

AMST 445-01, #19312

The Cold War and American Culture

"With the source of the evil so elusive and so immune to risk-free retaliation, American culture was politicized. The values and perceptions, the forms of expression, the symbolic patterns, the beliefs and myths that enabled Americans to make sense of reality—these constituents of culture were contaminated by an unseemly political interest in their roots and consequences. The struggle against domestic Communism encouraged an interpenetration of the two enterprises of politics and culture, resulting in a philistine inspection of artistic works not for their content but for the *politique des auteurs*."

Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (1996)

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Instructor: Dr. Adam Golub

Mondays 4:00-6:45 • Room: EC-011

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Course Description

This course explores the impact of Cold War geopolitics on U.S. society and culture. Specifically, we will examine the ways in which anticommunism, nationalism, and the atom bomb shaped the cultural conversation surrounding science, technology, childhood, family, gender, race, and sexuality. In addition, we will consider how everyday Americans drew on Cold War rhetoric and symbolism to give meaning and purpose to their lives. Throughout the course, we will study how the Cold War influenced the thematic concerns and ideological content of various cultural forms, particularly literature and film.

Course Prerequisite: Completion of General Education category II.B (new D.3), Historical and Cultural Foundations.

Required Texts

Books

Tom Engelhardt, *The End of Victory Culture: Cold War America and the Disillusioning of a Generation*

John Hersey, *Hiroshima*

David Serlin, *Replaceable You: Engineering the Body in Postwar America*

Mickey Spillane, *One Lonely Night*

Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*

Additional Readings will be available on Titanium

All books are available for purchase at Little Professor bookstore, 725 N. Placentia Ave (near the corner of Nutwood and Placentia).

Films

The Atomic Café (dir. Jayne Loader, Kevin Rafferty, Pierce Rafferty, 1982)

Them! (dir. Gordon Douglas, 1954)

Failsafe (dir. Sidney Lumet, 1964)

Invasion of the Body Snatchers (dir. Don Siegal, 1956)

The Manchurian Candidate (dir. John Frankenheimer, 1962)

Rocky IV (dir. Sylvester Stallone, 1985)

Far From Heaven (dir. Todd Haynes, 2002)

You are required to view some of these films in advance of our scheduled discussions [see course schedule]. They are available on reserve in the library, or you may acquire them on your own through DVD-rental services. You will be expected to discuss these films in your written assignments.

Learning Goals

- Students will analyze and evaluate a variety of primary and secondary sources, and synthesize these sources in meaningful ways
- Students will imaginatively and critically forge connections among diverse cultural and historical themes and problems
- Students will develop an interdisciplinary interpretive framework for studying American cultural production in a geopolitical context
- Students will be able to independently apply this interpretive framework to complicated cultural problems and issues from both historical and contemporary perspectives
- Students will develop skills in oral and written communication

Course Assignments

You will write three papers for this course. Each paper will challenge you to analyze primary cultural documents and connect them to their historical context. In each paper, you should analyze the assigned main texts as expressions of Cold War culture.

Each paper should have a thesis. You should develop your argument with ample evidence. In your papers, you are expected to integrate secondary sources (Engelhardt and Serlin) and relevant supplementary readings provided via Titanium.

The scholar Gene Wise has written that the practice of American Studies requires one to have a “connecting imagination.” Think of each paper as an opportunity to exercise your “connecting imagination.”

Each paper should be 6-8 pages in length (8-10 pages for graduate students).

Paper #1: Main texts for analysis: *Hiroshima*, *Them!*, *Failsafe*, and “There Will Come Soft Rains.”

Paper #2: Main texts for analysis: *One Lonely Night* and *Rocky IV*.

Paper #3: Main texts for analysis: *The Bell Jar* and *The Manchurian Candidate*

Participation

Attendance and class participation make up 10% of your final grade. Upper-division seminars work best when students are actively engaged with the classroom community, concepts, and coursework. Please come to every class prepared to 1) describe the central argument or theme of the assigned reading and/or film; 2) assess the reading/film for its relative strengths and limitations; 3) raise questions about the reading/film; 4) connect the readings/films to one another; 5) connect the readings/films to your broader understanding of contemporary and historical issues in American culture; 6) relate the readings/films to your own experience and/or areas of expertise.

Attendance is required at every class meeting.

Additional assignment for graduate students

M.A. students are required to read one additional book for the course (a book that you have **never** read before), selected in consultation with the instructor from the list below, and write a 6-8-page response paper that 1) summarizes AND evaluates the author's main argument and methodology and 2) ties the book into larger themes/issues/questions examined in the course. This paper is due no later than May 6.

--Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*

--Julia Mickenberg, *Learning From the Left: Children's Literature, the Cold War, and Radical Politics in the United States*

--Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*

--Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany*

--Reinhold Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War: The Cultural Mission of the United States in Austria after the Second World War*

--Peggy Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War*

Grading Standards

	<u>Undergraduates</u>	<u>Graduates</u>
Paper #1	30%	20%
Paper #2	30%	30%
Paper #3	30%	30%
Participation	10%	10%
Book Review (Graduate Students)	N/A	10%

For this course, +/- grading will be used. No extra credit will be offered. Keep all graded work so that any discrepancies can be easily and fairly straightened out. An assignment is considered late if it is not turned in at the beginning of the class session in which it is due. Late assignments will be lowered one mark **per day** (NOT per class meeting) after the due date (for example, C to C-). Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis for legitimate reasons and only when a student asks for an extension at least 24 hours before an assignment is due.

A+ 97-99; A 94-96; A-90-93; B+ 87-89; B 84-86; B- 80-83; C+ 77-79; C 74-76; C- 70-73; D+ 67-69; D 64-66; D- 60-63; F 0-59

A Note to Graduate Students

In keeping with university-wide requirements for graduate study, graduate students enrolled in this 400-level course will be expected to demonstrate, in both written and oral performance, quality higher than that expected of an undergraduate. Graduate students should demonstrate an advanced level of competence in interdisciplinary cultural analysis and synthesis.

Student Accommodations

CSUF complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act by providing a process for disclosing disabilities and arranging for reasonable accommodations. On the CSUF campus, the Office of Disabled Student Services has been delegated the authority to certify disabilities and to prescribe specific accommodations for students with documented disabilities. DSS provides support services for students with mobility limitations, learning disabilities, hearing or visual impairments, and other disabilities. Counselors are available to help students plan a CSUF experience to meet their individual needs. Prior to receiving this assistance, documentation from a qualified professional source must be submitted to DSS. For more information, please contact DSS in UH 101; phone 657-278-3117.

Academic Integrity

Integrity is an essential component of all students' academic experience. Students who violate university standards of academic integrity are subject to disciplinary sanctions, including failure in the course and suspension from the university. Since dishonesty in any form harms the individual, other students, and the university, policies on academic integrity are strictly enforced. I expect that you will familiarize yourself with the academic integrity guidelines found in the current student handbook. [<http://www.fullerton.edu/handbook/>]

Cheating is defined as obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for work by the use of any dishonest, deceptive, fraudulent, or unauthorized means, or helping someone commit an act of academic dishonesty. (UPS 300.021). Examples include, but are not limited to:

Unacceptable examination behavior: communicating with fellow students, copying material from another student's exam or allowing another student to copy from an exam, possessing or using unauthorized materials, or any behavior that defeats the intent of an exam.

Plagiarism: taking the work of another and offering it as one's own without giving credit to that source, whether that material is paraphrased or copied in verbatim or near-verbatim form.

Unauthorized collaboration on a project, homework or other assignment where an instructor expressly forbids such collaboration.

Documentary falsification, including forgery, altering of campus documents or records, tampering with grading procedures, fabricating lab assignments, or altering medical excuses.

Course Schedule (subject to revision)

Date	Topic	Due
M, Jan. 28	Introduction to Course: The Scorpion and the Tarantula • In-class film screening: <i>Atomic Cafe</i> (1982)	
	PART I: ORIGIN STORIES	
M, Feb. 4	Victory Culture	-- Engelhardt, <i>Victory Culture</i> : Preface, "Triumphalist Despair," "War Games," "X Marks the Spot." --President Harry S. Truman, "Recommendation for Assistance to Greece and Turkey," March 12, 1947 (a.k.a., The Truman Doctrine) --excerpts from <i>NSC-68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security</i> , April 14, 1950
M, Feb. 11	Containments and Corrosions	--Engelhardt, <i>Victory Culture</i> : "The Enemy Disappears," "The Haunting of Childhood," "Entering the Twilight Zone," "The First Coming of G.I. Joe." --James F. O'Neil, "How You Can Fight Communism," <i>American Legion Magazine</i> , August 1948 --Testimony of J. Edgar Hoover before HUAC March 26, 1947 --"100 Things You Should Know about Communism and Education," HUAC, 1948
M, Feb. 18	NO CLASS: <i>Presidents' Day</i>	

	PART II: ATOMIC CULTURE	
M, Feb. 25	The Atomic Sublime	--Hersey, <i>Hiroshima</i> --“The Bomb” from Yoshiteru Kosakai, <i>A-Bomb: A City Tells Its Story</i> (1972) --“An Overview of the Atomic Bombing,” from Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, <i>Eyewitness Testimonies: Appeals from the A-Bomb Survivors</i> (2003)
M, Mar. 4	Atomic Tales	--View: <i>Them!</i> (1954) --View: <i>Failsafe</i> (1964) --Ray Bradbury, “There Will Come Soft Rains”
	PART III: BODY POLITICS	
M, Mar. 11	“They’re Here Already! You’re Next!” In-class film screening: <i>Invasion of the Body Snatchers</i> (1956)	<u>Due</u> : Paper #1
M, Mar. 18	Reconstructing Bodies	--Serlin, <i>Replaceable You</i> , Introduction and Chs. 1 and 2
M, Mar. 25	Deconstructing Sexuality	--Serlin, <i>Replaceable You</i> , Chs. 3 and 4
Mon, Apr. 1	<i>NO CLASS—Spring Recess</i>	
	PART IV: MANLINESS AND THE COLD WAR	
M, Apr. 8	The Hard, the Soft, the Hammer	--Mickey Spillane, <i>One Lonely Night</i>
M, Apr. 15	“I Must Break You” In-class film screening: <i>Rocky IV</i> (1985)	

	PART V: NUCLEAR FAMILIES	
M, Apr. 22	“It’s a Terrible Thing to Hate Your Mother”	<u>Due: Paper #2</u> --View: <i>The Manchurian Candidate</i> (1962)
M, Apr. 29	Esther, Ethel, and Domestic Containment	--Sylvia Plath, <i>The Bell Jar</i>
M, May 6	“It’s all smoke and mirrors, fellas” In-class film screening: <i>Far From Heaven</i> (2002)	--Betty Friedan, “The Way We Were—1949”
M, May 13	Conclusion of Course	--Engelhardt, <i>Victory Culture</i> : “Victory Culture, the Sequel”
TBD		<u>Due: Paper #3</u>