

History 315L
The United States Since 1865
Unique #85115
Summer 2010

Dr. Mark Lawrence
malawrence@mail.utexas.edu
475-9304, Garrison 3.204
Office Hours: Tuesday, 1-2 p.m.; Wednesday, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.;
and by appointment

This course introduces the rich and complex history of the United States from the end of the Civil War until roughly the present day. The course will focus on three major themes: the impact of economic change on American thought and politics; the struggles by traditionally marginalized groups to gain political rights; and the debate over the appropriate role of government in regulating social and economic relations.

There are no prerequisites for this course. The instructor hopes that the class will lay the foundation for further study in American history and politics.

Course requirements

- 1) midterm examination on July 30 (30 percent of semester grade)
- 2) paper of 4-6 pages (1,200-1,500 words), due on date given below (30 percent)
- 3) final examination, date and time TBA (40 percent)

Teaching assistants

Takkara Brunson
email: tkbrunson@gmail.com
office hours: Burdine 408, Monday and Wednesday, 12-2 p.m.

Paul Conrad
email: ptc@mail.utexas.edu
office hours: Burdine 408, Monday and Thursday, 12-2 p.m.

Jessica Shore
email: jessierae.shore@gmail.com
office hours: PCL 5th floor, Monday, 12-3

Required texts (available at University of Texas Coop)

Horatio Alger Jr., *Ragged Dick: Or, Street Life in New York with the Boot Blacks*
James Davidson, et al., *U.S.: A Narrative History* (vol. 2: since 1865)
Tom Hayden, *The Port Huron Statement*
Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*
New York Times correspondents, *Class Matters*
Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*

Other important notes

- Students are not strictly required to attend lecture. However, students are responsible for everything that the instructor or the teaching assistants say during class time, including details about papers and exams.
- Students who attend class are required to arrive on time, stay for the entire session, and to obey basic rules of civility and decorum. Students may enter or leave in the middle of the class period only with permission of the instructor. Using cell phones, sending or receiving text messages, and using laptops for purposes unrelated to the course are strictly forbidden.
- The instructor or TAs will routinely hand out photocopies for use during class. These should be treated as required reading.
- Class time will occasionally be devoted to discussion. Participation is not a course requirement, but students should be aware that regular and constructive participation can improve their semester grades.
- Neither the instructor nor the TAs will provide lecture notes under any circumstances.
- The University of Texas provides, upon request, appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 or 471-4641.
- This syllabus and all materials presented in lectures are copyrighted by Dr. Mark A. Lawrence. No materials may be directly or indirectly published, posted to the internet, or rewritten for publication or distribution in any medium. Neither these materials nor any portion thereof may be stored in a computer except for personal and non-commercial use.
- Students are required to be fully aware of university rules regarding academic dishonesty. The instructor assumes full compliance throughout the semester and will observe all university procedures in cases of violations.

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENTS

July 12 Introduction to the Course

Part I: The Era of Transformation

July 13 Reconstruction and Its Failures
READING: Alger, preface-chapter VI; *U.S.*, chapter 17

July 14 Reconfiguring White Supremacy
READING: Alger, chapters VII-XIII; *U.S.*, pp. 355-361

July 15 Forces of Industrialization
READING: Alger, chapters XIV-XX; *U.S.*, chapter 19

July 16 Ideology of the Gilded Age
READING: Alger, chapters XXI-XXVII

July 19 Challenges from Below

READING: Sinclair, chapters 1-5

July 20 Immigration and City Life

READING: Sinclair, chapters 6-10; *U.S.*, chapter 20

July 21 Westward Expansion

READING: Sinclair, chapters 11-15; *U.S.*, pp. 361-375

Part II: The Era of Reform

July 22 The Crisis of American Capitalism

READING: Sinclair, chapters 16-20; *U.S.*, pp. 423-435

July 23 The American Empire

READING: Sinclair, chapters 21-25; *U.S.*, pp. 435-445

July 26 Progressivism

READING: Sinclair, chapters 26-31; *U.S.*, chapters 26-31

July 27 The First World War: International Aspects

READING: Moody, chapters 1-4; *U.S.*, chapter 23

July 28 The First World War at Home

READING: Moody, chapters 5-9

July 29 The 1920

READING: Moody, chapters 10-14; *U.S.*, chapter 24

July 30 MIDTERM

August 2 Depression and New Deal

READING: Moody, chapters 15-18; *U.S.*, chapter 25

August 3 Rise of a Superpower

READING: Moody, chapters 19-22; *U.S.*, chapter 26

Part III: The Rise and Fall of Postwar Liberalism

August 4 The Second World War at Home

READING: Moody, chapters 23-27; *U.S.*, chapter 27

August 5 Containment at Home and Abroad

READING: Moody, chapters 28-30; *U.S.*, chapter 28

August 6 Movements of the 1960s
READING: Hayden, pp. 45-90; *U.S.*, chapter 29

August 9 The High Point of American Liberalism
READING: Hayden, pp. 91-134

August 10 The Vietnam War
READING: Hayden, 135-169; *U.S.*, chapter 30

August 11 The Decade of Discontent
READING: *New York Times*, pp. 1-50; *U.S.*, pp. 659-666

August 12 The Conservative Tide
READING: *New York Times*, pp. 73-110; *U.S.*, pp. 666-679

August 13 Contemporary America in Historical Perspective
READING: *New York Times*, 111-133, 182-201; *U.S.*, chapter 32

Paper topics

For the essay assignment, each student must choose ONE of the topics given below and turn in a paper of 1,200-1,500 words (roughly 4-6 pages) on the date specified. Late papers will not be accepted. In crafting your essay, be sure to state a clear thesis and to support your point with specific details from the book (using footnotes or parenthetical citations as necessary). Be sure to include page numbers and a title. The paper should be double-spaced and use 12-point type. You will be evaluated on the effectiveness of your argument as well as the quality of your writing.

ESSAY 1 (due July 19): Imagine you are a working person in an industrial city of the United States in the 1880s. Your local newspaper has given you the opportunity to write a critique of Horatio Alger's novel Ragged Dick. Write your essay as that newspaper column. You may define your circumstances as you like. (Are you a man or a woman? Unemployed? Skilled? Unskilled? Etc.)

ESSAY 2 (due July 28): The introduction to the Penguin edition of The Jungle asserts that the novel demonstrates the "structural, interlocking nature of corruption in American life" (p. xxv). What do you make of this assertion? In what ways might corruption in the book be described as "structural" and "interlocking"? Are these apt descriptions of conditions described in the book?

ESSAY 3 (due August 9): Anne Moody ends Coming of Age in Mississippi on a deeply ambivalent note, expressing uncertainty about the future course of the civil rights movement. "I wonder," she says about the future. "I really wonder." How do you account for this ambivalence? Using specific examples from the book, discuss reasons for Moody's attitude and the crossroads confronted by civil rights activists in 1964. For the broader context of the black freedom movement, be sure to consult the textbook.