HIST 2112-H
U.S History Since 1890
MW, 3:30-4:45
Library, 426

Professor: Dr. Albert Way
Office: Social Sciences Building, 4096
Office Hours: TTH, 11:00-12:00, and by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is a broad introduction to the social, political, and economic history of the United States since 1890. The primary objectives of the course are to develop your skills as critical consumers of history in its written, visual, and aural forms, and to improve your ability to communicate in an organized and analytical fashion. And, along the way, you will also gain fundamental knowledge about the events, people, and institutions that have shaped the American experience. Our approach to the material will be both chronological and thematic, with special attention to concepts such as historical memory, identity, and representation. We will read books, watch films, and listen to music, all of which represent a wide array of approaches to our shared past.

REQUIRED READING
The following books are required for the course and are widely available from a number of sources, including the campus bookstore.

- Laura Wexler, *Fire in a Canebrake* (Scriber, 3003)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Book Essays: You will write **FOUR 3-4 page book essays**. These essays should focus on a central theme or question in the book that relates to historical context. I will provide a guide to writing these essays, and we will talk about form and content often throughout the semester. For now, you should know that it is not enough to summarize the plot of the book, not enough to repeat an argument you heard in lecture, not enough to recapitulate textbook information. Your goal is to reveal something that is not obvious about the topic at hand. I will offer a couple of broad questions/topics for each book that should get you started, and feel free to develop your own topics as well (with my approval).

I encourage you to make an appointment with the KSU Writing Center if you need further
assistance on any writing project. Experienced writing assistants work with you on any aspect of your writing – topic development, revision, research, documentation, grammar, and more. For more information or to make an appointment (appointments are strongly encouraged), visit www.kennesaw.edu/english/WritingCenter, or stop by Room 242 in the English Building.

Film Reactions: You will contribute a **250-word post** to a discussion thread for each film that we watch in class. You should post these discussions to GaView Vista after the first day of watching a film, in preparation for its conclusion and our in-class discussion on the next class day. They are due **one hour before class (2:30 pm)** on the second day of each film. These posts should focus on a question you have about the film, a particular theme that you found interesting, or anything else about the film that you would like to discuss. Think of this as a sort of online conversation, and as a way to develop talking points for classroom discussion.

Class Participation/Quizzes: Finally, you are expected to **fully participate in classroom discussion**. Since this class is run as a seminar, your active participation is essential to its success. I will provide some background information in occasional lectures, but the bulk of our classroom time will be spent in discussion. You should come to class prepared to engage the readings, films, and music with thoughtful comments and questions; be ready to present, articulate, and defend your ideas, as well as listen to and comment on the ideas of others. The success of this class depends, in large part, on your willingness to participate in discussion. I will also give occasional in-class **quizzes** that will gauge your understanding of the readings.

**Attendance**
Attendance will be recorded at each class meeting. Each absence over **four** will result in **five points** subtracted from your final grade. If you are more than fifteen minutes late for class, or leave early, it will count as a **½ day**. I make no distinction between excused or unexcused absences. If you anticipate any problems about attendance, please talk with me in advance.

**Note on Requirements**
Please note that the course syllabus is a general plan for the course, and I may deviate if necessary. This means that course readings and requirements are subject to change.

**Academic Integrity**
All students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of your academic careers. If you have not already read KSU’s Student Code of Conduct, you should do so immediately. You can find it here: [http://www.kennesaw.edu/scai/code_of_conduct.shtml](http://www.kennesaw.edu/scai/code_of_conduct.shtml).

You should pay particular attention to Section II.A., which I have copied here:

**A. Plagiarism and Cheating**
No student shall receive, attempt to receive, knowingly give or attempt to give unauthorized assistance in the preparation of any work required to be submitted for credit (including examinations, laboratory reports, essays, themes, term papers, etc.). Unless specifically authorized, the presence and/or use of electronic devices during an examination, quiz, or other class assignment is considered cheating. Engaging in any behavior which a professor prohibits as academic misconduct in the syllabus or in class discussion is cheating. When direct quotations
are used, they should be indicated, and when the ideas, theories, data, figures, graphs, programs, electronic based information or illustrations of someone other than the student are incorporated into a paper or used in a project, they should be duly acknowledged. No student may submit the same, or substantially the same, paper or other assignment for credit in more than one class without the prior permission of the current professor(s).

GRADING

Film Reactions 20%
Participation/Quizzes 30%
Book Essays 50%

CONTACTING ME
I will hold regular office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00-12:00. You do not need an appointment to come in and talk with me during these hours. If these hours are inconvenient, we can schedule a meeting at another time. You can contact me via email or office phone, both of which are listed at the top of the syllabus. Please keep in mind that I sometimes do not check email at night.

Students with Disabilities
If you have a disability that requires accommodation, please notify me as soon as possible and provide the necessary documentation from Disabled Student Support Services. You can find their website here: http://www.kennesaw.edu/stu_dev/dsss/dsss.html.

CLASSROOM RULES
I aim to create a congenial classroom experience guided by the imperative of mutual respect among participants. The ring of the cell phone, the bowed head and hidden hands of the texter, and the disinterested gaze of the web surfer all amount to a breach of that respect. So, turn off all of your electronic devises before entering the classroom; it’s just that simple. I will allow the use of laptops to take notes, but if I see that you are using it for other means, you will not be allowed to use it for the remainder of the semester.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Jan. 9  Course Introduction
*Start Ragtime
Jan. 11  Getting Up to Speed: Reconstruction, Redemption, and the Gilded Age
Jan. 16  MLK HOLIDAY
Jan. 18  Urbanization and Immigration
*Continue Ragtime
Jan. 23  Discuss Ragtime
Jan. 25  Discuss Ragtime
Jan. 30  The New South and the Rise of Jim Crow
*View portions of Birth of a Nation (no discussion post)

*Ragtime Paper Due

Feb. 1 The Atlanta Race Riot of 1906

*Begin Fire in a Canebrake

Feb. 6 The 1920s: The Modern and the Traditional
Film: Inherit the Wind
Feb. 8 Discussion

Feb. 13 Great Depression and Dust Bowl
Film: Grapes of Wrath
Feb. 15 Discussion

Feb. 20 Discuss Fire in a Canebrake
Read/View: Without Sanctuary: Photographs and Postcards of Lynching in America: http://withoutsanctuary.org/ *Note: View images and read the information on each photograph first, then view “Movie.” Be prepared to view very disturbing images.
Feb. 22 Discuss Fire in a Canebrake

Feb. 27 The Cold War
*Film: Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb
*Fire in a Canebrake Paper Due

Feb. 29 Discussion

*Begin Silent Spring

March 5, 7 SPRING BREAK

March 12 Movement Culture: The Modern Environmental Movement
*LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY
March 14 Discuss Silent Spring

March 19 Discuss Silent Spring
March 21 Movement Culture: The Civil Rights Movement
Film: Malcolm X
*Silent Spring Paper Due

March 26 Malcolm X
*Begin The Things They Carried
March 28 The Civil Rights Movement, cont.

April 2 Vietnam and the Student Movement
April 4 From Woodstock To Altamont: Politics and Popular Music in the ‘60s

April 9 Discuss The Things They Carried
April 11 Discuss The Things They Carried
April 16  Richard Nixon, Archie Bunker, and an Okie from Muskogee
April 18  Morning in America
       *The Things They Carried Paper Due*
April 23  Film: *Do the Right Thing*
April 25  Discussion
April 30  Last Words