

This syllabus is your guide to the course. It lists readings, describes assignments and spells out expectations. Look here first for answers to your questions.



March On Washington, 1963



Peace Patch



Hippies doing their thing

History 150: The Sixties in America

Professor Patrick Jones

Allegheny College - Fall 2003

Class Meetings: M-W-F, 1:30pm-2:20pm

Room: 201 Arter Hall

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"History does not refer merely, or even principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all that we do."

- James Baldwin

About the Course: The 1960s remains one of the most contested decades in recent American history. Politicians and social commentators continue to squabble over its meaning and legacy. Advertisers repackage sixties images, music and words to sell products through the haze of nostalgia. A new generation of political activists employs the rhetoric, tactics and style of sixties movements to advance old and new causes. To some, the 1960s were a dream, to others a nightmare. Many look back fondly on the 1960s as a lost moment of opportunity and possibility, when a new and better America seemed possible. They see the sixties as worthy of imitation and emulation. Others view the decade as a terrible horror and a detour from the vaunted traditions of America's past, responsible for the proliferation of a variety of contemporary social and political ills. They view the 1960s as a model to be avoided like the plague. Over the course of the semester, we will explore the social, political and cultural contours of the 1960s with the hope that a more complex and nuanced view of that decade might emerge. Students will play an active role in this process and it is my hope that each of you will walk away at the end of the semester with a deeper appreciation of this fascinating decade's many important lessons. Ultimately, it will be up to you to decide where you come down in the contemporary tug-of-war over the 1960s. Hopefully, this course will arm you with the information needed to make an informed decision based on your own values and experiences!

Course Requirements:

Readings

The reading load varies greatly from week to week, but on average *it is significant* but manageable. Please understand this going into the course and keep up. You should complete readings *before* the class period for which they are assigned. Ultimately, you are responsible for all of the material in each of the readings whether or not it is discussed in class. ALL course materials are fair game on exams.

The following books are available at college bookstore:

- Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, eds., "Takin' It to the Streets": A Sixties Reader
- Charles Payne, I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition
- Michael Herr, Dispatches
- Robert Pardun, Prairie Radical: A Journey Through the Sixties
- Lisa Law, Flashing On the Sixties
- Lisa McGirr, Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right
- Howard Cruse, Stuck Rubber Baby

In addition, a few shorter readings (marked with an ** in the "Topics and Assignments" section of this syllabus) are available through electronic reserve at the Pelletier Library. These shorter pieces can be accessed, downloaded and/or printed online depending on how you prefer to engage them. Again, these are required readings, so keep up. If you have ANY trouble accessing the short readings, let me know *at the beginning of the week for which they are assigned*.

Finally, I have placed a few general histories of the sixties on 3-hour reserve at Pelletier Library. If you feel like you need a refresher or want some more general context to the era, I encourage you to take a look at these books:

- Gitlin, The Sixties: Years of Hope. Days of Rage
- O'Neill, Coming Apart: An Informal History of the Sixties
- Miller, Democracy Is In the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago
- Isserman and Kazin, America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s

Class Meetings

Class meetings will be a mix of lectures, discussions, videos, and brief assignments. Regular attendance at all class meetings is *required* and will be noted. While I understand that from time to time conflicts may arise and you may have to miss a class, these conflicts are expected to be for "good cause" and kept to a minimum. It is the responsibility of the student to let me know *before class* when and why they will be absent. Chronic absenteeism WILL negatively effect a student's final course grade. Fridays will often - though not always - be used for discussion.

A brief word on participation: Classroom discussion gives us all the opportunity to talk about course content and listen to what each other has to say. Class discussions and brief assignments are intended to help students better integrate course readings with the lectures and to clear up any confusion or questions you may have. It is important to respect your fellow classmates and their perspectives during discussions. Feel free to challenge each other (and me!), but do it in a respectful manner. Participation means coming to class prepared and contributing to the discussion regularly. Asking questions and offering comments or answers are equally important to creating a lively and meaningful discussion. Remember, any question you have is an important question. Any comment you want to make is an important comment. At the same time, it is quality, not quantity that is most important to your final grade. If you have any problems with section participation please feel free to come speak with me about it. Attendance, participation and brief assignments make up one of the four pillars of your final grade (25%, in fact). SO, DON'T BAIL OUT ON CLASS PARTICIPATION! For the course to be successful, we all need to be active members of our learning community...

Exams

Each student will take an in-class *midterm exam* and a *final exam* for the course. On exams, students will be responsible for information presented in lectures, readings, discussions and other class materials. We will discuss the format and expectations for each exam at the appropriate time.

In order to be successful on exams, *I encourage you to take notes on all lectures, readings, videos and documents as you read/view them; try to summarize their arguments/meanings*. This will pay large dividends by the end of the semester as you will have a ready-made study guide!

Writing

The course has been set up with a WebCT hook-up that will offer various on-line discussion opportunities. Over the course of the semester, students are expected to participate in these groups. From time to time, I will post a question for the class to consider. Otherwise, you are free (and encouraged!) to post your own questions and comments based on readings, lectures, discussions and other class materials. If you would like me to set up a WebCT discussion group on a specific topic, come see me.

In addition, students are required to select and complete one of the following projects from the list below, due on **December 5th**; **no late projects will be accepted**. A project proposal is due at the beginning of class on **October 24th**. More detailed information on each of these options will be provided during the first few weeks of the semester:

- *Individual/Organizational Biography* (3-source minimum): Select a significant 1960s figure or organization, find and read two sources on that subject, and write a 6-8 page paper analyzing their significance to the sixties and relating it to course materials.
- *Social Action Project*: Drawing on the lessons you have learned from the class, you may work with two other students (3 total) to design and implement a social action project on campus or in Meadville. Students who select this option will also turn in a 5-6 page reaction paper summarizing their contribution to the project and the lessons they learned.
- *Music of the 1960s* (5 song minimum): Write a 6-8 page paper analyzing at least five songs from the 1960s and linking them to course materials.
- *Films of the 1960s* (2-3 film requirement): Write a 6-8 page paper analyzing 2-3 films that were made during the 1960s or deal with sixties themes/issues, and linking them to course materials.
- *Collage project* (15 image minimum): Using the library, internet, or any other found objects, select at least 15 related images and design a collage. Next, write a 6-8 page explanation of your collage that links the images and their arrangement to course materials and themes.
- If you have an alternative idea for a final project, that is fine, but you must meet with me during office hours **before October Break** to make a case for your project and secure my approval. This is your responsibility. Alternative projects that do not get prior approval will not be accepted or graded.

Extra Credit Option: In addition, for extra credit, students may choose to do an oral history report that involves interviewing family members on their experiences during the 1960s. Here, too, detailed information on my expectations for such a report will be furnished at the appropriate time.

NOTE: It is imperative that all students conform to the basic rules of academic conduct and Allegheny College's Honor Code. Each of you should be familiar with the Honor Code. Regarding plagiarism, you must always make your debt to other writers perfectly clear. Any phrase or sentence that was written by someone else must appear between quotation marks and must be followed by a citation of the work, in a footnote, endnote or within parentheses. Similarly, if the ideas you are trying to communicate are someone else's, even if paraphrased, you must acknowledge that with a proper citation, just as if you had quoted the work directly. I prefer footnotes or endnotes, but will accept any recognized form of citation as long as it is used correctly and consistently. Always include the following information: author, title, date, place of publication, and relevant page numbers. If you have any questions regarding the Honor Code, plagiarism or academic misconduct, in general, do not hesitate to see me during office hours.

Sixties Film Series

Over the course of the semester, I will be screening two documentaries and four feature films that relate to course themes. These screenings will take place on Tuesday evening beginning at 7PM. A list of dates and titles can be found on the last page of this syllabus. The room number will be announced in class. The two *documentaries are mandatory*, but the *films are optional*. If you are unable to watch either the documentaries or films at the designated times, they will be available to you at the library, or in my office for brief free "rentals." The film series is meant to be a more informal way for students to explore the issues raised in class. Attendance is optional, but students who come to a screening and write a 1-2 page reaction paper can earn *extra credit* for the course. You are welcome to bring along a friend to screenings, if you choose.

Email

While you are always welcome to send me emails at my personal email address, please understand that I cannot always respond instantaneously. In general, I check my email at least once a day and try to respond within 24 hours of receipt of the message. Sometimes this is not possible, though, and I try to respond as quickly as possible given the circumstances. Note that around Midterm and Final Exam time, email volume rises dramatically and it might take longer for you to receive a response from me.

Office Hours

My office hours are from 10am-12pm each Monday, Wednesday and Friday, as well as each Wednesday from 2:30pm-4pm. You may also set up an appointment by emailing or calling me. If you have any questions, comments, suggestions or problems during the semester, please feel free to come speak with me.

Grading

Midterm Exam: 25%

Final Project: 25%

Final Exam: 25%

Participation (attendance, participation and brief assignments): 25%

Grading Scale: A = 93-100%; A- = 90-92%; B+ = 88-89%; B = 83-87%; B- = 80-82%; C+ = 78-79%; C = 73-77%; C- = 70-72%; D+ = 68-69%; D = 60-67%; F = 59% and lower

Topics and Assignments

- 8/29 (F) Course Introduction: Remembering the Sixties: Myth or Reality?
- 9/1 (M) “The Sixties” Today
9/3 (W) The 1950s and the Roots of Sixties Rebellion
9/5 (F) Discussion: “‘Past As Prologue’: The 1950s as an Introduction to the 1960s,” Bloom/Breines, pp. 1-12
- 9/8 (M) JFK and “Cold War Liberalism”
9/10 (W) LBJ and the Great Society
9/12 (F) Discussion: ** Schlesinger, “The New Political Mood”; ** Kearns, “The Great Society”
- 9/15 (M) An Introduction to the Civil Rights Movement, 1945-1965
9/17 (W) Document Discussion
9/19 (F) **Discussion: Payne, I’ve Got the Light of Freedom**
- 9/22 (M) “We Shall Overcome”: Music and the Movement
9/24 (W) An Overview of The War in Vietnam, 1954-1975 (watch “**Hearts and Minds**” by this date)
9/26 (F) It’s a Jungle Out There: The Soldier’s Experience in Vietnam
- 9/29 (M) **Discussion: Michael Herr, Dispatches**
10/1 (W) “Hey, Hey, LBJ!”: The Emergence of “The New Left” and the Anti-War Movement (watch “**Berkeley In the Sixties**” by this date)
10/3 (F) Document Discussion: “The Port Huron Statement,” Bloom/Breines, pp. 50-61
- 10/6 (M) “Blowin’ In the Wind”: Music and the Vietnam Era
10/8 (W) Document Discussion
10/10 (F) Student Activism at Allegheny College in the Sixties
- 10/13 (M) **October Break/No Class**
10/15 (W) **Discussion: Pardun, Prairie Radical**
10/17 (F) Hippie, Dippy, or Just Plain Trippy? Making Sense of the Counterculture
- 10/20 (M) Document Discussion
10/22 (W) **Discussion: Law, Flashing On the Sixties; ** Echols, “Hope and Hype in Sixties Haight-Ashbury”**
10/24 (F) “Black Power’s Gonna Get You Sucka!” (**Project proposal due**)
- 10/27 (M) “What Happens to a Dream Deferred?”: Urban Rebellion in the North
10/29 (W) The *Other* Side of the Sixties: The Rise of “the New Right” in America
10/31 (F) **Discussion: McGirr, Suburban Warriors**
- 11/3 (M) The Personal Is Political: Women’s Rights and the Feminist Revolution
11/5 (W) Discussion: ** Bailey, “Sexual Revolution(s)”; ** Echols, “‘Nothing Distant About It’: Women’s Liberation and Sixties Radicalism”
11/7 (F) Document Discussion
- 11/10 (M) 1968: The World Turned Upside-Down?
11/12 (W) Video: Chicago ‘68
11/14 (F) The “Reformation” of the 1960s: Spirituality and Faith in a Turbulent Decade
- 11/17 (M) The Rise of “Identity Politics” (pt. 1)
11/19 (W) The Rise of “Identity Politics” (pt. 2)
11/21 (F) Document Discussion
- 11/24 (M) **Discussion: Cruse, Stuck Rubber Baby**
11/26 (W) **Thanksgiving Break/No Class**
11/28 (F) **Thanksgiving Break/No Class**
- 12/1 (M) Radicalism and Fragmentation on the Left
12/3 (W) Reaction and Repression in “Amerika”

12/5 (F) Document Discussion (**Final Project due at the beginning of class**)
12/8 (M) The Legacy of the 1960s, pt. 1: Consuming the Sixties
12/10 (W) The Legacy of the 1960s, pt. 2: Politics, Power and the Struggle for Meaning

**** Final Exam: Tuesday, December 16th, 7PM ****

Film Schedule

(all films begin at 7PM; room to be announced in class)

September 9: "American Graffiti"

September 23: "Hearts and Minds" (documentary #1)

September 30: "Berkeley In the Sixties" (documentary #2)

October 21: "Born On the Fourth of July"

November 4: "Yellow Submarine"

November 18: "I Shot Andy Warhol"