

## CH 6020: Themes and Issues in Contemporary History

Spring 2014

Monday, 7-10 p.m. Brown House

Instructor:

Katherine Jellison

459 Bentley Annex

Office hours by appointment

[jellison@ohio.edu](mailto:jellison@ohio.edu)

phone: 593-4333

### Description:

This seminar is the second half of the Contemporary History course sequence. During this semester, students will examine a number of contemporary issues and debates from a historical perspective and discuss the use of knowledge of the past to understand and perhaps deal with problems in the world of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Like Professor Trauschweizer's CH 6010 seminar in the fall, the course's chronological focus will be primarily on the 1960s and 1970s, a period of recent history that continues to shape and inform national and international policy-making and problem-solving.

As with Professor Trauschweizer's seminar, this one relies on students' active participation in discussion. To help students prepare for seminar discussions, they will be required to submit a reaction paper about each week's assigned readings. Papers should be word-processed, one page in length, and submitted to the instructor at the beginning of each class period. Each paper should include a summary of the major arguments of that week's readings and end with a question that the author wants to pose to the other seminar members about those readings. The instructor will not assign letter grades to the reaction papers but will provide feedback as necessary. Students' completion of the weekly reaction paper assignment will be considered in determining their overall participation grades.

### Assessment:

80%--in-class discussion and weekly reaction papers.

20%--capstone paper: a 12-15-page review essay (in the style one would find in the *New York Review of Books* or the *Times Literary Supplement*) on three or four recent scholarly works in the student's field of specialty. (These should **NOT** be the same works dealt with in last semester's capstone paper for Professor Trauschweizer.) The capstone paper should address how the authors' interpretations of past events may raise questions and increase understanding of present-day policies, discourse, and events.

Students are required to submit a 3-page outline on March 24: What three or four books (or two or three books and a **substantive** article) will be evaluated in the paper? What issue or

issues do these works illustrate or investigate? What is the paper's working hypothesis? **Final papers will be due at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 30.**

Course Readings:

The following books are available for purchase at Little Professor Book Center and have also been placed on overnight reserve at Alden Library.

Jeff Greenfield, *If Kennedy Lived: The First and Second Terms of President John F. Kennedy, An Alternate History* (2013) ISBN 9780399166969

Denis Kozlov and Eleonory Gilburd, *The Thaw: Soviet Society and Culture during the 1950s and 1960s* (2013) ISBN 9781442644601

Barbara Zanchetta, *The Transformation of American International Power in the 1970s* (2013) ISBN 9781107041080

Christian Caryl, *Strange Rebels: 1979 and the Birth of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (2013) ISBN 9780465018383

Paul Berman, *A Tale of Two Utopias: The Political Journey of the Generation of 1968* (1996) ISBN 0393316750

Stephanie Coontz, *A Strange Stirring: The Feminine Mystique and American Women at the Dawn of the 1960s* (2012) ISBN 9780465028429

William H. Chafe, *Bill and Hillary: The Politics of the Personal* (2012) ISBN 9780809094653

Jefferson R. Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (2012) ISBN 9781595587077

Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart: The Making of Christian Free Enterprise* (2010) ISBN 9780674057401

Michelle R. Boyd, *Jim Crow Nostalgia: Reconstructing Race in Bronzeville* (2008) ISBN 9780816646784

Michael G. Long, *Martin Luther King Jr., Homosexuality, and the Early Gay Rights Movement: Keeping the Dream Straight?* (2012) ISBN 9781137275516

Tom Hayden, *The Long Sixties: From 1960 to Barack Obama* (2011) 9781594517402

**These readings will be supplemented by articles and book excerpts on Blackboard.**

Schedule:

Week 1—Jan. 13	Intro to seminar
Week 2—Jan. 20	MLK Day: <b>NO CLASS</b>
	<u>A Useable Past and the “What If?” Question</u>
Week 3—Jan. 27	Greenfield book and Blackboard readings
	<u>The Cold War Thaws</u>
Week 4—Feb. 3	Kozlov and Gilburd book and Blackboard readings
Week 5—Feb. 10	Zanchetta book and Blackboard readings
Week 6—Feb. 17	Caryl book and Blackboard readings
	<u>The Generation of 1968</u>
Week 7—Feb. 24	Berman book and Blackboard readings
Mar. 3	<b>Spring Break: NO CLASS</b>
	<u>The Politics of Gender</u>
Week 8—Mar. 10	Read Coontz book and Blackboard readings
Week 9—Mar. 17	Read Chafe book and Blackboard readings
	<u>The Politics of Class</u>
Week 10—Mar. 24	Read Cowie book and Blackboard readings <b>PAPER OUTLINES DUE</b>
Week 11—Mar. 31	Read Moreton book and Blackboard readings
	<u>The Politics of Race</u>
Week 12—Apr. 7	Read Boyd book and Blackboard readings
Week 13—Apr. 14	Read Long book and Blackboard readings
Week 14—Apr. 21	Read Hayden and Blackboard readings
Apr. 30	Celebrate the end of the semester and <b>SUBMIT FINAL PAPERS</b>

### Rules and Regulations:

This seminar requires active and engaged participation from all members. Students are expected to come to class ready to submit their reaction papers and to discuss, debate, and assess the assigned readings. Any unexcused absence will lead to a significant reduction in a student's participation grade, and a second unexcused absence will lead to an automatic F for participation.

**Capstone papers are due on April 30.** PR grades are strongly discouraged and will only be granted on a case-by-case basis. Plagiarism or any other type of academic misconduct will lead to automatic dismissal from the class, an F for the seminar, expulsion from CHI, and further proceedings through appropriate university judiciary channels.