

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

History 24

The Cold War and American Life

Professor Jennifer M. Miller

Winter Term 2017

Class Time: MWF 11:30 – 12:35 (X Hour Tuesday, 12:15 – 1:05)

Class Location: Carson 60

Office Hours: 410 Carson Hall, Friday 1:30 – 4:30 or by appointment

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Course Overview:

This course will examine how Americans understood and experienced their lives at home and abroad during the Cold War. Focusing on the years between 1945 and 1975, we will explore the relationship between international affairs and domestic society. How do international changes shape life within the United States? How do domestic developments affect American interactions with the world? To answer these questions, we will explore the diverse ways that Americans “lived” the Cold War. Along with examining the beginning of the Cold War and key conflicts in Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam, we will consider the Cold War’s domestic manifestations. We will explore themes such as the rise of the national security state; the relationship between democracy and Cold War security; the impact of the Cold War on thinking about race and civil rights; suburbanization and consumerism; nuclear culture; the Cold War and higher education; and the globalization of U.S. power. To consider the diverse voices and perspectives that shaped American Cold War experiences, we will use various primary sources, including movies, fiction, government documents, speeches, images, cartoons, and songs.

Throughout this course, we will use a broad definition of the term “Cold War,” examining it as far more than a geopolitical conflict with the Soviet Union or as a time of domestic anti-Communism. We will explore the ideas and norms that shaped American understandings of the Cold War and consider the consequences of these ideas for American society, institutions, culture, politics, and international relationships. Ultimately, using the Cold War as a window, this course aims to give you new tools to think about the varied ways that international affairs change life at home.

Course Requirements and Grading:

This course aims to develop the following skills:

1. An understanding of the origins, development, and consequences of the Cold War, particularly for American politics, culture, institutions, foreign policy, and conceptions of American identity.

2. The ability to read, analyze, and interpret primary and secondary sources in order to understand their main arguments and to explain their context, potential bias, and consequences. In particular, we will focus on being able to identify, summarize, and critically assess the key points of complex readings.
3. The ability to develop, support, and present arguments, both orally and in writing. In particular, we will emphasize the ability to write clear, well-organized, and well-supported papers that bring together diverse materials to prove an argument.

Your grade for this course will be composed of the follow components. You must complete all components in order to pass the course:

1. Class Participation (15%): Throughout the term, one course meeting each week will be devoted to discussion. This course averages 130 – 150 pages of reading per week. All students are expected to complete all the readings for each unit before this meeting and to actively participate in all discussions. Each week, I will circulate questions to help guide and focus your reading.

Throughout the course we will also watch two films: *On the Waterfront* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (1960). These films will stream online through the course media gallery in Canvas.

2. Short Reading Essay (15%): An 800 word essay in response to a prompt provided by Professor Miller. This paper is due on **Thursday, January 26th by 7PM** via Canvas.
3. Movie Response (5%): Each student will write a short (1.5 – 2 pages) response paper about one of the films assigned in this class. This response will examine how the film relates to and/or depicts the Cold War and place the film in dialogue with other materials from this class. You will choose which film during the first week of the course. This response will be due at the Wednesday discussion day for that unit.
4. In Class Midterm (15%): An in-class exam that will include material from lectures, readings and discussions. This exam will be held on **Wednesday, February 8th**.
5. Question Essay (25%): A 1200 word essay in response to one of the questions distributed by Professor Miller. In writing this essay, you will be expected to draw from the lectures, discussions, reading material (including primary sources and songs), and films assigned in this course. This paper is due on **Thursday, February 23rd at 7PM** via Canvas.
6. Take-home Essay/In-Class Final Exam (25%): The final has two parts.
 - a. A 90-minute in-class exam that draws from lectures, readings, and discussions. This final will be held on **Saturday, March 11th at 8AM**

- b. A take home essay of 1200 words. The question for this essay will be distributed in advance. This essay is due on **Sunday, March 12th at 12PM** via Canvas.

Readings:

The following books are available for purchase at Wheelock Books and are also at reserve at Baker-Berry library. In addition to the books listed below, other course materials, including readings, primary documents, songs, and films, will be available through Canvas.

Mary L. Dudziak. *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Melvyn P. Leffler. *The Specter of Communism: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917 – 1953*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1994.

Lisa McGirr. *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*. Princeton University Press, 2001.

Nevil Shute. *On the Beach*. New York: Vintage International, 2010. [originally published 1957]. [there are multiple editions of this book – please buy this one, so that everyone is working from the same text].

Students are expected to complete all the readings listed for each unit of the course by the corresponding discussion.

Attendance:

You are expected to attend all classes. However, since unavoidable circumstances do arise, you are allowed to miss **up to three classes**. After three absences, short of extraordinary circumstances and communication with your dean, you will **receive no credit for class participation (15% of your grade)**. Moreover, any absence from discussion days will result in a reduction of your overall participation grade. If you do miss class, it is your responsibility to get the missed material from a classmate. I also expect you to arrive to class on time. A pattern of late arrivals will adversely affect your grade.

Technology Policy:

Laptops are not allowed in this course. Additionally, all cell phones must be turned off and stowed in your bag for the duration of class.

Recording Policy:

In accordance with New Hampshire state law, it is forbidden to record lectures in this course without the consent of the professor. If you need to record lectures for academic accommodation purposes, please come and talk to me.

Honor principle:

All students should read the Dartmouth Academic Honor Principle, which can be found here: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/judicialaffairs/honor/index.html>

As per the Honor Principle, all work submitted for this course must be your own independent work, work that you have completed solely for this course. You may not collaborate or work together on papers or during course exams. You may not pass other peoples' work or ideas as your own – that is, you may not submit papers that are cut and pasted, copied, or paraphrased from an outside source, whether that source is another student, an internet source, or another text. You may not submit work that you have completed for another course.

When completing writing assignments, you must properly document each and every outside source from which you have obtained information or ideas (there is a handout about proper citation format posted on Canvas). This includes direct quotations, statistics, maps and images, and other author's ideas rewritten in your own words (paraphrasing). For more information on plagiarism and how to avoid it, consult: <http://writing-speech.dartmouth.edu/learning/materials/sources-and-citations-dartmouth>

If you are confused about how to properly cite sources or about what constitutes plagiarism, consult with the professors **BEFORE** submitting your assignment. It is **YOUR** responsibility to understand and follow the honor code.

Accommodations:

All students who may need academic adjustments or accommodations during the term are invited to convey those needs to Professor Miller as soon as possible. Early communication is especially important in cases in which students will miss class due to athletic events or religious holidays; it is also important in cases involving disabilities, which may require in-class or other accommodations. All communications will remain confidential, although it may be necessary to consult with the Student Disabilities Coordinator in some cases involving documented disabilities.

Schedule of Readings and Lectures

CV = Canvas

Jan. 4 (W) Introduction: What is the Cold War?

Unit 1: Cold War Beginnings

Jan. 6 (F) From Postwar to Cold War

Jan. 9 (M) The Cold War in Asia

Jan. 10 (Tu) **XHOUR** Building the National Security State

Jan. 11 (W) Discussion

Primary Sources:

Harry S. Truman, "The Truman Doctrine" (1947) CV
National Security Council, NSC-68 (1950), pp. 1 - 24 CV

Readings:

Melvyn P. Leffler, *The Specter of Communism: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917 - 1953* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994).

Unit 2: Anti-Communism and its Consequences

Jan. 13 (F) Purging "Subversives"

Jan. 17 (Tu) **XHOUR** McCarthy's Rise and Fall

Jan. 18 (W) Discussion

Primary Sources:

Senator Joseph McCarthy, "Speech at Wheeling, West Virginia" (1950) CV
Testimony of Paul Robeson before the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) (1956) CV

Readings:

Robert Dean, "'Lavender Lads' and the Foreign Policy Establishment," in *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 63 – 96. CV
Andrea Friedman, *Citizenship in Cold War America: The National Security State and the*

Possibilities of Dissent (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014), 1 – 47, 80 – 118. **CV**

Mae M. Ngai, “The Cold War Chinese Immigration Crisis and the Confession Cases,” in *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Immigration and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 202 – 224. **CV**

Unit 3: Leading the “Free World”

Jan. 20 (F) Leading the “Free World” [Guest Lecture: Prof. Udi Greenberg]

Jan. 23 (M) Learning in the “Free World”: The Cold War University

Jan. 25 (W) Discussion

Jan. 26 (Th) **Reading Essay due at 7PM via Canvas**

Primary Sources:

Film: *On the Waterfront* (1954)

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., “Not Right, Not Left, But a Vital Center,” *New York Times Magazine* (1948) **CV**

Readings:

Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 3 – 78.

Wendi L. Wall, “Crusading for Freedom at Home and Abroad,” in *Inventing the “American Way”: The Politics of Consensus From the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 241 – 277. **CV**

Unit 4: Nuclear Possibilities, Nuclear Fears

Jan. 27 (F) Creating a Nuclear World

Jan. 30 (M) Living with “The Bomb”

Feb. 1 (W) Discussion

Readings:

Nevil Shute, *On The Beach* (1957)

Unit 5: Home and the Family

Feb. 3 (F) Women and Cold War Mobilization

Feb. 6 (M) Cold War Consumers

Feb. 7 (Tu) Discussion

Primary Sources:

“The Kitchen Debate” (1959) CV

Betty Friedan Describes the Problem That Has No Name (1963) CV

Song: Pete Seeger, “Little Boxes” (1963)

Readings:

Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (20th Anniversary Edition) (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 10 – 30, 100 – 143. CV

Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 2 – 110.

Feb. 8 (W) **MIDTERM EXAM**

Unit 6: Civil Rights in a Decolonizing World

Feb. 10 (F) The Global Tide of Decolonization

Feb. 13 (M) The Cold War and Civil Rights

Feb. 15 (W) Discussion

Primary Sources:

W.E.B. Dubois, “To The Peoples of Asia and Africa Meeting at Bandung, April 1955” (CV)

Martin Luther King Jr., “The Rising Tide of Racial Consciousness” (1960) CV

Readings:

Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 79 – 202, 249 – 254.

Cynthia A. Young, “Havana up in Harlem and Down in Monroe” in *Soul Power: Culture, Radicalism, and the Making of a U.S Third World Left* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 19 – 53.

Unit 7: Cold War Frontiers

Feb. 17 (F) New Frontiers, New Crises: the United States and Cuba

Feb. 20 (M) Why Vietnam?

Feb. 22 (W) Discussion

Primary Sources:

Film: *The Magnificent Seven*
Lyndon Johnson, "Peace Without Conquest" (1965)

Readings:

Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), preface, 192 – 332.

Feb. 23 (Th.) **Question Essay due at 7PM via Canvas**

Unit 8: Challenging the Cold War Order

Feb. 24 (F) 1968: Global Revolution and Détente

Feb. 27 (M) A New Conservatism

Feb. 28 (T) XHOUR Special Session at Rauner Library [First half of class]

Mar. 1 (W) Special Session at Rauner Library [Second half of class]

Mar. 3 (F) Discussion

Primary Sources:

Students for a Democratic Society, Port Huron Statement (1962) **CV**
Young Americans for Freedom, Sharon Statement (1960) **CV**
Song: Marvin Gaye, "What's Going On" (1971) **CV**

Readings:

Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 110 – 216.
Jeremi Suri, "The Global Disruptions of 1968," in *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 164 – 212.
CV

Unit 9: The 1970s and Cold War Fragmentation

Mar. 6 (M) The 1970s: Where is America Headed?

Mar. 8 (W) Discussion and Conclusions

Primary Sources:

Jimmy Carter, “Crisis of Confidence” (1979)
Song: Bruce Springsteen, “Johnny 99” (1982)

Readings:

Thomas Borstelmann, “The Spread of Market Values,” in *The 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 122 – 174.

Daniel T. Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 1 – 40.

Final Exam:

In-Class Final: Saturday, March 11th at 8AM. Location TBA

Take-Home Final Due: Sunday, March 12th at 7 PM via Canvas.