



**Core Knowledge
U.S. History II (1865-1992)
Syllabus**

Note to the Instructor:

This course calls for three hours of class time per week. The number of topics to be discussed during those three hours varies. In most cases there are two topics per week, but sometimes there are three, or only one. This is meant to give some rough guidance as to the depth of coverage that would seem to be appropriate for each topic while also allowing individual instructors to adjust the emphasis as they see fit. The syllabi were designed to be very inclusive, but the reality of the classroom will almost certainly require some adjustments (especially depending on the level of preparation of the students).

Ideally, both recommended textbooks should be used since they complement each other in terms of material covered and in their historical perspective. They are also, given the pressures of the market to produce PC history, reasonably balanced (especially for the earlier periods).

The instructor should make every effort to assign at least one research paper or term paper. Students must learn to write analytically; this skill is absolutely essential for surviving in the real world and for functioning as an informed citizen in a democracy.

The instructor may wish to give up one hour to schedule an exam in the middle of the semester, but it is assumed that a comprehensive final exam would come during an exam period and not require sacrificing class time.

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WEEK ONE:

Topic 1: Reconstruction:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) Democrat Andrew Johnson succeeds after Lincoln's assassination; alienates Radical Republicans in Congress by supporting leniency toward defeated South.
- 2) Radical Republicans push for political and social rights for emancipated blacks; Freedmen's Bureau established and oppressive black codes nullified.
- 3) Northern missionaries, teachers and entrepreneurs sweep into the South creating the Carpetbagger myth (and reality).
- 4) 14th and 15th Amendments establish equal protection under the law and the right to vote for black males; exclusion of white females splits advocates of women's rights.
- 5) Black enfranchisement enforced by Federal authority; blacks elected to state and national office.
- 6) Reconstruction governments dominated by white Republicans (with significant black involvement).
- 7) Freedmen seek economic and social rights – especially land ownership; Congress ultimately fails to keep commitment to land redistribution.
- 8) Clashes between Johnson and Congress leads to impeachment and acquittal in Senate by one vote; Grant elected 1868 but Radical commitment to equal rights wanes.
- 9) Rise of Ku Klux Klan and anti-black violence and lynching—force and terror used to nullify black political participation and economic gains.

Topic 2: The Coming of Jim Crow:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) Democrat Tilden defeats Republican Hayes in 1876 election; military control of the South used to manipulate electoral vote and claim victory for Hayes.
- 2) Compromise of 1877: Democrats accept election of Hayes in return for the end of military Reconstruction and other pro-Southern concessions.
- 3) The "Redeemers" reestablish white supremacy and control; blacks driven from office as Republican rule collapses in states with black majorities.
- 4) Black families and churches survive despite poverty and violence; independent black farming eliminated by spread of sharecropping and peonage.
- 5) Gradual emergence of racial segregation (Jim Crow) – sanctioned by the Supreme Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896).
- 6) New racist literature, in North as well as South, proclaims black racial inferiority; rise of myth of the South's "Lost Cause".
- 7) Voting rights systematically eliminated by "Grandfather Clause," poll tax, etc.

Week One Suggested Background Reading:

Alan Brinkley, *American History: A Survey*, Volume II, Ninth Edition, McGraw-Hill, 1995, pp. 413-446.

John M. Murrin, Paul E. Johnson, James M. McPherson, Gary Gerstle, Emily S. Rosenberg, Norman L. Rosenberg, *Liberty, Equality, Power: A History of the American People*, Harcourt Brace, Second Edition, 1999, pp. 583-613; 627-635.

WEEK TWO:**Topic 3: A New American Society and Economy:****Lecture Outline:**

- 1) Civil War stimulates the growth of a national economy and government support for industrial development.
- 2) Local, state and federal subsidies facilitate the growth of railroads; transcontinental connection completed in 1869.
- 3) The first technological revolution: trans-Atlantic cable, telephone, Marconi's wireless, steel skyscrapers and elevators, typewriter, motion pictures, phonograph, automobile, airplane; surge in patents – more than 10 times all previous U.S. history.
- 4) Modern corporations: limited liability, vertical and horizontal integration, holding companies, mergers, monopolies, investment banking and stock market spur unprecedented concentrations of private wealth.
- 5) The new business culture: Social Darwinism, the Gospel of Wealth, the Robber Barons and Horatio Alger's "rags to riches".
- 6) Critical realism in American literature: Twain, Howells, Dresser.

Topic 4: The New Urban Economy**Lecture Outline:**

- 1) Immigrant labor key to industrial growth – critical role of Irish and Chinese in building the railroads.
- 2) Child labor persists in new factories, among poor urban-immigrant families, in mines and agriculture.
- 3) Single white women enter workforce in department stores, offices, nursing and teaching; 20% of women working by 1900; black women largely confined to domestic service or teaching in segregated schools.
- 4) Ethnic and racial divisions (and the use of court injunctions and force to break strikes) limit the impact of early labor unions.
- 5) The "new" immigration from southern and eastern Europe; emergence of urban-ethnic neighborhoods, occupations, political machines and bosses.
- 6) Growth of great cities – millions of rural Americans and 25 million immigrants jam the new cities by 1910; beginnings of exodus of southern blacks to northern cities.
- 7) The modern urban lifestyle; electricity revolutionizes work and daily life: night shifts, night life, etc.
- 8) The new nativism: fear of "hyphenated-Americans" and calls for immigration restriction; Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882.
- 9) Urban squalor; women and urban reforms: the settlement house movement, temperance, social work, etc.

Week Two Suggested Background Reading:

Brinkley, II, pp. 481-501; 507-529.

Murrin, *et al.*, pp. 637-649; 659-693.

WEEK THREE:**Topic 5: The Closing of the Frontier and the Last Indian Wars**

Lecture Outline:

- 1) Homestead Act stimulates rapid settlement of the West and the Southwest; frontier declared “closed” in 1890.
- 2) New territories and states press Congress for harsh policies to remove or isolate Indians.
- 3) Escalation of Army campaigns against Native Americans; over 200 battles in the decade after 1865.
- 4) Destruction of vast buffalo herds devastates Indian culture and economy.
- 5) Board of Indian Commissioners forces Native Americans onto poor lands and reservations; treaties persistently violated and promises broken.
- 6) Dawes Act undermines tribal autonomy by dividing reservation land by family units.
- 7) Nez Perce, Apaches and Sioux defeated between 1877 and 1890.
- 8) Fewer than ¼ million Indians remain in the United States by 1890.

Topic 6: The Farm Crisis and the Populist Movement:**Lecture Outline:**

- 1) Farm income depressed by mechanization and overproduction; farmers lack leverage with banks, railroads, processors and “middlemen”.
- 2) Beginnings of farm activism in the Grange and the Farmers’ Alliances (including many women).
- 3) Emergence of the Populist movement: People’s Party candidate James Weaver carries six states and receives a million votes in 1892.
- 4) Populists endorse free coinage of silver, popular election of senators, graduated income tax and federal regulation or control of railroads and public utilities.
- 5) William Jennings Bryan captures Democratic nomination in 1896 and endorsed by Populists; fails to overcome racial divisions in southern Populism or to win support of urban workers, immigrants or eastern liberal reformers.
- 6) McKinley shatters the Gilded Age political stalemate; GOP becomes majority party until Great Depression.

Week Three Suggested Background Reading:

Brinkley, II, pp. 449-478; 538-551.

Murrin, *et al.*, pp. 615-627; 649-657.

WEEK FOUR:**Topic 7: An Imperial Democracy:****Lecture Outline:**

- 1) Toward empire: forcing France out of Mexico (1865); purchase of Alaska and annexation of Midway Islands (1867); annexation of Hawaii (1898).
- 2) Imperial ideologies: racism and the “white man’s burden”; Social Darwinism; Alfred Mahan on naval strength and world power.
- 3) The “yellow” press and the “splendid little war” with Spain over Cuba; Theodore Roosevelt and Admiral Dewey seize popular imagination.
- 4) Spain cedes Puerto Rico, Guam, Philippines and grants Cuban independence.
- 5) Fierce national debate over “imperial democracy”: treaty ratified by one vote more than 2/3 required for ratification.

- 6) The Platt Amendment establishes de facto U.S. control over Cuba; suppression of Philippine nationalists.
- 7) The Open Door Policy: U.S. joins international intervention in China.
- 8) TR's "revolution" in Panama; building the "path between the seas".
- 9) The "Roosevelt Corollary" to Monroe Doctrine, Taft's Dollar Diplomacy in Latin America and Asia; Wilson intervenes in Haiti and Mexico.

Topic 8: The Progressive Impulse:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) The Progressive response to the new urban-industrial society: social and political problems solved by rational and scientific management by trained and educated leaders.
- 2) Organized interest groups impact local, state and national politics; the Social Gospel continues religious reform tradition.
- 3) Struggle for women's suffrage and equality continues; the "New Woman" and leadership in campaigns for family planning, prohibition and laws to protect children.
- 4) Booker T. Washington and the "Atlanta Compromise"; The Niagara Movement and the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.
- 5) Racism the "Achilles heel" of Progressivism (especially in the South); upsurge in lynching and anti-black urban riots; Wilson segregates federal departments in D.C.
- 6) Municipal and state reforms (city planning and management; direct primary, initiative, referendum and recall) set tone for national progressivism.
- 7) Roosevelt and Wilson: anti-trust laws, regulation of railroads, conservation, consumer protection; direct election senators, regulation of working conditions and graduated income tax.
- 8) Progressive education: socialization, practical and industrial training for the poor, immigrants and minorities; rejection of academic tradition and content.

Week Four Suggested Background Reading:

Brinkley, II, pp. 553-571; 573-613;
Murrin, *et al.*, pp. 695-731; 733-761.

WEEK FIVE:

Topic 9: The U.S. and the Great War:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) Wilson's call for "neutrality in thought and action conflicts with American sympathy for and investment in the Allied cause; the debate over preparedness.
- 2) Conflict over "neutral rights" on the high seas; German unrestricted submarine warfare leads to American intervention in April, 1917.
- 3) Unprecedented federal wartime economic controls over production, labor relations, railroads, shipping and utilities; Herbert Hoover and U.S. Food Administration.
- 4) The draft reveals widespread health deficiencies among young Americans.
- 5) Committee on Public Information enforces "loyalty"; pacifists and opponents of the war arrested and dissent suppressed.
- 6) The Great Migration of southern blacks to northern cities; anti-black urban riots erupt as black soldiers return from service in segregated armed forces.

- 7) Women enter wartime industries; Prohibition and Women's Suffrage Amendments ratified.
- 8) Anti-Bolshevik hysteria, the Palmer raids, the Red Scare and the Sacco-Vanzetti case.
- 9) Wilson at Versailles: U.S. rejects treaty as Wilson refuses to compromise on League of Nations.

Topic 10: Normalcy and the Jazz Age:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) Postwar inflation, labor strife, unemployment, housing shortages and racial conflict fuel backlash against progressivism and wartime economic controls.
- 2) Harding creates Bureau of the Budget: cuts wartime tax rates, federal budget and national debt, shipping returned to private ownership, higher tariffs and credit legislation for agriculture, immigration quotas established.
- 3) Washington Naval Conference limits construction of warships by world naval powers.
- 4) Teapot Dome: Harding's death and disgrace; Coolidge defuses the scandal.
- 5) Coolidge endorses federal anti-lynching legislation and a federal commission to reduce racial conflict (proposed by Harding in 1921); resurgence of KKK and nativism; Marcus Garvey and black separatism.
- 6) Coolidge prosperity: tax cuts leave 93% of Americans paying no income taxes; high tariffs fuel agricultural depression; immigration quotas cut.
- 7) Advertising, credit and the consumer culture; proliferation of labor saving home appliances; cultural impact of Hollywood, automobile, flappers and the sexual revolution.
- 8) The "empire of the air": over 12 million radios in American homes by 1929; Coolidge first president whose voice is recognized by American people.
- 9) Women continue post-suffrage struggle for equality and entry into professions; dominate low pay clerical positions and teaching.
- 10) Hoover routs Al Smith in 1928; campaign reveals deep divisions over Smith's Catholicism, opposition to Prohibition and big city background.

Week Five Suggested Background Reading:

Brinkley, II, pp. 613-650; 653-675; 729-733.

Murrin, *et al.*, pp. 763-797; 799-835.

WEEK SIX:

Topic 11: The Coming of the Great Depression:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) Fault lines in the economy: low prices and high debt in agriculture; uneven distribution of income and purchasing power; over dependence on auto and construction industries; unpaid European war debts; stock market speculation and margin (credit).
- 2) The Great Crash: stock market loses 50% of its value (26 billion) in a few weeks; farm and labor income down 60% by 1932; 7,000 banks fail; 9 million savings accounts lost.
- 3) Hoover rejects traditional hands-off business cycle approach: cuts budget and pressures labor and management to maintain production and jobs; doubles federal public works but resists deficit spending.
- 4) Hoover remains ambivalent about extending federal authority and undermining individual responsibility through dependence on government.

- 5) Reconstruction Finance Corporation enacted to prevent collapse of banks and corporations; RFC authorizes (but fails to spend) \$300 million in direct aid to the states.
- 6) Private charities overwhelmed; most of Hoover's plan for federal economic intervention dies in Congress.
- 7) The Bonus Army debacle; Hoover becomes a symbol of failure—Hoovervilles, Hoover-blankets, Hoover-flags, etc.
- 8) N.Y. governor Franklin Roosevelt breaks tradition by accepting nomination in person at Chicago Convention; pledges New Deal for the American people and condemns Hoover for failure to balance budget.
- 9) Depression deepens (“Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?”); Democrats capture White House and Congress in landslide.

Week Six Suggested Background Reading:

Brinkley, II, pp. 677-695.

Murrin, *et al.*, pp. 837-842.

WEEK SEVEN:

Topic 12: FDR's New Deal:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) FDR captures public imagination in Inaugural Address (“The only thing we have to fear is fear itself...”) and Fireside Chats on the radio.
- 2) The “100 days” of the first New Deal: Emergency Banking Act, Agricultural Adjustment Act, Federal Deposit Insurance, Securities and Exchange Commission, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, National Industrial Recovery Act, Civilian Conservation Corps.
- 3) Coalition of labor, farmers, urban ethnics and blacks (90% vote for FDR in 1936 despite segregation in most New Deal programs) makes Democrats the majority party for first time since before the Civil War.
- 4) The second New Deal responds to attacks from Right and Left: Works Progress Administration, National Youth Administration, Social Security Act, the Wagner Act, Fair Labor Standards Act.
- 5) Legacy of the New Deal: presidential dominance over Congress, federal dominance over the states, a permanent federal presence in the private economy and an unprecedented federal role in daily lives of American people.
- 6) Conspiracy of silence with the press on FDR's paralysis; live press conferences and the “news revolution” make Washington, D.C. a world news dateline.
- 7) Eleanor Roosevelt as FDR's social conscience and advocate for youth, minorities and women.
- 8) Depression becomes a way of life; 25% of white women and 38% of black women in workforce by 1940; unemployment remains 15% in 1939. World War II economic boom ends the Depression.
- 9) FDR's political dominance eroded by defeats on Supreme Court “packing” plan (1937) and “purge” of conservative Democratic senators (1938).
- 10) Executive Office of the President institutionalizes modern presidency (1939); FDR shatters two-term tradition (1940).

Week Seven Suggested Background Reading:
 Brinkley, II, pp. 701-727.
 Murrin, *et al.*, pp. 842-877.

WEEK EIGHT:

Topic 13: World War II:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) FDR recognizes the dangers posed by Fascism in Germany and Italy, Communist terror in the Soviet Union and aggressive militarism in Japan; most Americans committed to neutrality and non-involvement.
- 2) Italy's invasion of Ethiopia (1935), Germany's seizure of the Rhineland (1936) and Japan's invasion of China (1937) strain American neutrality.
- 3) FDR's "quarantine speech" rallies isolationists; constitutional amendment requiring a public referendum before a declaration of war narrowly defeated in House.
- 4) FDR authorizes secret \$2 billion Manhattan Project to build an atomic bomb.
- 5) FDR calls U.S. the "great arsenal of democracy"; maneuvers to prevent fall of Britain with Lend-Lease (March, 1941). Germany invades U.S.S.R. (June, 1941).
- 6) Isolationists discredited after Japan attacks Pearl Harbor and Germany and Italy declare war on U.S. (December, 1941).
- 7) Japan and Germany appear invincible after victories in Asia and Blitzkrieg in Europe.
- 8) Battle of Midway, German defeats at Stalingrad and in North Africa turn tide by 1943.
- 9) D-Day invasion and German losses in Battle of Bulge compel Nazi surrender (April, 1945); Truman succeeds FDR; atomic bombs force Japan's surrender (August, 1945).
- 10) United Nations established with active American support and leadership.

Week Eight Suggested Background Reading:
 Brinkley, II, pp. 733-751; 760-766.
 Murrin, *et al.*, pp. 879-898.

WEEK NINE:

Topic 14: The Home front During World War II:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) FDR pledges ships, tanks and planes for victory; federal controls established over the economy; Truman Committee exposes waste and corruption in wartime production.
- 2) War hysteria, greed and racism in California; FDR agrees to the internment of more than 100,000 Japanese-Americans; \$2 billion in personal property lost.
- 3) March on Washington threat persuades FDR to establish Fair Employment Practices Commission to open defense jobs to blacks; race riots in Detroit and other cities.
- 4) Armed forces remain segregated and double "V" on mastheads of black newspapers proclaims goal of victory over racism at home and abroad.
- 5) Women (symbolized by "Rosie the Riveter") flock to defense industries and jobs traditionally held by men.
- 6) FDR and State Department fail to confront or act on evidence of the Holocaust.
- 7) Hollywood and radio mobilize national commitment to destroy tyranny; World War II remains in our national memory as "the good war," fought by "the greatest generation."

Topic 15: The Fair Deal and the Cold War:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) Revisionist controversy over Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb: a military necessity or a political move to restrain the Soviet Union in the postwar world?
- 2) Containment policy emerges as Soviets pressure Berlin and divided Germany, Eastern Europe, Iran, Greece and Turkey and communists make gains in Italy and France.
- 3) Truman warns against a return to isolationism: aid to Greece and Turkey, the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan.
- 4) National Security Act (1947) creates Department of Defense, National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency.
- 5) Soviets blockade Berlin (1948): airlift supplies the city and breaks the blockade.
- 6) 1949: North Atlantic Treaty Organization: first U.S. mutual security alliance repudiates isolationism; Soviets detonate atomic bomb and Communists take over China.
- 7) North Korea invades South Korea (new documents from Soviet archives confirm Soviet backing); Truman send U.S. troops under United Nations command.
- 8) The second Red Scare: Joseph McCarthy and "McCarthyism" spur reckless efforts to expose communist subversion in American life. (Newly declassified documents confirm extensive espionage and control of U.S. Communist Party by Soviet Union).
- 9) Truman proposes national health insurance, federal aid to education and civil rights legislation; desegregates armed forces by executive order; wins second term upset (1948).
- 10) Truman's popularity collapses over Korea and charges of corruption and communist influence at home; Dwight Eisenhower returns GOP to White House after 20 years.

Week Nine Suggested Background Reading:

Brinkley, II, pp. 751-760; 769-791.

Murrin, *et al.*, pp. 898-917; 919-949.

WEEK TEN:

Topic 16: Eisenhower and the 1950s:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) The television revolution: 10,000 homes get new sets every day of "the Fifties". 11% of American homes have TV in 1950; nearly 90% by 1960; the consumer culture revives after decades of Depression and wartime controls.
- 2) Idealization of the single family suburban home, the nuclear family and the housewife; but 1/3 of married women in workforce by 1960.
- 3) The automobile age (Federal Highway Act) and the decay of American cities; ambiguous legacy of urban renewal.
- 4) America invents "the teenager" and youth-centered popular culture.
- 5) The genial public Ike vs. new evidence of the decisive private Eisenhower ("hidden-hand" in the censure of McCarthy).
- 6) Eisenhower reduces the budget and federal controls over the economy; cuts military spending and farm supports; taxes reduced for individuals and business; balanced budgets in 1954 and 1960.
- 7) Ike preserves New Deal safety net: expands unemployment compensation and Social Security.

- 8) *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) launches modern civil rights movement; emergence of Martin Luther King, Jr. in Montgomery bus boycott (1955); Ike sends federal troops to Little Rock and Civil Rights Commission established (1957); sit-ins sweep south; less than 10% southern black children attend integrated schools by 1960.
- 9) Ike initially supports “massive retaliation,” “more bang for the buck” and the “domino-theory” but warns in 1961 of anti-democratic threat by “military-industrial complex”.
- 10) Korean armistice (1953), military advisers to Vietnam; U-2 incident and collapse of Paris summit and Moscow visit (1960); diplomatic break with Castro’s Cuba (1961).

Topic 17: John F. Kennedy’s New Frontier:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) 1960: first televised debates help Kennedy win very close election; first (and only) Catholic president; challenges nation to “bear any burden” for freedom around the world.
- 2) Cold War heats up in 1961: Bay of Pigs, Operation Mongoose, tense Vienna Summit with Khrushchev, Berlin Wall.
- 3) Cuban Missile Crisis: Soviets withdraw missiles after U.S. non-invasion pledge and secret deal to remove American missiles from Turkey; ambiguous legacy: Limited Test Ban Treaty and the “Hotline” vs. intensified nuclear arms race.
- 4) JFK sends 16,000 military “advisers” to South Vietnam: declares Vietnamese must win their own war but U.S. should not withdraw; Diem overthrown and killed.
- 5) JFK American University speech: calls for rethinking Cold War assumptions dominating U.S. foreign policy since 1945.
- 6) Civil rights crises: Freedom Riders, confrontations at the Universities of Mississippi and Alabama; Kennedy calls civil rights a “moral issue” and submits comprehensive bill to end segregation; March on Washington and King’s “I have a dream” speech.
- 7) Space Program and Peace Corps stimulate idealism by the young (“Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.”)
- 8) Medical care for seniors, cabinet department of urban affairs and federal aid to education fail in Congress.
- 9) JFK’s televised press conferences attract huge audiences; first TV president.
- 10) Assassination in Dallas: the Warren Commission and the enduring controversy.

Week Ten Suggested Background Reading:

Brinkley, II, pp. 793-821.

Murrin, *et al.*, pp. 949-993.

WEEK ELEVEN:

Topic 18: Lyndon Johnson: the Great Society and the Vietnam War

Lecture Outline:

- 1) 1964 Civil Rights Act outlaws segregation and discrimination in public accommodations and employment based on race and gender.
- 2) 1965 Voting Rights Act establishes full legal equality for black Americans for the first time in American history.
- 3) Great Society: War on Poverty, Medicare, Medicaid, Head Start, federal housing and urban renewal, aid to elementary and secondary schools, immigration reform, etc.

- 4) Tonkin Gulf Resolution (1964); bombing of North Vietnam (1965) and buildup of U.S. troops (to more than 500,000).
- 5) Anti-war movement (especially on college campuses); televised war coverage, increasing casualties and the credibility gap diminish public support for the war.
- 6) Tet Offensive (1968) leads to LBJ's withdrawal from presidential race.
- 7) Massive military costs, in blood and treasure, divide the nation and lead to significant cuts in Great Society programs.

Topic 19: The Upheaval of the Sixties:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) Urban riots sweep through American cities; Kerner Commission warns of "two societies, one black and one white, separate and unequal."
- 2) Collapse of the bi-racial civil rights coalition; demand for "black power" spurs a white backlash for "law and order".
- 3) The new feminism and the women's liberation movement (National Organization for Women); new Hispanic, Native American and Gay rights militancy; the new conservatism (Young Americans for Freedom).
- 4) The campus counterculture: attack on traditional academic disciplines and requirements; emergence of Black Studies, Women's Studies, Gay Studies, etc.
- 5) 1968 assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy; police "riot" at Chicago Democratic National Convention.
- 6) Richard Nixon's "southern strategy"; wins close election with appeal to law and order, "the silent majority" and a "secret plan" to end the Vietnam War.
- 7) George Wallace's American Independent party captures nearly 10 million votes and ends "the solid South" for Democrats.

Week Eleven Suggested Background Reading:

Brinkley, II, pp. 821-864.

Murrain, *et al.*, pp. pp. 995-1012.

WEEK TWELVE:

Topic 20: The Nixon Era:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) Nixon's foreign affairs master plan: shift combat role in Vietnam to the Vietnamese; improve relations (détente) with communist world and reduce burdens of Cold War.
- 2) "Ping-pong diplomacy" and breakthrough to China; Nixon visits Beijing.
- 3) Moscow summit leads to economic cooperation and Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty.
- 4) "Vietnamization" and expanded bombing and mining of North Vietnam; negotiated settlement signed in 1973.
- 5) Nixon's domestic master plan: build on middle class anger over liberal social policies and the welfare state to make GOP majority party for first time since Great Depression.
- 6) Uniform national standards for food stamps, cost of living increases for Social Security and extension of coverage to elderly blind and disabled.
- 7) The Clean Air Act, Environmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

- 8) “Benign neglect” in civil rights; opposition to court-ordered busing and support for the courts and the police.
- 9) Watergate scandal and release of secret tapes force Nixon’s resignation after three articles of impeachment; Gerald Ford becomes only vice president and president not elected to either office (through 25th Amendment).

Topic 21: Ford, Carter and the Post-Watergate Malaise:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) Supreme Court (*Roe v. Wade*, 1973) affirms woman’s right to abortion; bitter conflict escalates between “pro-life” and “pro-choice” advocates.
- 2) Conflict over “social issues”-- drug culture and teen pregnancies, divorce and single-parent families, decline of traditional nuclear family; taxpayers revolt against high property taxes and government-mandated programs in public schools.
- 3) New racial tensions over court-ordered busing and affirmative action (compensation for past discrimination or “reverse discrimination”); rise of the New Right, Christian evangelicals and political action committees.
- 4) Post-Watergate efforts to limit the “imperial presidency”: War Powers Act, Freedom of Information Act, public funding of presidential campaigns.
- 5) Inflation, unemployment and economic stagnation after 1973 OPEC oil embargo.
- 6) U.S. forces and supporters flee as Saigon falls to North Vietnam in 1975.
- 7) Carter defeats Ford -- promising “never to lie” to the American people.
- 8) Carter calls energy crisis “moral equivalent of war”; energy conservation legislation enacted to reduce Middle East oil imports.
- 9) Carter brokers Camp David treaty between Israel and Egypt; Panama Canal treaty ends U.S. control in 1999; diplomatic relations established with China.
- 10) 1980: double-digit inflation/unemployment and Iranian hostage crisis; Ronald Reagan defeats Carter promising less government, lower taxes and military buildup.

Week Twelve Suggested Background Reading:

Brinkley, II, pp. 864-878; 881-885.

Murrin, *et al.*, pp. 1012-1028; 1071-1079.

WEEK THIRTEEN:

Topic 22: Ronald Reagan and the Conservative Revolt:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) Iranian hostages released minutes after Reagan takes oath of office; charges that the Reagan campaign colluded in delaying their release until after election never proven.
- 2) The Reagan program: cut taxes and government, shrink government regulation and social spending, balance the budget, rebuild U.S. defenses and halt communism.
- 3) Inflation and unemployment drop but loss of tax revenue and increase in military spending creates huge budget deficits, national debt and trade imbalance.
- 4) Spending slashed on food stamps, aid to education, college loans, assistance to cities and states and unemployment insurance.
- 5) Reagan attacks affirmative action as a racial quota system.
- 6) Anti-Soviet rhetoric (“the evil empire”) gives way to arms control agreements and accommodation with Mikhail Gorbachev’s USSR.

- 7) Iran-Contra scandal: arms illegally sold to Iran (for release of American hostages) and money used to supply Nicaraguan Contras.
- 8) Congressional investigation exposes “a secret government” operating in the White House; several national security officials convicted.
- 9) Special prosecutor finds that Reagan likely committed impeachable offenses.
- 10) George Bush becomes first incumbent vice president to win presidency since 1836.

Topic 23: The End of the Cold War -- From Bush to Clinton:

Lecture Outline:

- 1) Iraq invades Kuwait; Bush pulls together unprecedented international coalition (including USSR) to support UN sanctions; decisive military victory over Iraq.
- 2) Bush proclaims a “new world order” as USSR and communist regimes in Eastern Europe collapse; Berlin Wall torn down and Germany reunified; Cold War ends and Bush’s popularity hits 90%.
- 3) Soaring federal deficits and national debt; Savings and Loan scandal requires \$500 million federal bailout.
- 4) Recession, bankruptcies and downsizing in industry eliminate millions of American jobs.
- 5) American national identity and cohesion tested by “culture wars” over feminism, gay rights, abortion, AIDS, affirmative action, multiculturalism, urban crime and “new” immigration from Asia and Latin America.
- 6) 1992: Bill Clinton defeats Bush; unprecedented numbers of women and minorities elected to Congress.

Week Thirteen Suggested Background Reading:

Brinkley, II, pp. 885-918.

Murrin, *et al.*, pp. 1046-1069; 1079-1105.

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Suggested Bibliography:

Paul Boyer, *The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People* (Houghton Mifflin)

Alan Brinkley, *American History: A Survey* (McGraw Hill)

David Brion Davis and Steven Mintz, *The Boisterous Sea of Liberty: A Documentary History of America from Discovery Through the Civil War*, (Oxford)

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