

HI 468: America Since 1970
Boston University, Spring 2014
Tuesday 3.00-6.00pm, STH 113

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Office Hours: Tuesday 10-11.30; Thursday 2.30-4.00

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

HI468 explores the political, social, and cultural developments from 1970 to the present. Topics include the end of the Vietnam War, the ghost of Vietnam, Watergate, détente, the rise of conservatism, Reagan's America, the end of the Cold War, the Clinton era, ideas of an American Empire, and the modern liberal/conservative divide.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Sean Wilentz, *The Age of Reagan: A History, 1974-2008*
Robert Schulzinger, *A Time for Peace: The Legacy of the Vietnam War*
Bruce Schulman and Julian Zelizer eds., *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*
Meg Jacobs and Julian Zelizer, *Conservatives in Power: The Reagan Years, 1981-1989: A Brief History with Documents*
Joe Klein, *The Natural: The Misunderstood Presidency of Bill Clinton*
Andrew J. Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy*

All books are available the Barnes and Noble Bookstore. Students can find additional assignments, course materials, and a breakdown of weekly expectations on the course Blackboard site. Sources available on Blackboard are designated on the syllabus with "***."

COMMITMENTS TO THE COLLOQUIUM:

The Colloquium is the most important and intensive requirement of the concentration for students majoring or minoring in History. It demands a much greater level of commitment, preparation, and effort than a regular lecture or discussion class. Students are required to attend every session. There will be no unexcused absences. If you are unable to attend a meeting (due to illness or a family emergency it is your obligation to contact the instructor in advance of class. *If you miss three or more class meetings for any reason, you cannot receive credit for this class.*

REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

You must complete and pass all requirements to pass this course. Your final grade will be calculated according to the following formula:

Historiographical Essay (5-6 pages), due March 6 by noon in my office (25%)
Primary source analysis (8-10 pages), due April 15 by 5pm in my office (25%)
Participation and presentation (30%)
Final Paper (6-7 pages), due on May 5 at 3pm in my office (20%)

For further details on grading criteria and the paper assignments, see the Essay Guide available on Blackboard.

NOTE ON PLAGIARISM: **Remember that plagiarism is a serious offense.** The Boston University Code of Academic Conduct defines plagiarism as “any attempts by a student to represent the work of another as his or her own.” Plagiarism is subject to serious sanctions, including reprimand, suspension, and expulsion. For a detailed description of Boston University’s rules, consult the code of conduct at:
<http://www.bu.edu/academics/cas/policies/academic-conduct/>

Schedule of Lectures and Weekly Assignments

- January 21** **Introduction: The Post War Era, America from 1945-1969**
- January 28** **Vietnam and My Lai**
Nixons’ Vietnam**
Olson & Roberts, “The Beginning of the End”**
Readings on My Lai**
- February 4** **Living with Vietnam: Memory, Politics, and Culture**
Schulzinger, pp. 73-111; 131-179
“Something Rather Dark and Bloody”**
Veterans and the War**
Assignment: Each student must watch *at least one* movie from the blackboard list.
- February 11** **Nixon and Watergate**
Schulman, “Down to the Nut-Cutting”**
Schlesinger, Jr., *The Imperial Presidency***
Kutler, *Watergate***
- February 18** **America in the post-Nixon Seventies**
Wilentz, pp. 26-126
Jacobs in *Rightward Bound*, pp. 193-209
Suri in *Rightward Bound*, pp. 227-245
Jimmy Carter’s Inaugural Address, 1977**
- February 25** **The Rise of Ronald Reagan**
Jimmy Carter, “Crisis of Confidence”**
Zelizer and Jacobs, pp. 11-20; 72-74; 89-94
Zelizer in *Rightward Bound*, pp. 265-287
Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, “Dictatorships and Double Standards”**

- March 4** **Morning in America & Iran-Contra**
 Wilentz, pp. 127-150; 209-244
 Zelizer and Jacobs, pp. 49-51; 118-125; 183-201; 203-212
 Buckaloo in *Rightward Bound*, pp. 246-264
 Senate Minority Report on Iran-Contra (excerpt)**
- March 6** **Historiographical Essay due in my office by 2.30pm.**
- March 18** **Feminism, Gender, and Social Politics in the 1970s and 1980s**
 Lassiter in *Rightward Bound*, pp. 13-28
 Spruill in *Rightward Bound*, pp. 71-89
 Gloria Steinem, *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellion* (excerpts)**
 Jacobs and Zelizer, pp. 110-111; 113-117; 126-128
- March 25, April 1** **The End of the Cold War and a New International Order**
 Wilentz, pp. 245-322
 Bacevich, 55-78
 Jacobs and Zelizer, pp. 141-143; 152-168; 178-182; 218-221
 Fukuyama, "The End of History"
 Krauthammer, "The Uni-Polar Moment"
- April 8** **Clinton's America at home**
 Wilentz, pp. 382-407
 Klein, 23-68; 85-217
 Jacobs and Zelizer, 222-227
- April 15** **Clinton and the World**
 Bacevich, pp. 117-140
 Klein, 68-84
 Clinton, "Confronting the Challenges of a Broader World"***
Primary Source Analysis Paper due
- April 22** **An American Empire?**
 Bacevich, pp. 7-31; 167-244
 Boot, "The Case for American Empire"***
 George W. Bush, "Commencement Address at West Point, 2002"***
- April 29** **Conservatives v. Liberals: Media, politics, and culture in the
 Twenty First Century**
 Jacobs and Zelizer, pp. 233-236
 The State of 21st Century Political Discourse?***
- May 5** **Final Paper due by 5pm in my office.**