The United States after 1945

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The course examines the history of the United States after 1945 to the present. This period could be called the American Moment: for good or ill, the United States became the predominant power in the world. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, the United States remained the only global “hyperpower.” But today the world looks different and with the rise of China, some analysts talk about the decline of the United States. Topics include American politics, foreign policy, economy, society and culture.

Schedule of topics:

Week 1

The World Set Free: Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower
The Not So United Nations
The Bomb
The “Leader of the Free World”
“When whales fight, shrimps get their backs broken”

Week 2

Not a Pax Americana: John F. Kennedy and L. B. Johnson
The Best and the Brightest
Making a Cuba Libre
The Great Society
The Greatest Purveyor of Violence

Week 3

From Pragmatism to Détente: Richard M. Nixon, Gerald Ford and James E. Carter

Did you know? Your registration in the LinR program allows you to borrow materials from Carleton University’s MacOdrum Library. To receive a temporary borrowing card, visit the circulation desk and identify yourself as a participant of LinR.
Ménage à Trois

In Retrospect

There is a bright side (to Watergate)

Do We Have to Be So Gratuitously Snotty?

**Week 4**

*If You Seek Peace, Come to This Gate: Ronald Reagan and G. H. W. Bush*

New Crusade

Our Days of Weakness Are Over

Completely Different Conversation

Burst of Triumphantism

**Week 5**

*We Are the Indispensable Nation: William J. Clinton and G. W. Bush*

An Enormous and Historic Strategic Error

New American Century

Like a New Pearl Harbor

It Is Largely About Oil

**Week 6**

*Mr. Smith Goes to Washington: Barack H. Obama and Donald J. Trump*

A Return to the Traditional

The United States Can, Must and Will Lead

We Stand at a Crossroads

Offshore Balancing
Recommended readings for continued learning:


Other interesting resources: