOSE:** How did Americans imagine their role in the world after 1945? **OR** Was 1945 truly the beginning of an American century?
2. Have Americans become more or less free over the course of the late-twentieth century? (1945-today) You may want to consult Eric Foner's helpful *Story of American Freedom* (1999) but **REMEMBER:** you must limit your answer to the dates 1945-2002. Also, be careful not to plagiarize!!!

ALL PAPERS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO TURNITIN.COM.

All powerpoint presentations will not be posted until the day after the lecture.

Schedule:

Week 1: The US in an international economy

1. 3.30 The American century?
 2. 4.1 Bretton Woods
 3. 4.3 The Marshall Plan vs. aid to developing nations
- Required reading: Jeffrey Frieden, *Global Capitalism* (chs. 11-12)**

Week 2: The Cold War abroad

4. 4.6 The logic of containment and the military industrial complex
 5. 4.8 Communist China and the Korean War
 6. 4.10 Attempts at nonalliance and the Suez Crisis
- Required reading: Jeffrey Frieden, *Global Capitalism* (ch. 13-14)**

Week 3: The Cold War at home

- 7. 4.13 HUAC and McCarthyism
- 8. 4.15 Betty Friedan and the problem that has no name
- 9. 4.17 Mass consumption and debt

Week 4: Civil rights, economic rights

- 10. 4.20 International exchange of ideas about decolonization and nonviolent resistance
FIRST PARAGRAPH for PAPER 1 DUE
- 11. 4.22 Segregation – both *de facto* and *de jure* – not only of African Americans, but Asians, Jews, etc.
- 12. 4.24 American interests in decolonizing regions
Required reading: Mary Dudziak, *Cold War: Civil Rights* (2002) - ALL

Week 5: Border crossing, diasporas, immigration

- 13. 4.27 Alliance for Progress
- 14. 4.29 Border crossings and diasporas
PAPER 1 DUE
- 15. **5.1 FAKE MIDTERM**

Week 6: The sixties

- 16. 5.4 Student movements & Vietnam
- 17. 5.6 Organizing hyphenated Americans
- 18. 5.8 Radicalization

Week 7: Things fall apart

- 19. 5.11 Culture wars: abortion, gay rights
- 20. 5.13 Urban unrest
Recommended reading: Jeff Chang, *Can't Stop Won't Stop*
- 21. 5.15 Nixon

Week 8: The Middle East

- 22. 5.18 Resources and security, part I
FIRST PARAGRAPH for PAPER 2 DUE
- 23. 5.20 Resources and security, part II
- 24. 5.22 Carter's failures and the rise of the Right
Required reading: Jeffrey Frieden, *Global Capitalism* (chs. 15-16)

Week 9: A new age?

- 25. 5.25 MEMORIAL DAY
- 26. 5.27 The end of the Cold War and the remaking of the left under Clinton
- 27. 5.29 The information age and consumer capitalism goes global
Required reading: Jeffrey Frieden, *Global Capitalism* (chs. 17-18)
PAPER 2 DUE

Week 10: Crises

- 28. 6.1 Bush II / 9-11 / Afghanistan / Iraq
- 29. 6.3 Bush II, part II
- 30. 6.5 Green movement and change we can believe in?
Required reading: Michael Pollan, *Omnivore's Dilemma* - ALL

FINAL EXAM JUNE 12, 11:30-2:30pm