

**SCHOOL OF HISTORICAL STUDIES (ECONOMIC & SOCIAL HISTORY)**  
**EH3115/EH3615 From Eisenhower to the Oil Shock. US Economic and Social History from the 1950s to the 1980s**

Module Description and Outline

This module will examine the progression of the American people from confident post-war prosperity, through the fraught '60s and on to the destabilising outcome of the OPEC-induced oil price rises which occurred in the mid-1970s. The topics which will be covered include: regional change and migration; the 'sun belt' and the 'rust belt'; cities and suburbs; immigration and demographic change; the family and consumption patterns; agriculture and the future of the family farm; government, business and regulation; jobs and ethnicity; winners and losers; the incidence of poverty; the economy, social change and public unrest; the US and the international economy. The political, social and economic forces that contributed to the dramatic transformation which overwhelmed US society during this era will be scrutinised in depth.

The module will be taught by lecture and seminar. There will be ten hours of lectures and the student group will be divided into three seminar groups each having ten meetings.

Aims and Objectives

This module will analyse economic and social change in the United States from the end of World War II to the 1980s.

Intended Learning Outcomes

A critical understanding of

- the influence of the federal government
- changes in the economy and the society of the US since 1945
- links between economic and social factors and the civil rights movement and the role of women
- the growth of wealth and the incidence of poverty since 1945.

**General Texts**

There are many excellent texts for this course and the one that I recommend you purchase is:

Chafe, W.H., The Unfinished Journey. America Since World War I

Other valuable texts, most containing excellent bibliographies:

Chafe, W. H. and H. Stitkoff (eds), A History of Our Time. Readings in Post War America

French, M., US Economic History Since 1945

Leuchtenberg, W.E., In the Shadow of FDR. From Harry Truman to Bill Clinton

McQuaid, K., Uneasy Partners. Big Businesses in American Politics 1945-1990

Patterson, J. T., Grand Expectations. The United States, 1945-1974

Polenberg, R., One Nation Divisible

Rosenberg, S., American Economic Development Since 1945

Smiley, G., The American Economy in the Twentieth Century

Spulber, N., Managing the American Economy from Roosevelt to Reagan

Thompson, G. (ed), Markets: The US in the Twentieth Century

Valter, H. G. and J. F. Walker, History of the US Economy Since World War II

### More specialist Economic History volumes

- Bernstein, M. A., A Perilous Progress: Economists and Public Purpose in Twentieth Century America  
Collins, R. M., The Business Response to Keynes, 1929-1964  
Engerman, S. E. and R. A. Gallman (eds), Cambridge Economic History of the United States, Vol.III The Twentieth Century  
Feldstein, M., The American Economy in Transition  
Hickman, B. G., Growth and Stability in the Post War Economy  
Spulber, N., The American Economy. The Struggle for Supremacy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

### Reference Works

- Dennison, E.F., Accounting for United States Economic Growth 1929-1969  
Historical Statistics of the United States. Colonial Times to 1970s (CD-Rom)  
Joint Economic Report of the President (Library has a number of Reports for the period 1958-77)  
OECD Economic Surveys, The United States (1953-1984; OECD/A, Official Publications)  
Statistical Abstract of the United States (1946 onwards)

### **Politics and Policy**

#### The Truman Presidency (1945-48; 1948-52)

- Collins, R. M., 'The emergence of economic "growthmanship" in the United States: Federal policy and economic knowledge in the Truman years' in Furner, M. O. and Supple, B. (eds), The State and Economic Knowledge: The American and British Experiences  
De Long, J.B., 'Keynesianism Pennsylvania Avenue Style: Some Economic Consequences of the Employment Act of 1946' Jnl of Economic Perspectives, 10 (1996), pp.241-53  
Hamby, A. L., Man of the People: A Life of Harry S. Truman  
Heller, F. H., Economics and the Truman Administration  
Poem, M. H., Harry S. Truman versus the Medical Lobby: the genesis of medicine  
Public Papers of Harry S. Truman  
Schultze, C. L., 'The CEA: An Inside Voice for Mainstream Economics' Jnl of Economic Perspectives, 10 (1996), pp.41-53

#### The Eisenhower Presidency (1952-56; 1956-60)

- Ambrose, S. E., Eisenhower (2 vols)  
Carter, P., Another Part of the Fifties  
Flink, J. J., The Automobile Age  
Galbraith, J. K., The Affluent Society  
Kovaleff, T. P., Business and Government during the Eisenhower Administration  
Morgan, I. W., Eisenhower Versus 'The Spenders': The Eisenhower Administration, the Democrats and the Budget, 1953-60  
Peterson, T. H., Agricultural Exports, Farm Income and the Eisenhower Administration  
Public Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower  
Saulnier, R.J., Constructive Years. The US Economy under Eisenhower  
Schrecker, E., Many Are The Crimes  
Schrecker, E., The Age of McCarthyism  
Sloan, J. W., Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity  
Vatter, H. G., The US economy in the 1950s: an economic history

Kennedy Presidency (1960-63)

Farber, D., The Age of Dreams. America in the 1960s  
Hersch, S. M., The Dark Side of Camelot  
Parmet, H. S., JFK: the Presidency of John F. Kennedy  
Public Papers of John F. Kennedy  
Rorabaugh, W. J., Kennedy and the Promise of the Sixties

Johnson Presidency (1963-64; 1964-68)

Bloom, A. (ed), Long Time Gone: Sixties America Then and Now  
Caro, R., The Path to Power  
Caro, R., Master of the Senate  
Dallek, R., Flawed Giant  
Dallek, R., Lone Star Rising  
Halberstam, D., The Best and the Brightest  
Matusow, A.J., The unravelling of America: a history of liberalism in the 1960s  
Public Papers of Lyndon B. Johnson  
Sundquist, James L., Politics and Policy: the Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson Years

Nixon Presidency (1968-72; 1972-74)

Ambrose, S. E., Nixon (2 vols)  
Matusow, A. J., Nixon's Economy: booms, busts, dollars and votes  
Public Papers of Richard M. Nixon  
Wills, G., Nixon agonistes: the crisis of the self-made man

Ford Presidency (1974-76)

Greene, J.R., The Limits of Power: the Nixon and Ford Administration  
Public Papers of Gerald R. Ford  
Reeves, R., A Ford not a Lincoln: the Decline of American Political Leadership

Carter Presidency (1976-1980)

Morris, K. E., Jimmy Carter. American Moralist  
Public Papers of Jimmy Carter

## LECTURE THEMES AND TOPICS

### 1. Introduction to the Course - double lecture session

Legacy of World War II; Overview of economy since 1945; main political changes

### 2. The People

(2 seminar topics: (a) population and immigration; (b) the labour force)

Population: baby boom, birth rates, age structure, link to economy

Easterlin, R. A., In Engerman and Gallman, op.cit  
Russell, C. B., The Baby Boom Generation and the Economy

Immigration:

Barkan, E. R., And Still They Come. Immigrants and American Society 1920 to the 1990s  
Gubbaccia, D., From the Other Side. Women, Gender and Immigrant Life in the US, 1820-1990  
Muller, T., Immigrants and the American City  
Simon, J. L., The Economic Consequences of Immigration  
Yans-McLaughlin, V., Immigration Reconsidered

Migration: push/pull

Greenwood, M. J., Migration and Economic Growth in the United States  
Jones, J., The Dispossessed. America's Underclass from the Civil War to the Present; see also Topic  
3. Cities and Suburbs

Labour Force: Composition: male/female, age, race, ethnic

Distribution: regional, industry, contraction and expansion  
Jobs: wages, homes  
Productivity, employment, skills, education, retirement, vacations, unions

Chafe, W., The American Woman: her changing social, economic and political roles  
Costa, D. L., 'From Mill Town to Board Room: the Rise of Women's Paid Labour', Jnl of Economic Perspectives, 14 (Fall 2000), 101-122  
Costa, D. L., The Evolution of Retirement  
Folbre, N. and J. Nelson, 'For Love of Money – or Both', Jnl of Economic Perspectives, 14, (Fall 2000), 123-140  
Golden, C., In Engerman and Gallman, op.cit  
Golden, C., Understanding the Gender Gap  
Goldfield, M., The Decline of Organised Labor in the United States  
Kessler-Harris, A., Out to Work. A History of Wage Earning Women in the United States  
Matthaei, J. A., An Economic History of Women in America  
Minchin, T. J., What do we need a Union for? The TWUA in the South 1945-55  
Reder, M. W., 'The rise and fall of unions: The public sector and the private', Jnl of Economic Perspectives, vol 2 (Spring 1988)  
Renshaw, P., American Labor and Consensus Capitalism  
Thompson, Markets, op.cit.  
Zieger, R. H., American Workers, American Unions, 1920-85

### **3. Cities and Suburbs**

(1 seminar topic: migration, cities and suburbs)

Migration: Black and white movement. Role of business, government, pressure groups, social implications.

Effect on city finances, jobs, business location, city government

Link to road building, construction industry, automobiles

Suburban society

Poverty, riots, attempts at urban renewal

Abbott, C., The New Urban America: metropolitan growth and politics in the Sunbelt since 1940

Bernard, R. M. and B. R. Rice (eds), Sunbelt Cities: Politics and growth since World War II

Goldfield, D. R., Cottonfields and Skyscrapers: the Southern City and Region 1607-1980

Hirsch, A. R and R. A. Mohl (eds), Urban Policy in Twentieth Century America

Jackson, K. T., Crabgrass Frontier. The Suburbanisation of America

Markusen, A. et.al, The Rise of the Sunbelt

O'Connor, C. A., 'A Region of Cities' in Milner, C.A. et.al., The Oxford History of the American West

Teaford, J. C., The Rough Road to Renaissance: Urban Revitalisation in America 1940-1985

Teaford, J. C., The Twentieth Century American City: problem, promise and reality

### **4. Regional Change**

(1 seminar topic on regional change)

#### Sunbelt

Abbott, C., 'The Suburban Sunbelt', Jnl of Urban History 13 (1987), 5

Daniel, P., Breaking the Land: the transformation of cotton, tobacco and rice culture since 1880

Daniel, P., Lost Revolutions. The South in the 1950s

Foster, M. I., 'Is the South Still A Backward Region?' American Economic Review, (May 1972), 195-203

Hurt, R. D., The Rural South Since World War II

Kirby, J. T., Rural Worlds Lost: the American South 1920-1960

Lyson, T. A., Two Sides to the Sunbelt: The growing divergence between the Rural and Urban South

Marks, C., Farewell – We're Good and Gone: The Great Black Migration

Milner, C. A., The Oxford History of the American West

Mohl, R. A. (ed), Searching for the Sunbelt: historical perspectives on a region

Schulman, B. J., From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt, federal policy, economic development and the transformation of the South 1938-1980

Vance, R., All These People

Wright, G., Old South – New South

#### Rust belt

Declining industry, productivity, wages, unions, deindustrialisation

Hein, C. E. in Engerman and Gallman, op.cit

Nelson, D., Farm and Factory

Bluestone, B., The deindustrialisation of America

Harrison, B. and B. Blueston, The Great U-Turn: Corporate restructuring and the polarising of America

Nau, H. R., The Myth of America's Decline

## **5. Living Standards**

Employment, real wages, consumer durables, housing, leisure, autos, TV, religion, movies, position of women

(2 seminar topics: (a) American society, living standards; (b) poverty, underclass, violence)

Chafe, W. H., The Unfinished Journey

Chafe, W. H., Women and Equality: changing patterns in American Culture

Cross, G., An All-Consuming Century

French, M., US Economic History Since 1945

Poverty, welfare, economic growth, riots, great society, war on poverty, Medicaid, Medicare

Poverty and race, children, the elderly, single parent households, rural/urban poverty, the 'underclass'

Alston, L. J. and J. P. Ferrie, Southern Paternalism and the American Welfare State

Brauer, C. M., 'Kennedy, Johnson and the War on Poverty' Jnl of American History (1982-3), 98-119

Brown, M. K., Race, Money and the American Welfare State

Caudill, H., Night comes to the Cumberland

Harrington, M., The Other America. Poverty in the United States

Katz, M. (ed), The "Underclass" Debate

Katz, M., The Undeserving Poor

Morrill, R. L. and E. H. Wohlenberg, The Geography of Poverty in the United States

Mucclaroni, G., The Political Failure of Employment Policy 1945-1962

Patterson, J. T., America's Struggle Against Poverty

Patterson, J. T., Grand Expectations

Patterson, J. T., The Welfare State in America

Piven, F. F. and R. A. Cloward, Regulating the Poor

Rose, N. E., Work Fare or Fair Work. Women, Welfare and Government Work Programs

Stein, H., Presidential Economics

Sugrue, T. J., The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Post War Detroit

Weir, M. et.al., The Politics of Social Policy on the United States

Will, R. E. and Vatter, H. G. (eds), Poverty in Affluence. The social, political and economic dimensions of poverty in the United States

## **6. Businesses**

(1 seminar topic - economic performance)

Structure: family firms to corporations, manufacturing; service sector profits, investment, productivity, research and development

Adams, W. (ed), The Structure of American Industry

Caves, R. E. in Feldstein, op.cit

Chandler, A. D., 'The competitive Performance of US Industrial Enterprises since the Second World War', Business History Review 68 (1994), 1-72

Dertouzos, M. L. et.al, Made in America. Regaining the Productive Edge

French, M., op.cit.

Galambos in Engerman and Gallman, op.cit

McGraw, T., American Business 1920-200: how it worked

McQuaid, K., Uneasy Partners, op.cit

Mowery and Rosenberg in Engerman and Gallman, op.cit

Olien, R. M. and D.D., Oil and Ideology. The Cultural Creation of the American Petroleum Industry

Piore, M. J., The Second Industrial Divide

Smiley, G., op.cit.

## **7. Government**

(1 seminar topic: defense; industrial strategy; economic management)

### The Military Industrial Complex

Adams, G. and D. A. Gold, 'Defense Spending and the American Economy', Defense Economics, 4 (1990), 275-293

Edelstein, M. in Engerman and Gallman, op.cit

Edelstein, M., 'What price Cold War? Military Spending and private investment in the US, 1946-79', Cambridge, Jnl of Economics, 14 (1990), 421-438

Higgs, R., 'The Cold War Economy: Opportunity, Cost, Ideology, Defense Program and Industrial Policy', Explorations in Economic History, 31 (July 1994), 283-312

Leslie, S. W., The Cold War and American Science: the military-industrial academic complex at MIT and Stamford

Markusen, A. et.al, The Rise of the Gunbelt

Oi, W.Y., 'The Economic Cost of the Draft', American Economic Review, 57 (1967), 38-62

War, inflation, stagnation, unemployment, price controls, wage controls, regional development, industrial research priorities.

Overseas trade policies, international comparisons, industrial competitiveness, balance of payments.

### Government Economic Policy

Blinder, A. S., Economic Policy and the Great Stagflation

Eckstein, O., The Great Recession

Gordon, R. J. in Feldstein, op.cit.

Joint Economic Reports of the President

Krugman, P., The Age of Diminished Expectations

Markusen, A. et al., The Rise of the Gunbelt

OECD, 'The Adjustment Process Since the Oil Crisis', Economic Outlook, 21 (1977) 86-97 (official Publications Section)

Vedder, R. and Gallaway, L. E., Out of Work: Unemployment and Government in the Twentieth Century

### Role of the US in world economy

Branson, W. in Feldstein, op.cit

Eichengreen, B. in Gallman and Engerman, op.cit

Flynn, G., The Draft 1940-1973

Lindert, P. in Gallman and Engerman, op.cit

Smiley, G., op.cit

### Regulation/De-Regulation

Vietor, R. H. in Gallman and Engerman, op.cit

Vietor, R. H., 'Contrived Competition', Business History, 68 (Oct. 1994)

Vogel, Fluctuating Fortunes: The Political Power of Business in America

See also Topic (5) for Government and Welfare

### Keynes versus Friedman

Bernstein, M. A., A Perilous Progress

Eisner, M., The State and the American Political Economy

Nelson, R., 'The economics profession and the making of economic policy', Jnl of Economic Literature, 25 (March 1987) 49-91

#### Agriculture

Gardner, B.L., American Agriculture in the Twentieth Century

Smiley, G., op.cit

Vogeler, I., The Myth of the Family Farm: Agribusiness dominance of US agriculture

#### Technology

Mowery, D. C. and N. Rosenberg, Paths of Innovation: technological change in 20<sup>th</sup> Century America

Mowery, D. C. and N. Rosenberg in Engerman and Gallman, op.cit

### **8. The African-American Experience**

(2 seminar topics: struggle for equality; link to African American economic progress)

#### Civil Rights: general

Caro, R., Master of the Senate

Chafe and Sitkoff, op.cit

Chafe, W. H., The Unfinished Journey

Fairclough, A., 'Historians and the Civil Rights Movement', Jnl of American Studies, (Dec. 1990), 387-398

Goldfield, D., Promised Land. The South since 1945

Marable, M., Race, Reform, Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction in Black America 1945-1980

Omi, M. and H. Winant, Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s

Patterson, J. T., Grand Expectations

Sitkoff, H., Struggle for Black Equality 1954-1980

Woodward, C. V., The Strange Career of Jim Crow

#### Civil Rights: Further reading

Bartley, N., The Rise of Passive Resistance: Race and Politics in the South during the 1950s

Boskin, J., Urban Racial Violence in the Twentieth Century

Morris, A., Origins of the Civil Rights Movement

Sugrue, T., 'Crabgrass-roots politics: Race, rights and the reaction against liberalism in the urban north, 1940-1964', Jnl of American History, 82 (1995) 551-78

The Kerner Commission, National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders Report

#### Civil Rights and the Economy

Badger, A. J., 'Review Essay: Segregation and the Southern Business Elite' Jnl of American Studies, 18 (1984)

Cobb, J. C., 'Somebody Done Nailed us on the Cross', Jnl of American History, (1990), 912-936

Cobb, J. C., The Selling of the South

Donohue, J. H. and J. P. Heckman, 'Continuous versus Episodic Change: the Impact of Civil Rights Policy on the Economic Status of Blacks', Jnl of Economic Literature, 29 (1991), 1603-43

Jacoway, E. and R. Colburn (eds), Southern Businessmen and Desegregation

Kain, J. F. (ed), Race and Poverty. The Economics of Discrimination

Katz, M. B., The Underclass Debate

Kirby, J. T., Rural World's Lost. The American South 1920-1960

Kusmer, K., 'African Americans in the City since World War II', Jnl of Urban History, 21 (1995), 458-504



Mandle, J., Not Slave, Not Free  
Pinkney, A., The Myth of Black Progress  
Smith, J. P. and F. P. Welch, 'Black Economic Progress After Myrdal', Jnl of Economic Literature,  
27 (1989), 519-64  
Vatter, H. G. (ed), The Economics of Black America  
Weems, R. E. Jr, Desegregating the Dollar. African American Consumerism in the Twentieth  
Century  
Wilson, W. J., The Ghetto Underclass  
Wright, G., 'The economic revolution in the American South', Jnl of Economic Perspectives, vol 1  
(Summer 1987), 161-178.

## COURSEWORK

### Minor Assignment

Minor Assignment to be undertaken by all students following this module.

This essay is a minor piece of work and students will be expected to answer one of the following questions. All submission must be word processed, 1.5 or double spaced and must not exceed 1,500 words.

One of the objectives of this exercise to enable students to acquire a good understanding of the library. None of the questions has a bibliographical guide so using the references in the recommended texts and the Unicorn search facilities you must construct your own bibliography. You should aim to produce concise answers and good bibliographies.

1. Assess the impact of the 'baby boom'.
2. What was the significance of the Taft-Hartley Act (1947)?
3. Chart and explain changes in unemployment between 1945-1975.
4. Why are per capita incomes in Mississippi lower than in Massachusetts?
5. What was the rationale behind the Economic Opportunity Act (1964).
6. Why was the Montgomery bus boycott effective?
7. Was J. Edgar Hoover a force for good or ill during the period 1945-1970?
8. What was happening to the family farm during the 1950s and 1960s?
9. Explain the performance of the steel industry between 1945 and 1975.
10. Explain the rise of the "New Right".

## Essay(s)

Students taking the 15-credit module (EH3115) write one essay; students taking the 20-credit module (EH3615) write two essays. Word length for each essay is 2,500 maximum. Deadlines are as stated on the front cover sheet.

1. What was the economic legacy of the Truman administration?
2. Explain the main trends in women's earnings since 1945.
3. What links do you detect between defence expenditure and regional economic change?
4. Assess the effect of the assassination of President Kennedy on civil rights legislation.
5. What connections do you see between the provision of welfare and African American living standards?
6. To what extent do you agree that the position of women in US society during the 1950s was characterised by conformity?
7. How successful were American businesses in the fight to remain competitive during the 1960s and the 1970s?
8. What were the main problems facing big cities in the North East and North Central regions during the thirty years after World War II? How effectively were these problems addressed?
9. Why did the concept of the 'underclass' feature so prominently in debates on the causes of poverty in the 1970s and 1980s? How far does this concept contribute to our understanding of this issue?
10. Analyse the support for and the opposition to government regulation of business and financial institutions?
11. Has post-1945 federal farm policy been a failure?