

“The Sixties”

English 395, History 367, American Studies 301
Spring 2012, Professors Alkana, Spivey, and Wilson

Dr. Joseph Alkana
Assoc. Professor of English
Office: 407 Ashe
Hrs: T 11-12 pm;
Th 11:30-1:30 pm
Ph: 305-284-4076
jalkana@miami.edu

Dr. Donald Spivey
Professor of History
Office: 610 Ashe
Hrs: T & W 3-5 pm
Ph: 305-284-2737
dspivey@miami.edu

Dr. David L. Wilson
Professor of Biology
Office: 237 Cox Sci.
Hrs: T 2-3 pm; Th 3-4 pm
Ph: 305-284-6421
davidwilson@miami.edu

Teaching Assistants:

Brian Breed, b.breed@umiami.edu, Ashe 421G (305-284-2955); hours: W 1-3 pm
Filip Grzelak, f.grzelak@umiami.edu, Ashe 625 (305-284-4916); hours: T 1-2 pm, W 12-1 pm
Ashley Mateiro, a.mateiro@umiami.edu, Ashe 625 (305-284-4916); hours: M 3:30-5:30 pm
Carolina Villalba, c.villalba1@umiami.edu, Ashe 421G (305-284-2955); hours: T 4-6 pm

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. The course title appears in quotation marks because 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. We also will address how the sciences played a role in 1960s culture—this was a decade 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 also 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 will be a blend of lecture, discussion, film screenings (on Thursday evenings in LC 140), 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 Sixties” requires a range of personal perspectives and interpretations, for even today the era of “The Sixties” provokes passionate responses from those who were there as well as those who were not.

Requirements (assignment due dates are noted on the schedule):

- Two 5-7-page essays (25% each, for 50% of course grade)
- Midterm essay examination (25% of course grade)
- Final essay examination (25% of course grade)
- Class attendance is mandatory along with good note-taking.
- 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.

Course website with huge collection of links, resources, and bibliography on variety of 1960s topics: <http://scholar.library.miami.edu/sixties/index.html>

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. 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 statement that refers to the grading criteria handout; only after such a statement 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.

Academic Service-Learning Component:

- In lieu of the two essays, a limited number of students may engage in service work (in conjunction with the U.M. Office of Civic and Community Engagement) and submit at the end of the semester a paper that offers a description and analysis of the experience. Participants will be provided guidelines with respect to both the work requirements as well as the accompanying paper. The community organizations with whom students might work include the Miami Workers Center, the Overtown Youth Center, Habitat for Humanity, and others. Your volunteer effort must be for this course only and not for credit in any other course. Participants are expected to attend the orientation session on Thursday, January 26.

Film Screenings:

- A series of films pertaining to “The Sixties” will be screened in the Learning Center on Thursday evenings. Attendance is not required, but 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 attend at least five screenings and submit a 3-page response paper no later than the last class session will receive an increase of a full grade on their lowest examination grade.

Required Texts (texts are available for purchase at the University Bookstore and will be on reserve in the Richter Library; additional information about texts may be found by following the online course link: <http://myumnet.miami.edu/General/ClassSearch/ClassSearch.aspx>):

- Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, editors, *“Takin’ 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*
- Guy Maynard, *The Risk of Being Ridiculous: A Historical Novel of Love and Rebellion*
- Charles Neu, *America’s Lost War: Vietnam, 1945-1975*

Schedule (subject to revision): Tuesdays, 6:25-9:05 p.m., Storer Auditorium

January 17:

Course objectives and requirements
Documentary: "1965-1970: *Unpinned*"

January 24:

"Prelude to the Sixties"
Speaker: Donald Spivey
Comments and Questions: The Students

Required Reading: *Takin' it to the Streets*: "Past as Prologue: The 1950s as an Introduction to the 1960s, 1-11"; "Keep on Walkin', Keep on Talkin': Civil Rights to 1965," 12-47.

[Thursday, January 26, location TBA, 6:30 pm:

Orientation session for service learning. This is a mandatory session for those planning to participate in the service learning option.]

January 31:

"Sixties Science and Technology"
Speaker: David Wilson
Comments and Questions: The Students

Required Reading: *Takin' it to the Streets*: "The Environmental Movement," 517-527; online reading materials at Blackboard (see Course Documents).

[Thursday, February 2, LC 140, 6:30 p.m.

Film: *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), a Stanly Kubrick film starring Peter Sellers in three roles and George C. Scott. Look for a cameo by a young James Earl Jones. 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.]

February 7:

"The Literature of the Sixties"
Speaker: Joseph Alkana
Comments and Questions: The Students

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

[Thursday, February 9, LC 140, 6:30 p.m.:

American Graffiti (1973), a coming of age film about the early '60s (set in 1962) directed by George Lucas and starring Richard Dreyfuss. Look for Harrison Ford in a small role. Cruising, rock and roll, and a night of adventures. Number 62 on AFI's top 100 films.]

February 14:

“The Civil Rights Movement”

Speaker: Donald Spivey

Comments and Questions: The Students

Required Reading: *Takin' it to the Streets*: “Say It Loud, Say It Proud,” 107-151.

[Thursday, February 16, LC 140, 6:30 p.m.:

In the Heat of the Night (1967). Sidney Poitier and Rod Steiger at their very best in a Norman Jewison film. Come see the “slap heard 'round-the-world,” as the investigation of a murder in a small southern town opens the way to bias and prejudice on all sides. This film should give you a taste of what life was like for blacks in the South. Number 75 on AFI's top 100 films.]

February 21:

1st half: “Reflections on The Civil Rights Movement” Panel

Moderator: Donald Spivey

Panelists: Jomills Braddock; Marvin Dawkins; Michael Gaines;
Maria Kosinski; Clyde McCoy; Steve Stein

Comments and Questions: 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)

(Interlude)

2nd half: Lecture by Dr. Cornel West at Gusman Hall (7:45 p.m.)

[Thursday, February 23, LC 140, 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 ground-breaking film on interracial marriage. In the year the film was released, interracial marriage still was illegal in 17 states! It also was the last time that Tracy and Hepburn were together in a film.]

February 28

Note: First essay is due at the beginning of class

1st half: “The Kennedy Era, Great Society, and Urban Unrest”

Speaker: Donald Spivey

Comments and Questions: The Students

(Interlude)

2nd half: Panel

Panelists: Gregory Bush; Wanda Colon; Marc Royster

Comments and Questions: The Students

[Thursday, **March 1**, LC 140, 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.]

March 6: (Location: LC 140)

1st half: "The Vietnam War"

Guest Speaker: Professor Charles Neu

Moderator: David Wilson

Comments and Questions: The Students

Required Reading: Charles Neu, *America's Lost War: Vietnam, 1945-1975* (entire)

(Interlude)

2nd half: **MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

*****No class session on March 13 because of Spring Break*****

March 20:

1st half: "The Vietnam War"

Moderator: David Wilson

Panelists: Frank Britt; Keith Nelson; Terri Hood; Jeff Raskin; Ray de Arrigunaga

Comments and Questions: The Students

(Interlude)

2nd half: "The Kennedy Era and Peace Corps"

Guest Speaker: President Donna Shalala

Comments and Questions: The Students

Required Reading: *Takin' it to the Streets: "Antiwar Activity Within the Military,"* 211-217; "The Vietnam Veterans," 217-224

[Thursday, **March 22**, LC 140, 6:30 p.m.:

The Graduate (1967) with Dustin Hoffman, Katharine Ross, and Anne Bancroft. Directed by Mike Nichols. Nominated for 7 Academy Awards. A romantic comedy about college and post-college life in the '60s, this is the film that launched Dustin Hoffman's career, with great music by Simon and Garfunkel. Number 17 on the American Film Institute's Top 100 films.]

March 27:

“The Anti-War Movement, Student Revolt, and the Campus Scene”

Moderator: David Wilson

Required Reading: *Takin' it to the Streets*: “The Antiwar Movement,” 182-201; “Resistance and the Draft,” 201-211.

1st half: Panel:

Panelists: Jeff Donnelly; Sue Ann Campbell; David Landowne;
Walt Secada; Daniel Suman; Michael DiTomasso

Comments and Questions: The Students

(Interlude)

2nd half: Second Panel:

Panelists: Stephen Diamond; Tom Steinfatt; Bruce Bagley; Steve Green;
Tom Musca; Barbara Cole; John Murphy

Comments and Questions: The Students

[Thursday, March 29, LC 140, 6:30 p.m.:

Easy Rider (1969). Starring Peter Fonda, Dennis Hopper, and Jack Nicholson. A road trip full of the counterculture of drugs, hippies, and free love. Captain America will blow you away. Number 84 on AFI's top 100 list.]

April 3:

1st half: “Literature about the Sixties”

Speaker: Joseph Alkana

Comments and Questions: The Students

Required Reading: Guy Maynard, *The Risk of Being Ridiculous* (entire); *Takin' it to the Streets*: “Campus Explosions,” 331-354

(Interlude)

“The Psychedelic Sixties and The Age of Aquarius”

Guest Speaker: Marc Gellman

Moderator: David Wilson

Comments and Questions: The Students

[Thursday, April 5, LC 140, 6:30 p.m.:

Woodstock. Marc Gellman will present actual footage of the event and the music]

April 10:

“Feminism and Gay Rights”

1st half: Women’s Rights Movement

Moderator: Rita Deutsch

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

Panelists: Rita Deutsch; Marsha Matson; Ellenmarie McPhillip; Cristina Savretto

Comments and Questions: The Students

(Interlude)

2nd half: “Gay Rights”

Moderator: Donald Spivey

Panel

Panelists: Robert Johnson; Sarit Levy; Stanley Langbein

Comments and Questions: The Students

[Thursday, April 12, LC 140, 6:30 p.m.]

Film: TBA

April 17:

Note: Second essay or service-learning report is due at the beginning of class.

“The International Scene”

Moderator: Donald Spivey

Panel:

Panelists: Melanie Goergmaier; Ralph Heyndels; Edmund Abaka

Comments and Questions: The Students

[Thursday, April 19, LC 140, 6:30 p.m.:

A Hard Day’s Night (1964). A comedy about a couple of days in the life of the Beatles, starring them—John, Paul, George, and Ringo. Directed by Richard Lester. Wonderful music to get us ready for the faculty singing and playing next week!]

April 24

“The Music of the Sixties”

A Faculty/Staff Performance and Sing-Along in Open Celebration

Final Examination: Tuesday, May 8, 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Location: TBA.