“The Sixties”
American Studies 301, English 395, History 367
Fall 2009, Profs. Spivey, Watson, and Wilson

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Professor of History  Assoc. Professor of English  Professor of Biology
Hrs: T/Th 3-5 p.m.  Hrs: T 10-11, W 11-12, Th 1-2  Hrs: W/Th 10:30-11:30 a.m.
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Course website with huge collection of links, resources, and bibliography on all kinds of 1960s topics: http://scholar.library.miami.edu/sixties/index.html

This course is an attempt to capture and convey the rich flavor of dynamic social, cultural, and political events known as “The Sixties.” The course title appears in quotation marks because the time frame is only approximate. The idea is to present an historical/popular-cultural picture of the United States in the era synonymous with the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, widespread college and university campus activism, and urban unrest. We will also address scientific, technological, and international events during this same period. The 1960s was a time of profound social, cultural, and political ferment around the world, and we will look at events in the Caribbean, France, and Africa alongside the American course materials.

Besides drawing on primary documents, fiction, poetry, and music of the period, we will draw on the personal experiences of faculty who “were there,” many of whom participated in, or were eyewitnesses to, the dramatic challenges that occurred at that time of war, tumultuous political, gender and racial upheavals, and the momentous changes in the academy and intellectual discourse. We will endeavor to make connections between the ideas and events of the 1960s and more recent academic interest in women’s and gender studies, racial equality and diversity, post-colonial studies, revisionist history, and ethnography. Special attention will be given to period literature, film, television, advertising, fine art, and popular music such as folk, jazz, R & B, and rock.

The course will mix first-hand personal accounts from university faculty and staff with lectures, discussions, and film screenings. 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 anything that is as involved, convoluted, and multifaceted as the period we call “The Sixties” requires many personal perspectives of what we as students, faculty members, and a nation in flux felt so passionately about, and the meanings that we collectively and individually drew from living through it and from its continuing influence on our present.

We are offering the course on Tuesday evenings to provide a convenient time for the lectures,
videos, films, musical performances, personal testimony, panels, and open discussions we envision. We intend to close the course – as we have before – with a gala concert featuring 60s faculty and staff singers and musicians from both the Coral Gables and Medical campuses.

Requirements:
Two 5-8-page papers (25% each; 50%)
Midterm examination (25%)
Final examination (25%)
Class attendance is mandatory along with good note taking.
All examinations are of the essay variety.
Papers must be completed and submitted on time. Late papers will not be accepted.

Required Texts (texts are available for purchase at the University Bookstore and are on reserve in the Richter Library):
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
Charles Neu, America’s Lost War: Vietnam, 1945-1975

Schedule: (Tuesday, 6:25-9:05 p.m., Storer Auditorium)

September 1:
Course objectives and requirements
(Professors Spivey, Watson, and Wilson)

[Thursday, Sept. 3, LC 140, 6:30 p.m.]
Film: Dr. Strangelove (all films are optional and free)
A 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!

September 8:
“60s Science and Technology”
Speaker: David Wilson
Comments and Questions: The Students

Required Reading: Takin’ it to the Streets: “The Environmental Movement”, 520-529; and online reading materials at Blackboard (in Course Documents)

September 15:
“Counter Currents of the 1950s”
Speaker: Donald Spivey
“The Beats and other Literature of the 1950s”
Speaker: Tim Watson
Comments and Questions: The Students

**Required Reading:** Allen Ginsberg, *Howl*; Ralph Ellison, from *Invisible Man*; Elizabeth Bishop, “Questions of Travel” (all available on Blackboard in Course Documents)

(Interlude)

**Documentary:** *The Coming of the Civil Rights Movement*; Spivey (moderator)

**Required Reading:** *Takin it to the Streets: “Keep on Walkin’, Keep on Talkin’: Civil Rights to 1965*, 15-48

*[Thursday, Sept. 17, LC 140, 6:30 p.m.*

**Film:** *In the Heat of the Night*

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.]

**September 22:**

“The Civil Rights Movement”

Guest Speaker: Patricia Stephens Due

Comments and Questions: The Students

(Interlude)

Panel: Jomills Braddock, Marvin Dawkins, Michael Gaines, Sam Grogg, Clyde McCoy, Linnea Pearson, Steve Stein, Spivey (moderator)

Comments and Questions: The Students

**Required Reading:** *Freedom in the Family* (entire)

**September 29:**

“The Great Society and Urban Unrest”

Speaker: Donald Spivey

(Interlude)

Panel: Mark Brown, Russ Gordon, Evie Martin, Marc Royster, Spivey (moderator)

Comments and Questions: The Students

**Required Reading:** *Takin’ it to the Streets: “Say It Loud, Say It Proud”*, 103-152

*[Thursday, Oct. 1, LC 140, 6:30 p.m.*

**Film:** *Apocalypse Now*

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.]

**October 6:**

“The Vietnam War”

Guest Speaker: Professor Charles Neu

Wilson (moderator)

Comments and Questions: The Students

(Interlude)
Panel: Basil Paquet, Frank Britt, Ramon “Ray” de Arrigunaga, James Klosowski, Wilson (moderator)
Comments and Questions: The Students

**Required Reading:** *America’s Lost War* (entire)

[Thursday, Oct. 8, LC 140, 6:30 p.m.
Film: *Full Metal Jacket*
Stanley Kubrick, director. We see the dehumanizing effects of training for and experiencing the Vietnam war. Don’t miss Lee Ermey as drill sergeant or the Tet offensive from Kubrick’s perspective. Check out a very different Vincent D’Onofrio—not quite *Law and Order!*]

October 13:
Part I: “The Kennedy Era”
Guest speaker: President Donna Shalala
Comments and Questions: The Students
(Interlude)
Part II: “The Anti-War Movement”
Panel: Joseph Alkana, Jeff Donnelly, David Landowne, Walter Secada, Jeffrey Raskin, Wilson (moderator)
Comments and Questions: The Students

**Required Reading:** *Takin’ it to the Streets*: “The Anti-War Movement”, 174-193

***First interpretive essay is due. Papers will be collected at the beginning of class.***

October 20:
“The Psychedelic Sixties and The Age of Aquarius”
Guest Speaker: Marc Gellman
Wilson (moderator)
(Interlude)

**MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

[Thursday, Oct. 22, LC 140, 6:30 p.m.
Film: *Woodstock*
Marc Gellman will present actual footage of the event and the music]

October 27:
“Anti-War Movement, Student Revolt, and the Campus Scene”
Panel I: Sherrill Hayes, John Murphy, Steven Ullmann, Steven Green, Wilson (presenter/moderator)
Comments and Questions: The Students
(Interlude)
Panel II: Michael Abrams, Thomas Steinfatt, Bruce Bagley, Don Spivey, Wilson (moderator)
Comments and Questions: The Students

**Required Reading:** *Takin’ it to the Streets*: “Resistance and the Draft”, 193-203

November 3:

“Anti-War Movement, Student Revolt, and the Campus Scene”
Panel I: Richard Boxer, Peter Tarjan, Guido Ruggiero, Anthony Paul, Wilson (moderator)
Comments and Questions: The Students
(Interlude)
Panel II: Gregory Bush, Paula Musto, Marta Bret, Stephen Diamond, Wilson (moderator)
Comments and Questions: The Students

**Required Reading:** *Takin’ it to the Streets:* “Experiences of War”, 203-226

November 10:
“Feminism and Gay Rights”
Panel I (the women’s movement): Rita Deutsch (moderator), Audrey Finkelstein, Sharon Ladner, Ellen McPhillip
Comments and Questions: The Students
(Interlude)
Panel II (the gay liberation movement): Bob Johnson, Watson (moderator)
Comments and Questions: The Students

**Required Reading:** *Takin’ it to the Streets:* pp. 388-93, 398-415, 434-48, 493-508

November 17:
“Literature in the 1960s”
Speaker: Tim Watson
(Interlude)
Comments and Questions: The Students


***Second interpretive essay is due. Papers collected at the beginning of class.***

November 24:
“The International Scene”
Panel: Edmund Abaka, David Ellison, Ralph Heyndels, Lillian Manzor, Watson (moderator)
(Interlude)
Comments and Questions: The Students

Required Reading: Nelson Mandela, “I am Prepared to Die”; Frantz Fanon, from *The Wretched of the Earth*; Daniel Cohn-Bendit, from *Obsolete Communism*; documents on Bay of Pigs and Cuban Missile Crisis TBA (all on Blackboard)

December 1:
“The Music of the 60s”
A Faculty/Staff Performance and Sing-Along in Open Celebration

**Final Examination:** Tuesday, December 15, 8:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. in Storer Auditorium.
It is the student’s responsibility to be present. This is the only date and time that the final
examination will be offered.