

**History 212-05, Spring 2002**  
**The United States Since 1865:**  
**Human Rights and the American Equal Rights Tradition**

**Professor Tom Jackson**

Office: 200 McIver Building

Office Phone: 334-3514; History Dept. Message: 334-5992

Office Hours: Monday, 12-1, Tuesday 1:15-2:15, Wednesday, 2-3 and by appointment

**M, 6-8:50**

**McIver 226**

tjackson@uncg.edu

## I. INTRODUCTION

This is both a survey of U.S. history since 1865 and a closer look at several episodes when the American equal rights tradition underwent debate, conflict and change. In every period of U.S. history, Americans have posed central questions about national citizenship and community. What rights – civil, political, cultural, economic and social – should American citizens enjoy? Should all of their rights be the same? How should these rights be defended, expanded, or restricted? What action should government take (or avoid) to make these rights real? Who should be included in the circle of “We the People?” Do we need broader conceptions of “human rights” in order to stretch or supplement American Constitutional rights? When rights come in conflict, who wins? For example, it took a Civil War to end slaveholders’ rights to property in slave persons, and to establish, at least in theory, national and state citizenship rights for *all* persons born or “naturalized” in the United States.

There has always been great tension between the *ideals* of the equal rights tradition and the *behavior* of many Americans, though most Americans have rationalized their actions in terms of *their own rights*. We share a common language of equal rights, so often our conflicts are expressed in similar terms. In some cases, one group’s struggle for full citizenship helped expand rights for others (such as when the civil rights movement of the 1960s caused Congress to abolish the racist system of immigration quotas inherited from the 1920s). Examining this tradition of thinking and speaking about equal rights can therefore be an excellent lens into the main currents of American social and political life. It also helps us reflect about our own identities as citizens with rights and public obligations.

Though concerned with politics and ideas, this is also a *social* history course concerned with the dreams and experiences of ordinary Americans. We will read the writings and speeches of educated elite Americans: reformers, rebels and defenders of the status quo. Equally, we will capture the voices of ordinary people, women, racial minorities and political dissenters. One assumption of this course is that those who have had to fight for an expansion of citizenship and equal rights *within* this country have much to teach us about their meaning. We will therefore give less attention to topics that might interest you, such foreign policy and warfare, economic and technological history, the arts or popular culture. We give somewhat more attention to the period 1865 to 1945 than to the post World War II era, simply because I teach another course covering this period in detail: **HIS340: The U.S. Since World War II.**

### Course Goals:

To improve your knowledge of the **main themes and events** in American history since 1865.

To help you appreciate **change and continuity** in the experiences of different Americans, in the nation’s social structure and politics.

To introduce you to the elements of **controversy, evidence and interpretation** that occupy working historians (that is, to get beyond limited “fact-and-date” notions of history).

To examine in depth **several episodes when the equal rights tradition took a decisive turn**. This component will rely upon your analysis of 1) primary documents from the past (testimonies, speeches, letters, songs, images) and 2) secondary historical scholarship (articles or sections from books written by historians who weave together stories and arguments from primary documents).

**Teaching and Learning Methods:** This class may be different from your past history classes. I will not give formal, traditional lectures lasting the full period, or repeat what the textbook covers. Rather, I will mix up shorter lectures, guided small group discussions, and general Socratic question and answer periods. As a rule, the first half of the class period will explore broad social and political changes as they affected different Americans, creating the context for the specific problems and interpretations that the second half of the class period will explore. For example, we will move from a broad understanding of Reconstruction to a particular appreciation of how newly freed African Americans saw the relationship between land and labor. Another week, we will move from a broad understanding of the purposes of Progressive era reform to questions about why women's rights and sense of public obligations assumed center stage in the decade before women won the right to vote.

## II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### A. Readings [Remember to bring all assigned readings to each class]:

#### 1. Textbook available for purchase in Addams University Bookstore, Tate St.:

James A. Henretta, et. al. *America's History*, Fourth Edition (New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2000), Volume 2: Since 1865. (If the bookstore runs out I will place my extra textbook on reserve in the library, to the right as you walk in).

**Textbook Website:** <http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/history/henretta/> has chapter summaries and help with key concepts. A few assignments will explore the "research modules."

#### 2. Primary Documents, Scholarly Articles and Other Materials:

**Available through Jackson Library Electronic Reserves or the through the Internet.** I assign many short excerpts from published and Internet sources that speak to themes of equal rights in ways that published course readers or other books (such as novels) do not. I saved you money beyond the purchase of the textbook. Understand, however, that accessing and printing out these materials will require more effort and computer knowledge than if I asked you just to buy 4 books. Each week you may have to find and print out three or more items, so follow instructions carefully and remember: bring all assigned material to class.

**[You will need a web browser (Internet Explorer 4.0 and above or Netscape 4.0 and above), and the Adobe Acrobat reader, all of which are standard on UNCG's networked computers. If you do not have these on your home computer or if you have a slow Internet connection, I advise you to use the networked computers and printers].**

**See Instructions for finding and printing reserves at the end of this syllabus.**

Various weeks will draw upon a few sources you will need print out at the same time and bring to several classes: Samuel T. McSeveny, *Selected Historical Documents to Accompany America's History*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Scott and Scott's *One Half the People* and McElvaine's *Down and Out in the Great Depression*.

**A Note on the Reading and General Reading Method:** I assign about 50-60 pp. per week, combining the textbook and short excerpts from a variety of sources. To do well at all in this course you must consistently read and come to class prepared to discuss the material. **Remember to read actively and strategically**. Don't just start at page one and plow through. **Preview** the material, look at the topic divisions and the flow of main ideas, and then dive in with **questions**. Ask yourself: what do I know

already about this period, theme, social trend? *Who wrote this, and for whom?* Am I reading **an historian's interpretation** of the past (a "secondary source") or **an historical actor's statement** (a "primary source")? How does the historical context and the language of this reading compare with other debates about human rights? Remember, the course is about human rights and American equal rights, so be keenly aware of when history speaks to these issues. As you read, you should **UNDERLINE** quotes and passages especially relevant to your questions (do this after you have read one or two paragraphs, so the process doesn't bog you down; remember, *if you underline everything, you emphasize nothing*). If you don't know the meaning of a word or concept, **look it up**. Along the way and at the end, **WRITE** in the margins of your texts, in your notebooks (or computers) what you have learned, and what still puzzles you. If you feel you need to develop college-level study skills, **COME SEE ME or visit the Student Success Center or the Writing**. You paid for them; you might as well use them!

**A Note on Written Work:** All papers must be typed and formatted as follows: 11 or 12 font size, double spaced lines, margins no larger than 1" all around. PLEASE SUBMIT ALL WORK WITH "WORD COUNT" AT THE TOP. Papers that are too short will be returned to you immediately for resubmission. Citation styles: MLA, Turabian or Chicago Manual of Style 14<sup>th</sup> are all acceptable. Here is the Library's guide to MLA: <http://library.uncg.edu/depts/ref/handouts/mla.html> For the long paper and the final exam I personally favor footnotes, but use MLA if you want. Example of footnotes:<sup>1</sup>

**Rev. Jackson Preaches:** I am completely convinced that the better you *read*, the better you *write*, and vice versa. I am also convinced that for most of you at least, both of these skills will be central to your worldly success, your wisdom, and the quality of what you give back to the world.

**Reminder:** the last day to drop a course without academic penalty is March 20; the last day to drop with tuition and fees refund is January 22. I will certainly inform you by early March if I consider you to be in trouble, so that we can work up a contract for improvement.

## **B. Attendance:**

I take attendance every day. *Email me in advance if you will miss class, or within 24 hours if an emergency detained you – otherwise your absence will be recorded as unexcused.* Excuses: personal or family illness or serious emergency only. You are on your honor to inform me of the general reason your absence falls within these criteria. Avoid long or personal explanations. More than one unexcused absence and your final grade will go down 4 points for every day missed. Two *consecutive* unexcused absences and you may be asked to withdraw from the course.

## **C. Class Participation (20%):**

I grade participation on the basis of how consistently and thoughtfully you express yourself in various contexts. **I require that you write down at least one question of your own – large or small – to bring to each class period. Be ready to share it if asked.** As for specific points of clarification, but also bring the most important question you can think of to class. There are no "dumb" questions (besides, if you never risk saying something "dumb" you will never say anything smart). Group discussion is a question of balance. Sometimes students will dominate discussion, edging out others with more reserved speaking styles. So be aware that "teamwork" involves sharing the ball!

**A note of group dynamics and politics:** This history is controversial and close to the bone. There will be some informal "debate" exercises. Embrace controversy (this can be stressful for some students in this culture). But do so with respect, humility and an appreciation that we all start from different points on

---

<sup>1</sup> If you need further guidance, consult Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (New York: St. Martin's, 1995), on hard copy reserve in the Library for **HIS212**.

our own journeys. “The past is a foreign country to us all,” and in this there is a certain freedom to discover who we are and to decide who we want to be. Yet that “foreign” country is where our ancestors lived, and they left us a powerful, if sometimes unconscious, inheritance. We find much to honor in that inheritance, and much to criticize. A culture that celebrated individual achievement, equality and overcoming the limits of the past is also a culture with a history of racism, sexism, class inequality and other abuses of power that continue to shape our social lives and identities. We are truly, in Michael Kammen’s words, “a people of paradox.” So, for example, in the context of free speech, we must challenge intolerant speech. I have an excellent ability to discerning where students come from and how far they travel intellectually in my courses. I have no investment in the *political* direction the study of history takes them. What I do expect is that you deepen your abilities to reason and write and communicate and support what you say with *historical* evidence.

**D. Chapter Quizzes (20%) – You must take at least 10; the 9 best will count toward your grade. You may take as many as 14. DUE FRIDAY AT THE END OF THE WEEK THEY ARE HANDED OUT.**

These are “20 question” take-home quizzes that you must take after or along with reading the textbook. I will hand out the following week’s every Tuesday. They are due by 5PM every FRIDAY before the next Monday’s class. This deadline is to ensure that people get beyond the textbook to grapple with the “case study” material. I do not expect perfection, just consistency in your textbook reading. Any cooperation or collusion in the completion of these will be considered a violation of the honor code.

**E. Homework Essays (20%):**

**Six (6) Short essays that respond to a question with evidence from the readings (400-500 words, up to 2 pp. each) due on the day assigned and not accepted afterward.** You will have **12 options** over the course of the semester. You must submit at least three by Spring Break, preferably more since you may want to chalk one or two up as a “learning experience!” **You may write up to 9 essays. I will select the best 6 results for your grade. If all your essays are at B- or above, each essay over the limit of 6 will count as an extra point on your final grade.** Answer one of the “homework essay questions” provided in the syllabus or in class before the due date. State your own analytical viewpoint and support it with evidence from the texts. Refer to actual people and their actions and ideas rather than to your general feelings or ideas. **Paraphrase** the point of view of an individual or group in your own words, and then **quote** sparingly when of a particular speaker’s language illustrates your point. **For further guidelines see Homework Essay Option 1.**

**F. Analytic Paper (20%):**

**Primary source analysis** paper (1500-1800 words, 5-6 pages). **Due in class.** In this paper you will develop your own thesis about the values expressed in letters from ordinary Americans to Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt during the Great Depression (see the full assignment, mid syllabus). I’ll give you opposing viewpoints from different historians, and ask you to come to your own conclusions with concrete evidence. I’ll discuss guidelines in advance.

**G. Final Take Home Exam (20%):** (1500-1800 words, 5-6 pages).

As I mentioned this will be a straight-forward essay that will pull together your thoughts about human rights and equal rights in the American context: when they conflicted, or how different rights – civil, political, economic, social – were thought to be related.

### III. GRADING, EXTENSIONS AND THE HONOR CODE

A “.59” on anything is a failing grade (above .90 is A range, above .80 B range, and so on). If you do not hand in work or if you submit unacceptable work you risk earning a “.00” for that assignment. There is a “progress” component of each final grade I give: evidence of improvement from beginning to end will weigh in your favor if your grade falls near a margin. The paper and the final will both be written in the last 6 weeks of the class, and they will build on skills learned earlier. Notice the opportunities in this syllabus to earn extra credit that can change your final grade point by at least .05, which could make the difference between a C+ and a B!

**“Stonewall Jackson’s” Policy on Extensions:** No extensions except in cases of personal illness, family loss or serious emergency. Late papers will suffer a quarter of a grade reduction for every day late. No quizzes will be accepted after Friday before class (to make sure you take time for the case study material), and no homework essays will be accepted after the class in which they are assigned.

**Honor Code:** Find UNCG’s policy at <http://saf.dept.uncg.edu/studiscp/Honor.html> Know the definition of plagiarism and the rules of quoting, citing, and paraphrasing other sources. Rampola’s *Student’s Guide to Writing in History* is a good guide (hard copy reserve), as are several Websites: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~sources/about/what.html>

All of your written work must be your own and you must not plagiarize other sources. This includes failure to put in quotes phrases or sentences taken from another author, even if you footnote them.

**A note regarding Internet sources:** All my assignments refer to and draw upon common assigned readings. I do not prohibit your finding supplementary evidence on the internet, but quoting sources such as Encarta Encyclopedia instead of what I assigned I will regard as intellectually lazy. “Block quoting” of Internet (or any) resources without interpretation (even if you provide references) will also be regarded as intellectually lazy. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES will I permit you to “cut and paste” from Internet sources into your written work. If you quote anything, you must go to the trouble of physically re-typing the source. This will force you to paraphrase it and directly quote only the most important language (an essential skill). Writing that “stitches together” a bunch of block quotes is boring and unoriginal (I have already read all this stuff, remember). It will be graded much more severely than writing that is in your own words, even if you make mistakes in spelling, grammar or paragraph construction. Use the Writing Center and the various study skills workshops available to you.

**Conferences:** I am here to help with questions, to guide you in developing your ideas and writing strategies, and to give you careful honest evaluation on your work. Do not hesitate to visit my office hours or schedule an appointment if that is not convenient. We will also soon have a graduate course assistant, who will help with discussion groups and will be available to help with studying as well. I have been very clear and firm with the rules, but students have also found me very approachable and helpful.

**The Syllabus as Contract:** I have tried to spell out course requirements, goals and means of evaluation as meticulously as possible. By choosing to remain in the course beyond the drop deadline you agree to abide by its provisions. It is your responsibility to read the “fine print” and if questions remain, to clarify them.

#### IV. CLASS MEETINGS, DUE DATES, REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED READINGS

##### 1/28: Introduction: Human Rights and the Challenges of Primary Source Interpretation

1) Download and print for class discussion: “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” adopted and proclaimed December 10, 1948 by the General Assembly of the United Nations:

<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

2) Visit the Textbook Website: <http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/history/henretta/> Familiarize yourself with how it operates. Go To Chapter 15, Click “Research Module 1” – then click Source and read “2. Guidelines for Evaluating Primary Documents” (one page).

3) Visit Jackson Library’s Electronic Reserves, <http://library.uncg.edu/> Search under “Jackson” and print out (remember you need Acrobat reader – the username is “ereserves” and the password is “spring2002”): “Two Ex-Slave Narratives from the 1930s,” from James Davidson and Mark Lytle, *After the Fact*, (1999) excerpts, pp. 159-166. [This reading is #45 on the list if you search “Jackson” – unfortunately the ereserves list is not sequential, so you’ll have to hunt some times. I’ll email you with where to find them in advance].

##### Questions for Discussion:

1) Only by examining what we think at any given moment can we challenge, confirm or deepen the beliefs and assumptions we bring to learning. What rights of American citizenship do you value? What do you already know of their history? How do they stack up against the human rights outlined in the UN Declaration? Which is the most controversial of the rights discussed there? Why do you think it was written as it was?

2) How do the two ex-slave narratives differ in their views of: 1) how slaves were treated and how they responded; 2) treatment of families and children; 3) assumptions about history – the African past and the New World of slavery – especially compared to perceptions of Native Americans.

##### 2/4: Reconstruction – African Americans and Birthright Citizenship

Henretta, et. al., *America’s History 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, chapter 15, 477-502.

Examine “A Plea for Land,” *America’s History*, p. 483. Would wider land ownership among African Americans have alleviated poverty and prevented much of the oppression of the post Reconstruction period?

##### Case Study: Land, Labor and the Vote: The Views of the Freedmen

1) “To My Old Master, Colonel P.H. Anderson,” August 7, 1865, from Leon F. Litwak, *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (New York: Vintage, 1979), pp. 333-334, by Jourdon Anderson. (ereserves # 4)

2) *Black Voices from Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1997), by John David Smith, pp. 62-65, 70-75, 82-84, 92-97. (ereserves #2)

3) *Selected Historical Documents to Accompany America’s History, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, (New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2001). **Part A: Reconstruction Blacks and Native Americans.** Edited by Samuel T. McSeveny, At this point read only: # 15-7, “An Advocate of Federal Aid” and 15-8, “Statistics on Black Ownership.” (ereserves # 3– print out only pp. 1-5)

For more sophisticated guidelines for reading various kinds of primary sources, spend 10 or 15 minutes at the Library of Congress American Memory Project’s “Historian’s Sources Learning Page,” <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/psources/pshome.html> and click on Student lesson: (skip the Mindwalk activity, 1.a.).

**Homework Essay Option 1, (choose one question):**

- 1) Why was land so important to newly freed African-Americans? What was so abhorrent to (some) ex-slaves about working for wages?
- 2) What role did the federal Freedmen's Bureau play in creating the new plantation system that replaced slavery? In whose interests was it truly working? The two contracts in *Black Voices* typify what the Freedmen's Bureau helped arrange. What can they tell us about the relationship between landowning ex-slaveholders, landless ex-slaves, and federal officials? [A tough question].

**Guideline: When writing your homework essay, do not extensively quote the textbook. Rather, quote actual "voices" from the past to support a point of view about the question you are answering.** Example: "According to 'Kush,' wage labor was no better than slavery, for it subjected freedmen to control by their ex-masters and condemned them to lives of 'squalid, wretched poverty'" (Smith, 83). These essays allow for some freedom on your part to zero in on an aspect of the questions that seems especially important, an idea that can be developed with evidence. You may not, however, focus on only one voice or a few pages of the reading. Show me you can grapple with different perspectives and sources.

**2/11: Labor and Capital in the Gilded Age**

Henretta, et. al., *America's History 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, chapter 17, 541-572.

**Case Study: The Homestead Strike of 1892, Property Rights vs. Labor Rights**

1) "Opposing Viewpoints on Concentrations of Wealth," in *Opposing Viewpoints in American History* (1996) [by] **Henry George and Andrew Carnegie. (ereserves #10)**

2) "Selected Documents on Carnegie and Homestead from the 'History Matters -- Many Past's Website': "A Workingman's Prayer for the Masses" "Looking a Gift Horse in the Mouth: Workers Protest Carnegie Library" "The Musical Saga of Homestead" (ereserves # 11) (Reformatted and placed on ereserves by Prof. Jackson to save paper and time – source is <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/>).

3) George E. McNeill, ed., *The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today* (New York: 1887), pp. 160-162, 454-456. (ereserves)

**Homework Essay Option 3 (choose):**

- 1) How did Henry George and Andrew Carnegie differ on the question of how rich men were made and what employers owed to workers and their communities? How did the workers captured on the "History Matters" Website view Carnegie's methods and philanthropy?
- 2) How would you compare the ideas and worldview recorded by labor leader George McNeill in 1877 with the more grass-roots, rank and file voices from the Homestead strikers?

If you have not yet done so, read the textbook Website's "Guidelines for Evaluating Internet Resources," at chapter 24, "Great Depression" "Research module 1," or <http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/history/modules/mod29/frameset.htm>

**Extra Credit Option (1 point toward final grade):**

Go to Ohio State University's Website on the Homestead strike and familiarize yourself with the events <http://www.history.ohio-state.edu/projects/HomesteadStrike1892/> Read the following three news articles:

A Description of the "Incident" of July 6, from the July 16 issue of *Illustrated American*.

The Situation at Homestead, from the July 23 issue of *Illustrated American*

The struggle of The Military v. Labor, from the July 30 issue of *Illustrated American*

**Write a 1.5-2 pp. essay on the following and be willing to tell the class about it:** *Illustrated American* catered to a native born middle-class audience, neither class-conscious workers nor wealthy captains of industry. Where did the magazine's sympathies ultimately lie in the Homestead Strike? Can you tell by reporters' word choices and use of language?

## 2/18: The City – Urban Masses and Moral Order

Henretta, et. al., *America's History 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, chapter 19, 607-636.

### Case Study: The Great Chicago Fire and Scientific Charity – A Right to Relief?

1) Karen Sawislak, *Smoldering City: Chicagoans and the Great Fire, 1871-1874* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995) pp. 25-29, 42-44, 69, 72-73, 80-81. (**ereserves #12**)

2) Michael B. Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse* (NY: Basic, 1986) pp. 66-72, 80-85, 92-99, 110-112, 116-119. (**ereserves #9**).

These two assignments represent historians at work on their “monographs” (book-length studies of a historical problem). Sawislak used the flames of the Chicago fire to reveal class and ethnic tensions in the 19<sup>th</sup> century city; Katz wrote a broad history of social welfare in America since Colonial times, using Josephine Shaw Lowell to illustrate the rise and fall of the “scientific charity” movement.

### Homework Essay Option 4 (choose):

1) How did the great Chicago fire affect different citizens differently? Who made up the Chicago Relief and Aid Society and why were these men empowered with administering disaster relief? On what principles did they do so? What was different about the independent women’s and the Jewish relief societies?

2) Explain how Josephine Shaw Lowell tried to make systematic the principles that governed the Chicago Relief and Aid Society, and why you think she so thoroughly rejected this philosophy in her later life, after the 1890s?

**Optional 1 Point Extra Credit:** For a terrific historical Website with photographs, testimony, and original documents see “The Great Chicago Fire and the Web of Memory, a Virtual Exhibition” <http://www.chicagohs.org/fire/> Write a 1.5-2 pp. review of the Website answering with specific references what one is able to learn from such a source that just reading Sawislak could not capture.

## 2/25: 19<sup>th</sup> Century Politics and the Crisis of the 1890s

Henretta, et. al., *America's History 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, chapter 18, 575-605.

### Case: Politics and Gender in the Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century

1) Selected Documents from *One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage*, eds. Anne Firor Scott and Andrew MacKay Scott, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), Read only for now: **Susan B. Anthony** 90-95. **Zerelda Wallace**, 96-99. **Southerners**, 100-105. (**ereserves**). [Others in this collection to be read next week].

2) "Hull House in the 1890s: A Community of Women Reformers." [by] Kathryn Kish Sklar. In *Unequal Sisters* edited by Ellen Carol DuBois and Vicki L. Ruiz. New York: Routledge, 1990, 109-120. (**ereserves**).

[For further interest, optional: Kathryn Sklar’s graduate students have put together a Website on Kelley’s campaign against sweatshops, with lots of interesting material from Kelley and others: <http://womhist.binghamton.edu/projects.htm#factory>]

### Homework Essay Option 5 (choose):

1) Some historians have alleged that the arguments woman suffragists used for demanding the vote shifted between 1869 and 1900: from arguments grounded on a woman’s *general rights as a person and citizen* to arguments grounded on her *specific capacities, concerns and duties as a woman*. Do you see this shift in the primary sources? Is it as cut and dry, as this generalization would have you believe?

2) Historian Carl Degler once said that for women of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the true frontier – the place of individual opportunity and new possibility – was not the West but the City. How is this true of Florence

Kelley's biography as interpreted by historian Kathryn Sklar? How was Kelley able to earn her law degree, to become a professional reformer and factory inspector of sweatshops?

### **3/4: Progressive Men and Women**

Henretta, et. al., *America's History 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, chapter 20, 639-668.

Who were the Progressives? Was there a central set of beliefs or purposes that knit them together?

### **Case: Women's Rights, Woman's Duties, and Woman Suffrage**

1) "Jane Addams, Progressivism, and Woman Suffrage: An Introduction to 'Why Women Should Vote'" by Victoria Bissell Brown, In *One Woman, One Vote*, pp. 179-202 (**read Addams' essay 'Why Women Should Vote' on pp. 195-202** and then skim or read historian Victoria Brown's interpretive introduction *if you have time after reading the rest of the assignment that follows*). **Ereserve title**: "Jane Addams, progressivism, and suffrage. Chapter ten from *One woman, one vote*:"

2) Selected Documents from *One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage*, eds. Anne Firor Scott and Andrew MacKay Scott. Finish with: **Susan Fitzgerald, 114-115, Caroline Lowe and Leonora O'Reilly, 122-128. (ereserves)**

3) "A Woman's Place is in Politics," from *The South in the History of the Nation*, eds. Link and Wheeler, pp. 113-118. Articles by **Madeline McDowell Breckenridge** and **Adella Hunt Logan. (ereserves).**

### **Homework Essay Option 6 (choose):**

- 1) What range of reforms did progressive women think woman suffrage would promote? What was the relationship between suffrage reform and progressivism?
- 2) Do you see a difference in how middle class reformers like Jane Addams, working class spokeswomen such as Leonora O'Reilly spoke of women's rights and duties in the public sphere? How do the two educated Southern women (black and white) in selection 3 compare? [Don't just summarize – focus and analyze, using several voices as evidence].

### **Optional 1 Point Extra Credit Option:**

1) The suffrage movement succeeded because it reached out to traditional middle class women *and* to working class women concerned with their own safety and security. Sometimes both groups came together, as in New York City between 1909 and 1915, when finally New York State passed woman suffrage and a host of state laws were passed protecting workers in factories. One of the best history web sites that explores the 1909 "uprising of the twenty thousand" garment workers and their middle class supporters is "The Triangle Factory Fire, March 25, 1911" <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/> Centered on the deadly fire that killed 146 immigrant teenage girls making "ladies garments," the Website explores sweatshops, factory legislation, women's trade unionism, and the cross-class alliance that fueled progressive reform in New York. See especially "We Have Found You Wanting" by Rose Schneiderman, under the "Mourning and Protest" section.

2) SUNY Binghamton has assembled a huge collection of primary documents online "Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1830-1930." See especially the project on the New York Shirtwaist strike and the cross-class alliance at <http://womhist.binghamton.edu/projectmap.htm>

**Extra Credit: Write a 1.5-2 pp. summary of what you learned about women's activism from either one or the other Website.**

**SPRING BREAK – USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO READ AND THINK ABOUT THE ANALYTIC PAPER BASED ON READINGS FOR THE WEEKS ON THE GREAT DEPRESSION.**

**ALSO, IF YOU ARE BEHIND ON THE HOMEWORK ESSAYS, NOTE MY GENEROUS OFFER OF TWO CATCH-UP HOMEWORK ESSAYS.**

### 3/18: World War One: Mobilization and the Repressive Aftermath

Henretta, et. al., *America's History 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, chapter 22, 705-734.

#### Case: The Right to Dissent – Eugene V. Debs and Oliver Wendell Holmes

1) *Eugene V. Debs: Citizen and Socialist* (1982), pp. 290-296, by Nick Salvatore (ereserves)

2) “Eugene Debs Lashes Out against World War I,” Professor Jackson’s excerpts from Debs’ Canton Ohio speech, June 15, 1918. (ereserves)

3) **Web exercise for legal and constitutional context:** Debs was only the most famous of dozens of war opponents jailed for their views during the Red Scare. You need to be familiar with the legal and constitutional doctrines that sent him to prison. Go to this web page and print it out:

<http://lawbooksusa.com/cconlaw/debsvus.htm> It contains the Supreme Court decision “Debs v. United States 249 U. S. 211 (1919)” upholding his conviction and ten year prison sentence under the Espionage and Sedition Acts of 1917 and 1918. First read Section 3 of both the Espionage and Sedition acts contained at the end of the long web page. Then read Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes’ opinion upholding the conviction of Debs for encouraging resistance to the draft.

HOLMES, THOUGH HE SENT DEBS TO PRISON, LAID THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE OPENING OF MODERN CIVIL LIBERTIES LAW IN THE 1920S.

Briefly, for context, click on the link **Schenck v. United States**, and skim the 1919 opinion where Holmes established the “clear and present danger” test for limiting free speech: “The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theater,” Holmes wrote.

Then click on the link to **Abrams v. United States** 250 U. S. 616 (1919), where Holmes *dissented* from the Court’s majority opinion upholding the conviction of six Russian Americans (who criticized the U.S. invasion of the Soviet Union). Skim most of it but definitely read Holmes’ dissent (2/3 of the way down the page). Here he lays the groundwork for later civil liberties law by defending “free trade in ideas . . . the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market.” [You may cut and paste from this website for your own reference in class].

#### Homework Essay Option 7 (choose one):

1) Did Debs’ speech in fact violate the Espionage and Sedition Acts, as upheld by the Schenck decision (regardless of their merit)? In the eyes of the law, at what points did he pass over the line between free speech and the “clear and present danger” to the Republic’s success in war?

2) Compare what biographer Nick Salvatore wrote about the speech versus Justice Holmes’ summary. What do they choose to focus on and with what tone and purpose?

[Note: Jackson Library’s Government Documents web page <http://library.uncg.edu/depts/docs/us/> contains a link to Judicial finding aids: “FindLaw U.S. Supreme Court Opinions 1893-present” contains the text for every Supreme Court opinion and dissent ever].

***NB: Now is not too early to look ahead to the Analytic Paper assignment based on the Letters to Franklin and Eleanor during the Great Depression.***

### 3/25: The Twenties: Diversity and Conformity

Henretta, et. al., *America's History 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, chapter 23, 737-768

#### Case: The Rights and “Character” of Newcomers: Nativism and Immigration Restriction

“Selected Arguments” from *Immigration: Opposing Viewpoints* (Greenhaven, 1992), by Edward A. Ross, A. Piatt Andrew, Henry Cabot Lodge, T.J. Brennan, Roy L. Garis and Edith Terry Bremer, pp. 128-135, 138-145, 210-213, 220-223, 243-257. (ereserves)

Robert S. McElvaine, ed., *Down and Out in the Great Depression: Letters from the Forgotten Man* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983) (**ereserves**), **Print out Parts A and B at the same time, since each week draws on both.** Letters # [not page numbers]: 107, 109, 110, 145, 146.

### **Homework Essay Option 8:**

- 1) The arguments for, and against, immigration restriction up to and including the 1924 quota act, involved assumptions about the racial “character” of the “new” immigrants arriving since 1880, as well as ideas regarding the ability of American institutions to assimilate them. What fears and convictions lay at the core of arguments for restricting immigration, and how did defenders of immigrants try to address them?
- 2) Do you see any continuities between the arguments of elite immigration restrictionists of the 1910s and 1920s (in *Immigration: Opposing Viewpoints*) and the shriller popular voices from the 1930s (in *Down and Out*)?

### **4/1: The Great Depression: The Visible and Invisible Scars**

Henretta, et. al., *America's History 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, chapter 24, 771-798.

### **Case: Self-Reliance, Relief, and Old Age Security in the Depression**

Robert S. McElvaine, ed., *Down and Out in the Great Depression: Letters from the Forgotten Man* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983), Letters # 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 17, 18, 12, 25, 56, 57, 73, 75, 106, 140. (20 pp.) (**ereserves**).

#### **Work on paper due next week.**

**Questions for Class Discussion:** Different people had vastly different analyses of the causes and necessary solutions to the Great Depression. Who or what did they blame for the calamity? On what grounds did middle class homeowners and others claim to be “deserving” of help? Did the elderly and disabled base their demands for government pensions on any consistent themes? The last letter shows a curious mixture of age-consciousness and class-consciousness, a sense that benefiting the elderly would also benefit “the masses.” What has happened to this consciousness since the New Deal? Historians agree that class consciousness was especially high in the 1930s, but differ on the degree to which the working class wished for radical change (“the red decade”) or simply sought security and jobs. Which seems to fit best? Finally, why do you think the woman in letter # 18 does not mention her husband?

### **Catch-up Homework Essay Option (for those falling behind) or 1 Point Extra Credit:**

Studs Terkel, *Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression*, [N.B.: These readings are broken into Parts A and B as well: print them both out at once].

Sheridan (pp. 13-16), Paulsen (pp. 29-31); Morrison (pp. 122-124), Baxter (pp. 124-128), Oscar Helene (pp. 217-221). Thompson (pp. 306-310), Alinsky (pp. 310-313), Durr (pp. 461-462).

In the oral histories, when people protest or resort to direct action, on what grounds did they justify their actions? What happens to them? Are they advocating radicalism, revolution, or something else?

### **4/8: New Deals – Expanding American Rights**

Henretta, et. al., *America's History 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, chapter 25, 801-830.

### **Entitlements, Resentments, and New Deal Relief Policy**

McElvaine, ed., *Down and Out in the Great Depression*, Letters # 37, 38, 43-6, 49, 54, 55, 81, 82, 83, 88, 89, 92, 97, 98, 100, 102, 104, 105, 108, 141-143, 166, 169, 170, 171 (27 pp.).

**Questions for Class Discussion:** Most people seemed to prefer work relief to “the dole.” So why was work relief so controversial in practice? Many people were grateful for relief. Yet it seems that many

harbored either resentments or a deep sense of unfairness against the local relief “racket.” Whom did people blame for this state of affairs? Who is getting what at whose expense? When does criticism of the RELIEF SYSTEM spill over into criticism of the CLASS SYSTEM and POLITICAL SYSTEM? When African Americans protest about the local (white) relief officials, are there any themes they voice that are unique to their situation, as distinct from white workers or middle class homeowners? How do blacks see themselves in relation to poor whites? How do whites who write in feel about the administration of relief for Negroes (contrast, for example, # 49, #54, and # 81)?

**Catch-up Homework Essay Option (for those falling behind) or 1 Point Extra Credit:**

Studs Terkel, *Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression*, Banks (pp. 40-43); Tiller (pp. 44-45); Terry and mother (pp. 45-49); Barkham (pp. 202-206); Beecher (pp. 277-281), Van Dusen (pp. 105-108), Oettinger (pp. 114-117), Tiller (pp. 232-234).

What difference did federal government involvement make in comparison to locally administered relief? When did blacks and whites overcome inherited racial divisions and achieve some cooperation or solidarity? How did federal involvement in relief change local racial practices?

**Thursday, April 11: 5-6 PAGE ANALYTIC PAPER DUE**

Interpret the voices of past actors in light of questions that have an element of controversy. “These voices from the past reveal . . .” is how these papers approach history. In this paper you will base your own historical interpretation on letters from ordinary Americans to Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt contained in *Down and Out in the Great Depression*.

Read the following quotes carefully. The first two historians make the argument that working class Americans (and many middle class Americans) in the 1930s turned away from individualism and came to believe that the economic system was unfair and that they had a right to economic security guaranteed by the federal government. The last quote directly challenges this interpretation, arguing that neither the Great Depression nor the New Deal dramatically altered Americans’ commitment to individualism, self-reliance and limited government.

Analyze the letters from McElvaine, *Down and Out in the Great Depression* with these contrasting viewpoints in mind. Write an essay that agrees with one or the other perspective; if you feel that you need to blend perspectives, be concrete about *for whom* each statement might be true, or how *different people* mixed the themes of entitlement, self-reliance, resentment, and the ethics of economic fairness. As always, support your analytical points with evidence drawn directly from the men and women themselves. Do not, repeat do not, use or quote secondary sources in this paper (secondary sources are writings of scholars or other writers you might find in books on the internet). This essay calls for your own generalizations about those who endured, understood and tried to change things in the Depression. Finally, try to avoid *presentism*, the tendency to interpret the past in light of present day politics or ideologies (this is what Kennedy accuses McElvaine of doing, but he may be as guilty of it himself).

“[A]s Roosevelt’s landslide reelection indicated, most Americans by 1936 had come to accept the view that freedom must encompass economic security, guaranteed by the government.”

-- Eric Foner, *Story of American Freedom*, p. 205

“Working-class Americans had never quite accepted the values of acquisitive individualism and marketplace economics so often associated with the middle and upper class in this country. [In the 1920s] advertising and installment buying [had led them briefly toward] amoral, egotistical individualism. But the Depression appears to have reversed the shift of workers toward the values of self-centered individualism. Throughout the letters run the themes of equity, justice, compassion, and humanitarianism. Appeals are often based upon the argument that the policy or treatment complained of

is unfair. Many of the writers, in short, imply that economics should have some connection with morality.”

-- Robert McElvaine, *Down and Out*, “Introduction,” p. 15-16

“McElvaine’s argument that workers’ letters to FDR abounded in ‘ethical themes’ is weak: many of the passages he quotes express more resentment than reasoned morality . . . The New Deal may have nicked those ancient American attitudes briefly [of individualism and limited government], but it made no lasting dent in them. . . We are still a people in thrall to the small government, radically individualistic philosophy of Thomas Jefferson.”

--David M. Kennedy, “The Changing Image of the New Deal” a book review of *The Great Depression*, by Robert McElvaine, *Atlantic Monthly*, January 1985 (on ereserve).

#### **4/15: From The New Deal to Cold War: Liberalism in the 1940s**

Henretta, et. al., *America’s History 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, Skim sections on WWII military history and Cold War foreign policy, pp. 837-853, 879-887.

Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Princeton, 1998), pp. 379-395. (ereserves).

#### **Case: The Rise and Fall of Labor Liberalism – Collective Bargaining and the Minimum Wage**

1) Through the Library’s Electronic Databases Online portal, go to Encyclopedia Britannica Online, or directly from a networked computer at <http://www.eb.com:180/> Look up the following terms to make sure you know them: Wagner Act, Fair Labor Standards Act, Taft-Hartley Act, Closed Shop, Union Shop. Compare these with the other printed reference sources appended to the **ereserves** readings.

2) “Selected Documents” from Major Problems in the History of American Workers, eds. Eileen Boris and Nelson Lichtenstein (Heath, 1991) **ereserves**.

3) “Labor & Labor Movements,” Selected documents from the American Social History Project, “History Matters” website. **Ereserves**

#### **Homework Essay Option 9:**

1) In the 1930s and 1940s, the federal government gave legal protection to labor’s right to collective bargaining and it regulated wages and hours and child labor. What did these measures mean to ordinary working people?

2) What happened to these legal protections in the Cold War, when the Taft-Hartley Act and the climate of Anticommunism set a new stage for labor-management relations (or the class struggle if you choose to call it that)?

**Discussion Extra Credit:** Not all web sources are completely reliable, so you need to corroborate evidence to be on firm factual ground. Be prepared to discuss how this assignment sheds light on this first principle of research.

#### **4/22: American Society and Politics in the 1950s – Affluence and the Other Americas**

Henretta, et. al., *America’s History 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, pp. 887-891, 895-900, 903-921; Thomas J. Sugrue, “Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and the Reaction against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940-1964,” *Journal of American History* (September, 1995): 551-2; 564-78.

**Homework essay Option 10:** As masses of Southern black migrants poured into Northern cities in the 1940s and 1950s, African Americans sought open housing opportunities in hitherto racially restricted whites-only neighborhoods. How did white homeowners groups in Detroit (with what language and rationales) seek to defend their “homeowners rights” against black “civil rights?”

#### **4/29: The Rights Revolution of the 1960s**

Henretta, et. al., *America's History 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, chapter 28, 927-938, chapter 29, 947-964.

##### **Case: From Civil Rights to Equality**

Martin Luther King, Jr., et. al., "MIA Mass Meeting at Holt Street Baptist Church," in Clayborne Carson, ed., *Papers of King*, v. 3, pp. 71-5, 78-9. **Ereserves**

Martin Luther King, Jr., "If the Negro Wins, Labor Wins," December 11, 1961, in Washington, ed., *A Testament of Hope*, Harper, 1986, pp. 201-207. **Ereserves**

Martin Luther King, Jr. "Testimony," December 15, 1966, in U.S. Senate, Subcommittee on Executive Reorganization, Committee on Government Operations, *Federal Role in Urban Affairs* (Washington, GPO, 1967), pp. 2967-2977, 2980-85, 2990-96. **Ereserves**

##### **Homework Essay Option 11:**

- 1) At each stage of the black freedom movement (1955, 1961, 1966) Martin Luther King spoke in terms of winning fundamental rights necessary to achieve African American equality. How did his sense of the priorities, and relationship, among these rights change?
- 2) African Americans have long felt a "double consciousness," in DuBois's words, "a Negro, an American, two souls in one dark body." In his first speech (1955) and his congressional testimony (1966), how did King seek to reconcile the needs and collective destiny of black Americans with the broader "American Dream" of freedom and equality?

#### **5/6: Since the Sixties – Faltering Growth and Resurgent Conservatism in Multiracial America**

Henretta, et. al., *America's History 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, very specific excerpts: Legacy of Vietnam, 968-9; Economy, environment and domestic movements of the 1970s, pp. 981-97; Reagan, pp. 1000-1002, 1006-1011; Uncertain Times in the 1990s, pp. 1015-1025 (skip Biotech Revolution); Clinton health care, pp. 1032-33; Welfare reform and the domestic agenda, pp. 1035-37; Contemporary issues, pp. 1044-47.

##### **Case: The Quality of American Life: Rights to Health Care and Environmental Protection**

George Lipsitz, *A Life in the Struggle*, ch. 7, "Lead Poisoning: Peace and Pain in the Struggle," pp. 174-185. **Ereserves**

Eddie Batista, "Garbage Wars: The Struggle for Waterfront Justice," May 1998, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest. (pps. 4-11 the most informative). **Ereserves**

Read also the biography of Lois Marie Gibbs in Henretta, *America's History*, pp. 988-989.

##### **Homework Essay Option 12:**

Ivory Perry was a Korean War veteran, a longtime civil rights activist for CORE in St. Louis and Louisiana, and housing coordinator for a local St. Louis War on Poverty Community Action Agency (Human Development Corporation). He organized protests to get jobs for African Americans in banks and federally funded construction sites in the mid-1960s, marched with Martin Luther King in Selma and Chicago, and organized rent strikes in public and private housing in the late 1960s. (The assigned excerpt picks up his activism in 1970 as he turned his attention to lead paint poisoning). Eddie Batista is currently a Puerto Rican lawyer from Brooklyn leading a campaign to stop the concentration of garbage transfer stations in poor communities in Brooklyn and the Bronx. He is a leader of the newly emerging National Environmental Justice Network. How did these two activists and Lois Marie Gibbs think and talk about the rights of their communities facing environmental hazards?

#### **Reading Day -- Optional Review Session – U.S. Citizenship Rights and Global Human Rights – What's the relationship?**

**5/13: 8:50 PM FINAL TAKE HOME EXAM IS DUE. This will be an essay you will write about various contexts in which rights came into conflict, or movement which tried to stretch the definition of American rights from civil and political to social and economic rights (5-6 pp.)**

### **Useful information regarding Websites that might get you hooked on history:**

Many of the notes on Websites in this syllabus are **RECOMMENDED** not **REQUIRED** exercises. I make crystal clear when they are one or the other. Most careful written history and historical sources are still in print or manuscript form in libraries, so if you have a deep interest there really is no substitute for library research. But more and more scholarly articles, primary documents, oral histories, images and sound recordings are becoming available on the web every day, and they are a good way of introducing you to the historical craft.

The American Social History Project's "History Matters" Website is superb, containing hundreds of speeches, oral histories, images and songs from ordinary Americans. Browse:

<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/>

The Library of Congress's "American Memory" Website offers millions of photographs, maps, songs, films and other materials. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/>

For many kinds of questions regarding the study of history, see "A STUDENT'S ONLINE GUIDE TO HISTORY" by Jules Benjamin, Adapted for the Bedford/St. Martin's research site by Jules R. Benjamin. Based on A Student's Guide to History, 8th edition (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000):

<http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/history/benjamin/>

You must develop critical standards for evaluating Websites, as you do any source, however. **ANYONE CAN POST ANYTHING THEY WANT ON THE WEB.** This ranges from holocaust deniers to apologists for Stalin. Early in the course you should read the textbook Website's "Guidelines for Evaluating Internet Resources," at chapter 24, "Great Depression" "Research module 1," or <http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/history/modules/mod29/frameaset.htm>

**Getting around Jackson Library's electronic reserves system** (hereafter referred to as "ereserves"): At the home page <http://library.uncg.edu/> click on "Reserves," then "Search Reserve items by <math>\infty</math> Instructor." Type "**Jackson**" (rather than HIS212 since there are many sections of 212). Find the citation; click "Full text online." You will be asked for a **username** (type "**ereserves**") and **password** ("**spring2002**"). You may then print out the reading from a University terminal or your home computer, provided you have Adobe Acrobat Reader (free download option at electronic reserves web page). *Get help at the reserve desk to your right as you enter the library if you do not know how to use this system.* **HINT:** In this area of the library they print double-sided to save paper. Trees have rights too! Print out a few weeks' readings at a time. **FINDING THE ERERESERVE READINGS: On the ereserves system, the title of the reading comes first, with the author at the end. My syllabus will imitate this system's quirky, free-form style of citation, to make it easier for you to find the readings. Do not use this citation style in your papers.**