

America after the Civil Rights Movement

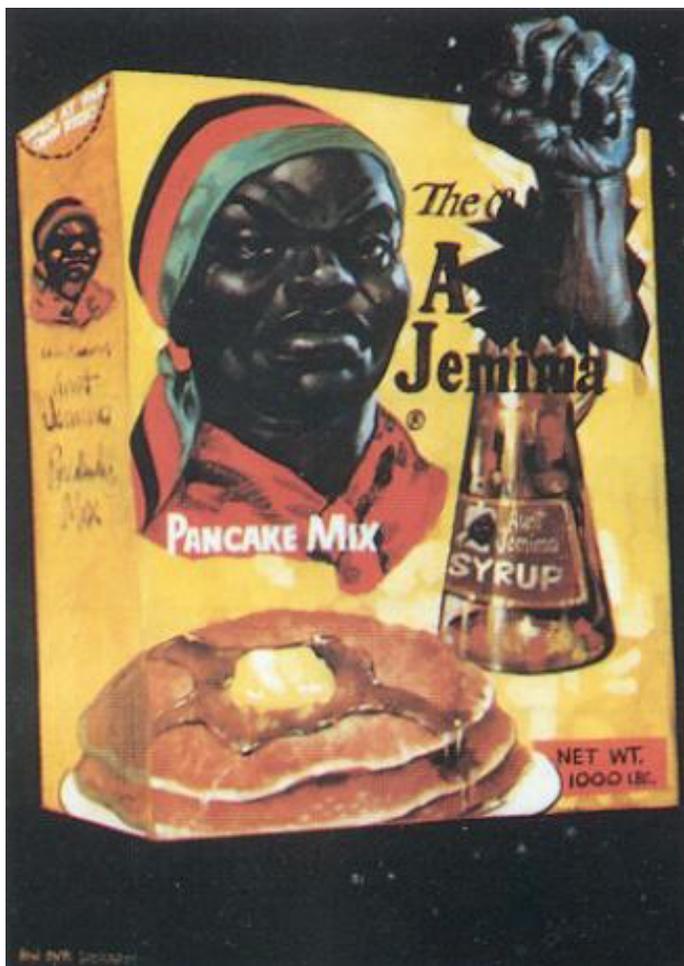
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Fall Term 2020

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“NO MORE” (1967), by Jon Onye Lockard

Course Description:

By the start of the 1970s, a series of events and political realignments had seemingly ended what Americans would come to know as “The Civil Rights Movement.” Waves of activism, revolving mostly around dismantling Jim Crow segregation, had indeed changed much of the country over the previous generation. Yet much about inequality in the United States would also remain the same for generations to come.

This course explores the history of late twentieth-century America by examining the social, economic, and political legacies of 1960s civil rights protest. It will also explore how historical actors from across the political spectrum have appropriated the messages and means of 1960s movement culture while waging ideological battles over the nearly fifty years that followed the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

What “The Movement” accomplished and what it left undone represent only part of the story we will address this semester. Our class will also explore the history of those events as viewed through campus life at Johns Hopkins University. Through an engaged reading of digital versions of the *JHU News-Letter*, students consider what the making of post-Civil Rights America meant for a generation of young people and American institutions looking to make the legacies of the 1960s freedom struggles relevant for subsequent generations.

Perceptions of America’s civil rights history have fed debates about black cultures of poverty, white cultures of privilege, and the seeming apathy of America’s youth. Civil rights activism has also determined the course of urban and suburban development, the emergence of feminist politics, rates of incarceration, and the mainstreaming of economic and moral conservatism, in ways both actual and imagined. By reading voices from the past and considering the legacy of “The Movement” today, students will learn to discern the history and legacy of the Civil Rights Movement in places they might not expect.

Evaluation:

This course will be graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory scale. Should you wish to pursue a letter grade, you will need Prof. Connolly’s written permission,

a signed agreement confirming that election. Please also be aware of the differing grading breakdown and expectations listed below.

For students pursuing a letter-grade...

- *Participation*
Discussion thread/chat contributions **10%**
- *Paper #1 – “Slipping Terms”*
4-page critical response to the readings from Wks. 4-5 **20%**
- *Paper #2 – “Diversity Politics”*
4-page critical response to the readings from Wks. 6-8 **20%**
- *Paper #3 – “Lingering Problems”*
4-page critical response to the readings from Wks. 9-11 **20%**
- *Final Paper/Project – Politics through the Eyes of the JHU*
News-Letter – 7-10-page Final Essay or 15 min YouTube video **30%**

For students seeking an S/U evaluation, an “S” will be earned by...

- Completing online reading feedback for 10 of the 14 weeks
- Quality of discussion thread/chat contributions
- 7-10-page Final Essay or 15 min YouTube video – *Politics through the Eyes of the JHU* News-Letter

Online Content and Contributions

This course will be taught in asynchronous fashion. You’ll view three short lectures (5min-15min) each week by Prof. Connolly. These will accompany a discussion thread or Zoom chat led by your assigned graduate teaching assistant (TA). Discussion questions for the threads will go up on Tuesdays. Please have your responses posted by noon Thursday of that same week.

The graduate teaching assistants will also host at least three Zoom discussions – during Week 3 (Sept. 14-18), Week 7 (Oct. 12-16), and Week 10 (Nov. 2-6). The

first meeting will explore research strategies and topic selection for the final assignment relating to the JHU *News-Letter*. The Week 7 meeting will include student discussions of articles students have drawn from the paper. And Week 10's meeting will explore how your research relates to the issues raised and outcomes of the 2020 Presidential Election.

By design, upper-level seminars such as this one rely on the principles of collective education. Each participant brings his or her own hard work and critical perspective to course materials, enriching the learning experience of the group as a result. Please be present and a presence. The marvel of the Internet means you never need to deny your colleagues the benefit of your insights.

Weekly lectures and readings

Course content will primarily be available on *Perusall*, and you'll access *Perusall* via Blackboard, under the "Syllabus" tab for the course. Course materials will be organized into weekly folders. A social reader program, *Perusall* will allow you to comment directly into shared documents, post discussion questions, "upvote" (or affirm) the comments of your classmates, and more. Given the course's asynchronous structure, you'll only be responsible to meet weekly deadlines. *Given the centrality of your online comments to the overall success of the course, particularly if taken for credit on the S/U scale, the frequency and substantiveness of those reading comments will have greatest bearing on your final grade.*

Three Short Papers

For those pursuing a letter grade, the course assignments consist of three short papers and one longer, final paper. The short papers represent your critical reflections from Units 2 ("Slipping Terms"), 3 ("Diversity Politics") and 4 ("Lingering Problems"). These papers provide you with the opportunity to exhibit your own sense of the important themes in a given unit. Look for common or conflicting ideas across the readings. Most effective papers will not remain preoccupied with a single reading or even a single week's readings, but will engage readings *across* weeks in the same unit.

Final Paper

For your final paper, you'll search the JHU *News-Letter* archive for the decade of the 1970s. From that paper's pages you'll choose from a selection of

preselected topic or search for a you own topic, with faculty approval, on which to write. You'll then bring at least four (4) sources from the course readings into your treatment of the *News-Letter* material. Successful papers will shed new light on JHU campus life, Baltimore politics/culture, or the larger events discussed in the course readings themselves. The most exemplary papers will be written with an eye toward current events and possible publication as well. In these rare instances, students may consult with the professor after the term about the placement of such pieces in online or print publications.

YouTube video option

Students can record a 15 minute video integrating four (4) sources from the course readings and close engagement with sources from the JHU News-Letter. This video will be uploaded to the course YouTube Channel.

Through either of these assignments – print or video – students will learn how to contextualize newspaper sources as part of their holistic contact with the history and legacies of the Civil Rights Movement.

Evaluation and Workload Management

Teaching assistants will evaluate students' online and discussion performance on their ability to summarize and interrogate the main arguments of authors, to analyze primary documents (when necessary), and to integrate themes from primary and secondary sources across weekly units.

For graded written work, in particular, we place great emphasis professional presentation, original arguments, thorough research, and clear, concise prose.

Those interested in the graded option and considering writing original work for potential publication should consider the following rubric:¹

A – Excellent in every way, though not necessarily perfect. Ambitious and perceptive. Addresses complex issues in clear and interesting ways. Responsive to counter-arguments. Framed effectively and originally so that the author's contributions represents new knowledge, not a simple restatement or compilation of source material. Begins with more than simple assertion, inviting the readers to read further. Holds readers' attention with clean, precise, often elegant prose. Ends with more than summary or sweeping

¹ Rubric adapted from Maxine Rodburg. A version of this rubric appears in Kerry Walk's booklet *Commenting and Grading: A Guide for Preceptors*, which is used in the Writing Program at Princeton University.

generality. An “A” essay, in sum, is a document that you would confidently send off for publication or as a writing sample to a prestigious internship or fellowship program.

B – Reaches high and achieves its aims. Built on solid ideas and sound use of evidence. Contains only a few thinly sourced claims or stray thoughts that don’t necessarily fit in with the paper’s stated argument. Generally clear and sharp prose, becoming unclear only infrequently. Makes strong claims, though perhaps without recognizing plausible counter-arguments. May occasionally leave unexplored the context for important pieces of evidence (i.e. authorial intent, social setting, etc.), diminishing the essay somewhat.

C – Real problems in an essay’s conceptual, structural, evidentiary, or prosaic qualities. Possibly repetitive, or plagued with several apparently unrelated and under-sourced ideas. Lacking depth and/or patently disengaged from other written sources. An essay that is largely summary with little to no close readings of sources. Contains a distracting frequency of catch phrases, platitudes, or grammatical and/or spelling mistakes. Could also be an essay built largely on opinion and/or personal reaction, albeit well-written reaction.

D – Falls far short of the assignment’s requirements. Problematic in several areas. Generally unintelligible. Unable to hold the attention of even the most charitable reader (i.e. your best friend, a parent, or even the professor).

F – Fails to meet the minimum requirements of the assignment.

**** Beyond even the use of this rubric, any student diagnosed with dyslexia or other forms of learning difference should let me know immediately and contact Dayna Geary or Terri Massie Burrell in Student Disability Services, 410-516-4720****

Two final pieces of advice:

- 1) The reading load for this course, while relatively heavy, is designed to provide students with a look into the major debates and concepts governing Americans’ in and their historical understanding of post-1960s America. On particularly heavy weeks, it may help to think less in terms of numbers of pages and more at the level of relational concepts. In other words, look for the key themes that each author or primary source is trying to communicate, and try not to get bogged down in the details. That said, details matter. This is especially true when reading stronger authors who marshal important evidence to substantiate their most

provocative and broadest claims. Look for the most forceful claims as signposts for locating and evaluating a document's most crucial evidence.

- 2) Because of its S/U grading scale, this course will not expect weekly reading reflections. Without this incentive, you may be tempted to fall behind in your reading or take a week off. Don't. The expectations are heavy enough to make catching up on the reading unduly stressful, if not impossible. And the written assignments will demand a command of the material hard to achieve if one attempts to cram.

Required Texts:

Kali Akuno and Ajamu Nangwaya, *Jackson Rising: The Struggle for Economic Democracy and Black Self-Determination in Jackson, Mississippi* (Daraja Press, 2017)

Dave Eggers, *Zeitoun* (Mc Sweeney's, 2009)

Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Roots Too: White Ethnic Revival in Post-Civil Rights America* (Harvard University Press, 2006)

One America in the Twenty-first Century: The Report of President Bill Clinton's Initiative on Race (Yale University Press, 2009)

William J. Barber II with Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *The Third Reconstruction: How a Moral Movement is Overcoming the Politics of Division and Fear* (Beacon Press, 2016).

Selected texts on *Perusall* and linked below

Course Calendar:

UNIT 1 – RETRENCHMENT

Week 1 (Aug. 31- Sep. 4): What Was the Civil Rights Movement?

- Martin Luther King, "The Last Steep Ascent," *The Nation*, March 14, 1966. [Perusall]

- “Coming: Wide Open Split Among Negro Leaders,” *National Observer*, Oct. 10, 1966 [Perusall]
- [“MLK In Chicago,” *Chicago Tribune*, 2006, *YouTube.com*](#)
- Podcast: [“Give Us the Ballot,” *LBJ and the Great Society*, March 3 2020.](#)

Week 2 (Sept. 7-11): Civil Rights and the Uses of History

- Podcast: [“The Real Martin Luther King,” *BackStory: The American History Podcast*, January 17, 2020.](#)
- [Jeanne Theoharis, “How History Got the Rosa Parks Story Wrong,” *Washington Post*, Dec. 1, 2015.](#)
- [Brandon Tensley, “Why Facile Histories of Civil Rights Are So Dangerous,” *Pacific Standard*, Feb. 26, 2018](#)

Week 3 (Sep. 14-18): Ending the “Second Reconstruction”

- *Johns Hopkins News-Letter*, Feb. 27, 1970 (whole issue) [Perusall]
- Leon Panetta, “Watch Not What We Say But What We Do,” Address before the 61st Annual Convention of the NAACP, Cincinnati, OH, June 29-July 3, 1970. [Perusall]
- “End of Reconstruction,” *TIME Magazine* March 2, 1970. [Perusall]

UNIT 2 – SLIPPING TERMS

Week 4 (Sep. 21-25): Feminisms

- “Phyllis Schlafly, Interview with the *Washington Star*, January 18, 1976,” in *The Rise of Conservatism in America*, pp. 103-107. [Perusall]

- “‘I am Your Sister,’ Audre Lorde, 1984,” in Manning Marable and Leith Mullings, eds. *Let Nobody Turn Us Around: Voices of Resistance, Reform, and Renewal: An African American Anthology* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), pp. 537-544. [Perusall]
- [“The Combahee River Collective Statement” \(1978\)](#)
- [Barbara Jordan, “Democratic National Convention Keynote Address,” July 12, 1976.](#)
- Film: *My Feminism* (Cardona and Colbert, 1997)

*****DEADLINE FOR CHOOSING FINAL PAPER TOPIC*****

Submit in writing to your TA

Week 5 (Sep. 28-Oct. 2): Color-blind Conservatism

- *Time Magazine* “Person of the Year: The Middle Americans,” 1970 [Perusall].
- “Spiro Agnew, Two Speeches, October 20, 1969, and October 30, 1969,” in Ronald Story and Bruce Laurie, eds. *The Rise of Conservatism in America, 1945-2000: A Brief History with Documents* (Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2007), pp. 77-80. [Perusall]
- “Richard M. Nixon, Labor Day Radio Address, 1972” in *The Rise of Conservatism in America*, pp. 90-93. [Perusall]
- [“Nixon Beyond Watergate,” BackStory: The American History Podcast, Jan. 25, 2019.](#)
- [Josh Levin, “Being Right About Reagan’s Racism Was Bad for Jimmy Carter,” Slate.com, Aug. 1, 2019.](#)
- [Ronald Reagan, 1980 Neshoba County Fair Speech, August 3, 1980.](#)

****Graded Paper 1 Due: “Slipping Terms”— Reflections on Weeks 4-5****

UNIT 3 – DIVERSITY POLITICS

Week 6 (Oct. 5-Oct.9): Roots Too: Multiculturalism Reconsidered

- Matthew Frye Jacobson, “Hyphen Nation,” and “Golden Door, Silver Screen,” in *Roots Too*, pp. 11-129.
- Stephen Steinberg, “The Liberal Retreat From Race During the Post-Civil Rights Era,” in Wahneema Lubiano, ed., *The House that Race Built: Original Essays by Tony Morrison, Angela Y. Davis, Cornel West and Others On Black American and Politics in America Today* (Vintage, 1997), pp. 13-47. [Perusall]
- “‘It’s Our Turn,’ Harold Washington, 1983,” in Manning Marable and Leith Mullings, eds. *Let Nobody Turn Us Around: Voices of Resistance, Reform, and Renewal: An African American Anthology* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), pp. 535-537. [Perusall]

Week 7 (Oct. 12-16): Affirmative Action

- Matthew Frye Jacobson, “The Immigrant’s Bootstraps, and Other Fables,” in *Roots Too*, pp. 177-205.
- “Amicus Curiae Brief in *Regents of the University of California v. Allan Bakke*,” “*Regents of the University of California v. Allan Bakke* (The Supreme Court Judgment),” and “*Regents of the University of California v. Allan Bakke* (Justice Marshall’s Dissent),” all in Clayborne Carson, David J. Garrow, Gerald Gill, Vincent Harding, Darlene Clark Hine, eds. *The Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader: Documents, Speeches, and Firsthand Accounts from the Black Freedom Struggle, 1954-1990* (Penguin Books, 1991), pp. 625-651. [Perusall]
- George Derek Musgrove, “Good at the Game of Tricknology: Proposition 209 and the Struggle for the Historical Memory of the Civil Rights Movement,” *Souls* (Summer 1999): 7-24. [Perusall]

Week 8 (Oct. 19-23): A National Conversation?: “Race Talk” Under Clinton

- *One America in the Twenty-first Century: The Report of President Bill Clinton's Initiative on Race* (Yale University Press, 2009).

****Graded Paper 2 Due: "Diversity" — Reflections on Weeks 6-8****

UNIT 4 – LINGERING PROBLEMS

Week 9 (Oct. 26-30): Unnatural Disasters

- Dave Eggers, *Zeitoun* (Mc Sweeney's, 2009)

Week 10 (Nov. 2-6): The Carceral State

- Guest lecture: Dominique Hazzard
- Heather Ann Thompson, "Why Mass Incarceration Matters: Rethinking Crisis, Decline, and Transformation in Postwar American History," *Journal of American History* 97, no. 3 (December 2010): 703-758. [Perusall]
- [James Baldwin, "A Report from Occupied Territory," *The Nation*, July 11, 1966.](#)
- Film: *The Prison in Twelve Landscapes* (dir. Brett Story, 2016)

Week 11 (Nov. 9-13): "Change You Can Believe In": Obama's America

- Guest lecture: Elliot Root
- Ta-Nehisi Coates, "[Fear of a Black President](#)," *The Atlantic*, Sept. 2012.
- Matthew D. Lassiter, "'Tough and Smart': The Resilience of the War on Drugs During the Obama Administration," in Julian Zelizer, ed., *The Presidency of Barack Obama: A First Historical Assessment*. [Perusall]
- [Elizabeth Day, "#BlackLivesMatter: The Birth of a New Civil Rights Movement" *The Guardian*, July 19, 2015.](#)

****Graded Paper 3 Due: "Lingering Problems" — Reflections on Wks. 9-11****

UNIT 5 – NEW MOVEMENTS

Week 12 (Nov. 16-20): The Afterlife of Black Power

- Kali Akuno and Ajamu Nangwaya, *Jackson Rising: The Struggle for Economic Democracy and Black Self-Determination in Jackson, Mississippi* (Daraja Press, 2017).

Week 13 (Nov. 23-27): Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 (Nov. 30-Dec. 4): The Third Reconstruction

- William J. Barber II with Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *The Third Reconstruction: How a Moral Movement is Overcoming the Politics of Division and Fear* (Beacon Press, 2016).

****Final Paper: JHU News-Letter and unit readings – 7-10 Pages****
Due Dec. 9th