

THE SIXTIES: A HISTORY
FIRST-TERM SEMINAR, FALL 2002
MTWF, 9:00-9:50, SSC 212

Professor Greg Kaster

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Office Hours: M 1:30-4:30, T 10:30-Noon, and by appointment

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In the Sixties, "it seemed especially true that History with a capital H had come down to earth, . . . and that within History, or threaded through it, people were living with a supercharged density."

--Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (1987)

"The meaning of the '60s depends, ultimately, upon which aspects of that time seem most significant to the retrospective observer."

--Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (2000)

"In the 1960s, Americans were plunged back into 'anguished scrutiny' of the meaning of their most fundamental beliefs and institutions in a renewed test of history. They reacted with varying degrees of wisdom and folly, optimism and despair, selflessness and pettiness—all those things that taken together make us, in any decade, but particularly so in times of civil warfare, sadly (and occasionally grandly) human."

--Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Taking these three quotes as our cue, we will explore the seeds and legacies of the 1960s (c. 1960-1973); the events, developments, conflicts, persons, practices, and ideas that defined the decade; and the changing and contested meanings of "the sixties" over time.

THE COURSE AND SYLLABUS IN BRIEF

Welcome to an exciting and intellectually challenging semester devoted to studying the history of the 1960s (c. 1960-1973). ***Please read this Syllabus carefully.*** It provides you with an overview of our work together this semester. Below you will find a course description, an explanation of the ways this course addresses the College's General-Education Area C criteria, a description of the major components of the First-Term Seminar, the grading policy, and a schedule of all reading and graded writing assignments the entire semester.

In this class you will find an intellectually open, stimulating, and challenging classroom atmosphere that encourages student ***learning*** through the free exchange of ideas in and outside the classroom, through intellectual discipline and experimentation, through listening and responding to the ideas of others, through sharing and peer-evaluation of written work, and through cooperation and collaboration with one another on selected small assignments.

REQUIRED BOOKS (PURCHASE IN BOOK MARK) AND FILMS

Please purchase all texts immediately so that you are not caught without.

This Syllabus

A dictionary and thesaurus (paperback, so you can bring to class easily)

Lunsford, *The Everyday Writer* 2nd ed. (2002)

Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* 3rd ed. (2001)

Anderson, *The Sixties* (1999)

Bloom and Breines, eds., *"Takin' It to the Streets"* (1995)

Bloom, ed., *Long Time Gone* (2001)

Miller, *Flowers in the Dustbin* (1999)

Ehrhart, *Passing Time* (1986)

Red Star Sister

Misc. short readings distributed in class or via e-mail

We will view several ***required*** films during the semester (time, date, and place to be agreed on). Some we will view during class time, but others are too long for a single class and are best viewed in one screening. There are now numerous outstanding (and some not-so-great) documentary and feature films dealing with the decade as a whole, or aspects of it. There are also many fascinating and entertaining films from the period itself. Your suggestions are welcome.

E-MAIL AND WEB SITES

The class e-mail list is f-fts-100-176@gac.edu. I will frequently post messages, comments, and perhaps even assignments to this list, so be sure to read your e-mail regularly (certainly once a day). You are responsible for all instructions and materials disseminated this way.

This list is also meant your use as well. Please feel free to post announcements relevant to the course, and *especially* comments and questions in response to readings, films, discussions, assignments, and the like. On occasion you will be required to post discussion questions to the list.

You will probably also be asked on occasion to consult and/or work out with selected web sites. More as we proceed.

HOW THIS COURSE MEETS THE CRITERIA FOR AREA C

This course counts toward partial fulfillment of the General-Education Area C requirement, which is concerned with “Meaning and Value, the Use of Language, and the Historical Process” (see current 2002-2003 catalog, under “Requirements for Graduation,” online at www.gac.edu/oncampus/academics/general_catalog/current/).

Critical reading, writing, and discussion are at the heart of this course, and each of these skills will help us to explore the Area C components just cited. Focusing on the history and changing meanings of the 1960s will necessarily engage us in questions about both national and individual values, then and since (including our own time). Indeed, the '60s witnessed wide-ranging and intense debate and conflict over national and personal values almost without precedent in American history, the reverberations of which are still heard and felt today (most noticeably in the so-called “culture war” of the past three decades). That debate and conflict in the '60s, the related ongoing debate over the meanings of that era, and the history of the era itself—years when the power of words, as well as of gestures and pictures, was never more evident—will afford us an opportunity to explore the political uses of language (both verbal and nonverbal) and the ways in which different interpretations of the 1960s have been and continue to be linguistically coded.

Because this course is concerned with the *history* of the '60s, attention to historical process and the discipline of history is central to it. We will explore change and continuity in the meanings attached to the period over time; we will interpret primary documents in their respective historical contexts, seeking to understand developments and perspectives rooted in particular times and places; and we will consider the burgeoning historiography of the '60s. Not incidentally, we will reflect throughout the semester on the practice of history. How has the discipline been defined? Who decides what is historically important and on what basis? Who “owns” history—specifically the history of the '60s—if anyone does or should? How and why have historians’ and scholars’ interpretations of the era changed over time? How does our understanding of United States history since WW II change when the 1960s take center stage?

COMPONENTS OF THE FIRST-TERM SEMINAR

The five main components of the First-Term Seminar are listed below along with a brief description of how we, as a class, will address each. As you will see, these components are closely interrelated.

Critical Thinking: As a group, we will develop a working definition of critical thinking that will guide us through(out) the semester. We will develop our critical thinking skills in a variety of ways: generating discussion questions based on the readings, responding to each other's written work, discussing how best to approach various kinds of historical sources, and learning to identify assumptions, biases, contradictions, ambiguities, and interpretations imbedded in the sources (including non-print sources) we encounter.

Writing: Here the emphasis will be on developing critical thinking skills through writing. There will be (roughly) weekly short essays (some 1-2 pp., others 4-5 pp.) based on the required course materials, at least two of which you will be required to rewrite. There will be a 10-pp. research paper on a topic chosen in consultation with me and based on library research. There will also be critical peer review of written work and several ungraded (though required) 1 p. essays. Throughout, we will consult and work out with Andrea A. Lunsford's *The Everyday Writer* 2nd ed., the writing manual for all Gustavus students in FTS and beyond. Each of you will keep a portfolio of all written work (both graded and ungraded). At the end of the semester you will be asked to review all of your work and reflect, in writing, on what you have learned in this course about the 1960s and the United States in that period, the ways your ideas and or values have changed (if they have) as a result of the course, and your areas of academic strength and weakness.

Speaking: The development of discussion skills is central to this course. By discussion I mean the ability to ***listen and respond*** to the ideas of others as well as the ability to ***express your own***. Both abilities are crucial to your liberal arts education because together they stress active learning, accurate understanding and critical consideration of the ideas of others (especially when those ideas differ from your own or from conventional wisdom), membership in an intellectual community, learning from others, and a sense of individual and group responsibility. Our discussions will be guided by the questions that you generate about the readings and other course materials. Each of you will co-lead at least one discussion beginning the second ***full*** week of class. On occasion, different members of the class might be assigned different positions on an issue arising from the reading, and you will be asked to debate the various positions.

Values: Together we will attempt to arrive at a common understanding of what we mean by "values," even as we likely discover through conversation and debate that our values, at least some of them, differ. In discussion and written assignments we will explore what the history of the 1960s suggests to us about national and individual values both then and now. Some of the general questions related to this component of the course are: What values can we identify as underlying a piece of historical writing, whether a primary or secondary source? (On the

distinction between primary and secondary sources see Rampolla, *Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, pp. 4-5.) In what ways have different historical actors, both individually and in groups, defined and acted on their values? What major conflicts over values characterized the '60s? What caused those conflicts, and what reverberations of them do you detect in the political discourse of our own day (consider, for example, the recent debate around “family values”)? Should we judge the attitudes and behaviors of earlier generations of Americans? If no, why? If yes, why and on what basis? How can we use the experiences of past Americans—specifically Americans in the 1960s—to illustrate national and individual values today as well as debates about them?

Advising: Academic advising will take place both individually and in groups, both in class (Tuesdays, especially) and in my office. I will work with you throughout the year and especially during the registration periods (*the first of which is November 5-20*) as you select courses that meet your interests and fulfill General Education requirements. As you begin to consider possible majors, study abroad opportunities, internships, and careers, I will direct you to faculty/staff knowledgeable in the areas you wish to explore (you will also take the initiative to identify and seek out these persons on your own). In time, once you have declared a major, you will want to secure an advisor in your major field either in addition to or in place of me.

Please seek me out whenever you have questions. I will set up scheduled advising sessions at various points in the year; however, you need not wait for these sessions to see me. You may contact me by phone or e-mail, or you may simply stop by my office, preferably during office hours, and knock on the door if it is closed. When not in the office I am most likely either at home, in the library, or at River Rock (our splendid coffeehouse in town) preparing for class, grading, researching, writing, working on faculty committee work, or (if out of town) at a conference or pursuing professional development in the Cities. I will return messages as soon as I can. Please understand that in most cases I do not respond to e-mail messages the instant I read them, and that I may not be able to meet with you the moment you stop by the office. Thus it is best if you schedule an appointment in advance, again preferably during my office hours or at another mutually convenient time. ***The bottom line is that there are several ways to contact me and we will always find a time to meet. Seek out your professors and don't wait until the last minute to do so! Remember to keep your appointments and be prompt!***

EVALUATION, EXPECTATIONS, AND ACADEMIC HONESTY/INTEGRITY

Grading is an art not a science. Final course grades will be arrived at approximately as follows.

Engagement (attendance, preparation, energy, alertness):	20%
Graded written work (excluding research paper):	30%
Research paper (quality of research and writing):	20%
Discussion (including co-leadership of):	20%
Library workouts (excluding research paper) and ungraded writing:	10%

Expectations: It is the clarity, depth, accuracy, neatness, honesty, and improvement of your work that concern me most. I am impressed by high levels of preparation and engagement with/in the course, as well as by extraordinary effort, though obviously results are no less important than effort. Attending every class, participating in every discussion, and completing all assignments on time are but minimal, though obviously crucial, required first steps. ***There are normally no excused absences or extensions of deadlines; if you cannot complete an assignment on time or if you must miss class, I expect you to notify me in advance, except when extraordinary circumstances prevent you from doing so. Late work and absences will count against you.*** Regular attendance, advance preparation, and active participation are essential to your and the course's success. ***Please note that "A" work is work that is completed on time, properly focused, framed around a clear thesis that is developed insightfully and persuasively, and, in the case of papers, flawlessly executed (i.e., free of spelling, grammatical, and syntactical errors).***

Academic Honesty/Integrity Statement: "By enrolling at Gustavus you have taken up membership in a worldwide community of scholars, and like any community, Academia has ethical standards to which you are expected to adhere.

You are expected to learn and follow the principles of honesty and integrity that apply in academic life. Among those standards are that you faithfully represent your own work, acknowledge any borrowing from the work of others, avoid falsifying data or sources, be respectful of other scholars' efforts and not interfere with their access to resources (e.g., by misappropriating or damaging library materials), do a fair share of the work in group efforts, give others the benefit of your informed opinions and observations in discussion, and be respectful of others' values, knowledge, and feelings while developing your own.

We define ourselves as a community by our common pursuit of knowledge and wisdom, not just as individuals, but also as colleagues. Integrity includes not just the principles we revere, but also what we do with them. Whether in research, in discussion, or in writing, certain kinds of trust, respect, and courtesy are called for in dealing with your peers and mentors, and in maintaining your self-respect.

Regrettably, serious and deliberate violations of ethics may incur serious penalties, including expulsion. Lesser violations may carry lesser penalties, but cannot be overlooked. If you are in doubt about whether your work conforms to ethical standards, please inquire—you are, after all, a learner."

--Professor John Rezmerski (retired), Department of English, Gustavus

Detailed information about the College's academic honesty policy can be found in the current editions of the *Gustavus Guide* and the College catalog.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Be prepared to discuss with vigor and rigor the material listed on the day indicated (review Guidelines for Critical Reading attached to this Syllabus). *Come to each class with two written discussion questions in response to that day's reading. Strive for questions that are interpretive or conceptual as opposed to merely factual—questions, that is, that invite critical reflection and discussion rather than merely “answers.” I will ask a few of you each day to read your questions aloud.*

The general headings in quotes below (excluding song titles in quotes of their own) come from the Contents page of our textbook, *The Sixties*, by Terry Anderson. Assigned titles are separated by a semi-colon (;) and assigned page numbers within the same book are separated by commas (.). B&B, eds.=Bloom and Breines, eds., “*Takin’ It to the Streets.*” Assignments in Lunsford and Rampolla will be announced in class.

I. Introductions

Sept. 4: *The Sixties*, cover

6: This Syllabus; *The Sixties*, iii-ix, and skim 223-243; *Long Time Gone*, vii-9

II. “Cold War America, 1945-1960,” and Early Rock and Roll

9: *The Sixties*, 1-18; B&B, eds., vii-xviii, 3-16

10: *Flowers*, 9-43

11: *Flowers*, 44-94

13: *Flowers*, 94-173

III. “The Years of Hope and Idealism, 1960-1963,” and Beatlemania and the Stones

16: *The Sixties*, 19-44; B&B, eds., 17-23

17: B&B, eds., 17-31

18: B&B, eds., 31-34; *Flowers*, 177-192

20: *Flowers*, 192-217

IV. “The Pinnacle of Liberalism, 1964-1965,” and Dylan and the Dead

23: *The Sixties*, 45-58; *Long Time Gone*, 11-22; B&B, eds., 34-51

24: *The Sixties*, 54-58; B&B, eds., 59-60; *Long Time Gone*, 23-45

25: *Long Time Gone*, 23-45; B&B, eds., 61-96

27: B&B, eds., 101-134

30: B&B, eds., 61-96, 101-134

Oct. 1: *The Sixties*, 58-72; B&B, eds., 203-211 / **Nobel Conference (no class)**

2: *Flowers*, 218-241 / **Nobel Conference (no class)**

4: *The Sixties*, 58-72; B&B, eds., 203-211; *Flowers*, 218-241

V. “Days of Decision, 1965-1967,” and Warhol, “Sgt. Pepper’s,” and Monterey

7: *The Sixties*, 73-101

8: *Long Time Gone*, 123-142; B&B, eds., 135-42, 152-159

9: B&B, eds., 159-170

Oct. 11: B&B, eds., 214-236; *Flowers*, 241-270

VI. “1968,” and “Sympathy for the Devil”

14: *The Sixties*, 102-128; B&B, eds., 381-384

15: *Long Time Gone*, 75-98

16: *Flowers*, 270-277; B&B, eds., 607-623

18: **Reading Break** (B&B, eds., 239-260, 384-412, 335-379, 418-445, 323-328, 170-176)

21: **Reading Break** (B&B., eds., 239-260, 384-412, 335-379, 418-445, 323-328, 170-176)

23: B&B, 239-273, 384-412

25: B&B, 335-379, 418-445, 323-328, 170-176

VII. “From Counterculture to Sixties Culture”

28: *The Sixties*, 129-152; B&B, eds., 275-278

29: *Long Time Gone*, 145-187

30: B&B, eds., 293-310

Nov. 1: B&B, eds., 310-334, 559-573

VIII. “Days of Discord, 1969-1970,” and “What’s Going On”

4: *The Sixties*, 153-180

5: B&B, eds., 363-372, 177-180, 189-201; *Long Time Gone*, 189-208

6: B&B, eds., 459-491

8: B&B, eds., 491-538, 545-557

11: B&B, eds., 596-607; *Long Time Gone*, 209-229; B&B, eds., 623-631

12: B&B, eds., 574-596; *Flowers*, 278-285

IX. “The Crescendo, and Demise of the Sixties, 1970-1973,” and the Demise of Rock(?)

13: *The Sixties*, 181-209

15: B&B, eds., 261-273; *Flowers*, 285-354

X. Sixties through Memoir I: Vietnam Vet Against the War

18: *Long Time Coming*, 47-73; *Passing Time*, ix-59

19: *Passing Time*, 60-103

20: *Passing Time*, 104-146

22: *Passing Time*, 147-203

25: *Passing Time*, 204-242

26: *Passing Time*, 243-277

XI. Sixties through Memoir II: One Woman’s Coming of Age in the Late ’60s/Early ’70s

27: *Red Star Sister*, 211 (Acknowledgements), vii-33,

29: **Thanksgiving Vacation** *Red Star Sister*, 33-102

Dec. 2: *Red Star Sister*, 33-102

3: **Open**

4: *Red Star Sister*, 103-157

6: *Red Star Sister*, 159-209

XII. “Legacies: The Decade of Tumult and Change”

9: *The Sixties*, 210-222

10: **Open**

11: *Long Time Gone*, 99-121

13: B&B, eds., 631-636

16: **Research paper due in box on my office door by NOON**

**NOTE: This Syllabus is subject to change at any time.
All changes will be announced in class and/or on the class e-mail list.
You are responsible for noting any and all changes announced these ways.**