

SINATRA'S CENTURY

Modern American History

This class will explore American history and culture from 1945 to the early 21st Century. One of the main themes of history during this time period is America's engagement with the world, so the Cold War is an important part of our studies. However this class will also focus on American domestic politics and culture.

We will begin with a quick look back at the first 40 years of the 20th Century; especially the Great Depression. Then a quick survey of the political and cultural effects of World War II. This will set the stage for the rest of the course.

We next look at the early post-war world. This time period is usually studied in the light of the beginning of the Cold War, but we will also look at how living in a new post-war world had it's own domestic challenges.

Then the Fifties! We will spend time with the coming of all of the icons of this age: the bomb, the baby boom, suburbia, rock & roll and the comeback of Frank Sinatra to name a few. We will also look at the nitty-gritty of creating a new technological age and a new political order.

The Sixties....we will cover all the major changes in society and we will look at the great cultural changes that occurred. However a lot happened that has been forgotten or overlooked especially (again) in the political and economic histories of the time.

The Seventies will cover the rise of both activism and conservatism. A new kind of Cold War is an important topic. The economic problems of this time are also part of this unit. The Eighties and the Reagan Era. At home there is a change in politics and culture. In the wider world the Cold War debates in the United States are an important part of the politics of this era.

The New World Order...otherwise known as the end of the Cold War...or sometimes the "End of History" We start and end with politics. The debates about, and the events in the Middle East are important but politics at home often created the biggest headlines. The Nineties and the early 2000s will look at how another "post-war" world was created.