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History 364
Fall 2007
Class time: MWF 12-12:50
Office hours: MWF 10:30-11:30, 1:30-2:30

The Great Depression in the United States, 1929-1942

<http://www.siu.edu/~histsiu/faculty/bean.html>

This course examines one of the most fascinating, and controversial, periods in modern U.S. history. During the Great Depression, Americans endured more than a decade of hard times. We will explore the economics of the Great Depression, and also discuss the social, political, and cultural dimensions of this crisis. Topics covered in the course include: the stock market crash of 1929, the origins of the depression, Herbert Hoover's response, Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal, radical and conservative alternatives to the New Deal, the "old-age" and anti-chain-store movements, prohibition, crime, literature, pop culture, and Hollywood's "Golden Age."

Required Books, Articles, and Films: All of the following are available on reserve in Morris Library

Books

Nash, *The Crucial Era: The Great Depression and World War II*, 2d ed. (1992)

Nushi, ed. *The Great Depression* (2001)

Terkel, *Hard Times* (1970)

Bean, *The Great Depression* (e-reserve)

Recommended: "Lecture Outlines" (available on-line <http://www.siu.edu/~histsiu/faculty/bean.html>)

Films

EXTRA, EXTRA!! (Bonus points):

Read a chapter from Bergmann's *We're in the Money: Depression America and Its Films* (on reserve). Each chapter deals with a specific genre of film in the 1930s. Then watch two movies in that genre and write a 4-5 page essay discussing what these films revealed about depression America. Bonus: Maximum of 10 points added to your paper grade (on a scale of 100).

ASSIGNMENTS:

Quizzes (20%): given on all discussion days. This assignment is to ensure that you keep up on the assigned reading. The questions will not be difficult: If you have read the assignments, you should do well. Discussion may also factor into this grade.

Lecture Note

Reviews (20%) To encourage and improve note-taking skills, I will grade and provide feedback on your lectures notes. Good note taking is *essential* to academic performance and success in "the real world." It reflects an ability to listen carefully and digest information that you will use later. This assignment also tests your knowledge of course material and prepares you for the comprehensive open-note final exam (contingent upon satisfactory performance on lecture note exams). You will turn in your lecture notes twice during the semester (see syllabus).

Biographical

essay (25%): See attached guidelines.

Final exam (35%) There will be a comprehensive exam. I will give you possible questions in advance.

NOTE: The syllabus is a tentative schedule of lectures and discussions. The instructor may change it as his discretion.

NEW ERA TO NEW DEAL: AN OVERVIEW OF THE 1920S AND 1930S

August 20: "What was so great about the Great Depression?"

THE HOOVER YEARS (1921-1933)

22 "Prosperity Decade"?: The American Economy During the 1920s

24 Herbert Hoover: "New Era" Prophet

27 Movie: *The Crash of 1929*

29 Discussion: "The Stock Market Crash"

31 Herbert Hoover: The Presidential Years

Sept. 3 **NO CLASS** (Labor Day)

5 Herbert Hoover: The Presidential Years

7 Movie: *The Road to Rock Bottom*

ROOSEVELT AND THE NEW DEAL (1932-1940)

10 Franklin Roosevelt and the Campaign of 1932

12 The First "New Deal"

14 The Second New Deal **ESSAY TOPIC DUE**

17 The Second New Deal

19 Discussion: "On the Road" **LECTURE NOTE REVIEW #1 DUE**

THE GREAT DEPRESSION: BUSINESS, GOVERNMENT, AND SOCIETY

ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

21 "The Great Contraction": Is There an Explanation for 1929-1933?

24 The New Deal: Did it Prolong the Great Depression?

26 Roosevelt's War on Business

28 " " " "

Oct. 1 Mass Marketing & Advertising: Persistence of "American Dream"; Anti-Chain Store Movement

3 Discussion: "Business During Hard Times"

LABOR

5 Unemployment and Labor Unions

8 Discussion: "Labor: Workers and the Unemployed"

10 Movie: *The Radio Priest*

POLITICS: THE NEW DEAL COALITION

12 Jews and Catholics: Coming of Age

15 African-Americans: A New Deal for Blacks?

17 Discussion: "Why Did Blacks Become Democrats?"

19 Senior Citizens: The "Old Age Movement" and Social Security

CRITICS OF THE NEW DEAL

Radicals

- 22 Popular opposition to Roosevelt: Overview
- 24 Discussion: "Radical Critics"

Conservatives

- 26 Congressional conservatives
- 29 Newspapers
- 31 Discussion: "Conservative critics" **LECTURE NOTE REVIEW #2**

SOCIETY

- Nov. 2 **MOVIE: "Surviving the Dust Bowl"**
 - 5 Farmers: The Dust Bowl and the "Okies": An American Exodus
 - 7 " " " " " " "
 - 9 Discussion: "Farmers"
 - 12 Women: Holding Their Own
 - 14 Prohibition and Crime: The End of a "Grand Experiment"
 - 16 Discussion: "Prohibition" **PAPER DUE**
 - 19 NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING BREAK)
 - 21 NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING BREAK)
 - 23 NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING BREAK)
 - 26 Pop Culture: A Nickel and Dime Decade

CULTURE

- 28 Lecture/Discussion: "Literature"
- 30 Hollywood: "The Golden Age"
- Dec. 3 Discussion: The Anti-War Movement of the 1930s
- 5 **REVIEW**
- 7 **REVIEW**

Schedule of Reading Assignments

The required readings total approximately 925 pages (60 pages/week), but the reading load varies over the course of the semester. Make sure that you complete the assigned readings by the dates listed below.

Week 1: Nash, The Crucial Era, 1-25
(25 pages)

Week 2: **The Stock Market Crash (1929)**
(40 pages) “It Started on Wall Street” (four selections), Nishi, The Great Depression, 31-52
“Julia Walther” (162-164) and “David J. Rossman” (78-81), in Hard Times
“Women in the Stock Market: The Ladies of the Ticker” (47-56) on *E-Reserve*

Week 3: **The Hoover Years (1929-1932): Opposing Viewpoints; The “Bonus March”**
(33 pages) Franklin D. Roosevelt, “America Needs a New Deal,” on *E-Reserve*
Hoover, “Roosevelt’s New Deal Would Harm America,” in *Course Packet*
“Jim Sheridan” (13-16) and “Everett McIntyre” (17-18), in Hard Times
“The Greatest Hooverville of All,” Nishi, The Great Depression, 67-76

Week 4: **The New Deal, 1933-1939**
(48 pages) Nash, The Crucial Era, 26-73

Week 5: **Life on The Road**
(42 pages) Nishi, “Taking it On the Road” (four selections) The Great Depression, 158-191
“Kitty and Dawn McCulloch” (39-40), “Louis Banks” (40-43), “Emma Tiller” (44), in Hard Times

Week 6: **Economics of the New Deal**
(27 pages) Higgs, “Regime Uncertainty: Why the Great Depression Lasted So Long,” on *E-Reserve*
“Martin DeVries” (74-75), “Charles Stewart Mott” (134-35), in Hard Times

Week 7: **Business: Advertising and Anti-Chain Store Politics**
(75 pages) Marchand, “Advertising in Overalls,” on *E-Reserve*
Bean, “The Robinson-Patman Act: Magna Charta of Small Business,” on *E-Reserve*
Sicilia, “Supermarket Sweep,” on *E-Reserve*

Week 8: **Labor: Workers and the Unemployed**
(41 pages) “Work Was Never Steady” (95-104), “Hard Life in the Harlan Mines” (114-18), “Waiting was the Hardest Part” (56-66), in Nishi, The Great Depression
“Gordon Baxter” (124-28), “Willye Jeffries” (397-402), “Harry Hartman” (403-407) in Hard Times

Week 9: **Blacks and the New Deal**
(55 pages) Nash, The Crucial Era, 85-95.
Weiss, “Why Blacks Became Democrats,” on *E-Reserve*
Davis, “The New Deal Has Not Aided Blacks,” on *E-Reserve*
“Hard Times in Harlem,” in Nishi, The Great Depression, 82-85.
“Horace Cayton,” in Hard Times, 434-38

Week 10: **The Old Age Movement and Social Security**

(48 pages)

“George Murray,” in Hard Times, 314-16.

Radical Critics

Long, "The Way of the Demagogue: The 'Share the Wealth' Plan," on *E-Reserve*

"A Total Alternative: The Platform of the Socialist Party, 1932," on *E-Reserve*

Thomas, "Socialism, Not Roosevelt's Pale Pink Pills," on *E-Reserve*

“William Patterson” (293-97), “Max Schachtman” (297-301), “Gerald L.K. Smith” (319-27), in Hard Times

Week 11:
(49 pages)

Conservative critics

Moley, "Roosevelt's Refusal to Make a Choice," on *E-Reserve*

Lawrence, “Redistributing Wealth Would Not Help Americans,” on *E-Reserve*

Mencken, “The New Deal is a Fraud,” on *E-Reserve*

Taft, “The New Deal Must Be Limited,” on *E-Reserve*

Walter Lippmann, "Planning Will Lead to Oligarchy," on *E-Reserve*

Lerner, "A TVA 'Yardstick' for the Opinion Industries," on *E-Reserve*

Week 12:
(43 pages)

Farmers

“Out on the Farm” (four selections), in Nishi, The Great Depression, 120-56

“Peggy Terry/Mary Owsley,” in Hard Times, 46-51.

Week 13:
(24 pages)

Women and College Students

Nash, Crucial Era, 74-84.

“Pauline Kael” (346-47), “Robert Gard” (347-48), “Chance Stoner” (348-49), in Hard Times

“College Students of the Depression,” in *Course Packet*

“A New Democracy in College Education,” on *E-Reserve*

Week 14:
(36 pages)

Prohibition

Thompson, “Prohibition Enforcement Requires a Softer Hand,” on *E-Reserve*

Wickersham Commission, “Prohibition Enforcement is Not Working,” on *E-Reserve*

Panunzio, “Immigrants Did not Obey Prohibition,” on *E-Reserve*

Thornton, “Prohibition was a Failure,” on *E-Reserve*

“Passing Time on Your Feet,” in Nishi, The Great Depression, 88-94.

Week 15:
(78 pages)

Literature

Nash, The Crucial Era, 96-108

Langston Hughes, "Let America Be America Again," on *E-Reserve*

Richard Wright, "12 Million Black Voices," on *E-Reserve*

Louis Adamic, "My America," on *E-Reserve*

Thomas Wolfe, "You Can't Go Home Again," on *E-Reserve*

Week 16:
(31 pages)

Foreign policy

Nash, The Crucial Era, 109-130

Roosevelt, "War in Europe: The President Addresses the People, 1939," on *E-Reserve*

Lindbergh, "The Dissident View: Charles Lindbergh Argues against Intervention," on *E-Reserve*

Biographical Essay: Guidelines

During the Great Depression, many interesting and important figures crossed the historical stage: politicians (Herbert Hoover, Franklin Roosevelt, Huey Long), businessmen (Henry Ford, Alfred Sloan), labor leaders (John L. Lewis), military figures (Douglas MacArthur), civil rights activists (Mary McLeod Bethune), film stars (Mae West, James Cagney, Humphrey Bogart), economists (John Maynard Keynes, Irving Fisher), and others. For this assignment you must write a 8-10 page, double-spaced essay on an individual who made a significant impact in his or her field. The following instructions should aid in your research and writing, but if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to see me.

Step 1: Topic Selection

Choose an individual whom you find interesting and important. You might begin by starting with areas of study you are especially interested in: business? politics? film? Due to space limitations, you should select a manageable topic (it might be difficult to cover Franklin Roosevelt's entire presidential career in 8-10 pages, though you might narrow your discussion of his presidential career to his interest in conservation or his attitude toward women and minorities). Once you have focused on a general area of interest, consult one or more of the following bibliographies and dictionaries:

Ciment, Encyclopedia of the Great Depression and New Deal (2001)
Graham, Franklin D. Roosevelt and His Times: An Encyclopedic View (1985)
O'Brien, Herbert Hoover: A Bibliography (1993)
Kyvig, New Day/New Deal: A Bibliography of the Great American Depression, 1929-41 (1988)
Olson, Historical Dictionary of the New Deal (2001)
The Great Depression: An Historical Bibliography (1984)

Note: All topics must be approved by me before you begin your research and writing.

Step 2: Research

The above works should point you to books and articles dealing with your subject and his or her field. You should also refer to the following (for more reference works go to <http://tinyurl.com/38zcyg>):

American National Biography: Subjects contained in the *ANB* are deceased

America: History and Life: Historical articles written since 1964 are available on-line with abstracts and links to many of the complete PDF articles.

Biographical Dictionary of American Business Leaders

Black Studies Center: contains several invaluable reference works to African American History *plus* the complete digitized run of the *Chicago Defender*. This is an online database.

Chicago Tribune (1849-present): online database.

Current Biography (1940-): Biographical sketches of persons both living and dead. There is a cumulative index for the annual yearbooks published 1940-90.

JSTOR: online database containing complete runs (in PDF) of hundreds of journals. The leading American historical journal goes back to the mid-nineteenth century! Use along with Project Muse, another online database.

Notable American Women, 1607-1950, Notable American Women: The Modern Period and Notable Black American Women

You may find that there are no book-length biographies or autobiographies available on your subject. Instead, you might read the writings of your subject. For example, no one has written a full-length biography of Boake Carter, conservative radio commentator and columnist of the 1930s; yet, Morris Library does contain several of his books. You could read one of these books, and then relate it to our class discussion of conservatism.

Taking notes: I strongly recommend that you take your notes on 4X6 cards, with the appropriate publication information contained on each card. Then, when it comes time to writing your paper, you can simply shuffle your cards into the format you have outlined.

Step 3: Writing

You should place your subject in historical context and discuss, in a critical fashion, how he or she affected the course of events during the Great Depression (your individual may have continued to play a prominent role in his or her field after the depression, but you should focus on the period 1929-42). Your report should define the dates of the person's life, and explain the main features of his or her career. What were his or her principal experiences in life that shaped his or her ideology? With what other significant individuals, groups, or institutions did the person associate? You can place your subject in historical context by relating them to the material covered in class or in your other readings. For example, if you are writing a biography of Francis Townsend (leader of the "old-age" movement), you might compare and contrast his alternative to the New Deal with that of Huey Long or Father Coughlin. Or, if you are writing a sketch of Raymond Moley, you can (and probably should) make use of the article he wrote in your readings packet.

If you find that there is not enough class material relating to your subject, you can refer to the following encyclopedias, which may provide some added context:

History Matters (a great portal to historical web sites covering a wide range of topics. Future teachers ought to bookmark this one!): <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/>

Encyclopedia of American Economic History (1980)

Encyclopedia of the American Military (1994)

Encyclopedia of American Political History (1984)

Encyclopedia of the American Presidency (1993)

Oxford African American Studies Center

Encyclopedia of Black America (1981)

Encyclopedia of Feminism (1986)

Encyclopedia of Social History (1992)

Step 4: Final paper

Along with your final paper, you should include all of the material you used to write the paper (returned upon request). Put the paper and the following in a securely bound folder.

1. An electronic copy emailed to Turnitin.com (instructions forthcoming)
2. Notes photocopies, etc.

Tips on Writing Your Paper

1. Allow enough time to write a good paper. In general, good writing is rewritten writing. You will probably need to prepare an outline and several drafts of your paper before you finish. Be sure to proofread your paper carefully. Papers with many misspellings or typographical errors will be returned as unacceptable and will have to be reworked.
2. Provide your readers with a structure for the paper--an introduction, main body, and conclusion.
3. Make sure that each paragraph includes a topic sentence (experienced writers often make the first sentence in a paragraph the topic sentence).
4. Avoid string-of-quotation writing. Use some evidence and examples to support your arguments; but do not litter your paper with one quotation after another. Let your own ideas shine through.
5. Avoid run-on sentences that are too long. Be precise and succinct.
6. Footnoting: Direct quotations must be put in quotation marks and footnoted. You must also provide footnotes when you are using someone else's ideas. Footnotes can appear at the bottom of each page or collected at the end of the paper as endnotes. Each note should identify the author of the work, its title, place of publication, date of publication, and page number.
Example:

1. Alan Brinkley, Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin, and the Great Depression (New York: Vintage, 1982), 112.

Citations to reference works should include the name of the reference, the title of the entry, and the author (if any). Example:

1. Current Biography (1954), "Patman, Wright," by John Carr.

WARNING: I will not tolerate academic misconduct in this class. I will report suspected cases of misconduct. The Student Conduct Code sets forth penalties for academic misconduct (www.siu.edu/~docedit/policies/conduct.html). Possible sanctions include failure of an assignment, failure in a course, disciplinary probation, or suspension from the university. Don't risk it.

You must research and write your papers yourself. You may not have a friend write your paper. You may not hire someone to write your paper (this includes Internet paper mills, which I *can* and *do* check). You may not turn in a paper previously used in a different class.

Avoid **plagiarism**. Plagiarism consists of using someone else's ideas as your own without properly acknowledging them. Changing a few words is not enough; it is still plagiarism. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, consult your teaching assistant or instructor.

Biographical Essay: Subject List

The following list of subjects indicates the diversity of topics you might consider for your essay, but it is not meant to be complete. Please feel free to choose a person from this list, or use the above reference works to locate an individual you find interesting.

African-Americans

Bethune, Mary McLeod	Highest-ranking black government official
Father Divine	Charismatic "messiah" figure. Large following in northern cities.
DuBois, W.E.B.	NAACP activist
Miller, Kelly	Dean of Howard University, the most widely-read black columnist of his day (500,000 read his weekly "Kelly Miller Says" column)
Robeson, Paul	Actor
Wright, Richard	Novelist

Business

Barton, Bruce	Advertising executive, author
Filene, Edward	Department store executive, founder of U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Ford, Henry	Auto manufacturer
Hartford, John and George	Chain store executives (A&P)
Sloan, Alfred	General Motors
Wood, Robert	Sears & Roebuck

Comic characters

Mickey Mouse (or Walt Disney)
Orphan Annie
Skippy (or his creator, Percy Crosby)
Superman
Tracy, Dick

Conservatives

Bailey, Josiah	U.S. Senator
Carter, Boake	Radio commentator
Fish, Hamilton	Republican congressman who also fought with the "Harlem Hellfighters" (all-black unit) during WWI. Anti-New Deal, pro civil rights.
Glass, Carter	U.S. Senator
Moley, Raymond	Ex-Roosevelt aide, newspaper columnist

Economists

Chase, Stuart
Fisher, Irving
Keynes, John Maynard
Means, Gardiner
Schumpeter, Joseph
Swope, Gerard

Film

Breen, Joseph	Hollywood censor
Cagney, James	Actor known for his roles as a gangster
Dietrich, Marlene	Actress
Hays, Will	Hollywood censor
Warner, Jack	Warner Brothers, close associate of FDR
West, Mae	Actress, sex symbol

Journalists

Kent, Frank	Syndicated columnist, historian, critic of FDR
Krock, Arthur	<i>New York Times</i> columnist

Lawrence, David
Lippmann, Walter
Sullivan, Mark

Founder and editor of *U.S. News*, syndicated columnist
Syndicated columnist
Syndicated columnist, historian

Labor

Dubinsky, David
Hillman, Sidney
Lewis, John L.

ILGWU
Amalgamated Clothing Workers Association
UMW, CIO

Literature

Agee, James
Carnegie, Dale
Caldwell, Erskine
Dos Passos, John

Author, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*
Self-Improvement guru (*How to Win Friends and Influence People*)
Author, *Tobacco Road*
Marxist author of (*USA*), conservative critic of New Deal (*District of Columbia*)

Lewis, Sinclair
Sinclair, Upton

Author of *It Can't Happen Here*, already well known for *Babbitt*
Author, Socialist, Democratic candidate for governor of California

Music

Ellington, Duke
Goodman, Benny
Vallee, Rudy

Politics and Government

Arnold, Thurman
Brandeis, Louis
Chavez, Dennis
Cohen, Benjamin
Frankfurter, Felix
Hoover, J. Edgar
Hopkins, Harry
Ickes, Harold
Johnson, Hugh
Lindbergh, Charles
Morgenthau, Henry
Landon, Alf
Olson, Floyd
Smith, Al
Smith, Gerald L.K.
Townsend, Francis
Tugwell, Rexford
Willkie, Wendell

Author, antitrusteer
U.S. Supreme Court justice
U.S. Senator (New Mexico)
Legislative draftsman, Roosevelt aide
Harvard Law professor, Supreme Court justice
F.B.I. director
W.P.A. director, Secretary of Commerce
P.W.A. director
N.R.A. head
Aviator, leading isolationist
Secretary of Treasury
Republican presidential candidate
Farmer-Labor Governor (Minnesota)
Democratic presidential candidate, critic of Roosevelt
Demagogue
"Old-age" movement
Roosevelt adviser, government official
Republican candidate for president, 1940

Radio commentators

Carter, Boake
Close, Upton
Kaltenburn, H.V.

Socialists/Communists

Thomas, Norman

Socialist Party presidential candidate

Women

Dewson, Molly
Davis, Maxine
Perkins, Frances
Roosevelt, Eleanor
Sanger, Margaret

Democratic Party activist
Journalist
Secretary of Labor, first female member of presidential cabinet
First Lady, syndicated columnist
Birth control advocate