Course Goals and Methods: This course seeks to familiarize students with major characters, events, developments, and ideas in the United States from 1877 to the present. Central themes to be explored include the changing contours of freedom, the tensions in U.S. history between cultural pluralism and civic nationalism, as well as key developments, such as the rise (and fall) of mass markets, consumption, the New Deal, the Civil Rights Movement, the right, deindustrialization, and globalization.

This course does not aim to cover a litany of facts and dates. Instead, it attempts to teach students the historical craft. Students will learn how to analyze a wide array of primary and secondary sources, including a novel, photographs, oral history, films, and historical monographs. Through critical readings, writing, and discussions, they will develop their own assessments of key historical figures, moments, and arguments. They will also gain an understanding of how historians construct the past.

Required Texts:

Electronic Resources:

Electronic Reserves:


13. Lorence, James J. *Screening America: United States History Through Film Since 1900* (NY: Pearson, 2006), ch. 10


16. “‘Say it Loud, Say it Proud’: Black Nationalism and Ethnic Consciousness” in *Takin’ it to the Streets,* eds. Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, ch. 3.

Note: All books are available at Swarthmore’s Bookstore, on reserve at McCabe Library, and/or on electronic reserve. If you plan to read books on reserve at McCabe Library rather than buying them, please plan your time wisely.

**Course Requirements:** Students must read all assigned materials BEFORE the designated class, and come to class prepared to participate actively. Students will also lead one class discussion, write three papers, prepare a mid-term and final review, and take a midterm and a final exam.

**Class Participation:** Students are required to attend all classes for the successful completion of the course. Unexcused absences will result in a lower grade. For 3 unexcused absences, your grade for the semester will be lowered by a third of a grade (for example, a B+ will become a B). For every additional 2 unexcused absence, your grade will be lowered by a further third of a grade. Excused absences include illness (please bring a doctor’s note to the following class), serious personal crisis, or observance of a religious holiday. Advance notice of an absence is appreciated (e-mail me).
Assignments:

**Leading Class Discussion:** Students will lead one class discussion. To do so, they will present their own analysis of the weekly reading. This 5-10 minute presentation should NOT be a summary, but rather should engage the reading critically discussing, for example, what you liked most/least about the reading, found most problematic etc. When analyzing primary sources, you should also consider how reliable and how representative the source is and try to relate it to the course’s broader themes. In addition, students will formulate 2 questions in response to the reading and ask them of the class. Questions should not be easily answered in the text, but rather should require additional thought and consideration. Please e-mail a brief description of your presentation and the question you have by (or before) 12PM on Tuesday.

**Papers:** Students will write three papers (6-8 pages in length) throughout the semester. These papers will include (1) critical readings of primary sources given to you, (2) identification and analysis of a primary source found in Swarthmore’s Peace Collection, and (3) an analytical book review following the standards in professional historical journals. Details concerning the topic, expectations, and requirements of each paper will be available on backboard and discussed in class prior to the deadline. Papers are due in class. Late papers will have their grades reduced by 1/3rd of a grade (i.e. a B paper becomes a B-) for every day they are late.

**Exams:** Students will take both a midterm and a final exam. Exams will challenge students to integrate lectures, class discussions, and readings of primary and secondary sources to defend their arguments. The format will include short answers and essays. Students will be required to write and post on Blackboard 4 sample essay questions prior to the exams.

1/23 Introduction
- Optional Reading: Foner, *Give Me Liberty!*, ch. 15

1/30 The Gilded Age: The Rise of Big Business and Going West
- Foner, *Give Me Liberty*, ch. 16
- Bellamy, *Looking Backward*

2/6 Freedom’s Boundaries: Segregation at Home and Empire Abroad
- Foner, *Give Me Liberty*, ch. 17
- Gerstle, *American Crucible*, Intro, Ch 1, 2
- Royster, *Southern Horrors*

2/13 The Progressive Movement: Immigration and the Rise of the City
- Foner, *Give Me Liberty*, 18
- Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*
- First Paper Due

2/20 WWI, Women’s Suffrage, and the Rise of Mass Culture
- Foner, *Give me Liberty*, 19, 20
- Foner, *Voices of Freedom*, chs. 19, 20. [ER]
- Cott *Grounding of Modern Feminism*, 13-50, 271-283 [ER]
- Emma Goldman (506-516), Charlotte Perkins Gilman (566-598, and Jane Addams (599-612) in Feminist Papers [ER]
2/27  New Deal
- Gerstle *American Crucible*, 4;
- Foner, *Give Me Liberty*, 21
- Robert and Helen Lynd, *Middletown*
- Midterm Review to be posted on Blackboard by 5PM, 2/26

3/6  Mid Term
3/13  Spring Break
3/20  World War and Cold War
   - Foner, *Give Me Liberty*, 22, 23, 24
   - Gerstle, *American Crucible*, Chs. 5+6
   - Davidson & Lytle *After the Fact*, ch. 13 [ER]
3/27  Affluence and its Discontents
   - Cohen *Consumers’ Republic* [ER]
   - Hoffman and Gjerde, *Major Problems*, ch. 11 [ER]
   - Davidson and Lytle, *After the Fact*, ch. 14. [ER]
   - **Second Paper Due**
4/3  No Class – Passover – Movie: “Salt of the Earth”
   Reading: James J. Lorence, *Screening America*, ch. 10 [ER]
4/10  The Sixties: Liberalism’s Height and Fall
   - Foner, *Give Me Liberty!*, 25
   - Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 7 + 8
   - Evans, *Tidal Wave*, ch. 2 [ER]
   - Bloom and Breines, *Takin’ it to the Streets*, ch. 3. [ER]
   - Peiss and Patterson, *Major Problems*, ch. 12 [ER]
4/17  Goldwater to Reagan
   - Foner, *Give Me Liberty!*, 26
   - Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*
   - **Third paper Due**
4/24  Deindustrialization and Globalization
   - Foner, *Give Me Liberty!*, 27
   - Thomas Friedman, *Clash of Economics* [ER]
   - Dublin and Licht, *The Face of Decline*, chs. 6, 7 [ER]
5/1  A New World Order?
- Gerstle, *American Crucible*, Epilogue
- Jacobson and Colon, *The 9/11 Report*
- Bernard Lewis, *Clash of Civilizations* [ER]
- Eric Foner, “Rethinking American History in a Post 9/11 World”
  http://hnn.us/articles/6961.html
- **Final Review to be posted on Blackboard by 5PM on 4/30**

TBA  Final Exam