

POST-INDUSTRIAL AMERICA, 1974-2016

History 167
MW 10.25-11.40
LeChase 121
Spring 2020

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The problems of our time—which now include the problem of man's very nature—cannot be stated adequately without consistent practice of the view that history is the shank of social study.

-C Wright Mills (1959)

This course is an examination of the development of American politics, society, and culture between the resignation of Richard Nixon and the election of Donald Trump. It focuses on the de-industrialization of the economy, the revitalization of conservatism, the "culture wars," the end of the Cold War and post-Cold War foreign affairs--including the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq--and the collapse of bipartisan policy-making in the twenty-first century.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS



Class Meetings: Students are expected to attend every class, having done the reading for each session, and to participate actively in discussions of that reading. Each student will also submit a brief commentary on one of the documents assigned each week. These commentaries are required but will not be graded. Each student will, in addition, lead part of the discussion of at least one session.

Examinations: Two in-class, hour examinations (26 February and 1 April) and a final examination (6 May). Each hour examination will consist of some brief identification/short answer questions and an essay to be prepared prior to the examination. The essay will consider either one of the following books or documentary films.

*All of the caricatures courtesy of the late, great David Levine (1926-2009) and *The New York Review of Books*.

Exam 1: **Books:** Susan Brownmiller, *In Our Time*, Debby Harry, *Face It*, Peggy Noonan, *What I Saw at the Revolution*.

Films: *Harlan County USA* (Barbara Kopple), *Hoop Dreams* (Steve James), or *Roger and Me* (Michael Moore).

Exam 2: **Books:** Ta Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*, Tara Westover, *Educated*, Elizabeth Wurzel, *Prozac Nation*.

Films: *OJ: Made in America* (Ezra Edelman), *The War Room* (Chris Hegedus and D.A. Pennebaker), *The Unknown Known* (Errol Morris).

Over the course of the two exams, each student must write one examination essay on a book and one on a film. Guides to these essays will be made available well before the examination dates. The final will consist of identification/short answer questions and an essay on a novel to be prepared prior to the examination (see "The Novel as History").

The Novel as History: Students will choose one of four selected novels and write a paper (2000 words or so) describing and assessing the view of the recent American past it offers. These novels are Paul Beatty, *The Sell Out*, Don DeLillo, *White Noise*, Anonymous (Joe Klein), *Primary Colors*, or Thomas Mallon, *Finale*. This paper is due at the final examination on 6 May. Further details on this assignment will be forthcoming, but students should choose and begin reading their novel posthaste.



GRADING

The course grade will be determined as follows: Each hour examination—25%; final examination—30%; class participation—20%.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and will be treated as such. Anyone who engages in such activities will be turned over to the College Board on Academic Honesty for disciplinary action, as outlined at <http://www.rochester.edu/College/honesty/>. For a helpful discussion of plagiarism (including subtle instances), see the American Historical Association's 'Defining Plagiarism,' <https://www.historical.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/plagiarism-curricular-materials-for-history-instructors/defining-plagiarism>.

DISABILITY SERVICES

The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the Office of Disability Resources at: disability@rochester.edu; (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.

BOOKS

Two books are required:

Andrew Bacevich, *America's War for the Greater Middle East*

Kevin Kruse and Julian Zelizer, *Fault Lines*

Two books are recommended:

Julian Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of George W. Bush*

Julian Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of Barack Obama*

These books are available at the University Bookstore (and all are available at a significant discount on line) and on reserve in Rush Rhees Library. The short documents and other brief readings for class discussion (B) are available via links indicated below or on Blackboard via the syllabus posted there. Highly recommended for leisurely browsing: Garry Trudeau, *40: A Doonesbury Retrospective*.

I have not ordered copies of the books for exam essays. They are readily available from on-line booksellers such as Amazon.com, often at considerable discounts. A copy is also on reserve in Rush Rhees Library. The documentary films for the course are on reserve in the Art Library, and also available on-line for DVD purchase or streaming.

COURSE MEETINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Reading assignments should be completed by the beginning of each segment. The College's credit hour policy on undergraduate courses is to award four credit hours for courses that meet for the equivalent of three periods of 50 minutes each week. Students enrolled in this course are expected to devote at least one hour each week, working alone or with others, to preparing questions and arguments for class discussions and to working on the additional reading/viewing required for the examinations.

15 JANUARY **ON VERY RECENT AMERICAN HISTORY**

20 JANUARY **NO CLASS: MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY**



22 JANUARY SURVIVING THE SEVENTIES

Kevin Kruse and Julian Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 1-6.

William Graebner, "America's Poseidon Adventure: A Nation in Existentialist Despair" (B).

Document: Bruce Springsteen, "Racing in the Street" (1978)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXwzG_4cmes

27 JANUARY A FORD NOT A LINCOLN

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 7-34.

Documents: Richard Nixon, "Resignation Speech" (1974) <http://watergate.info/1974/08/08/nixon-resignation-speech.html>

Gerald Ford, "Pardon of Richard Nixon" (1974)

<http://watergate.info/1974/09/08/text-of-ford-pardon-proclamation.html>.

29 JANUARY JIMMY

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 34-43.

Andrew Bacevich, *America's War for the Greater Middle East*, xix-xxii, 3-32.

Document: Jimmy Carter, "Crisis of Confidence Speech" (1979)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kakFDUeoJKM>

**3 FEBRUARY RACE MATTERS**

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 44-64.

Eric Porter, "Affirming and Disaffirming Actions: Remaking Race in the 1970s" (B).

Mark Crispin Miller, *Boxed In*, 3-27, 69-78 (B).

Document: Cosby Show "The Juicer" (1985)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nT_H68BH3Fc



5 FEBRUARY GENDER TROUBLE

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 65-87.

Beth Bailey, "She 'Can Bring Home the Bacon': Negotiating Gender in the 1970s" (B).

Document: Madonna, "Material Girl" (Video 1984) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6p-IDYPR2P8> and "Like a Virgin" (Video 1984) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s_rX_WL100

**10 FEBRUARY RIGHT TURN**

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 88-105.

Documents: Ronald Reagan, "A Time for Choosing" (1964)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXBswFfh6AY>.

Ronald Reagan, "To Restore America" (1976)

<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/3-31-76>

12 FEBRUARY THE "REAGAN REVOLUTION"

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 105-122, 128-134.

Miller, *Boxed In*, 79-94 (B).

Documents: "Morning in America" Reagan campaign advertisement (1984)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EU-IBF8nwSY>

Ronald Reagan, "Farewell Address" (1989) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKVsQ2daR8Q>

17 FEBRUARY NEW COLD WAR

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 122-127. 160-170.

Bacevich, *America's War*, 33-86.

Documents: Ronald Reagan, "Evil Empire" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcSm-KAEFFA>

Oliver North, "Testimony to Joint Iran Contra Congressional Committee" (1987)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ct3UxB696D4>

19 FEBRUARY BUSH I

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 180-185, 189-202.

Document: George H.W. Bush, "Nomination Acceptance Speech" (1988) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZCwsEo-zANM>

**24 FEBRUARY DESERT STORM**

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 185-189.
Bacevich, *America's War*, 110-134.

Document: George H. W. Bush, "Gulf War Announced" (1991) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFrnQHaQWoA>

**26 FEBRUARY HOUR EXAMINATION****2 MARCH SLICK WILLY**

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 203-227.

Documents: Bill Clinton, "State of the Union Address" (1996) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GXRLW1KEtvo>
"20/20 Monica Lewinsky Interview" (1999) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vUUATD_pfYE

4 MARCH CULTURE WARS

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 135-159, 170-179, 227-238.

Documents: Pat Buchanan, "Address to Republican National Convention" (1992) <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/patrickbuchanan1992rnc.htm>
Cornel West, *Race Matters*, 9-20 (B).

9 AND 11 MARCH NO CLASS. SPRING BREAK**16 MARCH SINGULAR SUPERPOWER**

Bacevich, *America's War*, 137-213.

**18 MARCH CHADS**

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 233-242.
Richard Posner, "Pragmatic Adjudication: The Case of *Bush v. Gore*" (B).

Documents: *Bush v. Gore* (2000) <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/531/98/case.html>

Albert Gore, "Concession Speech" (2000) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xq5YdkY-SyEE>

23 MARCH BUSH II

Julian Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of George W. Bush*, 1-38, 199-226.

25 MARCH 9/11

9/11 Commission Report, "Executive Summary" http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/report/911Report_Exec.pdf

Joseph Margulies, "'A War for the Survival of America'" (B).

Documents: Live ABC Coverage of 9/11 Attacks (2001)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KYE4zViAAg>

George W. Bush, "9/11 Speech to Joint Session of Congress" (2001).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wPuY5hI96U>

30 MARCH AFGHANISTAN

Bacevich, *America's War*, 224-238.

Document: "The National Security Strategy of the United States" (2002) <http://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-2002/>.

1 APRIL HOUR EXAMINATION**6 APRIL IRAQI FREEDOM**

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 260-270.

Bacevich, *America's War*, 239-294.

"Hubris" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5FaMbnINwc>



8 APRIL TERROR AND TORTURE

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 254-260
 Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of George W. Bush*, 38-87.

Document: "Torture Memo" (2002)
<http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB127/02.08.01.pdf>

13 APRIL COMPASSIONATE CONSERVATISM

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 243-249, 271-288.
 Zelizer, *Presidency of George W. Bush*, 114-133, 227-302.

**15 APRIL ECONOMIC COLLAPSE**

Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of Barack Obama*, 30-61.
 Chris Lehmann, *Rich People Things*, chs. 3, 6-8, 10, 12, 20-22, 24-25, Conclusion (B).

20 APRIL HOPEY/CHANGEY THING

Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of Barack Obama*, 127-143, 261-280.

Documents: Barack Obama, "Opportunity" and "Race" in *The Audacity of Hope* (B).
 Barack Obama, "A More Perfect Union"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrp-v2tHaDo>

22 APRIL STALEMATED POLITICS

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 289-319
 Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of Barack Obama*, 1-29, 179-194

Document: Tea Party Website <http://www.teaparty.org/about-us/>. Browse at will.

27 APRIL WAR WITHOUT END

Bacevich, *America's War*, 295-357.
 Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of Barack Obama*, 212-226.
 Jeffrey Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine" <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/04/the-obama-doctrine/471525/>.

29 APRIL 2016: AN ELECTION FOR THE AGES

Kruse and Zelizer, *Fault Lines*, 320-358.

Alan Abramowitz, "Negative Partisanship and the Triumph of Trump" (B).

