The University of Western Ontario Department of History 2016-2017 (Fall Term)

HISTORY 3326F ATOMIC AMERICA: The United States during the 1950s



U.S. Dept. of Defense/Office of Civil Defense, Personal and Family Survival (SM 3-11, Revised, 1963)

Mondays 9:30 a.m – 12:30 p.m. Location: Weldon Library Room 257

Instructor:Professor Aldona SendzikasOffice:Lawson Hall 1222E-mail:asendzi2@uwo.caTelephone:661-2111, x84377

Office hours: Tuesdays 3-4 p.m., or by appointment

Course Description:

Films and television tend to depict the 1950s as "happy days": a decade of widespread affluence and stability, close-knit families, and a new teen culture which embraced drive-in restaurants, poodle skirts, and sock hops. Other portrayals, however, present the 1950s as a period shaped by anxiety and marked by conformity and hypocrisy. While many Americans enjoyed the benefits of a strong and

affluent post-war society, they also struggled to learn to live in the shadow of the newly-developed atomic bomb. It was a decade of new homes and appliances, but also of backyard bomb shelters, blacklists, and worries about Communist expansion. Meanwhile, Americans such as Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, Jr., challenged the racial status quo and inspired a movement for civil rights. American women began to question their role in the nuclear family and in society as a whole. Antiheroes such as James Dean, Jack Kerouac, and Lenny Bruce who resisted conventional norms of society became regarded as role models by American youth.

In this course, we will examine some key aspects of political, social, and cultural life in the United States during the 1950s, looking primarily at the state of California as a microcosm of the nation. In California of the 1950s we see striking examples of the best and the worst trends and developments of the decade. Rapid urban growth, sprawling suburbia, the freeway system and the car culture, Disneyland, Hollywood, booming aerospace and defence industries, the expansion of education systems, in-migration from the other states—all of these suggested the idea of America as the land of the future, the land of possibility. At the same time, however, in 1950s California we see evidence of more negative developments, including the destruction of the environment, the ending of urban street car systems, the intensification of urban ghettos, and the excesses of the anti-Communist fervour.

In examining some of the key events, trends, and developments of this period as they took shape in the state of California, we will consider their relevance to and effects on the nation as a whole. Finally, we will compare the California of the 1950s with the California of today in an attempt to determine the legacy of the 1950s.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will have:

- o developed a detailed knowledge of key events and issues of 1950s American society
- o assessed the legacy and long-term impact of the events of the 1950s
- familiarized themselves with several significant primary documents of the period and evaluated their historical value and significance, alone and in relation to other primary sources
- o critically analyzed various historical interpretations of the decade
- examined some of the cultural artifacts of the period and learned to understand their significance (*egs.*: music, film, poetry, media coverage)
- o developed a research question and answered it in a written assignment, integrating both primary and secondary sources in formulating the argument.
- developed presentation and communication skills through class discussion and presentations

Required Texts:

- Kevin Starr, *Golden Dreams: California in an Age of Abundance, 1950-1963* (Oxford University Press, 2009) (Available for purchase at the Western Bookstore. In addition, four copies will be placed on one-day loan at Weldon library.)
- Weekly online readings, available on the internet or on the OWL course website.
- Each student will also choose and read one "classic" book that was widely read by the American public in the 1950s and facilitate a class discussion about the book.

Evaluation:

>	Short paper (3 pages in length) and short presentation on an influential individual of 1950s	15%
>	Facilitating class discussion on one of the weekly books and submission of written bibliography	20%
>	Written proposal for research essay (to include: thesis statement or question to be addressed; outline to show how the paper will be structured; and preliminary bibliography).	5%
>	Research essay (12-15 pages in length; on a topic of the student's Choosing, in consultation with the instructor).	40%
>	Class participation	20%

Written Assignments:

Written assignments must be submitted in paper form to the instructor at the start of class on the due date, and in electronic form via the submission link on the Owl course website by the same time. (By using the submission link on the course website, your paper will automatically be submitted to Turnitin.com.)

Further instructions regarding the above assignments will be provided in class.

Late assignments: A late penalty of 5% for the first day, and 2% for each day after the first day (including Saturdays and Sundays) will be incurred for all written work submitted after the due date and time. Papers submitted on the due date but after the due time (i.e., 9:30 a.m.) will be considered late and will be penalized 2%. Late papers should be submitted at the History Department (Lawson Hall 2201) drop box, as well as electronically via the course website. Keep a copy of each of your written assignments until you receive the grade for it.

Please note that HIS 3326F is an essay course. According to Western's Academic Handbook, an essay course "...must be so structured that the student is required to demonstrate competence in

essay writing to pass the course." In this class, that means that a student must submit a minimum of 12 pages of written work in order to pass the course.

The Dean has exempted this course from Senate regulation (2016 04) which reads: "At least one week prior to the deadline for withdrawal from a course without academic penalty, students will receive assessment of work accounting at least 15% of their final grade. For 3000- or 4000-level courses in which such a graded assessment is impracticable, the instructor(s) must obtain an exemption from this policy from the Dean and this exemption must be noted on the corresponding course syllabus." See the full text at:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/evaluation_undergrad.pdf

In other words, the instructor of this course is NOT required to provide an assessment of work accounting for at least 15% of the final grade one week prior to the deadline for withdrawal from the course.

Expectations:

- Regular attendance.
- Completion of all assigned readings and active, informed participation in class discussion, based on those readings.
- Courtesy and respect towards other members of the class.
- Be present: turn off cell phones and other technological devices, and engage with the class. Laptops are allowed if they are used to take notes or access online readings. Use of laptops for other purposes in class may negatively affect your participation mark.

Participation:

Each week, beginning on September 26th, 3 students will be tasked with evaluating the participation of their fellow students. Instructions and evaluation forms will be provided in class. Your participation grade for the course will be a combination of the results of these peer evaluations and the instructor's evaluation of your contributions to class discussion.

Policy on Absences and Extensions:

Students should read carefully the Faculty of Social Science "Instructions for Students Registered in Social Science Who are Unable to Write Tests or Examinations or Submit Assignments as Scheduled." They are appended to this syllabus. Pressures of work or computer/printer difficulties do not constitute acceptable reason for an extension.

If you require an extension or other type of academic accommodation, for either medical or non-medical reasons, contact Academic Counselling. Students are reminded that academic accommodation on medical grounds can in most instances only be granted if supported by a University of Western Ontario Student Medical Certificate. This form can be accessed at the Social Science Academic Counselling website: http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/, or can be picked up at the Academic Counselling Office in the student's home faculty. (For Social Science students: SSC 2105.) Further detail on this policy can be found at this same website.

Statement on Academic Offences:

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic policies/appeals/scholastic discipline undergrad.pdf.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a serious academic issue which can result in failure (*i.e.*, a grade of zero) on an assignment or more serious penalties. Plagiarism is reported to the Department Chair and the Faculty Dean. Students may be asked to submit research notes, and so students should keep all research notes for all assignments until after they have obtained their final grade in the course.

A copy of the Faculty of Social Sciences policy on plagiarism is attached to this syllabus. Students should familiarize themselves with this policy.

Note: "All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com)."

[www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/crsout.pdf]

Support Services

- The website for the UWO Office of the Registrar is: http://www.registrar.uwo.ca.
- UWO has many services and programs that support the personal, physical, social, and academic needs of students, in a confidential environment.
 - The Student Development Centre (SDC) has trained staff and an array of services to help students achieve their personal, academic and professional goals. See: http://www.sdc.uwo.ca.
 - The Services for Students with Disabilities office (SSD) has staff members who specialize in assisting students with various disabilities to adjust to the university environment. See: http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd.
 - For information related to accessibility, including accessible routes, temporary service disruptions, and university policies related to accessibility issues, see:
 http://www.accessibility.uwo.ca/students/index.htm.

Week 1 (Sept. 12th): Introduction.

Review of syllabus.

Lecture: "Duck and Cover": The dawn of the atomic age.

Discussion of biography assignment.

Week 2 (Sept. 19th): Urban America: the postwar growth of San Diego.

Subthemes: the defense industry; the Mexican border; arts and culture.

Readings for this week:

• Starr, Chapter 3 (pp. 57-87)

• Col. Richard P. Taffe, "I'm not afraid of the A-bomb" (26 January 1952): http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6451/

*Biography selection due!

Week 3 (Sept. 26th): Postwar San Francisco.

Subthemes: neighbourhoods; the workforce; politics and unions; religion.

Readings: Starr, Ch. 4 (pp. 88-130).

*Peer evaluations begin.

Week 4 (Oct. 3rd): Los Angeles as supercity.

Subthemes: the LAPD; arts and society; religion.

Readings:

• Starr, Ch.5 & 6 (pp. 131-188).

• Book excerpts on OWL.

Book topics for this week:

• The GIs return

• The Atomic Age.

► October 10th: Thanksgiving holiday. No class today!

Week 5 (Oct.17th): Suburbia: homes and happiness in residential subdivisions.

Subthemes: the San Fernando Valley; architecture and design; social class.

Readings: Starr, Chs. 1 & 2 (pp. 3-33, 49-53).

*Biographical short paper due. Brief oral presentations on biography

subjects.

*Discussion of essay assignment.

Week 6 (Oct. 24th): Freeways to the future.

Readings:

• Starr, Ch. 9 (pp. 245-266).

• President Eisenhower's message to Congress re: interstate highway

system, 22 February 1955:

https://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/research/online_documents/interstate_highway_system/1955_02_22_Message_to_Congress.pdf

- Popular responses to *Brown v. Board of Education:* available on course website.
- "The Southern Manifesto," 12 March 1956:
 http://www.pbs.org/wnet/supremecourt/rights/sources_document2.html
- Book excerpts on OWL.

Book topics for this week:

- Politics.
- Social Classes.

Week 7 (Oct. 31st): Freeway culture: automobiles, drive-ins, and Disneyland.

Readings: online, to be assigned.

Book topics for this week:

- Social critique.
- Environmentalism.

*Essay proposal due.

Week 8 (Nov. 7th): The Cold War campus.

Subthemes: the universities and the aerospace industry; HUAC.

Readings:

- Starr, Ch. 8 (pp. 217-244)
- J. Edgar Hoover, Testimony before HUAC, 26 March 1947: http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=3632
- The Attorney General's List of Totalitarian, Fascist, Communist, Subversive, and Other Organizations, 16 November 1950: http://niu.edu/~rfeurer/labor/pdf%20files/the%20attorney%20general.pdf
- "Is Communism Un-American?" (c. 1950): http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/documented-rights/exhibit/section4/detail/communism-unamerican.html
- Memorandum of conference with President Eisenhower after Sputnik, 8 October 1957: https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/sputnik-memo/
- Book excerpts on OWL

Book topics for this week:

- The Communist threat.
- Foreign policy.

Week 9 (Nov. 14th): "Father Knows Best": the roles of men, women, and children in the "nuclear family."

Subthemes: teen culture; the Rosenberg case.

Readings:

- Starr, Ch. 13 (pp. 352-380)
- Dr. Judson T. and Mary G. Landis, "The U.S. Male...Is He First-Class?" (19 July 1952): http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6562/

- Male and female roles in civil defense (1950): http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6773/
- Judge Irving Kaufman's Sentencing of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, 5 April 1951:
- http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=1118
- Book excerpts on OWL.

Book topic for this week:

• Family and Society

Week 10 (Nov. 21st): Literature, Film, Music and Comedy in the 1950s.

Subthemes: Hollywood and HUAC; the Beats.

Readings:

- Starr, Ch. 11 (pp. 285-313) & Ch. 14 (381-410)
- excerpts from Ginsberg and Ferlinghetti (to be assigned)
- Lillian Hellman, Letter to HUAC, 19 May 1952: http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6454
- The Waldorf Statement, 3 December 1947: available on course website.
- Book excerpts on OWL.

Book topic for this week:

• Science Fiction.

Week 11 (Nov. 28th): Race and civil rights in the 1950s.

Subthemes: school integration; Montgomery bus boycott.

Readings:

- Starr, Ch. 16 (pp. 436-465)
- Excerpt from Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma:* "Introduction" (pp. xiv-lv) and "America's Opportunity" (pp. 1021-1024): https://archive.org/details/AmericanDilemmaTheNegroProblemAndModernDemocracy
- Book excerpts on OWL

Book topic for this week:

• Race relations.

Week 12 (Dec. 5th): Civil rights. Subthemes: women's rights; gay rights; immigrants' rights.

Conclusion: California then and now.

Readings:

- Starr, Ch. 17 (pp. 466-480).
- Book excerpts on OWL

Book topic for this week:

• Race relations.

*Essays due!

Books of the 1950s assignment

Instructions: Each student will choose one of the following books to read, and will lead a class discussion of approximately 10-15 minutes about the book, on the date specified. Further instructions will be provided in class.

Unless otherwise noted below, these books are available at Weldon Library.

Books marked with an asterisk * are books that were once banned.

Week 4 (October 3rd):

The GIs return:

- [fiction] James Jones, From Here to Eternity (1951)
- [fiction] Arthur Miller, All My Sons (1948)
- [fiction] Herman Wouk, The Caine Mutiny (1951)

The Atomic Age:

- U.S. Congress, The Nature of Radioactive Fallout and Its Effects on Man (1957)
- David Bradley, *No Place to Hide* (1948)
- John Hersey, *Hiroshima* (1946)
- Michihiko Hachiya, *Hiroshima Diary: The Journal of a Japanese Physician August 6 September 30, 1945* (1955)
- Harrison Brown, Must Destruction Be Our Destiny? A Scientist Speaks as a Citizen (1946)
- National Industrial Conference Board, *Protecting Personnel in Wartime* (1952)
- U.S. Congress, Civil Defense Against Atomic Attack (1950)
- [fiction] Neville Shute, On the Beach (1957) (not at Weldon)

Week 6 (October 24th):

Politics:

- John F. Kennedy, Jr., *Profiles in Courage* (1956)
- [fiction] Allen Drury, Advise and Consent: A Novel of Washington Politics (1959)

Social classes:

- o C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (1956)
- O Vance Packard, The Status Seekers (1959)
- o John Kenneth Galbraith, The Affluent Society (1958)

Week 7 (October 31st):

Social critique:

- o David Riesman, The Lonely Crowd (1953)
- O William Whyte, The Organization Man (1956)
- O Vance Packard, The Hidden Persuaders (1957)
- o [fiction] William Golding, Lord of the Flies (1954)*
- o [fiction] Jack Kerouac, On the Road (1957)*
- o [fiction] Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman (1949)
- o [fiction] Sloan Wilson, The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit (1955)

Environmentalism:

• Rachel Carson, *The Sea Around Us* (1951)

Week 8 (November 7th):

The Communist threat:

- John Gunther, *Inside Russia Today* (1958)
- Whittaker Chambers, *Witness* (1952)
- J. Edgar Hoover, Masters of Deceit: The Story of Communism in America and How to Fight It (1958)
- [fiction] Richard Condon, *The Manchurian Candidate* (1959) (not at Weldon)
- [fiction] Arthur Miller, *The Crucible* (1952)

Foreign Policy:

- William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (1959)
- John H. Herz, *International Politics in the Atomic Age* (1959)
- P.M.S. Blackett, Fear, War and the Bomb: Military and Political Consequences of Atomic Energy (1949)
- [fiction] Eugene Burdick and William Lederer, *The Ugly American* (1958)
- [fiction] Graham Greene, The Quiet American (1955)

Week 9 (November 14th):

The family and society:

- o Norman Vincent Peale, *The Power of Positive Thinking* (1952)
- o Emily Post, *Etiquette* (1960)
- o Dr. Benjamin Spock, Baby and Child Care (1957)
- o [fiction] Sloan Wilson, The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit (1955)
- o [fiction] Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman (1949)
- o [fiction] J.D. Salinger, Catcher in the Rye (1951)*
- o [fiction] Grace Metallious, Peyton Place (1956)*
- o [fiction] John Updike, Rabbit, Run (1960)

Week 10 (November 21st):

Science Fiction:

- Ray Bradbury, Fahrenheit 451 (1953)*
- John Wyndham, Day of the Triffids (1951)
- Ray Bradbury, *The Martian Chronicles* (1950)
- Arthur C. Clarke, *Childhood's End* (1953)
- Kurt Vonnegut, *Player Piano* (1952)
- George Orwell, 1984 (1949)*

Weeks 11 and 12 (November 28th and December 5th):

Race relations in America:

- Martin Luther King, Jr., Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story (1953)
- John Howard Griffin, Black Like Me (1960)
- C. Vann Woodward, The Strange Career of Jim Crow (1955)
- James Baldwin, *Notes of a Native Son* (1955)
- [fiction] Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun (1959)
- [fiction] Ralph Ellison, Invisible Man (1952)*
- [fiction] James Baldwin, Go Tell It on the Mountain (1953)*
- [fiction] Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird (1960)*

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

Prerequisites and Antirequisites:

Unless you have either the requisites for this course, as described in the Academic Calendar description of the course, or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites. The Academic Calendar description of each course also indicates which classes are considered antirequisites, i.e., to cover such similar material that students are not permitted to receive academic credit for both courses.

Academic Offences:

Scholastic Offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitute a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

A. In using another writer's words, you must both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer.

You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. Acknowledgement is indicated either by (1) mentioning the author and work from which the words are borrowed in the text of your paper; or by (2) placing a footnote number at the end of the quotation in your text, and including a correspondingly numbered footnote at the bottom of the page (or in a separate reference section at the end of your essay). This footnote should indicate author, title of the work, place and date of Publication and page number. Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

B. In adopting other writer's ideas, you must acknowledge that they are theirs.

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers' trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of acknowledgement given in 'At above. Since the words are your own, they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own; where you must use words or phrases from your source; these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in 'A' above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgements and, when necessary, quotation marks is necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction, your instructor very likely will do so for you, and they will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student's receiving an 'F' in a course or, in extreme cases, in their suspension from the University.

Medical Issues:

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Please go to

https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical_accommodations_link_for_OOR.pdf to read about the University's policy on medical accommodation. This site provides links the necessary forms. In the event of illness, you should contact Academic Counselling as soon as possible. The Academic Counsellors will determine, in consultation with the student, whether or not accommodation should be requested. They will subsequently contact the instructors in the relevant courses about the accommodation. Once the instructor has made a decision about whether to grant an accommodation, the student should contact his/her instructors to determine a new due date for tests, assignments, and exams.

SUPPORT SERVICES:

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western, http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact, Rebecca Dashford, Undergraduate Program Advisor, Department of History, 519-661-2111 x84962 or rdashfo@uwo.ca

Rev.12Sept2016