

**Carleton University
Winter 2015
Department of English**

**ENGL 3702A
United States Culture, 1945-1979
W 2:35-5:25**

**Instructor: Franny Nudelman
Office: 1814 Dunton Tower
Phone: x1773
e-mail: franny_nudelman@carleton.ca**

Course Description:

In the United States, the decades following World War Two were marked by unprecedented military and economic expansion. In the realm of culture, innovation was afoot as writers, painters, filmmakers, and musicians cultivated an aesthetic of spontaneity, intensity, and interiority that might adequately represent the strange conditions of modern life. In this course, we will consider major trends in the culture of the era (including abstract expressionism, beat poetry, new journalism, and direct cinema) in light of foreign wars, movements for gender and racial equality, and the advent of live television, rock music, and mind-altering drugs.

Reading:

Tom Englehardt, *The End of Victory Culture: Cold War America and the Disillusioning of a Generation* (1995)
John Hersey, *Hiroshima* (1946)
Sylvia Plath, *Ariel* (1965)
Thomas Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49* (1965)
Tom Wolfe, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (1968)

Books for the course can be purchased at Octopus Books at 116 Third Avenue (at Bank St.). Reading marked with a * on the syllabus will be posted on ARES or CULearn.

Films:

John Frankenheimer, *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962)
Francis Ford Coppola, *Apocalypse Now* (1979)
David and Albert Maysles, *Gimme Shelter* (1970)
Sol Saks, "Bewitched" (1964)
William Wyler, *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946)

Images:

Jackson Pollock, selected paintings

Listening:

- **The Doors, "The End" (1967)
- **The Grateful Dead, "Feedback" from *Live/Dead* (1969)
- **Jimmy Hendrix, "Star-Spangled Banner" (1969)
- **Charles Mingus, *Mingus Ah Um* (1959)

Music will be posted on CULearn.

Laptops and Cell Phones

Please note that our classroom will be device-free. Each week two students will volunteer to take notes (on laptops) for the entire group. (They will receive extra credit for taking careful and accurate notes.) These notes will be posted on CULearn. Otherwise, the only students allowed to use laptops in the classroom will be those with special permission from the Paul Menton Centre. Likewise, students will not be allowed to use cell phones or other devices for any purpose during class.

Assignments and Evaluation:

Your final grade will be based on class participation, five in-class writing assignments, a journal, and one essay. Each will count for one quarter (25%) of your grade.

Class Participation

Our class will succeed or fail based on your active, informed, and generous participation in class discussions. For that reason, class participation will make up 25% of your grade. This grade will reflect not only your contribution to our conversations, your ability to listen and respond to the ideas of others in the class, and your attendance record.

If you miss more than one class your class participation grade will be lowered one grade for each missed class. For example, if you miss two classes you will receive a "B" for class participation, and if you miss three you will receive a "C."

Journal

You will keep a journal in which you make at least two entries each week—one in response to the week's reading/viewing, and one in response to class discussion. This assignment is meant to give you a chance to work through your ideas, and to keep a record of our class discussions. In your journal, feel free to write informally, and to explore and test ideas that are not yet fully formed. Please bring your journal with you to our class meetings, and plan to hand it in at the end of the term.

In-Class Writing

Over the course of the semester, there will be five unannounced in-class writing assignments. These may take the form of brief responses to the reading, or of reading quizzes. They are designed to insure that you attend class, keep up with the reading, and give the reading some thought in advance of our class meetings. For this reason, you will not be allowed to make up these assignments.

Essay

You will write one 6 page essay this semester, assignment and due date to be determined. When reading these essays, I will look for clear, communicative writing, as well as original and convincing analysis of the text/s in question.

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your *formally* scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by Nov. 11, 2011 for the Fall term and March 7, 2012 for the Winter term.

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>.

Week 1

Introduction

APOCALYPSE NOW: COLD WAR MILITARISM

Week 2

John Hersey, *Hiroshima*

*Harry Truman, "Announcing the Bombing of Hiroshima" (August 6, 1945)

*Mary McCarthy, "A Letter to the Editor of *politics*" (1946)

Week 3

William Wyler, *The Best Years of Our Lives*

Tom Englehardt, *The End of Victory Culture* ("The War Story," pp. 3-65)

Week 4

John Frankenheimer, *The Manchurian Candidate*

*Dwight Eisenhower, "Farewell Address" (1961)

Tom Englehardt, *The End of Victory Culture* ("Containments," pp. 69-171)

Week 5

Thomas Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*

MAGIC IN ACTION: EXPERIMENTS IN ART AND POLITICS

Week 6

*Charles Mingus, *Mingus Ah Um*

*Jackson Pollock, selected paintings

*Allen Ginsburg, "America" from *Howl and Other Poems* (1956)

Week 7

*James Baldwin, "Notes of a Native Son" (1955)

*U.S. Supreme Court, *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954)

*Martin Luther King, "I Have a Dream" (1963)

Week 8

*Students for a Democratic Society, "Port Huron Statement" (1962)

*Sol Saks, "Bewitched"

*Betty Friedan, "The Problem With No Name" (1962)

Week 9

Sylvia Plath, *Ariel*

DOORS OF PERCEPTION: APOCALYPSE AGAIN

Week 10

Tom Wolfe, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*

Week 11

Albert and David Maysles, *Gimme Shelter*

**The Grateful Dead, "Feedback"

**Jimi Hendrix, "Star-Spangled Banner"

Week 12

Francis Ford Coppola, "Apocalypse Now" (1979)

*Joan Didion, "The White Album" (1979)