

TOPICS IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY UNITED STATES HISTORY

History 372W/472
Spring 2016
F 2-4.40
Rush Rhees 456



Robert Westbrook
440 Rush Rhees X59349
Hours: W 9-11
robert.westbrook@rochester.edu

America as the dynamic center of ever-widening spheres of enterprise, America as the training center of the skillful servants of mankind, America as the Good Samaritan, really believing again that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and America as the powerhouse of the ideals of Freedom and Justice - out of these elements surely can be fashioned a vision of the 20th Century to which we can and will devote ourselves in joy and gladness and vigor and enthusiasm.

--Henry Luce, "The American Century" (1941)

This course is a research seminar on the history of the United States in the twentieth century. The strong emphasis of the course is on independent research and writing, and hence the principal requirement of the course is a substantial, article-length (25-50 page) paper on a topic of the student's choice and based on research in primary source materials. Any topic in the twentieth-century United States is welcome. I strongly advise those interested in the course to begin immediately thinking about the research they would like to pursue, and to arrive at the course in January with a clear idea of the topic they wish to engage. In any case, students should be well-launched on their research by the third week of the course.

We will nonetheless work together to some degree over the course of the semester. The seminar will begin with six weeks of common reading, which will focus on the theme of Christianity and twentieth-century American politics. During these weeks we will also discuss the tradecraft of historical research. The middle weeks of the course will be devoted to individual research and writing and to weekly individual meetings with me to discuss the progress of the projects. At the end of the term, we will reconvene as a group to hear an account of each of the papers.

BOOKS

The following books have been ordered at the UR Bookstore, and all are available at Amazon and other on-line vendors (often at reduced prices). They are also on 2-hour reserve in Rush Rhees Library.

Required:

David Chappell, *Stone of Hope; Prophetic Religion and the Death of Jim Crow*

Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sun Belt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism*

Mary Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*

John McGreevey, *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North*

Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart: The Making of Christian Free Enterprise*

Matthew Sutton, *American Apocalypse: A History of Modern Evangelicalism*

Recommended:

Andrew Abbott, *Digital Paper: A Manual for Research and Writing with Library and Digital Materials*

Wayne Booth, et al., *The Craft of Research*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

My expectation is that this course will attract both advanced undergraduates and beginning graduate students. The requirements for the course are the same for both, but graduate students will be held to a higher standard of sophistication in research, analysis, and writing.

Class Participation: All students are expected to attend and actively participate in the six weekly seminar discussions at the outset of the course. Each student will lead one of these discussions.

Discussion Questions: Each week each student will prepare a question for discussion. This question will be sent to all members of the class via e-mail by 10 pm on the Thursday evening before class. Preparation of these questions will be an important part of participation in the class.

Review: Each student will write a review (2000 words) of one of the assigned books on Christianity and twentieth-century American politics. This paper is due in class on the day that the book is discussed.

GRADING AND ACADEMIC HONESTY

Grading in the course will be weighted as follows: research paper (70%); review (10%); class participation (20%). All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. More information is available at: www.rochester.edu/college/honesty.

SCHEDULE

15 January

Introduction to the Course

22 January- 19 February	<u>Christianity and Twentieth-Century American Politics</u>	
22 January	Reading: Matthew Sutton, <i>American Apocalypse: A History of Modern Evangelicalism</i>	
29 January	Reading: Darren Dochuk, <i>From Bible Belt to Sun Belt</i> Description of Research Paper Due	
5 February	Reading: John McGreevey, <i>Parish Boundaries</i>	
12 February	Reading: David Chappell, <i>Stone of Hope</i>	
19 February	Reading: Mary Henold, <i>Catholic and Feminist</i>	
26 February	Reading: Bethany Moreton, <i>To Serve God and Wal-Mart</i>	
4 March-15 April	<u>Individual Research and Writing</u>	
4 March	Individual Advising Appointments Research Bibliography Due	
11 March	Spring Break	
18 March	Individual Advising Appointments	
25 March	Individual Advising Appointments	
1 April	Individual Advising Appointments	
8 April	Individual Advising Appointments First Draft of Seminar Papers Due	
15 April	Individual Advising Appointments	
22 April	<u>Seminar Paper Presentations</u>	
29 April	Final Draft of Seminar Papers Due	