History 372: Topics in Global History

Road Trip: Politics and Culture in the 1950s

Instructor: Prof. Aims McGuinness
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Classroom: TBA (e-mail the professor before the first day of class)
Meeting Time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30 p.m.-1:45 p.m.
Office: 328 Holton Hall
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m., and by appointment.

Course Description

This course explores global currents in politics and culture in the aftermath of World War II. The course focuses primarily on the United States and Latin America (including Argentina, Guatemala, Mexico, and Cuba) in the 1950s with occasional visits to other locales including France, Great Britain, Korea, and Japan. We will explore the theme of the “road trip” in a variety of contexts including travel, tourism, migration, civil rights, literature, suburbanization, sexuality, music, food, youth cultures, and political movements. Required work includes attendance and participation, two in-class presentations (five-seven minutes each), a midterm exam, a final exam, one short paper (five pages), and one long paper (ten pages).

A detailed syllabus, including a schedule of assignments and further explanation of course requirements, will be distributed in the first class.

Required Books


Additional readings will be available online via the course website or placed on reserve.

Q: "How do I gain access to the required books?"

There are three options for accessing the required books. Regardless of the option you choose, it is crucial that you secure regular access to the required books by the start of the course. A lack of access to the readings is not a valid excuse for failing to complete an assignment on time.

Option 1: Check out the required books at the UW-Milwaukee Libraries Reserve Desk.

The required books may be checked out for a 2-hour period from Reserve Desk (Course Reserve) of the UW-Milwaukee Libraries Media and Reserve Library, which is in the Golda Meir Library Building. For more information, visit: http://uwm.edu/libraries/media/.

Option 2: Purchase books at UW-Milwaukee’s Virtual Bookstore.

You can find the web site for the virtual bookstore here: http://uwm.ecampus.com/. Look for our term and course number and follow the instructions. In some cases, it may also be possible to rent the book.

Option 3: Purchase the required books from a non-university vendor.

You may find the required books for sale online by entering the ISBN number, title, or author into an Internet search engine. This procedure will produce a list of businesses that sell the book. Make sure that the seller sends you the correct edition in time for you to complete required assignments.