

The American 1950s and 1960s, the First Years of Our Own Time

a course dealing with Culture and Belief, and Historical Inquiry, and a course for the Africana Studies Minor
... they've all gone to look for America.

-Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel, "America" (Bookends, 1967)

Paul J. Croce

Fall 2013

Office Hours: M-Th, 1-3, and many afternoons, 3-5

AMST/HIST361B/H (CRN#: 5177/5178)

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MWF 11-11:50am, in Sampson 225

Course Objectives

This course is an in-depth examination of two decades in almost-present United States history and culture. The methods of American Studies, History, and other fields will allow for enlistment of different methods and outlooks to add further depth to our focus on a single period of time. My own interest in these decades has grown from a sense that during this period many recognizable features of our own world began to take shape. This course also offers an opportunity for students to develop their thinking, reading, writing, and speaking skills through the evaluation of historical accounts, primary sources, essays, pictures, music, films, class projects, lectures, and discussion. Please fill out a card so I can begin to get to know your academic interests right away.

Course Requirements and Grading

- Participation: attendance, class involvement, and 10 One-Page Essays } 20% of final grade
- Research Paper } 20%
- Two Midterm Exams } 20% each
- Final Exam } 20%

Extra Credit

- Attend related campus and community events, write a one-page essay, and briefly report your experiences to class.
- Arrange to make a class presentation on your research paper in relation to a particular day's topic.

I assume academic honesty. Anything less will be taken seriously at the department and university levels. Your work for this class must be your own, with quotations or references to the work of others clearly cited. On this topic and for ways to improve writing, you have resources from this class and at the Writing Center, Maggie Herb, Director, mherb@stetson.edu, located in the library near the East Room computer lab, writingcenter@stetson.edu, 822-7717; and the Academic Success Center, Stacy Collins, Director, and April Thompson, Assistant Director, asc@stetson.edu; scollin1@stetson.edu, 822-7127, 209 East Bert Fish (behind the CUB in between the Pi Phi House and the Honors House, for mail: 421 N. Woodland Blvd, Unit 8366, DeLand, FL 32723).

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, you should meet with me to discuss ways to ensure full participation. If disability-related accommodations are necessary, please register with the Academic Success Center (822-7127; www.stetson.edu/asc) and notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. You and I along with the Academic Success Center will plan how best to coordinate accommodations.

Have you noticed that small class sizes are rare in this world? How can you make use of this resource? Because so much of this course involves exchange of ideas in class and consideration of subtle values, your *attendance and participation* are crucial parts of your learning and make up a significant part of your grade. There are many forms of participation, including careful listening, reviewing notes after class, writing the One-Page Essays, and especially questions and discussion in class (as facilitated by all of the above). Much of class time will build on your reading and will link to projects and films. More than three unexcused absences will be reported to the administration and put your grade in jeopardy.

The One-Page Essays are places for you to capture your thoughts, practice writing, and prepare for class; in class, they can serve as a basis for comments and questions. The entries can allow you to test out ideas you are exploring, maybe even serving as your own experiments for paper topics. I encourage you to write, even if only briefly, every time you do some work for the class (before or after class, after reading, or after a project). In addition to this general advice, there are *ten one-page essays* due as part of your participation grade—that is, one per week (allowing for a few crazy weeks!). Turn them in during the week of the material discussed; *Essays submitted late will contribute to a lower Participation grade.* Write a paragraph on one typed page in response to the class material; include your *report* on what you've learned and your *reflections* in response to its facts and interpretations.

This type of assignment will also be *a way to make up for excused absences*.

The class-time *Explorations* (EXPs) will be student-led presentations for review of course readings, leadership of discussions, and pursuit of further insights; they are also exercises in the skill of oral communication, and contributions to the learning experience of all course members. The format will vary with the material involved, and with your thoughtful suggestions; in general, please choose small groups for each EXP, choose key readings of about 20 pages for your fellow students, present an overview with your theme(s) about the material, plan discussion questions, and be prepared for more questions.

The work of the *Research Project* will grow during the semester, and these *Writing Steps* on your own research project are separate from the ten One-Page Essays on the shared course material:

-Step 1, One Key Book: during the first month, think of topics and questions related to the course and that you find interesting; you may find a live issue in relation to your life, coursework, major, career goals, or avocational interests. In history, cultural studies and related fields, books are the premier cultural products for good quality research and evaluation; find a book on your topic, one that will help you answer your questions. *Turn in the citation of your book, with a paragraph explanation about why you find it interesting, how it relates to the course, and what it is arguing about your topic.*

-Step 2, The Book in Relation to More Sources: in the next few weeks, use the library and other resources to consult more related texts, including primary and secondary sources, to supplement your book; find at least two of the following: book reviews, journal articles, encyclopedia entries, government documents, web pages, newspapers and magazines, audio-visual material, and/or interviews. *Turn in a one-paragraph statement of the relation of these sources to your book, and how they illuminate your topic and your emerging theme;* and

-Step 3, The Final Paper: In addition to reporting on your topic, be sure to evaluate your sources with expression of your theme, using facts and explanations to support your interpretation. During the last week of classes, *turn in your final written Research Paper of 10 typed pages*—earlier is welcome!

The *Midterms* will be essay questions that ask you to analyze the material of the course. The *Final Exam* will also be in essay format; one part of it will be a “second mid-term” and the other will be comprehensive. To encourage improvement, turn in your earlier writing with each successive writing assignment. In grading oral and written work, I will emphasize your understanding of the material, the persuasiveness of your argument, and your clarity of presentation. Please print on used or two-sided paper and turn it in clipped, without any folders or binders.

All the assignments involve careful thinking and writing. Please see the *American Studies Web Page*, <http://www.stetson.edu/artsci/american-studies/>, for many postings designed to help you do your best work in the course and in life in general. In particular, click on Faculty > my name > Teaching, or go directly to <http://www.stetson.edu/artsci/american/pcteaching.php> to see the Learning Guides, namely, the guides to learning, research, writing, discussing, speaking, and grading. On the same department web page, at the Learning By Doing link > Work to Learn/Learn to Work, or by going directly to <http://www.stetson.edu/artsci/american-studies/worktolearn.php>, see tips on ways to use your Stetson education in preparation for later life and career, and see the American Bar Association’s Guide to Legal Education with suggestions about use of an undergraduate education in getting ready for law school, with ideas that also apply to other post-graduate training and job settings. **Blackboard:** This computerized bulletin board will be a place to post course information, including bibliography, web references for class work and research, assignments and requirements, recent updates, and more; “information” has general information and “Content” has particular assignments.

-collection of material depicting conservative and mainstream culture (one batch of primary sources)

-Paul Croce articles on Halloween; and Gary Cross, “How the Toy Market Outgrew Grownups”

-Thomas Frank, *The Corporate Conquest of Cool*, pp. 225-35 and 271-72

Book for Purchase:

James Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974*

Recommended Purchase (these books are two of three batches of primary sources)

David Howard-Pitney, *Martin Luther King Junior, Malcolm X, & the Civil Rights Struggle of the 1950s & 1960s*

Van Gosse, *The Movements of the New Left, 1950-1975*

On Reserve: (I can also put other materials on reserve, or available for borrowing from the office: let me know)

Eric Erik Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (1950)

Paul Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd* (1960)

Richard Sennett, *The Uses of Disorder* (1970)

Schedule of Topics and Readings (the Requirements include assignments to read in preparation for that day)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics</u>	<u>Requirements</u>
Aug. 23	Introductions	Patterson, Prologue and overview
Aug. 26	Setting the Scene	Patterson, chs. 1
Aug. 28	library basement pass the magazine, see the world	library project: <u>Life</u> , begin Patterson, chs. 2-3
Aug. 30	Hopes and Fears	film: The Fifties, begin Patterson, chs. 4-5
Sep. 2:	NO CLASS for Labor Day	
Sep. 4	Projecting Boom Times	Patterson, chs. 2-3
Sep. 6	Coping with Peace	Patterson, chs. 4-5
Sep. 9	To Err is Truman	Patterson, ch. 6; <i>Step 1: One Key Book</i>
Sep. 11	Fear of Communism	Patterson, ch. 7
Sep. 13	Segregated DeLand	stories from the time, begin Patterson chs. 8-10
Sep. 16	The Forgotten War	Patterson, chs. 8-9 and film clip: Korean War
Sep. 18:	NO CLASS FOR VALUES DAY	
Sep. 20	Age of Affluence	Patterson, chs. 10-11; Film clip: Seeing Red
Sep. 23	African-American Prophets	evaluation of primary sources in Howard-Pitney
Sep. 25	Cornucopia	Patterson, ch. 12; Film clip: The Blob
Sep. 27	meet in CCC Savage Side of Segregation	film: Emmett Till; compare with Howard-Pitney;
	611 Bert Fish Drive (behind Hollis and pool)	begin Patterson, chs 13-16
Sep. 30	Civil Rights Debate	EXP 1
Oct. 2	Civil Rights Stirrings	Patterson, chs. 13-14
Oct. 4	Struggle for Consensus	Patterson, chs. 14-15
Oct. 7	Genial Conformity	analyzing social roles: Lucy Show <i>Midterm due</i>
Oct. 9	High Hopes	Patterson, chs. 15-16 and Sound of Music clip
Oct. 10-13	Fall Break Movie of the Weekend	Movie Project
Oct. 14	Limits of Vigor	Patterson, ch. 17 and film clip: Atomic Café
Oct. 16	War on Social Problems	Patterson, ch. 18, Beatles clip; <i>Step 2: More Sources</i>
Oct. 18	Radical Turn	Patterson, ch. 19, Film clip: Berkeley in the 1960s
Oct. 21	Dominoes	Patterson, ch. 20
Oct. 23	Conservative Reaction	Patterson, ch. 21, Film clip: Weathermen
Oct. 25	Conservatives and the Mainstream	evaluation of primary sources on Blackboard
Oct. 28	Changing the World	film: The 1960s, browse Van Gosse
Oct. 30	Children's Culture	Toys and Games of 50s and 60s, browse Van Gosse
Oct. 31	5:30-8:30pm Trick or Treat... 320 West Minnesota Avenue	Croce articles (Blackboard and on web)
Nov. 1	Land of Freedom and Opportunity?	EXP 2
Nov. 4	Past and Future Careers More info @ Flagler 100	Robin Kazmarek, Director, Career Development Erikson, Goodman, Sennett (reserve): read one ch
Nov. 6	Year of Revolution	Patterson, ch. 22
Nov. 8	Youth Culture	class project on popular music, begin Van Gosse
Nov. 11	Liberalism and the New Left	evaluation of primary sources in Van Gosse
Nov. 13	Into the Quagmire	film on Vietnam
Nov. 15	How Best to Change America	EXP 3
Nov. 18	Tricky Dick	Patterson, ch. 23
Nov. 20	End of the Tunnel	Patterson, ch 24
Nov. 22	50s and 60s as commodity	artifacts of popular culture and read Frank, "Cool"
Nov. 25	50s and 60s as watershed	interview someone who experienced the 50s or 60s
Dec. 2	Lived History	class project on personal and cultural memory
Dec. 4	Stand by Your Man	class project on gender relations; <i>Step 3: Final Paper</i>
Dec. 6	Lower Expectations	Patterson, ch. 25
Dec. __	Evaluating the Almost Present	<i>Final Exam</i>