

POST-INDUSTRIAL AMERICA, 1974-2016

History 167
MWF 11.50-12.40
Morey 525
Fall 2016

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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 end of the Barack Obama administration. It focuses on the deindustrialization 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.

Examinations: Two in-class, hour examinations (19 October and 21 November) and a final examination (1 December). 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 doc-

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



umentary films. Exam 1: Kristen Iversen, *Full Body Burden*, Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism*, David Stockman, *The Triumph of Politics*, *Harlan County USA* (Barbara Kopple), *Hoop Dreams* (Steve James), or *Roger and Me* (Michael Moore). Exam 2: Ta-Nahesi Coates, *Between the World and Me*, Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation*, Evan Wright, *Generation Kill*, *Inside Job*, (Charles Ferguson), *Taxi to the Dark Side* (Alex Gibney), or *When the Levees Broke* (Spike Lee). Over the course of the two exams, each student must write one examination essay on a book and one on a film. Questions for all 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 chose 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*, Matthew Gallagher, *Young Blood*, Garth Hallberg, *City on Fire*, or Thomas Mallon, *Finale*. This paper is due at the final examination on 17 December. 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. More information is available at: www.rochester.edu/college/honesty.

BOOKS

Seven books are required:

Andrew Bacevich, *America's War for the Greater Middle East*
 Cynthia Enloe and Joni Seager, *The Real State of America Atlas*
 Morton Keller, *Obama's Time*
 Peter Marsden, ed., *Social Trends in American Life*
 James Patterson, *Restless Giant*
 Mark Singer, *Somewhere in America*
 Julian Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of George W. Bush*.

Except for Singer, they 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

31 AUGUST **ON VERY RECENT AMERICAN HISTORY**

2 SEPTEMBER **SURVIVING THE SEVENTIES**

James Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 1-12, 58-66, 76-92.

5 SEPTEMBER **NO CLASS: LABOR DAY**

7 SEPTEMBER **A FORD NOT A LINCOLN**

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 76-107.

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>.

9 SEPTEMBER **JIMMY**

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 108-128.

Document: Jimmy Carter, "Crisis of Confidence Speech" (1979)
<http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/speech-3402>.

12 SEPTEMBER **RIGHT TURN**





Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 128-151.
 Documents: Ronald Reagan, "A Time for Choosing" (1964)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXBswFfh6AY>.
 Ronald Reagan, "To Restore America" (1976)
<https://reaganlibrary.archives.gov/archives/reference/3.31.76.html>.

14 SEPTEMBER RACE MATTERS I

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 15-32.
 Eric Porter, "Affirming and Disaffirming Actions: Remaking Race in the 1970s" (B).

16 SEPTEMBER GENDER TROUBLE

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 45-58.
 Beth Bailey, "She 'Can Bring Home the Bacon': Negotiating Gender in the 1970s" (B).

19 SEPTEMBER SPIRITUAL CRISIS

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 67-75.
 William Graebner, "America's *Poseidon Adventure*: A Nation in Existentialist Despair" (B).
 Michael Nevin Willard, "Cutback: Skate and Punk at the Far End of the Century" (B).

Document: Bruce Springsteen, "Racing in the Street" (1978)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXwzG_4cmes

21 SEPTEMBER THE "REAGAN REVOLUTION"

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 152-192.
 Mark Crispin 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>

23 SEPTEMBER NEW COLD WAR

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 193-217.

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

Oliver North, "Testimony to Joint Iran Contra Congressional Committee" (1987)
<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/olivernorthfrancontra-hearing.htm>.

26 SEPTEMBER SPECTACLE AND IRONY

Miller, *Boxed In*, 3-27, 51-59, 69-78 (B).

Documents: *Cosby Show* "The Juicer" (1985)

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

Madonna, "Material Girl" (Video 1984) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DNSUOFgj97M>
 and "Like a Virgin" (Video 1984) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHW5RVvg2v4>

28 SEPTEMBER BUSH I

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 218-229, 238-253.

Document: George H.W. Bush, "Nomination Acceptance Speech" (1988)

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

30 SEPTEMBER DESERT STORM

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 230-238.

Andrew Bacevich, *America's War for the Greater Middle East*, 110-134.

Document: George H. W. Bush, "Gulf War Announced" (1991)

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



3 OCTOBER SLICK WILLY

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 318-334, 341-345, 366-368, 371-379.

Document: Bill Clinton, "State of the Union Address"

(1996) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=piKLeC_dwGw

5 OCTOBER SINGULAR SUPERPOWER

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 334-341, 368-371, 399-404.
 Bacevich, *America's War*, 162-176.

7 OCTOBER CULTURE WARS

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 254-291.

Document: Pat Buchanan, "Address to Republican National Convention" (1992).

10 OCTOBER RACE MATTERS II

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 292-317.

Document : Cornel West, *Race Matters*, 9-20 (B).

12 OCTOBER PRESIDENTIAL BLOW JOBS

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 387-399.

Document: "20/20 Monica Lewinsky Interview" (1999)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AB2_HKREoVo



14 OCTOBER CHADS

Patterson, *Restless Giant*, 402-425.

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=U4BZcH8bqRk>

17 OCTOBER NO CLASS: FALL BREAK

19 OCTOBER HOUR EXAMINATION

21 OCTOBER BUSH II

Julian Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of George W. Bush*, 1-38,
 199-226, 282-302.

24 OCTOBER 9/11

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

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).



26 OCTOBER CAPITAL TAKES COMMAND

Zelizer, *Presidency of George W. Bush*, 114-168.

28 OCTOBER COMPASSIONATE CONSERVATISM

Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of George W. Bush*, 169-198, 227-281.

31 OCTOBER AFGHANISTAN

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

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

2 NOVEMBER IRAQI FREEDOM

Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of George W. Bush*, 88-112,
 Bacevich, *America's War*, 239-294.
 "Hubris" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5FaMbnINwc>

4 NOVEMBER TERROR AND TORTURE

Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of George W. Bush*, 38-87.

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

**7 NOVEMBER HOPE**

Morton Keller, *Obama's Time*, 1-19.

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>

9 NOVEMBER ECONOMIC COLLAPSE AND REFORM

Keller, *Obama's Time*, 70-130.
 Chris Lehmann, *Rich People Things*, chs. 3, 6-8, 10, 12, 20-22, 24-25, Conclusion (B).

11 NOVEMBER STALEMATED POLITICS

Keller, *Obama's Time*, 154-257.

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

14 NOVEMBER WAR WITHOUT END

Keller, *Obama's Time*, 131-153.

Jeffrey Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine"

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/04/the-obama-doctrine/471525/>.

Bacevich, *America's War*, 295-357.

Cynthia Enloe and Joni Seager, *The Real State of America Atlas*, 18-19, 60-61, 90-103.

16 NOVEMBER WIRED

Sherry Turkle, *Alone Together*, 1-22, 279-296.

Dalton Conley, *Elsewhere U.S.A.*, 3-37, 172-190.

18 NOVEMBER AT THE MILLENNIUM

Mark Singer, *Somewhere in America*, 8-33, 61-125, 192-204, 228-239.

Document: Eminem, "Lose Yourself"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Yhyp-_hX2s.

21 NOVEMBER HOUR EXAMINATION**23 NOVEMBER NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING****28 NOVEMBER RECENT SOCIAL TRENDS: INEQUALITY**

Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez, "Income Inequality in the United States, 1913-1998"

<http://eml.berkeley.edu/~saez/pikettyqje.pdf>

Documents: Peter Marsden, ed., *Social Trends in American Life*, chs. 10, 12.

Enloe and Seager, *Real State of America Atlas*, 24-29, 48-55, 88-89.

30 NOVEMBER RECENT SOCIAL TRENDS: IDEOLOGICAL POLITICS

Documents: Marsden, ed., *Social Trends*, chs. 2, 5.

Enloe and Seager, *Real State of America Atlas*, 36-39



2 DECEMBER RECENT SOCIAL TRENDS: RACE AND GENDER

Documents: Marsden, ed., *Social Trends*, chs. 3, 4.
 Enloe and Seager, *Real State of America Atlas*, 36-37,

5 DECEMBER RECENT SOCIAL TRENDS: RELIGION

Documents: Marsden, ed., *Social Trends*, ch. 11.
 Enloe and Seager, *Real State of America Atlas*, 30-33

7 DECEMBER RECENT SOCIAL TRENDS: HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

Documents: Marsden, ed., *Social Trends*, chs. 6, 10-11.
 Enloe and Seager, *Real State of America Atlas*, 62-77, 80-83

9 DECEMBER RECENT SOCIAL TRENDS: COMMUNITY

Documents: Marsden, ed., *Social Trends*, chs. 7, 9.
 Enloe and Seager, *Real State of America Atlas*,

**12 DECEMBER 2016: AN ELECTION FOR THE AGES**

Jonathan Rauch, "What's Ailing American Politics"

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/07/how-american-politics-went-insane/485570/>

Dan P. McAdams, "The Mind of Donald Trump"

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/06/the-mind-of-donald-trump/480771/>

George Saunders, "Who Are All These Trump Supporters"

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/07/11/george-saunders-goes-to-trump-rallies>.

Rebecca Traister, "Hillary Clinton v. Herself"

<http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2016/05/hillary-clinton-candidacy.html>

Mark Landler, "How Hillary Became a Hawk"

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/24/magazine/how-hillary-clinton-became-a-hawk.html?_r=0



(I will add a bit of reading here from post-election analysis.)