

HIS-105
Mon, Wed, 11-12.30
Humanities 129
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CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Professor Neal M. Rosendorf
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This course explores the historical “back story” of several crucial issues facing the US and the larger world in the early 21st century, including tracing the narrative background of events from their origins to the present day, comparing and contrasting current issues with seemingly analogous earlier issues, and examining changing popular, policy and scholarly perspectives on given issues over time. During this semester we will focus on four areas of particular significance and controversy: the Iraq war; abortion and stem cell research; the current immigration debate; and global climate change. We will examine scholarly writings and primary documents, both written and audio-visual as appropriate. The presentation of issues here should not by any means be considered definitive. Rather it should be approached as a “first cut,” designed to stimulate thought, discussion, a sustained interest in exploring these topics and their historical contexts, and to provide tools for the exercise of “critical citizenship” in society at large.

This is a discussion-intensive class. Students will be expected to read assigned materials prior to class meetings, and to participate in an informed way in class discussion. The subjects under consideration are all hot-button issues by design; hence, it is critical that all participants conduct debate in a reasoned if spirited fashion (this isn't Hannity and Colmes, after all). Class participation is **mandatory** and will count for 20% of the final grade—so do not come to class unprepared! Chronically unprepared students will be directed to drop the course or face a UW or F at the professor's discretion.

Most Web-based readings can be accessed directly from the syllabus posted on the professor's Website. There will be four brief papers (worth 15% each) and a take-home final exam essay (worth 20%). Attendance will be taken: more than three unexcused absences will result in a half-grade reduction, with a half-grade off for each additional unexcused absence. More than six unexcused absences will be grounds for an automatic UW or F at the professor's discretion.

Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated—it will result in a failing grade for the semester, at the professor's discretion--so don't plagiarize!

SYLLABUS

Week One—1/22, 1/24: Course Introduction; Thinking About “Contemporary History”

SECTION I: QUAGMIRE IN IRAQ

Week Two—1/29, 1/31: World War I and the Making of the Map of the Modern Mideast

Readings:

MONDAY:

David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace* (Introduction; c. 1-2; c. 3 to p. 38; c. 8, 10, 12; c. 16, part III; c. 17; c. 23, part V; c. 24, parts I-II; c. 26, part III; c. 28; c. 31, parts I-III, V; c. 36, parts V-VI; c. 38, parts I, VI; c. 41, parts I-III, VII; c. 42, part V;

Sykes-Picot Agreement, 1916, at

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_depth/middle_east/2001/israel_and_the_palestinians/key_documents/1681362.stm

WEDNESDAY:

Fromkin, c. 43, 46, 51; c. 57, parts I, III-IV, VI-VII; c. 58, part VIII; c. 59, part III; c. 61, I-V)

T. E. Lawrence, “A Report on Mesopotamia,” 1920, at

<http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/iraq/history/1920arabia.htm>

Week Three—2/5, 2/7: Munich and “The Munich Analogy”; The US Supplants the UK in the ME, 1950s

Readings:

MONDAY:

Neville Chamberlain, Speech in Defense of the Munich Agreement, 1938, at

<http://www.wwnorton.com/college/history/ralph/workbook/ralprs36.htm>

Jeffrey Record, *Appeasement Reconsidered: Investigating the Mythology of the 1930s* (Strategic Studies Institute, 2005), at

<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/Pubs/Display.Cfm?pubID=622>

“Rumsfeld Steps Up Iraq War Talk,” *The Guardian* (UK), 8/21/02, at

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/Iraq/Story/0,2763,778180,00.html>

Jonah Goldberg, “Hitler vs. Hussein,” *National Review*, 10/16/02, at

<http://www.nationalreview.com/goldberg/goldberg101602.asp>

Daniel Mandel, “Islamofascism...Bush is On to Something,” History News Network (George Mason University), at <http://hnn.us/articles/30111.html>

WEDNESDAY:

Declassified Secret CIA Account of the Overthrow of the Elected Iranian Government, 1953, Summary, at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB28/summary.pdf>

“Baghdad Bastion,” *Time*, 12/5/55, at

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,893204,00.html?promoid=googlep>

Roger Hardy, "Regime Change, 1950s Style," BBC News, 7/25/06, at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/5212448.stm

"The Eisenhower Doctrine on the Middle East," 1957, at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1957eisenhowerdoctrine.html>

Week Four—2/12, 2/14: Vietnam and Lessons from the First Quagmire

Readings, etc.:

MONDAY:

Sen. J. William Fulbright on "the Arrogance of Power," 1966, at <http://coursesa.matrix.msu.edu/~hst306/documents/fulbright.html>

Walter Cronkite Comments on the Tet Offensive, 2/27/68 (transcript), at <http://www.alvernia.edu/cgi-bin/mt/text/archives/000194.html>

Andrew Kohut Interview, "Parallels, Differences in Vietnam 1968, Iraq 2006," NPR-All Things Considered, 10/19/06 (Audio), at <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=6344607>
(hit "Listen" button for audio)

"Conversation with Colonel Harry G. Summers, Jr.: Military Strategy," 1996, at <http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/conversations/Summers/>

WEDNESDAY:

Caspar Weinberger, "The Uses of Military Power" [National Press Club speech], 1984, at http://www.afa.org/magazine/jan2004/military_power.pdf

Colin Powell, "U.S. Forces: Challenges Ahead," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1992-93, at http://www.cfr.org/publication/7508/us_forces.html?breadcrumb=%2Fbios%2F2045%2Fcolin_1_powell

Week Five—2/21: Saddam's Iraq—From Client to Enemy, 1980s-90s

[NO MEETING Monday, 2/19—Presidents' Weekend]

Readings:

Secret Memorandum, "Talking Points for Amb. Rumsfeld's Meeting with Tariq Aziz and Saddam Hussein," 1983, at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB82/iraq29.pdf>

National Security Directive 54: "Responding to Iraqi Aggression in the Gulf," 1991, at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB39/document4.pdf>

Amb. Madeleine Albright Interview, CBS *Sixty Minutes*, 1996 [Excerpt], at http://indypeer.org/show_file_page.php?file_id=25

"Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Briefing on Operation DESERT FOX," 1998, at http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/1998/t12201998_t1219coh.html

Bill Clinton, The Iraq Liberation Act, 1998, at <http://www.library.cornell.edu/colldev/mideast/libera.htm>

Larry Johnson, "A Nation Sagging Under the Weight of Sanctions: Thousands of Infants are Dying," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 5/11/99, at <http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/iraq/life1.shtml>

Week Six—2/26, 2/28: War, “Mission Accomplished,” and More War, 2002-07

Readings, etc.:

MONDAY:

Kenneth Pollack, “Next Stop Baghdad?” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2002, at <http://www.cfr.org/publication.html?id=4484>

Charles Krauthammer, “Why Did Bush Go to War,” *Washington Post*, 7/18/03, at <http://www.benadorassociates.com/article/475>

George Packer: “War After the War: What Washington Doesn’t See in Iraq,” *The New Yorker*, 11/24/03, at http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/031124fa_fact1?031124fa_fact1

WEDNESDAY:

Francis Fukuyama, “Why Shouldn’t I Change My Mind?” *Los Angeles Times*, 4/9/06, at <http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/sunday/commentary/la-op-fukuyama9apr09%2C0%2C5138726.story?coll=la-sunday-commentary>

Thomas Ricks (Author of *Fiasco*) Interview with Charlie Rose, 2006 (Video), at <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-4926293608118312619>

Pres. Bush’s Address on Baghdad Troop Surge,” January 2007 (Video), at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-7.html>
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-7.html>
(view video; Webpage includes transcript)

Sen. Chuck Hagel Interview with Charlie Rose, January 2007 (Video), at http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=4101791107248270093&q=owner%3ACharlie_Rose
(go to 17:35; end at 38:55)

Film: *Battle of Algiers* (evening viewing; date TBA)

****BRIEF PAPER Assignment (5-6 pp.—1200-1400 words), due in class next Monday****

SECTION II: ABORTION AND STEM CELL RESEARCH: A DOMESTIC POLITICAL QUAGMIRE

Week Seven—3/5, 3/7: The Abortion Issue in the Pre-Roe Era

Readings:

MONDAY:

Kristin Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*, chapters 1-5

WEDNESDAY:

Griswold v. Connecticut US Supreme Court Decision, 1965, at <http://www.thisnation.com/library/griswold.html>

“41st Anniversary of Landmark *Griswold v. Connecticut* Decision Comes as Attacks on Birth Control Access Increase,” NARAL Press Release, 2006, at http://www.prochoiceamerica.org/news/press-releases/2006/pr06072006_griswold.html

Robert P. George and David L. Tubbs, “The Bad Decision that Started It All,” *National Review*, 7/18/05, at <http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/abortion/ab0099.html>

Week Eight—3/12, 3/14: Three-Plus Decades of Legal and Emotional Tug-of-War

Readings:

MONDAY:

Luker, chapters 6-7, 9

Roe v. Wade US Supreme Court Decision, 1973, at <http://www.tourolaw.edu/patch/Roe/>
(read through section 5)

Jeanie Rosoff, “The Webster Decision: A Giant Step Backwards,” *Family Planning Perspectives*, Vol. 21, No. 4. (Jul. - Aug., 1989), pp. 148-149, at J-STOR

David Shaw, “‘Abortion Hype’ Pervaded Media After Webster Case,” *Los Angeles Times*, 7/4/90, at <http://www-swiss.ai.mit.edu/~rauch/nvp/articles/media/shaw4.html>

Planned Parenthood v. Casey US Supreme Court Decision, 1992, at <http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/91-744.ZS.html>
(read through section 1-i)

WEDNESDAY:

“Salvi Gets Life Without Parole in Two Abortion Clinic Murders,” *Washington Post*, 3/19/96, at <http://www-tech.mit.edu/V116/N13/salvi.13w.html>

“Olympic Bomber Given Life Sentence,” *Washington Post*, 8/23/05, at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/08/22/AR2005082200108.html?nav=rss_nation

“Roberts Avoids Specifics on Abortion Issue,” *Washington Post*, 9/14/05, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/09/13/AR2005091300682.html>

“Some Abortion Foes Balk at S.D. Law,” *USA Today*, 3/6/06, at http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2006-03-07-abortion-side_x.htm

Jeffrey Rosen, “The Day After Roe,” *Atlantic Monthly*, June 2006, at <http://academic.evergreen.edu/Curricular/hhd2005/SpringDownloads/DayAfterRoe1.pdf>

Pat Arnow, “Abortion in New York City,” *Gotham Gazette*, 8/28/06, at <http://www.gothamgazette.com/article//20060828/200/1958>

Week Nine—3/19, 3/21: Public Funding of Embryonic Stem Cell Research

Readings and Viewings:

MONDAY:

William Jennings Bryan, “The Menace of Evolution,” 1921, at <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/bryanonevol.html>

James Watson and Francis Crick, “A Structure for Deoxyribose Nucleic Acid,” *Nature*, April 1953, at <http://academy.asd20.org/kadets/lundberg/dnapaper.html>

“Baby Jones,” *Time*, 1/21/80, at <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,952556,00.html>

“Activist Challenges Gene-Transfer Research,” *Washington Post*, 11/20/84, at <http://www.foet.org/past/documents/ActivistChallengesGenewpost11-20-84.doc>

President George W. Bush on Stem Cell Research, 2001, at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/08/20010809-2.html>
(view video; Webpage also has written transcript)

“Stem Cell Research,” PBS “NewsHour” Report, 8/10/04, at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/health/july-dec04/stemcell_8-10.html
(view video; Webpage also has written transcript)

WEDNESDAY:

“Senate Passes Stem Cell Bill; Bush Vows Veto,” *Washington Post*, 7/19/06, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/07/18/AR2006071800182.html>

Christine Vestel, “Stem Cell Debate Goes to Voters,” *Stateline.org*, at <http://www.stateline.org/live/printable/story?contentId=146780>

Michael J. Fox TV Campaign Ad for Claire McCaskill, October 2006, at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9WB_PXjTBo

Conservative Response Ad to Michael J. Fox Ad (“Vote No on Two”), October 2006, at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nguJQ_dRPXw&NR

“Rush Limbaugh on the Offensive Against Ad with Michael J. Fox,” *Washington Post*, 10/25/06, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/24/AR2006102400691.html>

Footage of Rush Limbaugh Comments on Michael J. Fox, NBC News Clip, 10/2006, at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2lXs6xyHMOg>

“Election Outcome Boosts Embryonic Stem Cell Work,” Reuters, 11/13/06, at <http://elections.us.reuters.com/top/news/usnN10197081.html>

“House Passes Stem Cell Research Bill, But Lacks Votes to Override Bush Veto,” 1/11/07, at http://www.foxnews.com/printer_friendly_story/0.3566.243062.00.html

****BRIEF PAPER Assignment (3 pp.—700-800 words), due in class next Monday****

SECTION III: AN AMERICAN IMMIGRATION CRISIS?

Week Ten—3/26, 3/28: Anxieties About the “Wrong” Immigrants in the 19th-20th Centuries

Readings:

MONDAY (All):

Nancy Foner, *From Ellis Island to JFK*, Introduction, c. 1, pp. 9-23; c. 2, pp. 36-47; c. 3, pp. 70-75, 79-89; c. 4, 108-123; c. 5, pp. 142-149; c. 6, pp. 169-176; c. 7, pp. 188-196, 205-208

“An Act to Establish an [sic] Uniform Rule of Naturalization,” 1790, at <http://rs6.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=001/llsl001.db&recNum=226>

Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882, at <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/chinex.htm>

Film: *Skyscrapers of New York*, 1903, at http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?papr:5:/temp/~ammem_LNOn:: (view parts 1-3; suggested download format is MPEG—you might wish to view film via RealPlayer)

“Shut the Door”: Statement of Sen. Ellison DuRant Smith, 1924, at <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5080>

US-Mexico Bracero Agreement, 1942, at <http://www.farmworkers.org/bpaccord.html>

[NO MEETING 4/2, 4/4—Passover/Easter]

Week Eleven—4/9, 4/11: Today’s Immigrants are Good/Bad/Indifferent for America

Readings, etc.:

MONDAY:

Foner, c. 1, pp. 23-35; c. 3, pp. 89-107, c. 7, pp. 208-223; c. 8, all

Lyndon Johnson’s Remarks at the Signing of the Immigration Bill, 1965, at <http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/Johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/651003.asp>

Daphne Eviatar, “Nightly Nativism,” *The Nation*, at <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20060828/eviatar>

George Borjas, “Immigration,” *The Concise Encyclopedia of Economics*, at <http://www.econlib.org/LIBRARY/Enc/Immigration.html>

“Bush Proposes Legal Status for Immigrant Labor,” *Washington Post*, 1/8/04, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A63428-2004Jan7.html>

“Effect of Immigration on Jobs, Wages, is Difficult for Economists to Nail Down,” *Washington Post*, 4/15/06, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/14/AR2006041401686.html>

Edward Sifuentes, “Immigration Debate Blazed in 2006,” *The Californian*, 12/31/06, at http://www.nctimes.com/articles/2007/01/01/news/californian/09_06_8112_31_06.txt

WEDNESDAY:

Film: *Farmingville*, 2003 (in-class viewing)

****BRIEF PAPER Assignment (3 pp.—700-800 words), due in class next Monday****

SECTION IV: GLOBAL WARMING AND COOLING (AND LET’S NOT FORGET NUCLEAR WINTER)

Week Twelve—4/16, 4/18: Hot World, Cold World, Yesterday, Today, and the Day After Tomorrow

Readings:

MONDAY:

“Plumbing the Black Sea for Proof of the Deluge,” *New York Times*, 1/5/99, at <http://www.ifremer.fr/drogm/Perso/lericolais/NYTimes.htm>

Scott A. Mandia, "The Little Ice Age in Europe: Influence of Dramatic Climate Shifts on European Civilizations," at http://www2.sunysuffolk.edu/mandias/lia/little_ice_age.html

Mike Davis, "A World's End: Drought, Famine and Imperialism (1896-1902)," *Capitalism, Nature, Socialist*, June 1999, online at ProQuest (access through Post Library Online database)

WEDNESDAY:

"The Impact of Greenhouse Warming on the El Niño Southern Oscillation," at <http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/science/factsheet/enso.html>

UnderSec'y of State Stuart Eizenstadt, "The Kyoto Protocol: A Framework for Action," *USIA Electronic Journal*, April 1998, at <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itgic/0498/ijge/gj-01.htm>

Letter from Pres. George W. Bush to US Senators on Global Climate Change, 2001, at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/03/20010314.html>

"What's After the Day After Tomorrow? A Science Perspective on the Science Fiction Movie," Woods Hole Ocean and Climate Change Institute, at <http://www.whoi.edu/institutes/occi/viewArticle.do?id=9948>

A. Robock, et al., "Climatic Consequences of Regional Nuclear Conflicts," *Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics Discussions*, 6, 11817-11843, 2006, at <http://www.copernicus.org/EGU/acp/acpd/6/11817/acpd-6-11817.pdf>

Week Thirteen—4/23, 4/25: Publicizing Environmental Awareness: 1962 and 2006

Readings, etc.:

MONDAY:

Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, chapters 1-2, 4, 7, 12, 14, 16, 17

WEDNESDAY:

Film: *An Inconvenient Truth* (in-class viewing, Wednesday)

****BRIEF PAPER Assignment (3 pp.—700-800 words), due in class next Monday****

IN CONCLUSION

Week Fourteen—4/30: Review Discussion; distribution of take-home exam assignment

*******Please note that this syllabus may be subject to modification during the semester at the professor's discretion.*******