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21H.102 The Emergence of Modern America 1865-Present  
Spring 2003

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Professor Meg Jacobs  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Fall 2005  
Lecture: M, 12:30-2:00  
Discussion: W, 12:30-2:00 or F, 12:30-2:00

**21H.102: THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN AMERICA,  
1865 TO THE PRESENT**

In a century and a half, the United States has gone from a nation torn apart by civil war to a global economic and military superpower. This course will ask why and how that dramatic transformation occurred. Throughout the semester, we will explore the emergence of a strong national government, the growth of a mass consumption economy, the evolution of civil rights, and the expansion of American international power.

Students will be responsible for all readings prior to Monday meetings. The class will be divided between lectures and discussions. Participation in weekly discussions counts for 25%. There are two five-page paper assignments, based on the readings, with each counting for 25%. You will rewrite the first paper as part of the CI requirement. For the second paper you will choose and present your own primary documents to use as a supplement to the assigned readings. The final paper will be a ten-page paper and will also count for 25%. There is no final exam.

The required books are:

Nash, Jeffrey, et al., *American People*, vol. 2

Nash and Graves, *From These Beginnings*, vol. 2

Riordan, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall*

Additional readings are on the class website.

**Week One: Introduction: A Nation in The Making**

September 7: Lecture (no discussions this week)

**Week Two: Reconstructing a Nation**

September 12: Lecture

September 14 or 16: Discussion

Reconstruction primary sources on the course website; *American People*, Chapters 16, 17

### **Week Three: The Rise of the City**

September 19: No Class

September 21 or 23: Discussion

Riordan, 45-102; *American People*, Chapters 18, 19

### **Week Four: Progressivism**

September 26: Lecture

September 28 or September 30: Discussion

Nash and Graves, Jane Addams and Gifford Pinchot; Riordan, 117-122; *American People*, Chapter 21

### **Week Five: World War I**

October 3: Lecture; **Paper One Due**

October 5 or 7: Discussion

Choose 5 or 6 WWI sources from the digital archive on the course website, read and annotate them, and be prepared to present your interpretation of them in recitation; *American People*, Chapters 20, 22

### **Week Six: Modern Times**

October 10: No Class

October 12 or 14: Discussion

Nash and Graves, Henry Ford; *American People*, Chapter 23

### **Week Seven: Great Depression**

October 17: Lecture

October 19 or 21: Discussion

Nash and Graves, Eleanor Roosevelt; New Deal primary sources on the course website; *American People*, Chapter 24

### **Week Eight: World War II**

October 24: Lecture; **Rewrite Due**

October 26 or 28: Discussion

Choose 5 or 6 WWII sources from the digital archive on the course website, read and annotate them, and be prepared to present your interpretation of them in recitation;  
*American People*, Chapter 25

### **Week Nine: Cold War**

October 31: Lecture

November 2 or 4: Discussion

Nash and Graves, Richard Nixon; *American People*, Chapter 27

### **Week Ten: Age of Affluence**

November 7: Lecture; **Paper Two Due**

November 9 or 11: Discussion

Nash and Graves, Elvis Presley; *American People*, Chapter 26

### **Week Eleven: Civil Rights**

November 15: Lecture

November 17 or 19: Discussion

Nash and Graves, Martin Luther King; *American People*, Chapter 28

### **Week Twelve: Vietnam**

November 21: Lecture

November 23: No Discussion

Vietnam primary sources on the course website; Nash and Graves, Martin Luther King;  
*American People*, Chapter 29

### **Week Thirteen: Age of Limits**

November 28: Lecture

November 30 or December 2: Discussion

Nash and Graves, Gloria Steinem; *American People*, Chapter 30

**Week Fourteen: New World Order**

December 5: Lecture

December 7 or December 9: Discussion

Nash and Graves, Ted Turner; *American People*, Chapter 31

**Week Fifteen: 9/11**

December 12: Lecture

December 14: Final Paper Due