Course Description/ Course Goals
This course will survey many of the major events and themes in American social, political, and cultural history from 1865 to the present. We will cover a variety of topics including westward expansion, industrialization, segregation, and a number of social and reform movements. We will also investigate the impact of a several military conflicts—including the Cold War—on the domestic front. We will survey U.S. history from a variety of subject positions—looking in some instances at America as shaped and understood by elected leaders, influential industrialists, and other powerful groups. However, we will also endeavor to understand United States history as experienced and analyzed by artists, musicians, and writers, We will also look at U.S. history from the vantage points of a wide variety of ordinary people, paying particular attention to the experiences of the working class, immigrants, women, and members of racial and ethnic minority groups.

Students should leave the course possessing both a broad understanding of the time period and a more sophisticated understanding of how to analyze primary sources, particularly films. This term we will watch several movies and use them as lenses for better understanding U.S. history during particular historical moments.

Because this is an honors class, the course will move at a brisk pace and students are expected to take responsibility for much of their own learning. They will be responsible for mastering the assigned readings, whether or not the material is directly discussed in class. Students will gain more experience in analyzing primary sources and in developing analytical skills than would be typical in a non-honors version of the course. The innovative format of using film as a lens for viewing U.S. history is particularly appropriate for an honors class, and students will gain extensive experience in learning how to analyze films as primary source material. This course will encourage students to go beyond merely familiarizing themselves with major historical issues. They will be asked to apply their historical understanding through class discussions and three papers that should demonstrate independent thinking and an ability to evaluate these films in their appropriate historical contexts. The course will be structured to meet the goals of honors courses at UNT, which are as follows:

Honors College courses will
- emphasize development of analytical and evaluative skills through readings from primary sources, journal articles, and other supplementary materials;
- encourage students to engage in high level thinking and learning through activities such as intensive discussion; writing in small, collaborative learning settings; and intensive research papers and projects;
- promote independent thinking by making students accountable for important aspects of their learning;
- place material in a conceptual context that illustrates its importance and relationship to other knowledge;
- provide enhanced opportunities for students to develop research skills and produce independent, original research or creative products as part of the course requirements; and
- include innovative approaches to course content and teaching, so that Honors courses can serve as campus-wide prototypes.
Class Format
The class will consist of lectures, class discussions, and several film screenings. Students are expected to attend every class and to keep up with the reading. Although attendance is not required, failure to attend class will adversely impact your performance in the course.

Required Texts
Keene, Jennifer, *Visions of America Since 1865*

Lorence, James, *Screening America: United States History Through Film Since 1900*

Assignments and Proportion of Final Grade
Four Quizzes/ Short Tests cumulatively --40%
Paper 1-- 20%
Paper 2-- 20%
Paper 3-- 20%

Short Tests
There will be four quizzes/ short exams during the course of the semester. Cumulatively the quizzes are worth 40% of your final grade. I will give you a brief study guide to help you narrow down what you should review for the quiz.

The quizzes will cover the lectures, the movies we watch in class, and the reading assignments. In the study guide I will give you a list of key concepts, events, people, etc. that you should be familiar with from the lectures. I will also narrow down the material from the textbook that you will be quizzed over in order to make the amount of material you are responsible for more manageable. Use the Lorence book and class notes to review the films.

The quizzes will primarily consist of objective questions (true or false, multiple choice, matching, etc.) and one essay question. The primary purpose of the quizzes is to encourage and reward attending class and keeping up with the assigned reading. Neither is a substitute for the other. You must take good notes over the lectures and movies and keep up with the assigned reading in order to do well on the quizzes. They quizzes will be on Scantron forms, so be sure to bring a pencil.

Papers
You will write three 4-5 page papers. Each paper will concern one particular film that we watched in class and will evaluate its significance as a primary source. You must have a clear thesis statement, which seeks to explain why the film in question is (or is not) an important resource for understanding the time period when it was created. You must underline your thesis so that it is readily identifiable. In your papers you must place the movie in its proper historical context by drawing on class lectures and the textbooks. Please provide citations to both the lectures and to the texts (and outside materials should you use them). Historians use Chicago Style (footnotes or endnotes), but you may use whatever system you are the most familiar with. We will talk more about this assignment in class.

Paper 1—Due October 12. You may choose to write about either *A Corner in the Wheat* or *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Paper 2—Due November 30. You may choose to write about *Prelude to War*, *The Salt of the Earth*, *Dr. Strangelove*, or *Alice’s Restaurant*.

Paper 3—Due December 16 by 12:30pm. You may chose to write about *Coming Home* or about any of the films in the Lorence book that we did not watch in class. Many of these films are available at the UNT library.

Missed Classes and Quizzes and Late Papers
If you miss one of the films that we watch in class, it will be your responsibility to find a copy of the film and to watch it on your own time.
I will allow make ups for scheduled quizzes/ short tests only if arrangements are made in advance and proper documentation explaining your absence is provided. Do not come to me after you missed a quiz and ask to make it up. Out of fairness to the other students, my answer at that point will be “no.” Make up quizzes will consist entirely of essay questions and will be more rigorous than the initial quiz/ short test.

I will accept Papers 1 & 2 up to one week late with a one letter grade penalty. I will not accept Paper 3 beyond its due date.

**Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to strictly adhere to the UNT Student Code of Conduct, which prohibits lying, cheating, and plagiarism. Academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for an assignment on the first offense. The second offense will result in failure of the course.

Please be particularly careful to avoid plagiarism—taking credit for another person’s intellectual property without giving her proper credit.

The American Historical Association’s “Statement on Professional Conduct” defines plagiarism in the following way:

“The word *plagiarism* derives from Latin roots: *plagiarius*, an abductor, and *plagiare*, to steal. The expropriation of another author’s work, and the presentation of it as one’s own, constitutes plagiarism and is a serious violation of the ethics of scholarship. It seriously undermines the credibility of the plagiarist, and can do irreparable harm to a historian’s career.

In addition to the harm that plagiarism does to the pursuit of truth, it can also be an offense against the literary rights of the original author and the property rights of the copyright owner... **The real penalty for plagiarism is the abhorrence of the community of scholars.**

Plagiarism includes more subtle abuses than simply expropriating the exact wording of another author without attribution. Plagiarism can also include the limited borrowing, without sufficient attribution, of another person’s distinctive and significant research findings or interpretations. Of course, historical knowledge is cumulative, and thus in some contexts—such as textbooks, encyclopedia articles, broad syntheses, and certain forms of public presentation—the form of attribution, and the permissible extent of dependence on prior scholarship, citation, and other forms of attribution will differ from what is expected in more limited monographs. As knowledge is disseminated to a wide public, it loses some of its personal reference. What belongs to whom becomes less distinct. But even in textbooks a historian should acknowledge the sources of recent or distinctive findings and interpretations, those not yet a part of the common understanding of the profession. Similarly, while some forms of historical work do not lend themselves to explicit attribution (e.g., films and exhibitions), every effort should be made to give due credit to scholarship informing such work.

Plagiarism, then, takes many forms. The clearest abuse is the use of another’s language without quotation marks and citation. More subtle abuses include the appropriation of concepts, data, or notes all disguised in newly crafted sentences, or reference to a borrowed work in an early note and then extensive further use without subsequent attribution. Borrowing unexamined primary source references from a secondary work without citing that work is likewise inappropriate. All such tactics reflect an unworthy disregard for the contributions of others.

No matter what the context, **the best professional practice for avoiding a charge of plagiarism is always to be explicit, thorough, and generous in acknowledging one’s intellectual debts.**

(See: [http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/professionalstandards.cfm#Plagiarism](http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/professionalstandards.cfm#Plagiarism))
If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism while you are in the process of writing your book review or final exam, see me.

***Please note: Copying even a few sentences from the Internet and presenting them as your own work constitutes plagiarism.***

**Special Needs**
Any student requiring instructional modifications due to a documented disability should make an appointment to meet with the instructor as soon as possible. An official letter documenting the disability will be expected in order to receive accommodations.

**Student Evaluations**
The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SETE to be an important part of your participation in this class.

**Schedule**
****Please note: This schedule is tentative and may be adjusted. Students are expected to attend class regularly and to be aware of any changes.****

**Week 1, Introduction:**

August 26 -- Introduction to the course

**Week 2, Reconstruction and Westward Expansion:**

August 31 — Lecture: Reconstruction; Read Keene, Chapter 14

September 2 — Lecture: Native Americans and Westward Expansion; Read Keene, Chapter 15

**Week 3, Industrialization:**

September 7 — Lecture: Industrialization; Read Keene, Chapter 16

September 9 — Lecture: Segregation and Violence in the Jim Crow South; Read Keene, Chapter 17

**Week 4, The Progressive Era**

September 14 — Film: A Corner in the Wheat (1909; 14 minutes); Read and be prepared to discuss, Lorence, Chapter 1

September 16 — Lecture: The Progressive Era; Read Keene, Chapter 18

Study guide for Quiz #1 distributed

**Week 5, WWI and Quiz/ Short Test #1**

September 21 — Lecture: World War I and the Fear of Radicalism; Keene, Chapters 19-20

September 23 — Quiz/ Short Test #1

**Week 6, The Jazz Age**

September 28 — Lecture: The Jazz Age; Read Keene, Chapter 21
September 30—Lecture: The Great Depression; Read Keene, Chapter 22

**Week 7, The Great Depression Continued:**

October 5—Film: *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940; 128 minutes)

October 7—Finish film; Read and be prepared to discuss; Lorence, Chapter 6

**Week 8, World War II:**

October 12—Lecture: World War II and a Changing World; Read Keene Chapter 23

Paper #1 Due

October 14: Film: *Prelude to War* (1942; 52 minutes); Read and be prepared to discuss Lorence, Chapter 8

Study guide for Quiz/ Short Test #2 distributed.

**Week 9: The Origins of the Cold War; Quiz/ Short Test #2:**

October 19: Lecture; The Origins of the Cold War; Read Keene, Chapter 24

October 21: Quiz/ Short Test #2

**Week 10, The Cold War Continued:**

October 26—Film: *The Salt of the Earth* (1954; 94 minutes)

October 28—Finish watching film: Read and be prepared to discuss Lorence, Chapter 10

**Week 11: 1950s Culture; The Cold War Continues:**

November 9: Lecture: 1950s Culture; Read Keene, Chapter 25

November 11—Film: *Dr. Strangelove* (1964; 95 minutes)

**Week 12: The Civil Rights Movement**

November 9—Finish film; read and be prepared to discuss Lorence, Chapter 11

November 11—Lecture: The Civil Rights Movement; Read Keene, Chapter 27

Study guide for Quiz/ Short Test #3 distributed

**Week 13, Quiz/ short test #3; 1960s Culture**

November 16— Quiz/ Short Test #3

November 18—Film: *Alice’s Restaurant* (1969; 111 minutes)

**Week 14, Vietnam:**

November 23—Finish film; Read and be prepared to discuss Lorence, Chapter 12

November 25—No Class Thanksgiving Holiday
Week 15, Vietnam:

November 30— Lecture: The Vietnam War and Conservative Backlash; Read Keene, Chapters 26 and 28
Paper #2 Due

December 2— Film: Coming Home (1978; 127 minutes)
Study guide for Quiz/ Short Test #4 distributed

Week 16, Conclusion:

December 7— Finish film; Read and be prepared to discuss Lorence, Chapter 14

December 9— Quiz/ Short Test #4

Final Paper:

Due by 12:30 on Thursday, December 16. I will not accept late papers. I will not accept papers via email. Please place your paper in the container on my office door.