

**Cold War Culture  
Prof. David Greenberg  
SAS Honors Seminar**

**Class Time:** Monday 1.10-4.10  
**Email:** davidgr[at]rci.rutgers.edu  
**Office Hours:** Mon. 10.30 a.m.-12 p.m.  
**Course No.:** 01:090:277

**Room:** Brett Hall Seminar Room  
**Phone:** (732) 932- 7500 ext. 8178  
**Office:** 4 Huntington St., Rm 110  
**Index No.:** 73201

**Syllabus**

**Description.** The years just after World War II did much to define American politics and culture in the half century that followed. Although the 1950s seem more than a lifetime away, many of the concerns of those years—from the prediction of a war without end against a ruthless global enemy to domestic fears of repression and conformity—are pertinent to our own day. Other issues—the mixed blessing of material abundance, the efforts by women and blacks to shatter constraining cultural bonds, a new aesthetic of spontaneity and informality in art—have scarcely disappeared since. In examining American culture from roughly 1946 to 1960, the course seeks to show the interconnectedness of politics, ideas, and culture; to complicate conventionally accepted clichés about the period; to locate the origins or cultural patterns that persist in our own time; and to appreciate as well the important differences of this era from our own.

**Course Requirements.**

- Regular attendance and active participation. This course meets only two and a half hours a week. Arriving on time and staying for the duration is essential. Students may miss *one* class during the semester, no questions asked. Students who miss more than one class—or substantial portions of more than one class—will be penalized one third of a letter grade for each class missed, even if they notify the professor in advance. In case of severe illness or other extraordinary events, documentation must be provided.

One purpose of a seminar like this is to teach students to form their own ideas and share them with their peers. The very work of the course consists of engaging in a discussion of ideas. Students who abstain from discussion are missing the course's whole purpose. A class in which a student doesn't contribute to discussion is equivalent to a missed class.

- Reading. The class reading ranges between 125 and 150 pages a week.
- Short Paper. Due February 11. You are to write a four-page (maximum) essay making an argument about some aspect relating to the first two weeks' readings. You do not need to consult outside sources. You will be graded on the clarity and style of the writing, the originality and cogency of the thesis, and your use of the readings.
- Classroom Presentation. Each week one student will prepare a 15-minute presentation framing the readings. This presentation should *not* summarize the reading chapter by chapter. Rather, it should aim to give a broad overview of the subject under discussion. The material for class that we read does not consist of purely factual accounts of what happened. Each reading has a point of view, and the points of view expressed are often controversial. Your presentation should explain why these readings are controversial, and what aspect of their viewpoint is

distinctive.

- **Term Paper.** The main piece of writing for the course is a ten-page paper that involves significant research on a topic that is related to the themes of the class but that we did not deal with explicitly in class. An optional outline of the paper is due **February 18**. An optional rough draft is due **April 7**. A final draft is due **May 5**. The purpose of the outlines and rough drafts is to give you feedback on your project at two important early stages. If and only if you submit the outline and rough draft by their respective deadlines, you will get a third of a grade extra credit (a B+ final paper becomes an A-, an A- becomes an A, etc.) If you do not submit the outline and rough draft by their respective deadlines, I will still try to read them and give you feedback, but I cannot promise that I will be able to do so and you should not expect such feedback.

### **Additional Rules and Information.**

- Cell phones must be turned off upon entering the classroom and may not be used in the classroom or during class time.
- Laptops may be used for note-taking only. No emailing or Web-surfing during class.
- Students must show up on time and stay for the duration of the class. During class, students should not engage in personal conversations, read newspapers, do crossword puzzles, or undertake other personal diversions unrelated to class activity.
- I will return all emails, usually on a first-come, first-served basis. Do not assume that I have received your email. Sometimes it gets stuck in a spam folder. If I don't reply within 48 hours, please follow up with a phone call. If it's urgent, please call me.
- We will be using Sakai for the class. Go to <https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal> and log in using your Rutgers ID and password. On the site I will post announcements, assignments, readings, and so on.

### **Academic Integrity.**

Plagiarism and cheating are, of course, forbidden, according to Rutgers University policy. You are responsible for reviewing and obeying these policies. A lengthy statement of the policy is at <http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html>.

On plagiarism, this statement (from [history.rutgers.edu/undergrad/plagiarism.htm](http://history.rutgers.edu/undergrad/plagiarism.htm)) appears in Rutgers University's rules. Like all such rules, it applies to this class.

Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be promptly cited in the text or in a footnote. Acknowledgment is required when material from another source is stored in print, electronic, or other medium and is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one's words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: "to paraphrase Plato's comment ..." and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material.

Information which is common knowledge, such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be footnoted; however, all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, only materials that contribute to one's general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a subtle issue. Any questions about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the faculty member.

### Reading List.

Glenn Altschuler, *All Shook Up* (Oxford University Press)  
Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light* (UNC Press)  
Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (Norton)  
James Gilbert and Peter Kuznick, *Rethinking the Cold War* (Smithsonian Books)  
David Halberstam, *The Fifties* (Ballantine Books)  
Jack Kerouac, *On the Road* (Penguin)  
Stephen Whitfield, *Culture of the Cold War* (Johns Hopkins)

### Weekly Assignments.

📖 **Book** available at Rutgers University Bookstore or in Alexander library reserves  
📄 **Article** available at online on the class website at rutgersonline.net.

- Jan. 28                    **Introduction**  
📄 Robert Griffith, "The Cultural Turn in Cold War Studies,"  
    *Reviews in American History* 29 (2001), pp. 150-157. [optional]
- Feb. 4                    **Origins of the Cold War**  
📄 William Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since World  
    War II*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, pp. 31-78.  
📄 Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. "Origins of the Cold War," *Foreign  
    Affairs*, 1967, pp. 22-52.  
📄 George Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs*,  
    July 1947, pp. 566-582.  
📄 Walter Lippmann, "The Cold War," reprinted in *Foreign Affairs*,  
    Spring 1987, pp. 869-884.
- Feb. 11                   **The Bomb**  
📖 David Halberstam, *The Fifties*, Chs. 2, 6, 24  
📖 Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light*, Parts 1, 2, 4 & 7.
- Feb. 18                   **Politics and the Red Scare**  
📖 Halberstam, *The Fifties*, Chs 1, 3, 16-18, 23  
📖 Whitfield, *Culture of the Cold War*, pp. 1-52.  
📄 Leslie Fiedler, "Hiss, Chambers, and the Age of Innocence,"  
    *Commentary*, August 1951.  
📄 Irving Howe, "Lillian Hellman and the McCarthy Years."
- \*\*Short Papers Due\*\***
- Feb. 25                   **Cold War Adventurism**  
📖 Halberstam, *The Fifties*, Chs. 25-27.  
📄 Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *The CIA and American Democracy*, Chs. 5  
    & 6.  
📄 Michael Kackman, *Citizen Spy: Television, Espionage, and Cold  
    War Culture*, pp. 1-48.  
📄 Michael Ignatieff, "What Did the CIA Do to His Father?," *New  
    York Times Magazine*, April 1, 2001.
- Mar. 3                    **Affluence and Conformity**  
📖 Halberstam, *The Fifties*, Chs 8-12, 33, 35.

- 📖 Whitfield, *Culture of the Cold War*, Ch. 3.
- 📁 Irving Howe, "This Age of Conformity."
- 📁 Alan Brinkley, "The Illusion of Unity in Cold War Culture," in *Rethinking Cold War Culture*, pp. 61-73.

**\*\*Outline Due\*\***

Mar. 10

**Cold War Journalism**

- 📁 Mark Van Pelt, "The Cold War on the Air," *Journal of Popular Culture*, 18:2 (1984), pp. 97-110.
- 📁 Shawn J. Parry-Giles, "'Camouflaged' Propaganda: The Truman and Eisenhower Administrations' Covert Manipulation of News," *Western Journal of Communication*, (Spring 1996), pp. 146-167.
- 📁 Eric Alterman, *Sound and Fury*, Chs. 1 & 2.
- 📁 Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News*, Ch. 5.
- 📁 Daniel Boorstin, "Selling the President to the People."
- 📁 John Foran, "Discursive Subversions: *Time* Magazine, the CIA Overthrow of Mossadegh, and the Installation of the Shah," in Christian G. Appy, editor, *Cold War Constructions: The Political Culture of United States Imperialism, 1945-1966*, pp. 157-182.

Mar. 17

**SPRING BREAK**

*over break, please start reading:*

- 📖 Jack Kerouac, *On the Road*.

*We will discuss it the week of April 14, but it's long and you should start it now.*

Mar. 24

**Civil Rights Movement**

- 📖 Halberstam, *The Fifties*, Chs 28-30, 36, 44.
- 📁 Mary Dudziak, "Brown as a Cold War Case," *Journal of American History*.
- 📁 Samples from *Reporting Civil Rights*.
- 📁 Edward P. Morgan, "The Good, the Bad and the Forgotten: Media Culture and Public Memory of the Civil Rights Movement," in *The Civil Rights Movement in American Memory*.

Mar. 31

**Television and the Mass Culture Debate**

- 📖 Halberstam, *The Fifties*, pp. 180-202, 507-520, 643-666.
- 📖 Whitfield, *Culture of the Cold War*, pp. 153-178.
- 📁 Dwight Macdonald, "Masscult and Midcult."
- 📁 Richard Pells, *The Liberal Mind in a Conservative Age*, pp. 174-182, 217-232.
- 📁 Thomas Doherty, *Cold War, Cool Medium*, Ch. 3.

Apr. 7

**Film/Mass Culture**

- 📖 Halberstam, *The Fifties*, pp. 254-271, 479-486, 564-571.
- 📖 Whitfield, *Culture of the Cold War*, Ch. 6.
- 📁 Hortense Powdermaker, from *Hollywood: The Dream Factory*.
- 📁 Daniel J. Leab, "How Red Was My Valley: Hollywood, the Cold War Film, and *I Married a Communist*," *Journal of Contemporary History* 19:1 (Jan. 1984), pp. 59-88.
- 📁 Michael Rogin, "Kiss Me Deadly: Communism, Motherhood, and

Cold War Movies," *Representations*.

**\*\*Term Paper Rough Draft Due\*\***

Apr. 14

**Literature – The Beats**

- 📖 Jack Kerouac, *On the Road*.
- 📖 Halberstam, *The Fifties*, pp. 295-307.
- 📁 Louis Menand, "Drive, He Said," *The New Yorker*, October 1, 2007.
- 📁 Norman Podhoretz, "The Know-Nothing Bohemians," *Partisan Review*, 25 (Spring 1958).

**\*\*Term Papers Due\*\***

Apr. 21

**Feminism**

- 📖 Halberstam, *The Fifties*, pp. 587-598.
- 📖 Elaine Tyler May, "Explosive Issues: Sex, Women, and the Bomb," in *Recasting America*, pp. 154-168.
- 📖 Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*. Chs. 1-4, 12-14, Epilogue
- 📁 Jane Sherron DeHart, "Containment at Home," in *Rethinking Cold War Culture*, pp. 124-155.

Apr. 28

**Art**

- 📖 Erika Doss, "The Art of Cultural Politics," in *Recasting America*, pp. 195-217.
- 📁 Jane DeHart Mathews, "Art and Politics in Cold War America," *American Historical Review* 81:4 (October 1976), pp. 762-787.
- 📁 Clement Greenberg, "Avant Garde and Kitsch."
- 📁 Clement Greenberg, *Essays on Jackson Pollock*.
- 📁 Harold Rosenberg, "The American Action Painters."
- 📁 Meyer Schapiro, "The Nature of Abstract Art."

May 5

**Rock 'n' Roll**

- 📖 Halberstam, *The Fifties*, pp. 456-79.
- 📖 Glenn Altschuler, *All Shook Up*, pp. 3-129.

**\*\*Term Paper Final Draft Due\*\***