

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History

Semester II Year 1981-82

| <u>COURSE NO.</u> | <u>COURSE TITLE</u> | <u>INSTRUCTOR</u> |
|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 398 | The United States Since 1945 | Melosh |

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Truman's use of the atomic bomb against Japan both reflected and fundamentally transformed the United States's dominant position in world politics, and in turn, the new conditions of "atomic diplomacy" reshaped domestic politics and social life. This course will examine the development, influence, and effects of Post-World War II liberal ideology at home and abroad: the extension of New Deal social programs, the growing power of the executive branch, the retreat from brinkmanship to the foreign policy of "nuclear dread" and its strategies of detente and limited war. In domestic politics, liberalism struggled to maintain its position against the growing protest of those outside its consensus, and the default of disillusioned insiders. The course will explore the challenges to liberal ideology posed by the "personal politics" of the civil rights movement, the counter-culture, the anti-war movement, the New Left and the women's movement; and by the "politics of resentment" of Goldwater, Wallace, Nixon, and the radical right. The course also explores the social and cultural history of these years: the growing influence of mass media, life in the burgeoning suburbs, changes in men's and women's work.

LECTURES

Tues., Thurs., 9:30 AM-10:45 AM

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS and EXAMINATIONS

one short paper (3-5 pages)
take-home mid-term, essay exam (5 pages)
final paper, 8-10 pages; review essay
final exam--take-home essay; one hour in-class identification

GRADING SYSTEM

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|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| short paper: 20 per cent | final exam: 30 per cent |
| mid-term exam: 20 per cent | final paper: 30 per cent |

REQUIRED READINGS

And discussion; graded on scale of -3 to 3, to be ~~XXXXXX~~ subtracted from or added to final grade

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READING FOR HISTORY 398, The United States Since 1945

Spring, 1981-82

Caputo, Philip. Rumor of War. Soldier's memoir of Vietnam.

Evans, Sara. Personal Politics. Study of the emergence of the women's movement from the civil rights movement and the New Left.

Halberstam, David. The Best and the Brightest. The advisors and decisions which brought us to Vietnam.

Hellman, Lillian. Scoundrel Time. Memoir of the fifties' anti-Communist crusade.

Plath, Silvia. The Bell Jar.

OR

Salinger, J. D. Catcher in the Rye. Two novels about youthful discontent in the fifties.

Moody, Anne. Coming of Age in Mississippi. A young black Southerner's story of the civil rights movement in the South.

Schell, Jonathan. The Time of Illusion. The Nixon years and the end of the Vietnam war.

Wittner, Lawrence. Cold War America. Survey of American since 1945 from critical perspective

Yates, Richard. Revolutionary Road. Novel of disillusionment in the suburbs.