

American History 1865 to Present
Carr Building, Room 215
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11:00 am – 11:50 am

Professor Ashley Rose Young
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Office hours by appointment

Class Description: This course covers a sweeping array of themes in American history after the American Civil War including Reconstruction in both the North and South, American involvement in imperial expansion Westward and abroad, cultural responses to rapid industrialization and commercialization, efforts to secure civil rights, and the evolution of American citizenship in a global age. This course will explore the history of a diverse array of individuals in America including: immigrant families and their descendants, teenagers, presidents, freedom riders, industrial workers, writers, and musicians. Through this course we will explore these historical subjects' motivations, anxieties, and passions that fueled them to act, and the economic, social, and political factors at play which shaped their responses to the world around them. This course is interdisciplinary at its core and requires a strong commitment on the part of the student to complete readings, participate in class discussion, and creatively engage with first hand historical accounts. Through course work, class discussion, and lectures, students will learn the historian's craft and the way in which historians approach evidence to explore America's complex, contradictory, and oft inspiring history.

This course will deepen students' understanding of some of the major factors at play across centuries of American history, while emphasizing the shifting nature of economy, politics, culture, and society through major events such as the Reconstruction, the Great Depression, and the Cold War. This course will pay special attention to the changing ways in which people consume: how they consume, what they consume, why they consume, and the consequences of their consumption. Consumption is not restricted to the process of eating food, but rather, is a process that speaks to the ways in which people digest politics, theater, and media in addition to material goods.

The central question: How does the exploration of consumption – in both the American historical context and the larger historiography of American history – shift and shape our understanding of American history and the meaning of American citizenship and culture after the Civil War?

Throughout the course, students will explore themes that speak to the expansion of American economy and policy beyond the United States' borders, the meaning and changing nature of American citizenship, the efforts of Americans to secure greater political protection for industrial laborers, rural farmers, immigrants, blacks, and women, the strategy of corporations to build profit and expand American industry beyond national borders, the meaning of leisure activities such as dancing, shopping, and dining out, the successes and failures of the Civil Rights movement, and the rise of conservatism in the United States after the liberal political period of the 1960s. Students will also delve into economic, environmental, and cultural history, tracing the ways in which different modes of history can inform one's understanding on a broad spectrum of topics from consumer habits to conceptions of citizenship.

Class Goals:

- Acquire skills to read and analyze historical documents
- Learn to draw important information from first hand accounts, which offer and “on the ground” sense of what American life felt like, and which form the building blocks of historical inquiry
- Gain a foundational understanding of the people, places, and events that shaped modern American history. Students will think historically about why all these names and dates matter, having them at hand to weave into broader, interpretative arguments about the past.
- Engage in respectful discussion and construct thoughtful, evidence-based arguments based on course readings and lectures.
- Conduct primary research with visual materials found in the Perkins Library special collection and write a well organized, analytical essay

Reading:

The textbook for this course is available for purchase at the Regulator Bookstore on 9th Street. The textbook is also on reserve at Perkins library. Because there is simply not enough time for me to cover everything in lecture, this textbook will help you to organize the material, fill in gaps, and make connections. In the process, it will also help you do better on the exams.

- H.W. Brands et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* vol. II

All other readings are available on Sakai and can be accessed under Course Documents (organized by lecture). The readings are to be completed before lecture meets.

Grading Distribution

Attendance and Class Participation	20%
Visual Culture Paper (<i>due class 6.3</i>)	20%
Midterm (<i>taken during class 8.2</i>)	25%
Final Exam	35%

“I have great expectations of you, but none higher than you may attain.”-Thomas Jefferson

1) Attendance and Class Participation (20%)

If a student expects to miss class, he or she must notify me via email.

Students are expected and encouraged to participate in class discussion. These discussions will draw upon evidence from weekly readings and larger themes, issues, and trends discussed in lecture.

I grade class participation on the following point system:

5 points (excellent, regular participation, always prepared, made perceptive points)

- 4 points** (very good, regular participation, nearly always prepared, made good points)
- 3 points** (regular participation—once weekly—nearly always prepared)
- 2 points** (very little, but some, contribution to class discussions)
- 1 point** (good class attendance but no—or almost no—participation in class discussions)

2) Visual Culture Paper (20%)

Often historians rely on written sources, but visual sources such as photographs, newspaper advertisements, television broadcasts, and music videos can provide historical insights that written materials cannot. I will give you a prompt for the writing assignment two to three weeks prior to the assignment's due date. The paper will be roughly 3-5 pages in length. I expect you to use your most concise prose and conduct sophisticated analysis of the visual materials pulled from the Perkins Library Special Collection.

Format: Double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins.

Submission: Turn in your papers via dropbox on Sakai.

Citation: All work must be cited properly using Chicago Style citation footnotes and bibliography.

For citation information please refer to either of the following:

- *The Chicago Manual of Style*
- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*

For guidance on writing style please refer to:

- William Zinsser, *On Writing Well*
- Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*

Academic Integrity is of the utmost importance in this class. **Plagiarism is not tolerated.**

Please see the university's plagiarism policy here: <http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism/>

3) Midterm (25%)

Drawing from lectures, readings, and discussion sections, the midterm will include several short identifications *as well as a longer essay that requires you to identify and analyze themes from the first half of the course.*

The midterm will cover class lectures and readings from class 1.1-8.1

The midterm is an in-class exam (40 minutes in length) given during class period 8.2

4) Final (35%)

The final will draw from lectures, sections, and readings in both halves of the semester. It will include a series of short identifications as well as a longer essay that requires you to identify and analyze themes from the full span of the course.

The final is 3 hours in length

Accommodations:

If you have physical, psychological or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your course needs may be met. You may also wish to

consult the Coordinator of Services to Students with Disabilities, for suggestions and help with your particular needs at this University. All communication with me is confidential.

One Final Note: I strongly encourage students to visit me in my office for informal discussion of the class readings, clarification of course themes, and general interests in American history. Please feel free to email me to set up a time to meet.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Reconstruction, Populism and the Culture of Reform

1.1 What are Primary Source Documents and How Do We Read Them?

Class Reading:

- Class syllabus
- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 16: The Agony of Reconstruction (pg. 417-436)

1.2 The Legacies of Reconstruction

Was Reconstruction successful, if so, for whom and in what ways?

How did Reconstruction shape American culture?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources
 - Mississippi Black Code (1865)
 - Civil Rights Act of (1866)
 - Ku Klux Klan Act of (1871)
 - Booker T. Washington, “The Atlanta Exposition Address” (1895)
 - W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Forethought” and “Of Our Spiritual Strivings” (1903)

1.3 Making a World of Their Own: Women During Reconstruction and Jim Crow

What is white supremacy and what were women’s roles in the exercise of white supremacy?

What are the politics of respectability and how did “best men” and “best women” practice politics of respectability?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Ida B. Wells-Barnett, “Lynch Law” (1893)
- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 16: The Agony of Reconstruction (pg. 436-444)

Week 2: Making Way for Modernity

2.1 The Heart of Reform: Populists in Rural America

How did the Populists identify themselves; did rural Americans have a distinct culture?

How did Populists wield the idea of “progress” to achieve their goals?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - [The Texas Farmers’ Revolt](#) (1886)
- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 20: Political Realignments (pg. 532-544)

2.2 Remaking Manhood

How did American men define “manliness” in the last decades of the nineteenth century?

How are concepts of race and gender changing at the turn of the century?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Andrew Carnegie, “[Wealth](#)” (1889)

- Teddy Roosevelt, “The Strenuous Life” (1899)
- Teddy Roosevelt, “Americanism” (1915)
- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 20: Political Realignment (pg. 544-557)

2.3 Imperial Endeavors: The Spanish American and Philippine-American Wars

In what ways can cultural history help one understand foreign affairs at the turn of the century?

Was America an imperialist nation at the turn of the century?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - William McKinley, “[Decision on the Philippines](#)” (1900)
- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 21: Total Empire (pg. 561-585)

Week 3: Questioning Modernity: Recognition, Reaction and Backlash

3.1 The Roots of Antimodernism

How did modernity come to shape American notions of citizenship?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 18: The Industrial Society (pg. 479, 480-486, 493-501)

3.2 The Revival of Arts and Crafts: Aesthetics as Anecdote to Modernity

In what ways do architecture and social spaces reflect prevailing ideologies of modernity?

Is a consumption-oriented society the answer to the discontents associated with capitalist society?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 19: Toward an Urban Society (pg. 505-513)

3.3 The Birth of Leisure

What did leisure mean for Americans?

In what ways did American experience leisure differently?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 19: Toward an Urban Society (pg. 514-529)

Week 4: Progressive Reform

4.1 Who were the Progressives?

In what ways, if any, did rural and urban Progressive reform reflect one another?

Was progressive reform a movement of the masses?

Did Progressivism work to unite Americans, or cause further sectional divides based race, gender and class?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Eugene V. Debs, “The Issue” (1908)
 - Emma Goldman, “Patriotism: A Menace to Liberty” (1908)

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 22: The Progressive Era (pg. 589-611)

4.2 Life and Reform in the Midst of Jim Crow

How were women's political issue shaped not only by gender, but by concepts of race and class as well?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892)
- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 23: From Roosevelt to Wilson in the Age of Progressivism, 1900-1920 (pg. 615-631)

4.3 The Great Migration

What did African Americans hope to gain in migrating away from the Southern United States?

In what ways was black consciousness solidified through the process of migration?

In what ways did Northern urban life shape black culture in the decades after the start of Great Migration?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 23: From Roosevelt to Wilson in the Age of Progressivism, 1900-1920 (pg. 631-643)

Week 5: Consolidating Notions of Whiteness and American Identity

5.1 Red Gravy, Potatoes and Soft Bread: Immigrant Culture in America

How does one characterize immigrant culture?

Is immigrant culture "American" culture?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 24: The Nation at War (pg. 647-653)

5.2 Nativism

Who defined "whiteness" and what did it mean?

How did immigrant groups become "white?"

Who was not "white?"

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 24: The Nation at War (pg. 653-662)

5.3 Uncle Sam Wants You: Recruiting "Americans" for World War I

How did war campaigns imagine and depict the "American" citizen?

What role did women and African Americans play during World War I? In what ways did their participation in the war effort change the ways in which other Americans imagined their role as American citizens?

How did Americans' attitudes toward the federal government change after World War I?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 24: The Nation at War (pg. 662-675)

Week 6: The Interwar Period: Rapid Growth, Economic Collapse and the Making of a New Deal

6.1 Easing Tensions through Consumerism?

In what ways did working class men and women participate in consumer culture during the interwar period?

Was consumerism a mass phenomenon, or did consumerism only take hold in certain classes in American society?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 25: Transition to Modern America (pg. 678-694)

6.2 The Great Depression and the Rise of the Economic Citizen

In what ways were women and young “radical” thinkers incorporated into the new organizations and administrations created as part of the New Deal, and how did they shape government relationships with its citizens?

In what ways is consumption a political concern?

How were politics reoriented to target the citizen consumer?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - F.D.R., “First Inaugural Address” (1933)
- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 25: Transition to Modern America (pg. 694-697)
 - Chapter 26: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal (pg. 703-715)

6.3 Laborers for Reform

How did class consciousness affect the reform capabilities of industrial workers?

Who “made” the New Deal?

Class Reading:

- None

Visual Culture Paper Due

Week 7: World War II and the Militarization of American Society

7.1 The New Deal and Wartime Politics in the South

In what ways did the South experience the Great Depression and the World War II differently than other regions in the United States, if at all?

What political factors were at play that shaped the South’s participation in the New Deal and World War II?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 26: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal (pg. 715-721)
 - Chapter 27: America and the World (pg. 725-736)

7.2 The Affects of Militarization on American Society

What is the relationship between corporations and military during wartime?
Does the military industrial complex break down after World War II?
In what ways does the military industrial complex shape American economy; is American economy dependent upon this relationship?

Class Reading:

View Short Film: Frank Sinatra, “The House I Live In” (1945)

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 27: America and the World (pg. 737-751)

7.3 The Politics of Insecurity

How were the major policy decisions of the Cold War decided?
Was the Cold War driven by internal or external policy?

Class Reading:

View clip: “LBJ’s Daisy Ad” (1964)

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 28: The Onset of the Cold War (pg. 755-771)

Week 8: National Security in a Global Age

8.1 America’s Global Empire

In what ways were “third world” countries part of the Cold War?
In what ways did the United States justify its interventions in third world affairs? What were the predominant ideologies shaping American perceptions of third world interventions?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 28: The Onset of the Cold War (pg. 771-770)

8.2 MIDTERM

Class Reading:

- None

8.3 Turning Inward: “National Security” on the Homefront

Where does the grassroots support of anti-communist come from?
How do American perceive the Communist threat at home? How were notions of race and sexuality tied to anti-communist sentiments?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Senator Joseph McCarthy, “Speech at Wheeling, WV, 9 Feb. 1950”
 - Smith Act (1940)
 - McCarran Act (1950)
- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 28: The Onset of the Cold War (pg. 770-777)

Week 9. Urban Wasteland, Suburban Paradise, and the Restructuring of American Social Space

9.1 “White” Flight

What was “white” flight?

In what ways did urban spaces transform with the migration of thousands of Americans out of American cities?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 29: Affluence and Anxiety (pg. 781-786)

9.2 The Transformation of Commercial Space

In what ways were commercial spaces public spaces?

In what ways did individuals assign meaning to shopping centers?

How did women make claims on commercial space?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 29: Affluence and Anxiety (pg. 786-788)

9.3 The Aftermath of Exodus

How did consumer practices change in the aftermath of white flight? How did the evolution of urban culture reflect these demographic and economic changes?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 29: Affluence and Anxiety (pg. 789-795)

Week 10. Political Mobilization and American Social Movements

10.1 Sitting For Justice

View Documentary in Class: “February One: Greensboro Four,” by Rebecca Cereses and Steven Channing

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 30: The Turbulent Sixties (pg. 799-813)

10.2 Grassroots Freedom Struggle

Where do the Origins of the Civil Rights movement lie and how are historians talking about the movement’s beginnings?

What role did local organizations play in coordinating the national freedom struggle?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Martin Luther King Jr., “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” (1963)
 - Malcom X, “The Ballot or the Bullet” (1964)
 - Stokely Carmichael, “Black Power” (1966)

10.3 New Perspectives on the Black Freedom Movement

How did the Black Panther party evolve to survive beyond its initial years of founding?

What role did women play in the early foundation of the movement and how did their leadership shape the trajectory of Black Panther Party interest?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - The Black Panther Party Platform, “What We Want, What We Believe”

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 30: The Turbulent Sixties (pg. 823-827)

Week 11. Reconceptualizing “the Other” at Home and Abroad

11.1 America’s Perceptions of the “Third World” and the Middle East during the Civil Rights Era

How were African American cultural politics tied to the Middle East c. 1955-1972?

Class Reading:

- None

11.2 The Vietnam War and Counterculture and the rise of Détente

How does one define Counterculture and who contributed to its development?

What is détente and did the Cold War truly experience a “cooling off period” around 1971?

How were black civil rights issues addressed through the ambassadorial role of jazz artists abroad?

Class Reading:

Visit Website: BBC News, [“In Picture: The Vietnam War”](#)

- Primary Sources:
 - Joan Didion, “Slouching Toward Bethlehem” (1968)
 - Norman Mailer, *Armies of the Night* (1968) – excerpts
 - Richard Nixon, [Address to the Nation on the War in Vietnam](#) (November 1969)
 - Richard Nixon, [Address to the Nation on the Progress Toward Peace in Vietnam](#) (December 1969)
- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 30: The Turbulent Sixties (pg. 816-823)

11.3 The Women’s Movement in the Workplace

Why did women create a separate movement to address their needs?

In what ways was the Women’s movement shaped, and in turn shaping, the Black Freedom movement?

Class Reading:

View Documentary: “Sisters of 77” by Salzman Mondell and Allen Mondell

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 30: The Turbulent Sixties (pg.825-826)
 - Chapter 31: To a New Conservatism (pg. 844-846)

Week 12. The Rise of the Right:

A Different Perspective on the Turbulent 1960s and After

12.1 The End of the Liberal Hour

How liberal were the politics of the federal government during the 1960s?

When did the “liberal hour” of political reform come to end, and what replaced it?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 30: The Turbulent Sixties (pg. 813-816)

12.2 Right Wing Mobilization in the 1960s

In what ways did Barry Goldwater use a grassroots campaign to mobilize Americans under the Republican Party?

What were the main tenants of his campaign promise and how did they reflect the desires and fears of conservative American citizens?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Barry Goldwater, [Campaign Speech](#) (1964)

12.3 Battle Cry of the Silent Majority

What are the political roots of the New Right?

What role did Evangelicalism play in the resurgence of American conservatism?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Richard Nixon, [Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination](#) (1968)
 - Richard M. Nixon, “[The Great Silent Majority Speech](#)” (1969)
- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 30: The Turbulent Sixties (pg. 827-829)

Week 13. American Religion and the Development of American Service Industry

13.1 The Service Ethos

How did Wal-Mart provide an alternate community space for its workers?

What was the role of gender in shaping the service industry in America?

Class Reading:

- Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart: The Making of Christian Free Enterprise* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009)
 - Chapter 2: “The Birth of Wal-Mart” (pg. 24-35)

13.2 Christian Business

What role does Christianity play in American business?

Class Reading:

- None

13.3 Wal-Mart Goes Global: Consumer Habits in the Global Age

In what ways have global consumers been tied to American business and industry in the second half of the twentieth century?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Wal-Mart, [Nintendo NES and Gameboy Commercial](#) (1989)
 - Wal-Mart, [Commercial](#) (1993)

Week 14. Fighting for American Citizenship

14.1 American Identity under Reagan

What was the “Reagan Revolution?”

How did Americans continue to think of their citizenship in terms of consumption during the 1980s?

How did inflation impact American attitudes toward American culture and society?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - Ronald Reagan, “Inaugural Address” (1981)
- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 31: To a New Conservatism (pg. 833-844, 852-859)

14.2 Sexuality and Citizenship

What was “gay liberation” and how did the movement develop?

In what ways is sexuality written into American definitions of citizenship and how does this notion of sexuality discriminate against gay men and women?

Class Reading:

- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 31: To a New Conservatism (pg. 846-849)

14.3 “Hispanisization?”

What prompted the renewed growth in immigration in the 1990s?

Why was immigration from Mexico so controversial?

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
 - César Chávez, “Address to the Commonwealth Club of California” (1984)
- H.W. Brands, et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States* volume II
 - Chapter 32: To the Twenty-first Century (pg. 870-876, 892-893)