



Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*

Andrew Haley, *Turning the Tables: Restaurants and the Rise of the American Middle Class 1880-1920*

Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s and the American Political Tradition*

Martin Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity*

Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*

All other texts will be available online, via Blackboard.

### **Assignments:**

**Response Papers:** (25%) Every two weeks, students will write a 500-word essay that critically analyzes a primary source that they have found on their own, connecting it to a recent reading, and discussing how the source either *does* or *does not* support the primary argument of the book. Students will also post their essays and the primary sources on which they are based to the class Tumblr, which will serve as an online research repository and a discussion forum for the class.

During weeks when a response paper is not due, each student will provide a brief comment (100 words) on one of the source essays published the week before. These comments will make up part of the participation grade.

Locations and strategies for finding primary sources will be discussed at length during the initial class session, a conversation on the methods of digital and analog research that will expand as the semester goes on. Instructions for using the class Tumblr will be discussed as well.

**Final Project:** Over the course of this project, students will choose a “middle class” person, place, or institution as the subject of their research, examining a set of primary source materials related to their/its history, and then write a research paper examining the role played by class in that history.

The final project has several steps:

Due week 8 — (5%) Students will turn in a 750 word discussion of the “middle class” person who they have chosen as the object of their research. In this paper, they will identify and discuss three documents that they have chosen as part of the primary source base for their research.

Due Week 11 — (10%) Project outline due. This outline will expand on the initial discussion due week 8, including 5 primary source documents, discussing which of the secondary sources the

student is considering employing to provide context, and indicating what they believe their argument will be. Class time that week will be spent in small groups, as students offer each other peer review.

Due at the end of the Exam Period — (30%) Each student will write an 8-10 page research paper, relying on an analysis of at least seven primary source documents, exploring the “middle-class” life of the figure that they have chosen. They will analyze this figure in relation to at least two of the historical frameworks that we have discussed in class, highlighting the ways that the complexities of their life both support and push against the limits of historical argumentation.

**Participation: (30%)**

Students should come to every class not only having read and considered the assignments, but prepared to actively comment on them. Much of this class is based on the process of analyzing various historical arguments and relating them to one another. Participation is the best way to strengthen these skills, making it far easier to excel in the rest of the course.

When assessing class participation, I will be looking for the following:

- a) critically interpreting the argument of a text
- b) thinking about the kind of evidence used to support the argument
- c) bringing arguments from secondary sources to bear on the analysis of primary sources
- d) listening to and actively engaging with points raised by other students

I understand that not every student will be comfortable speaking in front of the class. The class will occasionally be broken up into smaller sections for group discussions, organized debates, or shared primary source analysis. In addition, written responses to student essays posted on Tumblr will also be counted as part of the class participation grade. These alternate settings will be especially important for students less comfortable with speaking in class.

Attendance: This class is based on the close analysis of historical texts, and as a result, attendance is crucial. If you know that you will need to miss class for an excused absence (including serious illness, religious observance, athletic team event, or family emergency), you must notify me in advance. More than one absence from class will result in a deduction from your participation grade.

Academic Integrity: All students must conduct themselves in accordance with the Johns Hopkins code of conduct and the Undergraduate Ethics handbook. Cheating or plagiarizing will be subject to the full penalties applicable under that code. If you are in doubt about the ethical nature of an action, PLEASE consult the instructor first. No penalty will be enforced for a question.

Disabilities: If you are a student with a registered accommodation for a disability, please let me know. If you believe you might require accommodations, please contact Student Disability Services ([studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu), 410-516-4720) or in-person at 385 Garland Hall.

Communication: Please feel free to email me ([sbacker2@jhu.edu](mailto:sbacker2@jhu.edu)) at any time. I will email back concerning any question within 24 hours.

### **Session 1: What is a class?**

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, Pages 14-21.

E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, Pages 9-13.

Stuart Blumin, "The Hypothesis of Middle-Class Formation in Nineteenth-Century America: A Critique and Some Proposals," Pages 2-41

### **Session 2: Sentimentality, Refinement, and the Family** (*First Response Paper Due*)

Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle Class Culture in America 1830-1870*, 56-123.

Catherine Beecher Stowe, *The American Women's Home*, Chapter 6.

Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, 250-313

### **Session 3: Work, Life, and the Middle-Class City**

Stuart Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City*, Pages 230-297.

Hepp, *The Middle Class City*, 21-114.

Richard Butsch, *Bowery B'hoys and Matinee Ladies: The Re-Gendering of the Nineteenth Century American Theater Audiences*. (Article)

### **Session 4: A Consuming Nation** (*Second Response Paper Due*)

Leach, William — *Land of Desire: Merchants Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture*, 15-111

Kristin Hoganson — *Consumer's Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865–1920*, 13-56

Abelson — *When Ladies Go A'Thieving*, 13-62.

### **Session 5: Gender in Transformation**

George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of an Urban World*, 99-133

Rob Schorman, *Selling Style: Clothing and Social Change at the Turn of the 20th Century*, 18-75

Gail Beiderman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 1-120.

### **Session 6: The Black Middle Class (Third Response Paper Due)**

Martin Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity*, 1-65

Karen Sotiropoulos, *Staging Race*, 42-122, 163-196

### **Session 7: Middle Class Taste/Middle Class Place (Final Project Part 1 Due)**

Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*, Chapters (116-190)

Andrew Haley, *Turning the Tables: Restaurants and the Rise of the American Middle Class 1880-1920*, 1-17, 43-117, 171-191

Michael Newberry, *Polite Gaiety: Cultural Hierarchy and Musical Comedy, 1893-1904* (Article)

### **Session 8: Reform...And Reaction (Fourth Response Paper Due)**

Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent*, 40-117

Evalyn Brooks Higenbotham, *Righteous Discontent*, 185-230

Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK*—25-61

**Session 9: A Go-Ahead Business** (*Fourth Response Paper Due*)

Walter Friedman — “*Birth of a Salesmen: The Transformation of Selling in America,*” Chapters 151-235

Sinclair Lewis— *Babbitt* (excerpts)

Clark Davis, *The Corporate Reconstruction of Middle-Class Manhood*, 201-216

Jeffrey Hornstein, *A Nation of Realtors*, 28-52.

**Session 10 – Mass Consumption and Mass Society**

Sarah Igo — *The Averaged American: Surveys, Citizens, and the Making of a Mass Public*, 23-149.

Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd — *Middletown: A Study in Modern American Culture* (excerpts)

LeRoy Ashby, *With Amusement for All*, 176-231

**Session 11: Peer Review** (*Project Outline Due*)

**Session 12: Suburbanization and Consumption** (*Final Response Paper Due*)

Lawrence Samuel, *Brought To You By*, 3-45

Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 190-245

Beauregard, *When America Became Suburban*, 101-143.

**Session 13: A Middle Class America?**

Lizabeth Cohen — *A Consumer’s Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*