THE SIXTIES

ENG 389 / HIS 372 / AMS 337
Section I, T 6:25-9:05 p.m.
Storer Auditorium
Fall 2014

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Teaching Assistants:
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This course presents the culture and history of the 1960s in the United States through writings, film, music, and the experiences of faculty members who participated in important events during this era of major conflict and change. We are less concerned about the precise time frame than in evoking the atmosphere of a period associated with the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War, the Antiwar Movement, widespread college campus activism, urban unrest, and the Women’s Movement. This also was a period when anxiety about nuclear war was prominent, the Space Race was in full swing, and concerns about ecology became widespread. Accordingly, we also will offer some discussion of international events during the period. In addition to examining primary documents, fiction, film, and the music of the 1960s, students will have the opportunity to hear the personal accounts of U.M. faculty and staff who witnessed dramatic episodes that occurred during this time of war, tumultuous political, gender, and racial upheaval, and momentous changes in the academy. We will endeavor to make connections between the ideas and events of the 1960s and more recent developments both inside and outside the academy.

The course format is a blend of lecture, discussion, film screenings, and panel presentations of first-hand accounts by eyewitnesses to events of the 1960s. There will be no effort to exclude anyone of any political persuasion either past or present. Indeed, opposing points of view are encouraged. We think that something as complex and multifaceted as the 1960s requires a range of personal perspectives and interpretations, for even today the era provokes passionate responses from those who were there as well as those who were not.
Texts:

Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, Editors, “Taking It to the Streets”: A Sixties Reader
Patricia Stephens Due and Tananarive Due, Freedom in the Family: A Mother-Daughter Memoir of the Fight for Civil Rights
Ken Kesey, One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest
Charles Neu, America’s Lost War: Vietnam, 1945-1975
Additional short readings posted on the course Blackboard site

Writing Assignments: Two 5-7-page papers* (each worth 25% of final grade); midterm examination (25%); final examination (25%).
*A service learning project, which would include volunteer work with the Miami Workers Center, Overtown Youth Center, Habitat for Humanity, Nature Links, or some other community service organization, may be done in lieu of one of the papers or for extra credit. See handout for details.

Thursday Night Film Screenings: On most Thursdays, films from and about the 1960s will be shown in LC 130. The course schedule provides details. Attendance, while not mandatory, is encouraged, and extra credit will be given. Students who attend at least five films will receive a one-third of a grade increase on their lowest examination grade (e.g., a B would become a B+). Students who in addition to attending five films submit a three-page response paper no later than the last class meeting will receive an increase of a full grade on their lowest examination grade.

On Essay Assignments and Grading: Questions and topics along with general guidelines for each of the two essays will be distributed a few weeks before assignment due dates. Papers must be completed and submitted on time; late papers will not be accepted. Papers must be original works written by you for this course only. Essay grades are based on the quality of ideas, the effectiveness of arguments, the proficiency of prose, and the initiative shown in responses to assignments. A grading criteria statement that is posted on the course Blackboard web site provides details. If you are unhappy about a grade for an assignment, make your argument for a higher grade in a written appeal that refers to the grading criteria statement (available on Blackboard); only after such an appeal is submitted will a meeting with you be set to discuss the grade. Plagiarism will result in penalties ranging from a failing assignment to course failure and appearance before the Honor Council; you are responsible for knowing what constitutes plagiarism. You are welcome to speak with faculty members and teaching assistants during office hours about questions that may arise in the writing process.

Course website with collection of links, resources, and bibliography on variety of 1960s topics: http://scholar.library.miami.edu/sixties
Schedule (subject to revision): Tuesdays, 6:25-9:05 p.m., Storer Auditorium

(**Students are strongly advised to take notes from each presentation, with attribution**)

August 26:
Course objectives and requirements

September 2:
“The Birth of the Sixties”
Speaker: Dr. Spivey
Q & A: The Students

Required Reading: Takin’ It to the Streets: “‘Past as Prologue:’ The 1950s as an Introduction to the 1960s, 1-11”; “The Environmental Movement,” 517-527.

[Thursday, September 4: Howl (2010). Starring James Franco as poet Allen Ginsberg, this film features Franco’s reading of Ginsberg’s classic Beat poem and the ensuing obscenity trial, an event that highlights the repressive mores of the 1950s. A combination of animation and live action, Howl recreates the cultural context from which Ginsberg’s work emerged.]

September 9:
“The Literature of the Sixties”
Speaker: Dr. Alkana
Q & A: The Students

Required Reading: Ken Kesey, One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest (entire)

[Thursday, September 11, LC 130, 6:30 p.m.: Dr. Strangelove (1964), a Stanley Kubrick film starring Peter Sellers in three roles. A doomsday classic comedy that might give you some sense of what it was like to live in a time of mutually assured destruction. Precious bodily fluids, a crazy general, and a Hitler-leftover mad scientist make for the stuff of combustible excitement! Number 39 on AFI’s top 100 films of all time.]
September 16:
“The Civil Rights Movement”
Speaker: Dr. Spivey
Q & A: The Students

Required Reading: Patricia Stephens Due and Tananarive Due, Freedom in the Family: A Mother-Daughter Memoir of the Fight for Civil Rights (entire); Takin’ It to the Streets: “Keep on Walkin’, Keep on Talkin’: Civil Rights to 1965,” 12-47; “Say It Loud, Say It Proud,” 107-151.

[Film on Thursday, September 18, LC 130, 6:30 p.m.: In the Heat of the Night (1967). Sidney Poitier and Rod Steiger are at their very best in this Norman Jewison film. The investigation of a murder in a small southern town should give you a taste of what life was like for blacks in the South. Number 75 on AFI’s top 100 films.]

September 23:
“Reflections on The Civil Rights Movement”
Moderator: Dr. Spivey

Panel 1: Dr. Jomills Braddock; Dr. Marvin Dawkins; Dr. Michael Gaines; Professor Tom Musca
Q & A: The Students

(Interlude)

Panel 2: Dr. Steve Green, Dr. Clyde McCoy; Daniel Best; Dr. Ruth Reitan; Dr. Steve Stein
Q & A: The Students

[Film on Thursday, September 25, LC 130, 6:30 p.m.: Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner (1967). Directed by Stanley Kramer, and starring Sidney Poitier, Katharine Hepburn, Spencer Tracy, and Katharine Houghton. This was a groundbreaking film on interracial marriage. In the year the film was released, interracial marriage still was illegal in 17 states!]

September 30:
MIDTERM EXAMINATION
October 7:
“The Vietnam War”
Moderator: Dr. Alkana

Guest Speaker: Dr. Charles Neu
Q & A: The Students

(Interlude)

Documentary

Required Reading: Charles Neu, America’s Lost War: Vietnam, 1945-1975

[Film on Thursday, October 2, LC 130, 6:30 p.m.: Apocalypse Now (1979). Francis Ford Coppola’s Vietnam War film is a study in madness on all sides; it was years in the making and generated a million feet of film to edit. Martin Sheen, Robert Duvall, and Marlon Brando paint a grim picture of war, from “I love the smell of napalm in the morning,” to a boat ride to hell. Number 30 on AFI’s top 100 films.]

October 14:
“The Kennedy Era, Great Society, and Urban Unrest”
Speaker: Dr. Spivey
Q & A: The Students

(Interlude)

Guest Speaker: President Donna Shalala
“Kennedy and the Peace Corps”

October 21:
“The Vietnam War”
Moderator: Dr. Alkana

Panel 1: Ramon de Arrigunaga; David Hoodiman; Dr. James Hutson;
Professor Barbara Leibell; Ellen Uguccioni
Q &A: The Students

(Interlude)

“Literature of the Vietnam War”
Speaker: Dr. Alkana
Q & A: The Students

Required Reading: Michael Herr, excerpt from Dispatches [on Blackboard]; Tobias Wolff,
excerpt from *In Pharaoh’s Army* [on Blackboard]; Denise Levertov, “Life at War” and “Overheard over S.E. Asia” [on Blackboard]; *Takin’ It to the Streets*: “The Vietnam Veterans,” 217-224

**Thursday, October 23,** LC 130, 6:30 p.m.: *Easy Rider* (1969). Starring Peter Fonda, Dennis Hopper, and Jack Nicholson, this film offers a road trip full of the counterculture of drugs, hippies, and free love. Number 84 on AFI’s top 100 list.

**October 28:**
“The Movement and the Campus Scene”
Moderator: Dr. Alkana

Panel 1: Dr. Sue Ann Campbell; Dr. Harry DeFerrari; Dr. Stephen Diamond; Dr. Jeff Donnelly; Dr. Spencer Eth; Dr. John Van Leer; Dr. Bob Warren
Q & A: The Students

(Interlude)

Panel 2: Dr. Hans Graber; Dr. John Murphy; Professor Thomas Robinson; Dr. Stephen Sapp; Dr. Walter Secada; Dr. Daniel Suman
Q & A: The Students

**Required Reading:** *Takin’ It to the Streets*: “Campus Explosions,” 331-354

**Thursday, October 30,** LC 130, 6:30 p.m.: *Medium Cool* (1969). Directed by legendary cinematographer Haskell Wexler, this film conveys a sense of political upheaval through a combination of fiction and non-fictional images, including scenes from the infamous “police riot” at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. This film was selected for preservation in the National Film Registry.

**November 4:**
**Note: First Essay is due at the beginning of class**
“The Psychedelic Sixties and The Age of Aquarius”
Moderator: Dr. Spivey

Guest Speaker: Dr. Marc Gellman
Q & A: The Students

(Interlude)

**Woodstock**

**Required Reading:** *Takin’ It to the Streets*, “‘Eight Miles High’: The Counterculture,” 225-285. Additional recommended readings: Tom Wolfe, *The Electric Kool-Acid Test*; Abbie Hoffman,
Steal This Book and Woodstock Nation; Timothy Leary, Flashbacks: A Personal and Cultural History of an Era: an Autobiography

[Thursday, November 6, LC 130, 6:30 p.m.: McCabe and Mrs. Miller (1971). Directed by Robert Altman and starring Warren Beatty and Julie Christie, this beautiful and distinctive “anti-Western” features songs by Leonard Cohen in its soundtrack. It is included in the AFI list of the top ten Westerns.]

**November 11:**

*Note: the class will meet in COX SCIENCE CENTER Room 126 this session only*

“The Women’s Liberation Movement”
Moderator: Dr. Spivey

Panel: Ellen McPhillip; Dr. Mary Sapp; Mary Young
Q & A: The Students

(Interlude)

“The Gay Rights Movement”

Panel: Dr. Robert Johnson; Professor Stanley Langbein; Professor Daren Blaney
Q & A: The Students

**Required Reading:** Takin’ it to the Streets, “‘She’s Leaving Home’: The Women’s Liberation Movement,” 392-463; “Gay Liberation,” 490-504

[Thursday, November 13, LC 130, 6:30 p.m.: Alice Doesn’t Live Here Anymore (1974). Dir. Martin Scorsese. Ellen Burstyn stars as a recently widowed woman who decides to move to California with her son to pursue her dream of becoming a singer. The effects of the sexual revolution and the women’s movement are on display in this blend of comedy and drama for which Burstyn won the Academy Award for best actress.]

**November 18:**

“The New Left and the Political Aftermath of the 1960”
Speaker: Dr. Alkana

**Required Reading:** Takin’ It to the Streets, “‘Love It or Leave It’: The Conservative Impulse in a Radical Age,” 286-328
December 2:
**Note: Second essay or service-learning report is due at the beginning of class.
“The International Scene”
Moderator: Dr. Spivey

Panel: Dr. Vendulka Kubalkova, Dr. Edmund Abaka; Dr. Bruce Bagley;
Dr. Donette Francis; Melanie Goergmaier
Q & A: The Students

[Thursday, December 4, LC 130, 6:30 p.m.: Z (1969). Directed by Costa-Gavras, Z is a political thriller based on a 1963 conspiracy to assassinate a Greek politician and the ensuing cover-up. Nominated for the Academy Award for both Best Picture and Best Foreign Film, this film reflects the spirit of an era of intense political conflict.]

December 9:
**Note: Extra-credit film response papers due at the beginning of class.
“The Music of the Sixties”
A Faculty/Staff Performance and Student Sing-Along in Open Celebration

Friday, December 12, 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm

Final Examination

Location TBA