History 329: United States History since World War II  
Fall 2015: Tues/Thurs 11-11:50a, 127a Cooke

Prof. David Herzberg  
565 Park Hall  
herzberg@buffalo.edu  
Office hours: Tuesdays 1-3pm or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is a survey of modern United States history from World War II to the end of the millennium—and a peek after that, too. It’s been a busy half-century, encompassing the Cold War and Vietnam; freedom rides and rock music; the fall of the Berlin Wall and the rise of the new right; and much more. We’ll examine popular culture, social movements, foreign and domestic politics, and economic developments in four broad units. Through scholarly histories and historical materials we’ll seek to understand how diverse groups of Americans have transformed the nation through conflict and cooperation in the decades since World War II.

There are three contexts in which you will encounter new ideas and formulate your own views in this class: lectures, readings, and in-class discussion. One of our goals will be to make these three contexts as inter-related as possible. In addition, I believe that learning happens best not by passively listening or reading. Rather, true learning occurs when you interact with the material, form your own opinions and arguments, AND interact with others who are also forming opinions and arguments. In order to foster this learning process, lectures and discussions will be structured to expose you to each others’ ideas rather than just those of professional historians. (This happens also to be more fun.) Assignments, accordingly, will require you to relate your own ideas as well as ideas of your classmates to information from readings and lectures. Because of this course structure, your attendance and preparation are especially important to your ability to succeed.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Many course readings are available through UBLearns. The following books are at the University Bookstore and on reserve at UB Libraries:

Patrick Jones, *The Selma of the North*  
Nancy MacLean, *The American Women’s Movement*  
Mark Bradley, *Vietnam at War*  
Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

I expect you to attend all classes, to complete assignments on time, and to participate in discussions.
• **Participation (20%)**: You will be assigned a letter grade for your preparation and participation, based on the quality and quantity of your participation in class discussions and on any in-class writing assignments. Each unexcused absence will lower your participation grade.

• **Unit 1 paragraphs (10%)**: Discussion questions for unit readings will be posted on UB Learns. Writing no more than one per class, each student will post a total of three brief responses to a discussion question, and a total of three brief reactions to another student’s response, by midnight the night before class. These will be graded full/half/zero credit based on relevance and thoughtfulness.

• **Three short essays (5 pages, 20% each)**: Unit 2 essay due October 22nd; Unit 3 essay due November 17th; Unit 4 essay due December 14th. All essays due at 11am.

• **Vietnam War projects (10%)**: Read/watch, present, and lead discussion of various historical documents related to different aspects of the Vietnam War.

**ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES**

UB’s Accessibility Resources Office coordinates services and accommodations to ensure the accessibility and usability of all UB programs, services, and activities by people with disabilities. To receive accommodation for physical and learning disabilities, students are required to register with that office; more information can be found at [http://www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/ods/](http://www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/ods/).

**PLAGIARISM & EXTERNAL SOURCES POLICY**:

All students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the University's academic integrity policies, available in the Undergraduate Catalog (http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/course/integrity.shtml) or the Graduate School Policies and Procedures Manual (http://www.grad.buffalo.edu/policies). I use plagiarism detection software to aid in determining the originality of student work—all papers will be handed in digitally through UB Learns as well as in hard copy.

What is plagiarism? Briefly, it is using the work and words of another writer (whether from print sources, from the Web, or from another student) without giving clear credit to her/him. Plagiarism is unacceptable in any course assignment, big or small, and will result in an “F” grade for the entire course. If you have any questions or doubts, ASK.

There are endless sources available for the study of post-WWII U.S. history, but I expect students to engage with the materials I have selected for this course. In your written work, therefore, do not refer more than briefly to sources other than those assigned for the course unless: (1) you have fully engaged all relevant course materials (including readings, lectures and discussion) and wish to add more to an already complete essay; and (2) you have received prior approval from me to bring in the additional source. This is particularly important for Web sources: absolutely no use of any Web sites for written work unless you have specifically cleared the Web site with me in advance.
LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENTS:

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<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Class discussion</th>
<th>Written work</th>
<th>Vietnam War projects</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Historical Knowledge</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- identify key events, people, and eras in the history of the U.S. since 1945</td>
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<td>- understand the origins and legacies of redlining and “white flight” in the 1950s and 1960s</td>
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<td>- understand the origins and legacies of the civil rights movement and “second wave” feminism</td>
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<td>- become familiar with American foreign policy in the Cold War in Europe and in Asia</td>
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<td>- understand the emergence of modern political conservatism and its ties to the discount service economy</td>
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<td><strong>Historical Thinking</strong></td>
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<td>- analyze the strengths and limitations of various kinds of activism (civil rights; black power; feminisms; conservatism) in responding to and shaping historical changes in the postwar era</td>
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<td>- analyze the exercise of American power globally, and explain how and why it differed in Europe and in Asia</td>
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<td>- explore the relative contributions of ordinary people and economically or politically powerful authorities in shaping and driving historical change</td>
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<td><strong>Historical Skills</strong></td>
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<td>- construct convincing arguments supported by evidence from primary and secondary sources</td>
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<td>- write clear, detailed analyses about historical questions and problems</td>
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<td>- strengthen ability to read closely</td>
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<td>- develop oral communication skills</td>
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UNIT ONE: CHOCOLATE CITIES & VANILLA SUBURBS

Week 1—Introduction &WWII
Sept 1: Course Intro
Sept 3: WWII

Week 2—Segregating the American Dream
Sept 8: Origins of the urban crisis
   Reading: HOLC maps and related documents
Sept 10: Film Noir, Disneyland, and the cultural destruction of the city
   Reading: Eric Avila, Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight

Week 3—The culture of the suburbs
Sept 15: Inventing the traditional family
   Readings: Stephanie Coontz, Leave it to Beaver
   Canaday, Building a Straight State
Sept 17: The Treaty of Detroit &building mass consumer culture
   Readings: Erin Hatton, Kelly Girls

Week 4—Suburban rebels
Sept 22: Ozzie and Harriet were the first to go
   Readings: Barbara Ehrenreich, Hearts of Men, 29-67
   Betty Friedan, The Problem That Has No Name
Sept 24: Rock around the clock
   Readings: Macias, Bringing Music to the People
   Allen Ginsberg, Howl

UNIT TWO: RETHINKING CITIZENSHIP

Week 5—Origins of the movement
Sept 29: Rethinking the Civil Rights Movement
Oct 1: Early activism outside the south
   Readings: Jones, 1-79

Week 6—Civil rights and the urban crisis
Oct 6: Organizing
Oct 8: Police & housing
   Readings: Jones, 80-209

Week 7—Feminisms
Oct 13: Origins and overview of feminism
   Reading: MacLean, The American Women’s Movement (Introduction)
Oct 15: The varieties of feminisms
   Reading: Reports on selected docs from MacLean

Week 8—Crisis of liberalism
Oct 20: Great Society & Black Power  
    Readings: Jones, 210-259

Oct 22: NO CLASS  
        UNIT 2 ESSAY DUE

UNIT THREE: VIETNAM AND THE PERILS OF POWER

Week 9—Cold War origins  
Oct 27: The Cold War in Europe  
Oct 29: Origins of Vietnam War  
    Readings: Bradley, Vietnam at War, 1-114

Week 10—Fighting the war  
Nov 3: Soldiers experiences  
Nov 5: Winning and losing  
    Readings: Bradley, Vietnam at War, 115-197

Week 11—The war at home  
Nov 10: Protest and power  
    Readings: Documents
Nov 12: Sir No Sir!

UNIT FOUR: FREEDOM AND THE FREE MARKET

Week 12—From the ashes of liberalism  
Nov 17: Movement conservatism  
    UNIT 3 ESSAYS DUE
Nov 19: Building the service economy / neoliberalism  
    Readings: To Serve God and Wal-Mart, Chapters 1-3 (pages 1-48)

Week 13—Thanksgiving  
Nov 24: NO CLASS  
Nov 26: THANKSGIVING NO CLASS

Week 14—Ideologies of modern conservatism  
Dec 1: Colorblindness  
Dec 3: Family values  
    Readings: To Serve God and Wal-Mart, Chapters 4-7 (pages 49-124)

Week 15—Life in neoliberal America  
Dec 8: The Great U-Turn  
Dec 10: What Wal-Mart really sells  
    Readings: To Serve God and Wal-Mart, Chapters 8-10, 13 (pages 125-92, 248-74)

Dec 14: UNIT 4 ESSAYS DUE, 11am