

**History 340-01 (WI), Spring 2002**  
**The United States Since World War II**

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This is not a survey, but a focused topical course on central issues in the development of American society and politics since the 1940s. Of central concern are the interactions between social movements, formal politics and social and economic trends. We will examine shifting electoral coalitions, wars, cultural conflicts, government activism and the steady erosion of popular confidence in government. We will consider the critiques and persistent weaknesses of the American Left, the rise and fall of 1960s liberalism, and the reconstruction of a new conservatism in the 1970s and 1980s. We will give primary attention to domestic politics and policies, considering developments in the international arena in terms of their effects on national politics and social change.

The main themes of the course are:

***The Cold War***, especially its relation to the nation's longest and most disastrous foreign war, ***Vietnam***.

***"McCarthyism,"*** the label for a broad anticommunist political network in the 1940s and early 1950s that dealt a crippling blow to the Left, especially the left-led labor unions.

***The civil rights movement***, which emerged from the ashes of anticommunist repression to transform the South and challenge the nation to rethink older notions of freedom and equality.

***The 1960s cultural and political revolt*** among young people, from campus antiwar activists to black nationalists and participants in the "ghetto revolts."

***"Second wave" feminism*** and the changing aspirations and social roles of women.

***1960s liberalism***, its impact, limitations, and demise in the context of war, racial polarization, and resurgent cultural conservatism in the 1970s.

***The rise of the New Right*** and the impact of the Reagan Revolution of the 1980s.

***Mass media***, its mushrooming power in public life, and the precipitous decline in ***public trust*** in government and other public institutions.

This is a recent history of what to most of you is home turf. The boundaries between collective memory, political conviction and historical inquiry overlap here more than in any other field of history. The nation has yet to resolve many of the issues we will examine. Yet social change since 1950 has come drastically and rapidly in many areas of American life and politics. So we must be aware of our double consciousness: present values and concerns and preconceptions will inevitably shape the questions we pose and the interpretations we impose upon the past; yet we must respect the "otherness" of the past and its actors and strive to *understand* the world as they saw it and the past in all its contradictory fullness. This involves a search for accuracy, completeness, and balance, if not "objectivity." It can also lead to astonishing *self*-discoveries. The central goal of the course therefore is to teach you to see the familiar world afresh, through historical lenses, and to sharpen your abilities *to bring interpretation and evidence into a dynamic dialogue*.

***This is a writing intensive course.*** Accordingly, there are a series of written assignments that build on each other and help you develop the skills of historical analysis and reporting. 1) If you haven't yet done so, the first thing to master is the art of grammatical sentence construction and

coherent paragraph construction (each paragraph wraps your analysis, paraphrase and quoted evidence around the spool of a *controlling idea*). 2) You will learn appropriate conventions of quotation, citation, and bibliographic referencing. 3) Through a series of short assignments, the **Scholar's Logs**, you will learn how to summarize the author's *thesis* or *argument* (which simply means the logic linking their concepts and evidence). Key to these exercises is the ability to distinguish descriptive from analytical statements. These assignments then make room for your own "reader response" – a "free writing" format that asks you to relate the issues to others we have discussed, to contemporary issues, or to questions and historical hypotheses that remain unresolved for you. 4) On the basis of these exercises I expect you all to propose to me a focused research topic that deepens your understanding of the central issues and episodes of the class. This is the term paper you will revise by the end of the course. 5) Finally, a take-home final will ask you to formally *synthesize* material on one or two of the central themes of the class – such as the enduring importance of class or race to American politics, or the impact of mass media on public life and political culture.

### **Readings:**

You will be responsible for reading approximately 100-125 pages per week. Two books are available for purchase in Addams University Bookstore (on Tate Street). Each day has brief, focused, often brilliant readings that draw on scholarly articles, book chapters or revealing primary documents. I am completely convinced that the better you learn to *read*, the better you will *write*, and vice versa. I am also convinced that for most of you at least, both of these skills will be central to your success, your wisdom, and the quality of whatever you give back to the world.

Mary Lynn Rampola, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (New York: St. Martin's, 1995)  
Godfrey Hodgson, *America in Our Time: From World War II to Nixon—What Happened and Why* (New York: Random House, 1976, 1995)

**All other assigned readings are available through the electronic reserves system** at the Jackson Library's website -- <http://library.uncg.edu/>. Click on "Reserves," then "Search Reserve items by . . . course number" – **HIS340**. The title of the reading comes first, with the author at the end. Readings longer than 25 pages are broken up into parts. The library's citation system is not the best, so you may have to hunt around if you are looking for a specific reading. Find the citation; then click "Full text online." You will be asked for a username (it's "ereserves") and password ("spring2002"). You may then print out from a University terminal or your home computer, provided you have Adobe Acrobat Reader. *Get help at the reserve desk to your right as you enter the library if you do not know how to use this.* **HINT:** Go to the reserve area of the library when they are not busy and print a few weeks worth out and put it in a binder!

### **Course Requirements:**

**Class Participation and Short Writing Exercises (20%):** You will receive a grade on the basis of how often and how thoughtfully you contribute to class discussion, and how well you answer occasional questions posed in writing in class (or as homework) about how you interpret scholarship and primary evidence. I see no substitute for participation. Dialogue can really help you focus your ideas, values and sense of direction.

**Scholar's Logs (20%):** Write 10 log entries (400-500 words) on any of the readings where "LOG" appears on the syllabus (no more than two a week). (Graduate students write 14). **These are due the day of discussion and not acceptable after that.** This is a way to help you develop

critical reading and writing skills and prepare for discussion. Briefly summarize the author's thesis, (the main *analytical* points he or she is trying to prove), in 1-4 sentences. Then write a one or two paragraph response containing *your* ideas about the reading. You might answer any of the following questions: How does the reading challenge or confirm what you previously believed or read? How does it tie in with broader themes in the course? Is it persuasive or flawed? (Don't just *say* this. *Show it* by referring to evidence presented or omitted.) How does this history help explain *today's* choices or dilemmas (This can be part, but never all of your reader response)? I'll accept these if they are complete, reasonably deep and if the thesis is correct or close. I will give detailed comments on everything from sentence and paragraph construction to transitions to thematic continuity of the entire piece.

**Grading:** 90% complete or more: A; 80% or more: B; 70% or more: C; and so forth. If you feel you are running into trouble by mid-semester, I will permit you to write 3 more LOG entries for 4 extra credit points on the final grade. But you must write all 3 acceptably (plus the required 10) to get this credit.

**Research Paper (40%):** (2400 words, 8 pp.) (Graduate Students, 3600 words 12 pp.). **This grade includes the Proposal, First Draft, and Final Draft, with the most weight going to the Final Draft.** There is a list of suggested topics at end, but I expect to have conferences with all of you before selecting a topic. This grade also reflects your overall PROGRESS in developing writing skills, in accordance with the "Goals for Improvement of Writing" that we will draw up together early in the semester.

**Final Synthetic Essay (20%):** (1500-1800 words, 5-6 pp.) (Graduate Students, 8 pp.) Paper on a question reflecting on one or two of the broader themes of the course. (Instructions and questions to follow).

**Attendance:** I take attendance. *You must email me in advance if you will miss class, or, in case of emergency, within 24 hours.* I can excuse absences only on the grounds of personal or family illness or serious emergency (not conflicting work schedules, the blues, or other extracurricular activity). No need for lengthy explanations; you are on your honor. More than six unexcused absences and I start reducing your final grade a third of a grade for every day missed. Four *consecutive* unexcused absences will result in my request that you drop the course.

**"Stonewall Jackson's" Extensions Policy:** Please, do not even ask unless personal illness, family loss or serious emergency intervenes. Otherwise, late work will suffer 1/4 of a grade reduction the day after it is due and every day after that.

**Written Work:** All papers must be typed and formatted as follows: "Times New Roman" font (or Garamond), 11 or 12 font size, double spaced lines, margins no larger than 1" all around. All papers must be submitted with **"Word Count:"** at the top. Short papers will be returned immediately for resubmission. For the two big papers, reference your quotes and paraphrases with **footnotes** the way all the authors we are reading use them. Example:<sup>1</sup> Otherwise you may use MLA-style on the LOGS, with the full citation to the reading at the TOP (like a book review).

**Conferences:** I require conferences in advance of your beginning your research project, and between your first and revised draft. I am here to help with questions, to guide you in developing your ideas and writing strategies, and to give you helpful, honest feedback on your work. Do not hesitate to visit my office hours or schedule an appointment. I may require some of you to visit

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<sup>1</sup> If you need further guidance, consult Mary Lynn Rampola, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (New York: St. Martin's, 1995), required for this course and on reserve in the Library for **HIS340**.

the Writing Center if it seems you need tutoring on the basics of sentence and paragraph construction and word choice.

**Honor Code:** I remind you that the URL for the University's Academic integrity policy is <http://saf.dept.uncg.edu/studiscp/Honor.html> I have caught a number of plagiarists in my career. It is very distressing for all concerned.

## **SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS AND DUE DATES**

### ***Week One: The Cold War and the Origins of Domestic Anticommunism***

#### **1/14: Introductions – Review of Syllabus**

#### **1/16: Truman and the Cold War**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 1-36

#### **1/18: Roots and Ideologies of the Anticommunist Crusade at Home**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 36-47

Robert Griffith, "American Politics and the Origins of 'McCarthyism'" in Chafe and Sitkoff, *A History of Our Time* pp. 62-73 **(ER) (LOG)**

Ellen Schrecker, *Age of McCarthyism*, Primary source excerpts: J. Edgar Hoover, 113-120; Joseph McCarthy, 210-214; William O. Douglas, 243-246. **(ER)**

### ***Week Two: McCarthyism and the Crippling of the American Left***

#### **1/21: MLK, Jr. Day – No Class**

#### **1/23: Impact of the Witch Hunt**

Ellen Schrecker, Chapter 10: "A Good Deal of Trauma," from *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Princeton Press, 1998) pp. 359-415. **ER LOG**

#### **1/25: The Attack on Interracial Unionism**

Robert Korstad and Nelson Lichtenstein, "Opportunities Found and Lost: Labor, Radicals, and the Early Civil Rights Movement," *Journal of American History* 75 (Dec., 1988), 786-811. **ER LOG**

### ***Week Three: 1950s Society: Suburbanization, Domesticity, Race***

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 47-64

#### **1/28: American Families and the Paradoxes of Domesticity**

Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*, ch. 2, pp. 23-41. **(ER) LOG**

Daniel Horowitz, "Rethinking Betty Friedan and *The Feminine Mystique* : Labor Radicalism and Feminism in Cold War America," *American Quarterly* 48, no. 1 (1996). **LOG**

**1/30: The Federal Government and the Suburbs**

Kenneth T. Jackson, "Race, Ethnicity, and Real Estate Appraisal," in Dinnerstein and Jackson, eds., *American Vistas* (New York, 1991), pp. 197-219. (ER) **LOG**

**2/1: Battles at the Urban Boundaries: Race and Housing in Detroit**

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): 551-578. (ER) **LOG**

**"Goals for Improvement of Writing" due after conference with me.**

***Week Four: Cold War Liberalism: Kennedy, Camelot and Cuba***

**2/4: The Liberal Consensus and the Foreign Policy Elite**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 67-98, 111-133. **LOG**

**2/6: The Imperial Presidency and the Triumph of the Tube**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 99-110, 134-152.

**2/8: The Cuban Missile Crisis**

Barton Bernstein, "The Week We Almost Went to War," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 32(1976), 12-21 (ER) (LOG)

**Research Proposal is Due (1-2 pages):** Here you define the central question and identify in annotated bibliographic format the secondary and primary sources that will shed light upon it and help you arrive at a clear interpretation.

***Week Five: Civil Rights – Confrontation and Crisis***

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 184-199.

**2/11: The Fruits of Mass Direct Action in Greensboro**

Chafe, William. *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina and the Black Struggle for Freedom*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980, chs. 4-5, pp. 102-151. **ER LOG**

**2/13: Transition: Kennedy to Johnson – From Race to Poverty?**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 153-178

Brauer, Carl M. "Kennedy, Johnson, and the War on Poverty." *Journal of American History* 69 (June 1982 ): 98-119. (ER) (LOG)

**2/15: Lyndon Johnson and the Roots of Black Power**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 179-184, 200-224.

### ***Week Six: Lyndon Johnson's Great Society***

#### **2/18: War on Poverty: Social and Political Context**

Friedman, Lawrence. "The Social and Political Context of the War on Poverty: An Overview." In *Federal Antipoverty Programs*, edited by Robert H. Haveman, 21-47, 1977. With comment by Nick Kotz. **ER LOG**

#### **2/20: Racialized Poverty: The Strange Fate of the Community Action Program**

Quadagno, Jill S. "Fostering Political Participation," ch. 2 in *The Color of Welfare: How Racism Undermined the War on Poverty*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994, pp. 33-59, and notes, pp. 204-208. **ER LOG**

#### **2/22: Assessments of the Great Society**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 263-273, 446-449.

Califano, Matusow and Schwartz, "How Great Was the Great Society?" in *The Great Society*, ed. Barbara Jordan (LBJ Library, 1986), pp. 123-131, 143-147, 150-151. **ER LOG**

### ***Week Seven: Vietnam – Into the Quagmire***

#### **2/25: War and Its Economic Consequences**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 225-260.

#### **2/27: The Soldiers' War**

Christian G. Appy, *Working-Class War*, pp. 6-25, 28-43, 266-71, 298-310. **LOG**

#### **3/1: The Shattering of Cold War Liberalism**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 353-364.

Lyndon Johnson and Martin Luther King, "Opposing Viewpoints," from *The 1960s: Opposing Viewpoints* (Greenhaven, 1997), pp. 84-97.

### ***Week Eight: The Student Antiwar Movement and the Counterculture***

#### **3/4: The New Left**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 274-305

Gitlin, Todd. "Certifying Leaders and Converting Leadership to Celebrity," ch. 5 in *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980, pp. 146-179. **ER LOG**

#### **3/6: Hippie Daze**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 306-352.

#### **3/8: The "Sixties" Debate Rages**

Klatch, Rebecca E. "The Counterculture, the New Left and the New Right." In *Cultural Politics and Social Movements*, edited by Marcy Darnovsky, Barbara Epstein and Richard Flacks, 74-89. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995.

Rick Perlstein, "Who Owns The Sixties? The opening of a scholarly generation Gap," *Lingua Franca*, Vol. 6, No. 4 - May/June 1996 (Reformatted on Ereserve for you or at

<http://www.linguafranca.com/9605/sixties.html> **ER -- LOG ON BOTH**

### ***Week Nine: Racial Polarization and the Dilemmas of Protest Politics***

#### **3/18: Urban Revolt**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 429-435.

Bloom, Jack M., "Ghetto Revolts, Black Power, and the Limits of the Civil Rights Coalition," ch. 7 in *Class, Race and the Civil Rights Movement*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987, pp. 186-213. 28 **LOG**

Members of the class will engage in a debate reflecting one or the other following positions:  
Hamilton, Charles V. "Riots, Revolts and Relevant Response." In *The Black Power Revolt*, edited by Floyd B. Barbour, 201-10. Toronto: Collier Books, 1968. 6  
Banfield, Ben H. "Rioting Mainly for Fun and Profit," in *The Unheavenly City: The Nature and Future of Our Urban Crisis*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1970, pp. 185-209. 24

#### **3/20: Liberalism and Protest Politics -- Denouement**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 365-376.

Thomas Jackson, "Power to Poor People: Civil, Political and Economic Rights in the Poor People's March, 1967-68," Paper presented to New York University International Center for Advanced Studies, November 1999. **ER LOG**

**THIS IS THE LAST DAY TO DROP THE CLASS WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY**

#### **3/22: The Conservative Tide in the Nixon Era**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 412-416, 421-428.

Rieder, Jonathan. "The Rise of the 'Silent Majority'." In *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order*, edited by Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, 242-67. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989. **ER LOG**

Spiro T. Agnew, "Impudence in the Streets," in William H. Chafe and Harvard Sitkoff, eds., *A History of Our Time*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., pp. 393-99.

### ***Week Ten: Nixon, the War and Race***

#### **3/25: Mass Media and the Tide of Antiwar Opinion**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 376 -398.

Chester J. Patch, Jr., "And That's the Way It Was: The Vietnam War on the Network Nightly News," in David Farber, ed., *The Sixties* (Chapel Hill, 1994), pp. 90-118. **ER LOG**

#### **3/27: Nixon, Boston, and Busing**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 449-462.

Ronald P. Formisano, *Boston Against Busing: Race, Class and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1991), pp. 1-21, 172-202. **ER LOG**

#### **3/29: Good Friday—No Class**

### ***Week Eleven: Feminism***

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 401-411.

#### **4/1: Liberal Feminism**

Susan M. Hartman, "Origins and Politics of the New Feminism," ch. 3 in *From Margin to Mainstream* (New York, 1989), pp. 48-71. **ER LOG**

**“Documents on Feminism,”** from *Modern American Women: A Documentary History* ed., Susan Ware (New York: McGraw Hill, 1997) **ER: READ ONLY:** Betty Friedan, “The National Organization for Women Statement of Purpose,” 1966, pp. 281-286.

#### **4/3: Radical Feminism, Black Feminism**

**From “Documents on Feminism,”** from *Modern American Women: A Documentary History* ed., Susan Ware (New York: McGraw Hill, 1997): **WRITE A LOG ON EITHER WHITE FEMINISTS OR FEMINISTS OF COLOR**

1) Robin Morgan, “Feminist Guerilla Theatre,” originally published as “No More Miss America!” (1968), pp. 286-9.

2) Pat Minardi, *The Politics of Housework* (1969), pp. 289-72.

3) “The Combahee River Collective: A Black Feminist Statement,” pp. 296-305.

4) Jessie Lopez De La Cruz, *Organizing the Farm Workers*, 1980, pp. 330-3.

Robin Morgan, *Going Too Far: The Personal Chronicle of a Feminist* (New York: Vintage, 1978), Introduction, pp. 1-10. **ER**

Bell hooks, “Black Women Shaping Feminist Theory,” in Chafe and Sitkoff, eds., *A History of Our Time*, pp. 210-221. **ER**

#### **4/5: Welfare Rights**

Jackie Pope, “Women in the Welfare Rights Struggle: The Brooklyn Welfare Action Council,” in *Women and Social Protest*, ed. Guida West and Rhoda Lois Blumberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 57-74. **ER LOG**

**“Documents on Feminism,”** from *Modern American Women: A Documentary History: 5*) Johnnie Tillmon, “Welfare is a Women’s Issue,” 1972, pp. 334-8.

### ***Week Twelve: The Politics of Sexuality and Women’s Health***

#### **4/8: Consciousness Raising and the Emergence of Issues**

Susan Brownmiller, “Rape is a Political Crime Against Women,” from *In our Time: Memoir of a Revolution* (New York: Delta, 1999), pp. 194-224. **LOG**

#### **4/10: Women’s Health – Crossing Boundaries**

Alice J. Wolfson, “Clenched Fist, Open Heart,” in *The Feminist Memoir Project*, eds. Rachel DuPlessis and Ann Snitow (New York: Three Rivers, 1998), pp. 268-83. **LOG**

Sandra Morgen, “‘Its the Whole Power of the City Against Us!’ The Development of Political Consciousness in a Women’s Health Care Coalition,” in *Women and the Politics of Empowerment*, ed. Ann Bookman and Sandra Morgen (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 97-115. 18pp. **LOG**

#### **4/12: Gay Liberation**

D’Emilio, John. “After Stonewall.” In *Making Trouble: Essays on Gay History, Politics, and the University*, 234-74. New York: Routledge, 1992. **LOG**

**Draft of Research Paper is Due**

### ***Week Thirteen: Economic Shocks, Political Disaffection and New Right Politics***

#### **4/15: Antifeminism and the Religious Right**

Rebecca Klatch, “Women against Feminism,” in William H. Chafe and Harvard Sitkoff, eds., *A History of Our Time*, pp. 266-284. **LOG**

## **Second Reading TBA**

### **4/17: Race and Class at the Bicentennial – The Enduring American Dilemma**

Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, pp. 435-446, 416-421, 463-499.

### **4/19: Behind the “Malaise” -- Jimmy Carter and American Political Disaffection**

Jimmy Carter, “America’s Crisis of Confidence,” (July 1979) in William H. Chafe and Harvard Sitkoff, eds., *A History of Our Time*, pp. 387-92.

Thomas B. Edsall, *The New Politics of Inequality* (NY: Norton, 1984), pp. 179-90, 202-7.

**LOG**

## ***Week Fourteen: The Reagan Era***

### **4/22: Reagan: Revolution from Above**

**Reading TBA**

### **4/24: Reagan the Movie**

Hedrick Smith, “The Image Game: Scripting the Video Presidency,” chapter 12 from *The Power Game: How Washington Works* (New York: Random House, 1988), pp. 392-450. **LOG**

### **4/26: No class – Revision of Research Paper**

## ***Week Fifteen: A Democracy that Works?***

### **4/29: Immigration and Multi-racialism**

**Reading TBA**

### **5/1: Taking Politics Back**

William Greider, *Who Will Tell the People: The Betrayal of American Democracy* (NY: Simon and Schuster, 1992), pp. 105-122, 222-41. **LOG**

### **5/3: Reports of Research Findings**

### **Last Class: 5/6: Final Draft of Research Paper – Reports of Findings**

**Discussion of the Final**

**Take home final is due the day of the scheduled Final.**

## **Suggested topics for the term paper**

Please select one of the topics below, or talk to me about an issue that comes up in the course that has an element of controversy. You must get approval by means of talking to me, proposing a topic, defining the question, and identifying several primary and secondary sources that speak to the question. We will talk about how to identify arguments and points of controversy in different secondary sources, and how to discover evidence that sheds light on these controversies.

Were the suburbs of the 1950s places of engineered conformity and isolation, or were they experienced and desired as places of community and higher standards of living?

Was Martin Luther King Jr.'s decision to make Birmingham, Alabama the site of dramatic 1963 protests a case of calculated nonviolent provocation?

Was the final Birmingham agreement a "sellout" on King's part?

Was John F. Kennedy's quarantine of Cuba during the Cuban missile crisis a wise and moderate course of action, or should he shoulder a large part of the blame for bringing the world to the brink of nuclear war?

Was the War on Poverty primarily conceived in 1963 and 1964 as a response to growing black urban unrest focused on economics, or was it a function of two Democratic administrations' needs to downplay the divisive politics of race?

Were the War on Poverty and the larger efforts of the great society a failure, undermining poor people's commitment to work? Or did they bring real, if limited, benefits and opportunities? Or were they simply irrelevant to long-term economic trends?

Was Lyndon Johnson's troop escalation in Vietnam in mid-1965 a foregone conclusion, or did he weigh all sides of the great debate within the administration? In contrast to his public expressions of optimism, did he really believe the United States and its South Vietnamese allies could achieve victory?

Did the counterculture offer genuine cultural or political alternatives to mainstream American values and institutions? Or did it simply reflect in a distorted mirror the dominant culture's consumerism and individualism?

Were 1960s feminists fatally limited by white middle-class identities and priorities (in their stress, for example, on career mobility and the ERA, or in their radical indictment of the family)? Or did feminists cross boundaries of class and race and forge effective coalitions? And what of working-class feminists who might not have called themselves "women's libbers?"

Were the urban revolts of the 1960s in some sense political protests, or even revolutionary actions? Or did they simply reflect the blind rage of young men and the opportunities to loot and burn following the collapse of public order?

Were the real prospects for defeating the Communist insurgency in Vietnam somehow compromised or defeated by a liberal media and Congress?

Were the working-class whites that protested busing (sometimes violently) in Boston and other cities motivated mainly by racism or by other values and commitments?

Did the Democratic Party inflict mortal wounds upon itself by embracing too thoroughly the "rights revolution" in the early '70s, thus alienating some of its core constituencies? Or were other factors more important in the early '70s in turning the tide toward conservatism?