

**CENTRE FOR CANADIAN, US & LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES  
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

Course	:	PhD
Course No.	:	AW602N
Course Title	:	Themes in Contemporary American History
Course Type (Core/Optional)	:	Core
Course Teacher	:	Prof. K.P. Vijayalakshmi
Credits	:	2
Semester	:	Monsoon Semester
Contact Hours	:	2 per week

**Course Objectives**

This course aims to explain the democratic journey of United States of America. The various themes under discussion focus on composing a compelling narrative of various socio-political occurrences since the foundation of the union. The course sets out the national story, emphasizing distinctive features of the national experience, which are meant to drive home an understanding of national values. The course structure contrasts paradigms of knowledge from traditional and modern perspective on the evolution of the US history. The curriculum contextualises the development of political and social belief structures that impacted the overall trajectory of the American politics and history.

**Learning Outcomes**

Gaining an extensive evidential base for the contemplation and analysis of how the US accomplished its journey as a democratic power, to comprehend the factors that cause change; and through history understand what elements of an institution or a society persist despite change. The course builds the ability to assess evidence and provides experience in dealing with and assessing various kinds of archival and historical evidence. Learning how to combine different kinds of evidence—public statements, private records, numerical data, visual materials—develops the ability to make coherent arguments based on a variety of data. The ability to assess conflicting Interpretations is gained by sorting through diverse, often conflicting interpretations of how societies and their politics work. It expands skills to assess past examples of change which are vital to understanding contemporary United States.

**Evaluation Methods**

Sessional Work, Mid and End Semester Examination: Marks breakup

Term Paper and class assignment: 10+10=20

20 Mid sem

50 End Sem

**Course Content**

**I American Colonial Experience: The United Colonies**

- Colonial Economies and British Imperialism.

- Colonial Governments and stirrings of Revolt

## **II American Revolution:1763 – 1783**

- Stirrings of Revolt
- Decision for and responses to Independence
- War of Independence:
- First Phase: New England
- Second Phase: Mid-Atlantic Region
- Third Phase: Tribes and the South
- Creation of State Governments
- Search for a National Government.

## **III. The Constitution and the New Republic, 1783 - 1815**

- Framers and Conventions
- Federalists and Anti Federalists
- Establishing National Sovereignty
- Creating State Constitutions After the American Revolution
- The Articles of Confederation and the Northwest Ordinance
- Weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation and Shays Rebellion
- The Constitutional Convention: The Great Compromise
- The Ratification of the Constitution and the New U.S. Government
- The US Constitution: Preamble, Articles and Amendments
- The Bill of Rights: The Constitution's First 10 Amendments
- Interpreting the Constitution

## **IV. Manifest Destiny and Sectional Conflict(c. 1812–c. 1860) 1860)**

- Mexican–American War, Territorial Expansion, Continentalism
- Contestations of American Imperialism.
- Dispossession and genocide of Native Americans.
- Jacksonian Era (c. 1820–c. 1845)
- California Gold Rush (1848–1855)

## **V. Civil War/Reconstruction Civil War: 1861- 1865**

- Civil War Begins: Northern and Southern Advantages Compared
- Key Civil War Battles in 1862: Monitor and Merrimac, Antietam, New Orleans & Shiloh
- The Emancipation Proclamation: Creation, Context and Legacy
- Reconstruction, 1865-1877.
- President Lincoln's Legacy and Johnson: Plans for a Reconstructed Union
- The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson: Conflict Between President and Congress

- The Reconstruction Amendments: The 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments
- Reconstruction's Effects on African Americans: Politics, Education and Economy
- The End of Reconstruction and the Election of 1876.
- Westward Expansion: The Homestead Act of 1862 & the Frontier Thesis

#### **VI. Rise of Industrial America, 1876-1900.**

- Immigration to the United States, 1851-1900
- Economic Policies During the Second Industrial Revolution
- Railroads in the Late 19th Century: Expanding the Transcontinental Railroad: History and Impact
- American Industry Development in the Gilded Age: Bessemer Process, Scientific Management & New Business Models
- Andrew Carnegie and the Robber Barons
- Gilded Age Politics: Political Machines & Civil Service Reform
- The Grange and the Populist Party Platform: Goals, History & Definitions

#### **VII. Progressive Era to New Era, 1890-1929**

- Cities During the Progressive Era
- Conservation in the Progressive Era
- Immigrants in the Progressive Era
- Prohibition: A Case Study of Progressive Reform
- Women's Suffrage in the Progressive Era
- Great Migration (c. 1910–c. 1940)

#### **VIII. U.S. Participation in the Great War (World War I)**

- World War I (c. 1914-c.1918)
- First Red Scare (1917–1920)
- Prohibition in the United States (1919–1933)
- Roaring Twenties (1920s)
- Jazz Age (1920s)

#### **IX. Great Depression (1929–1939)**

- Dust Bowl (1930–1936)
- New Deal era (1933–1938)

#### **X. World War II (1939-1945)**

- Second Great Migration (c. 1941–c. 1970)
- Second Red Scare (1947–1957)

- Cold War (1947–1991)

### **XI. Perils of Peace**

- Civil rights era (1954–1968)
- Women’s movement :Second-wave feminism (1960s–1970s)

### **XII. American World View**

- Space Race (1957–1975)
- Détente (c. 1969–1979)
- 1970s energy crisis (1973–1980)

### **XIII. Reagan Era (1980–1994)**

- Neoconservatism (1980s and 90s)
- New Federalism

### **XIV. Contemporary America:Dot-com bubble (c. 1992–present)**

- The Presidential Election of 1992: Bill Clinton, Ross Perot & George H.W. Bush
- Congress in the Late '90s: Contract with America & Clinton's Impeachment
- United States housing bubble (c. 2001–c. 2005)
- War on Terror (2001–present)
- Obama and Trump years: Isolationism vs Internationalism?

### **Readings**

#### **1) American Colonial Experience: The United Colonies**

Geiter, Mary, William Allen Speck and William Speck (2002), *Colonial America: From Jamestown to Yorktown*, London: Macmillan.

Johnson, Donald (2020), *Occupied America: British Military Rule and the Experience of Revolution*, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Mann, Charles C (2006), *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*, New York: Vintage Books.

Mboma, Kabamba Lieven (2021), *Pilgrims and Puritans in Colonial America: Regulatory laws in the New England Colonies, 1630-1686*, New York: Lieven K Mboma Press.

Nevins, Allan and Henry Commoger (1973), *A Short History of the United States*, New York: Knopf.

Newell, Margaret Ellen (2015), *Brethren by Nature: New England Indians, Colonists and the Origins of America Slavery*, New York: Cornell University Press.

William Cronon (2003) *Changes In the land: Indians, colonists, and the ecology of New England*, New York: Hill and Wang Books.

Wood, Gordon S (2009), *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1789-1815*, New York: Oxford University Press.

## 2) **American Revolution: 1763-1783**

Isreal, Jonathan (2017), *The Expanding Blaze: How the American Revolution Ignited the World, 1775-1848*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Loughran, Trish (2009), *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Taylor, Alan (2016), *American Revolutions: A Continental History, 1750-1804*, New York; W.W. Norton.

Wood, Gordon S (1992), *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, New York: Vintage Books

Wood, Gordon S (2015), *The American Revolution: Writings from the Pamphlet Debate 1764-1773*, New York: Library of America.

Yokota, Kariann Akemi (2014), *Unbecoming British: How Revolutionary America Became a Postcolonial Nation*, London: Oxford University Press.

Zinn, Howard (2016), *A People's History of the United States*, New York: Harper Perennial

## 3) **The Constitution and New Republic: 1783-1815**

Beard, Charles A (2011), *The Economic Interpretation of the US Constitution*, New Jersey: Lawbook Exchange.

Bender S, Lewis & James A. Stevens eds. (2019), *Administering the New Federalism*, London: Routledge.

Henretta, James A, Eric Hinderaker and Rebecca Edwards (2014), *America: A Concise History*, 4th edition (Volumes I & II combined), Boston: Bedford /St Martin's.

Johnson, Kimberly (2006), *Governing the American State: Congress and the New Federalism, 1877-1929*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Corwin Edward S (1978), *The Constitution and What it means today*, New Jersey; Princeton University Press.

Hamilton Alexander, James Madison and John Jay (1982), *The Federalist Papers*, London: Bantam Classics.

Kelly, Alfred et al (1986), *American Constitution: Its origin and Development*, New York: WW Norton.

Lears, Jackson (2010), *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920*, New York: Harper Perennial.

Maier, Pauline (2010), *Ratification: The People Debate the Constitution, 1787-1788*, New York: Simon and Schuster.

Rossiter, Clinton (1987), *1787: The Grand Convention*, New York: W.W Norton & Publication.

Tocqueville, Alexis De (2002), *Democracy in America*, Chicago: the University of Chicago Press.

Ricks, Thomas E (2020), *First Principles: What America's Founders Learned from the Greeks and Romans and how that Shaped our Country*, New York: Harper Collins.  
Klarman, Michael J (2016), *The Framers's Coup: The Making of the United States Constitution*, New York: Oxford University Press.  
Burns, Roger (1978), *A More Perfect Union: The Creation of the United States Constitution*, Washington DC: National Archives and Records Service.

#### 4) Manifest Destiny: 1812-1860

Goetzman, William (2000), *When the Eagle Screamed: The Romantic Horizon in American Expansionism, 1800-1860*, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.  
Greenberg, Amy S (2005), *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.  
Kluger, Richard, (2007), *Seizing Destiny: The Relentless Expansion of American Territory*, New York: Vintage Books.  
May, Ernest. R (1975), *The Making of Monroe Doctrine*, Massachusetts; Belknap Press.  
Merk, Fredrick (1995), *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.  
Stephanson, Anders (1996), *Manifest Destiny: American Expansion and the Empire of Right*, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

#### 5) Civil War/ Reconstruction: 1861-1865

Baptist, Edward A (2016), *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*, New York: Basic Books.  
Blight, David (2001), *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.  
Dew, Charles B (2002), *Apostles of Disunion: Southern Secession Commissioners and the Causes of the Civil War*, Virginia: University of Virginia Press.  
Donald, David (1994), *The Politics of Reconstruction*, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.  
Downs, Gregory (2011), *Declarations of Dependence: The Long Reconstruction of Popular Politics in the South, 1861-1908*, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press.  
Foner, Eric (2019), *The Second Founding: How the Civil War and Reconstruction Remade the Constitution*, New York: W.W Norton.  
Franklin, John Hope and Loren Schweninger (2000), *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation*, New York: Oxford University Press.  
Genovese, Eugene (1979), *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World*, Louisiana: Louisiana University Press.  
Hedblad, Allan (2016) *Understanding Primary Sources: American Civil War: Slavery, Freedom and Abolition*, Michigan: Gale Publishing.  
Kornblith, Gary J , 2003, " Rethinking the Coming of the Civil War: A Counterfactual Exercise" *The Journal of American History*, 90(1), pp. 76-105.  
Mason, Mathew (2008), *Slavery and Politics in the Early American Republic*, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press.

Newman , Richard S (2002), *The Transformation of American Abolitionism: Fighting Slavery in the Early Republic*, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press.

Pope Melish, Joanne (2000), *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "Race" in New England, 1780-1860*, New York: Cornell University Press.

Rothman, Adam (2007), *Slave Country: American Expansion and the Origins of the Deep South*, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Woodward, C. Vann (2001), *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, London: Oxford University Press.

## 6) Rise of Industrial America: 1876-1900

Adelstein, Richard (2012), *The Rise of Planning in Industrial America, 1865-1914*, New York: Taylor & Francis.

Jaffee, David (2011), *A New Nation of Goods: The Material Culture of Early America*, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Klein, Maurya (2007), *The Genesis of Industrial America, 1870-1920*, London: Cambridge University Press.

Potter, David (1954) *People of Plenty: Economic Abundance and the American Character*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Rodgers, Daniel T (2009), *The Work Ethic in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

William Appleman William, (1969 ) *The Roots of Modern American Empire,: A Study of the Growth and Shaping of Social Consciousness in a Marketplace Society*, New York: Random House.

## 7) Progressive Era to New Era: 1890-1929

Chambers, John W (2000), *The Tyranny of Change: America in the Progressive Era, 1890- 1920*, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

Eisenach, Eldon J (2006), *Social and Political Thought of American Progressivism*, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing.

Hays, Samuel P (1959), *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920*, Pittsburgh; University of Pittsburgh Press.

McGerr, Michael E (2005), *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Mowry, George E (1960), *Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Movement*, New York: Hill & Wang.

Pastorello, Karen (2014), *The Progressives: Activism, and Reform in America Society, 1893-1917*, New York: Wiley Publishing.

Pestritto, Ronald J (2021), *America Transformed: The Rise and Legacy of American Progressivism*, New York: Encounter Books.

R McCoy, Donald (1973), *Coming of Age: The US in the age of 20s and 30s*, New York: Penguin Books.

Rakove, Jack N (1979) *The Beginnings of National Politics: An Interpretive History of the Continental*, New York: Knopf Publishers

Scott, Andrew M (1959), "The Progressive Era in Perspective", *Journal of Politics*, 21(4), pp. 685-70.

## **8) US Participation in the Great War (World War I)**

Peck, Garrett (2018), *The Great War in America*, New York: Pegasus Books.

Osborne, Linda Barrett (2017), *Come on in, America*, New York; Abram Books.

Kennedy, David M (2004), *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Zieger, Robert H (2001), *America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience*, New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

## **9) Great Depression (1929-1939)**

Baran, Paul A and Sweezy, Paul M (1966), *Monopoly Capital: An Essay on the American Economic and Social Order*, New York: New York University press.

Bernstein, Michael A (1987), *The Great Depression: Delayed Recovery and Economic Change, 1929-1939*, New York: Cambridge University Press

Brinkley, Alan (1995), *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War*, New York: Vintage Books.

Galbraith, J.K (2009), *The Great Crash 1929*, London: Penguin UK.

Kennedy, David M (1999), *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Potter, Jim (1974) *The American Economy Between the World Wars*, New York; Palgrave Macmillan.

Schelisinger Jr, Arthur (2003), *The Crisis of the Old Order: 1919-1933, The Age of Roosevelt, Volume 1*, Boston: Mariner Books.

Schlesinger Jr.Arthur M*The Coming of the New Deal: The Age of Roosevelt, 1933–1935*, Boston: Mariner Books.

Wecter, Dixon (1971), *The Age of the Great Depression 1929-1941*, London: Franklin Watts.

## **10) World War II: 1939-1945**

Klein, Maury (2013), *A Call to Arms: Mobilizing America for World War II*, New York: Bloomsbury Publications.

Zeiler, Thomas W (2004), *Unconditional Defeat: Japan, America and the End of World War II*, Wilmington: Scholarly Resources.

Parsons, Lynn Hudson and Kenneth P O'Brien (1995), *The Home Front War: World War II and American Society*, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.

Olson, Lynne (2013), *Those Angry Days: Roosevelt, Lindbergh and America's Fight Over World War II*, New York: Random House Publishing.

Hannigan, Robert E (2016), *The Great War and American Foreign Policy, 1914-24*, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

## **11) Perils of Peace**



Berman, William C(1970), *The Politics of Civil Rights in the Truman Administration*, Ohio: Ohio State University Press.

Brown-Collier, Elba K. (1998), “Johnson's Great Society: Its Legacy in the 1990s” *Review of Social Economy*, 56(3) , pp. 259-276

Carson, Rachel (2002), *The Silent Spring*, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Chester, Lewis, Godfrey Hodgeon & Bruce Page (1969), *An American Melodrama: The Presidential Campaign of 1968*, New York: Vikings Books.

Ellison, Ralph (1952), *Invisible Man*, New York; Vintage Books.

Foner, Philip S (1995), *The Black Panthers Speak*, Massachusetts: Da Capo Press.

Friedan, Betty (2010), *The Feminine Mystique*, London: Penguin UK.

Gormick, Vivian & Baybara K. Moran (1971), *Women in Sexist Society Studies in Power and Powerlessness*, New York: Basic Books.

Levy, Mark R and Michael S. Kramer (1973), *The Ethnic Factor: How America's Minorities Decide Elections*, New York: Touchstone Publication.

Luther King, Martin (1964), *Why We can't Wait*, New York: Penguin USA.

Luther King, Martin (1990), *Stride Toward Freedom*, San Francisco: Harper.

Luther King, Martin (2010), *Where Do we go from Chaos or Community*, Boston: Beacon Press.

Milton R. Konvitz , 1967, “Civil Liberties” , *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 371(1), pp. 38-58.

Morgan, Robin (1970), *Sisterhood is Powerful An Anthology of Writings from the Women's Liberation Movement*, New York: Vintage Books.

Sundquist, James L (1968), *Politics and Policy: The Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson Years*, Washington DC: Brookings Press.

## 12) American World View

Kennan, George (1983), *Memoirs: 1925-1950*, New York: Pantheon.

Kissinger, (1977), *American Foreign Policy: Three Essays*, New York: W.W Norton.

Brinkley, Douglas (2019), *American Moonshot: John F Kennedy and the Great Space Race*, New York: Harper Collins.

Cruddas, Sarah (2019), *The Space Race: The Journey to the Moon and Beyond*, London: DK Press.

Collins, Martin J (1999), *Space Race: The US-USSR Competition to Reach the Moon*, Oregon: Pomegranate Communications.

Stevenson, Richard W (1985), *The Rise and Fall of Détente: Relaxations of Tension in US-Soviet Relations, 1953-84*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nelson, Keith L (2019), *The Making of Détente: Soviet-American Relations in the Shadow of Vietnam*, Maryland: John Hopkins University Press.

Jacobs, Meg (2016), *Panic at the Pump: The Energy Crisis and the Transformation of American Politics in the 1970s*, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

Hakes, Jay E (2021), *Energy Crises: Nixon, Ford, Carter and Hard Choices in the 1970s*, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.

### 13) Reagan Era (1980-1994)

- Brownlee, W Elliot and Hugh Davis Graham (2003), *The Reagan Presidency: Pragmatic Conservatism and its Legacies*, Kansas: University of Kansas Press.
- Bush, George H W and Brent Scowcroft (2011), *A World Transformed*, New York: Knopf Doubleday.
- David, Anderson (1992), "Whither America? The United State's Role in World Affairs", *IPA Review*, 45(1), p28.
- Ehrman, John and Michael W Flamm (2009), *Debating the Reagan Presidency*, New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Graebner, Norman (1984), *America as a World Power: A Realists Appraisal from Wilson to Reagan*, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Huntington, Samuel P (1981), *American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony*, Massachusetts: Belknap Press.
- Katz, William Loren (1993), *The Great Society to the Reagan Era, 1964-1990*, Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Perry, Barbara A and Michael Nelson (2014), *41: Inside the Presidency of George H. W Bush*, New York: Cornell University Press.

### 14) Dot Com Bubble (1992 to present)

- Davis, John (2004), *The Global War on Terrorism: Assessing the American Response*, New York; Nova Science Publishers.
- Gingrich, Newt and Richard K Armev (1994), *Contract with America*, New York: Times Books.
- Lowenstein, Roger(2004)*Origins of the Crash: The Great Bubble and Its Undoing*, New York, Penguin Press.
- Mills, C. Wrights (1999), *The Power Elite*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Nabers, Dirk (2016), *The Bush Leadership, the Power of Ideas and the War on Terror*, New York: Taylor & Francis.
- Nelson, Michael (2020), *Clinton's Elections: 1992, 1996, and the Birth of a New Era of Governance*, Kansas: University of Kansas.
- Perotti, Rosanna (2012), *The Clinton Presidency and the Constitutional System*, Texas: Texas A&M University Press.
- Theriahult, Sean M (2013), *The Gingrich Senators: The Roots of Partisan Warfare in Congress*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Thompson, Frank J, Kenneth K Wong and Barry G Gabe (2020), *Trump, the Administrative Presidency, and Federalism*, Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press.
- Zelizer, Julian A (2018), *The Presidency of Barack Obama: A First Historical Assessment*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.