
U.S. Cold War Culture

History 600

Tuesday 1:20 – 3:20pm
Humanities 5245

Fall Semester 2012

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Office Hours: Tuesday 11 am – 1 pm and by appointment

Course Description

This senior capstone seminar will examine the many contradictory facets of U.S. Cold War culture. For instance, some scholars consider the early Cold War years to be among the most repressive times in U.S. history. They detail how America during the 1950s witnessed the rise of anti-communist hysteria and of a domestic suburban culture that was forged through strict gender roles and segregated neighborhoods. However, other scholars note the early Cold War years to be a time when *Playboy* magazine was first issued and when the beat generation and James Dean rose in popularity. They further highlight how the postwar years witnessed the prominence of the civil rights movement, the formation of the first gay rights group, and the publication of Betty Friedan's feminist manifesto, *The Feminine Mystique*. In light of these many happenings, the study of U.S. Cold War culture promises to uncover a fascinating period that charts the development of social mores along with the attempts to resist and challenge these mores.

At the end of this semester, you will write a research paper that contributes to an ongoing conversation over the significance of U.S. Cold War culture. You will participate in exploring what life was like during the 1950s and analyze its impact on contemporary culture. Our intimate class size aims to foster a more in-depth discussion of assigned texts and a greater attention to the progress of your research project. It is my hope that you will find this a rewarding senior capstone seminar.

Course Requirements

Overview: This course consists of attendance, discussion of assigned readings, weekly 1-2 page write ups of assigned readings, two one-on-one meetings with the professor,

preliminary proposal of research paper, submission of rough draft of research paper, peer review of research paper drafts, class presentation of research paper, and submission of final research paper.

Participation and Discussion: Because a critical component of this course involves the discussion of assigned readings and of your research, please be respectful of the different viewpoints of your classmates. In this class, we will do our utmost to foster an open environment where **everyone** feels at ease to express their ideas. Additionally, your active participation is crucial to ensuring an effective seminar. This includes keeping up with assigned readings and making steady progress on your research throughout the semester.

Weekly Write-ups: There will be a total of **eight** weekly write-ups, each worth 25 points for a total of 200 points. All write-ups are due at the beginning of each class meeting. There will be no late work accepted. These write-ups aim to help you process and make sense of an assigned text. Their purpose is also to help stimulate classroom discussion. For each prompt, the first sentence should re-state **in your own words** the thesis of the assigned text. Please **DO NOT** quote from the reading. Your write-up should also include a discussion of two key examples that the text used to support, complicate, and/or expand on its argument(s).

Research Proposal: Your Research Proposal is due during the first ten minutes of Week 9's seminar meeting. Your Research Proposal consists of a 3-5 page write-up that clearly states your research topic, its main argument(s), and the examples that you intend to use to support and/or complicate that argument. This 3-5 page write-up should also include a discussion of what previous scholars have said about your topic. In addition to this write-up, you need to turn in a list of 5-7 sources that should include at least three books and two journal articles already published on your topic. While not required, you are encouraged to list some primary sources that you would like to look at for your research project.

Rough Draft of Research Paper: At the end of Week 13, you will submit electronically the first draft of your research paper. I along with a fellow classmate will review this draft and provide feedback to help guide the writing of the final draft of your research paper.

Final Research Paper: You will submit electronically the final draft of your research paper during finals week. Before submitting your final copy, you will do an in-class presentation of your project during Week 15.

Participation and discussion of assigned texts	200 points
Weekly 1-2 page write-ups of assigned texts	200 points
Research proposal and annotated bibliography	100 points
Rough Draft of Research Paper	100 points
Final Research Paper	400 points
TOTAL	1000 points

Required Readings/Texts

- Please see the attached handout entitled “Reading List” for a detailed listing of assigned readings. Your readings are also listed in the Course Schedule section of this syllabus.

Films Viewings to be Scheduled:

- *Manchurian Candidate*
- *Rebel Without a Cause*

Course Schedule

WEEK 1

T 9.4 Introduction
Write-up #1 DUE

Reading:

- Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (USA: BasicBooks, 1988).

WEEK 2

T 9.11 Write-up #2 DUE

Reading:

- Barbara Ehrenreich, *The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment* (New York: Anchor Press, 1987).

WEEK 3

T 9.18 Write-up #3 DUE

Readings:

- Victor Navasky, *Naming Names* (New York: The Viking Press, 1980).

WEEK 4

T 9.25 Write-up #4 DUE

Reading:

- David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: the Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

WEEK 5

T 10.2 Write-up #5 DUE
Discussion of Research Proposal

Reading:

- George Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

WEEK 6

T 10.9 Write-up #6 DUE
Discussion of Writing Kit

Readings:

- Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

WEEK 7

T 10.16 Write-up #7 DUE; One-on-one meetings with Professor Cheng

Reading:

- Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

WEEK 8

T 10.23 Write-up #8 DUE

Reading:

- Jack Kerouac, *On the Road* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999).

WEEK 9

T 10.30 **RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE**
Presentation of Research Proposals
Discussion of Final Write-up

WEEK 10

T 11.6 NO CLASS MEETING

WEEK 11

T 11.13 NO CLASS MEETING

WEEK 12

T 11.20 NO CLASS MEETING

WEEK 13

T 11.27 Check-in Seminar

Sunday, December 2, 2012 at *NOON*
Electronic Submission of First Draft of Research Project Write-up

WEEK 14

T 12.4 Peer Review of Research Project Write-up;
One-on-one meetings with Professor Cheng

WEEK 15

T 12.11 Class Presentation of Research Project

Thursday, December 20, 2012 at *NOON*
Electronic Submission of FINAL Research Project Write-up