

# History 395 Special Topics: The 1970s

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## Office Hours: By Appointment

### What can the 1970s tell us about modern American history?

Welcome to History 395 Special Topics: The 1970s! This course examines an underappreciated turning point in modern US history, a decade in which the New Deal liberalism of FDR, JFK, and LBJ faded in favor of the conservatism of Reagan.

When most of us think about “the seventies,” our minds turn to hippies or maybe *That Seventies Show*. Few of us think about the decade as one of wider cultural change, economic decline, and political redirection. Our job is to filter through common stereotypes of the decade and see it more fully as a pivot point in modern American history.

Throughout the semester, you’ll notice that the course is about much more than one decade: it’s about the arc of modern American history.

### Course Structure

I have tailored the course to our unusual circumstances this semester, which include the pandemic but also a smaller class size. The course structure emphasizes routine and rewards regular effort.

We will discuss via Zoom every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. In each discussion, three or four students will be responsible for summarizing that day’s reading and leading an analytical discussion of that reading. (More details below in “Discussion.”)

**Readings:** Our course will focus on three books that reset the seventies into this broader context.

Robert Self’s *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy since the 1960s* examines the emergence of the “culture war” that developed between liberals and conservatives. It therefore has much to offer regarding gender, sexuality, and religion.

Jefferson Cowie’s *Stayin’ Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* treats the fallout of deindustrialization—and therefore is an excellent work for understanding growing class tensions.

Christian Appy’s *American Reckoning: The Vietnam War and Our National Identity* investigates how that fraught war changed our nation’s sense of itself.

These books will fill gaps in your understanding of the twentieth century that you probably did not know you had. For future teachers, they will provide you with more confidence in the classroom about the thorny topics that you might be apprehensive about.

Our work will also include opportunities to read beyond these books. Later in the semester, students will be able to follow their own lines of inquiry into the decade by selecting some of their own readings.

**Assignments and Grading:** Due dates for each assignment are listed in the Schedule below. Canvas does not show due dates for this course.

**Discussion Leadership: 11 @ 2 points each**

**History Day Judging: 3 points**

**Final Paper Draft: 10 points.**

**Book Analysis papers: 3 @ 15 points each.**

**Complete Final Paper: 20 points**

Letter grades for the semester follow the typical pattern:

A 93-100	B+ 87-89.99	C+ 77-79.99	D+ 67-69.99	F 59.99 and below
A- 90-92.99	B 83-86.99	C 73-76.99	D 60-66.99	
	B- 80-82.99	C- 70-72.99		

**Life Happens:** I understand you have a life outside this class. I understand that life might make it difficult to complete some assignments, attend class, or simply to do well. I do my best to be flexible because I know those circumstances are out of your control and my control. I'm on your team.

I also know that some real learning has to take place in this class. You will have more opportunity in life if you understand history, read critically, and write well. This class has to be one of your priorities. I do my best to be flexible, but I have to adhere to some standards. If something comes up, let's talk.

*Note: The syllabus is a general plan for the course. Changes may be announced via email or Canvas.*

**How Online Works in This Course:** We will not use Canvas very much this semester. It will serve as a place to submit assignments, see your grades, and access course documents. I will use its email feature to communicate with you, so make certain you can access messages from Canvas.

**Discussion** Conversation allows us to grow intellectually with the help of others. It's simply essential. It also requires conscious effort and practice, particularly in our era of social media which rewards clickable content over empathy, patience, and thoughtfulness. In our course, I believe we will become better and better across the semester at using discussion to learn. Let me breakdown our discussion practice:

For those leading discussion, complete the Discussion Leadership Task Sheet document found below and posted to Canvas. Students will be assigned days to lead discussion early in the semester. I will ask leaders to share their screen at the beginning of the hour, so that their task sheet can become a common baseline understanding for everyone in the class.

<b>Schedule:</b>			
Week 1	Monday, January 25th		Introduction
	Wednesday, January 27th	“Prologue,” <i>All in the Family</i> , 3-14 “Introduction,” <i>American Reckoning</i> , xi-xix	
	Friday, January 29 <sup>th</sup>	“Introducton,” <i>Stayin’ Alive</i> , 1-19	
<b>UNIT 1: <i>Stayin’ Alive: The Last Days of the Working Class</i></b>			
Week 2	Monday, February 1st	<i>Stayin Alive</i> , 23-49	<b>Monday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 1</b>
	Wednesday, February 3rd	<i>Stayin Alive</i> , 49-74	<b>Wednesday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 1</b>
	Friday, February 5th	<i>Stayin Alive</i> , 75-95, 119-124	<b>Friday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 1</b>
Week 3  Recom- mended Film: <i>Country Music Ep. 6 Will the Circle Be Unbroken</i>	Monday, February 8th	<i>Stayin Alive</i> , 125-145	<b>Monday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 2</b>  <b>Final Paper Draft Due</b>
	Wednesday, February 10th	<i>Stayin Alive</i> , 145-166	<b>Wednesday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 2</b>
	Friday, February 12th	<i>Stayin Alive</i> , 167- 178, 189-199, 207-209	<b>Friday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 2</b>
Week 4	Monday, February 15th	<i>Stayin Alive</i> , 213-227	<b>Monday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 3</b>
	Wednesday, February 17th	<i>Stayin Alive</i> , 227-241	<b>Wednesday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 3</b>
	Friday, February 19th	No Class Meeting (Professor Conference)	
Week 5	Monday February 22nd	<i>Stayin Alive</i> , 261-278, 301-312	<b>Monday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 4</b>
	Wednesday, February 24th	<i>Stayin Alive</i> , 326-330, 337-342, 348-352	<b>Wednesday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 4</b>
	Friday, February 26th	<i>Stayin Alive</i> , 357-369	<b>Friday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 3</b>

<b>Unit 2: <i>American Reckoning: The Vietnam War and Our National Identity</i></b>			
Week 6  <b>March 3-10 History Day</b>	Monday, March 1st	No Class Meeting	<b>Book Analysis Paper 1: <i>Stayin' Alive</i> Due</b>  <b>History Day Judging Assignment</b> (details forthcoming)
	Wednesday, March 3rd	No Class Meeting	<b>History Day Judging continued</b>
	Friday, March 5th	“Chapter 1: Saving Vietnam,” <i>American Reckoning</i>	<b>Friday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 4</b>
Week 7  Recommended Film: <i>Vietnam and the War</i>	Monday, March 8th	“Chapter 2: Aggression,” <i>American Reckoning</i>	<b>Monday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 5</b>
	Wednesday, March 10th	“Chapter 3: Paper Tigers,” <i>American Reckoning</i>	<b>Wednesday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 5</b>
	Friday, March 12th	“Chapter 4: Vietnam, Inc.,” <i>American Reckoning</i>	<b>Friday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 5</b>
Week 8  Recommended Film: <i>TV War</i>	Monday, March 15th	“Chapter 5: Our Boys,” <i>American Reckoning</i>	<b>Monday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 6</b>
	Wednesday, March 17th	“Chapter 6: The American Way of War,” <i>American Reckoning</i>	<b>Wednesday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 6</b>
	Friday, March 19th	“Chapter 7: The War at Home,” <i>American Reckoning</i>	<b>Friday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 6</b>
<b>SPRING BREAK</b>			
Week 9  Recommended Film: <i>Fallout and Recovery</i>	Monday, March 29th	“Chapter 8: Victim Nation,” <i>American Reckoning</i>	<b>Monday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 7</b>
	Wednesday, March 31st	“Chapter 9: ‘The Pride Is Back,’ <i>American Reckoning</i>	<b>Wednesday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 7</b>
	Friday, April 2nd	“Chapter 11: Who We Are,” <i>American Reckoning</i>	<b>Friday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 7</b>
<b>Unit 3: <i>All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy since the 1960s</i></b>			

Week 10	Monday, April 5th	Documentary TBA	<b>Book Analysis Paper 2: <i>American Reckoning Due</i></b>
	Wednesday, April 7th	“Chapter 1: Are You Man Enough? Sixties Breadwinner Liberalism,” <i>All in the Family</i>	<b>Wednesday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 8</b>
	Friday, April 9th	“Chapter 2: Last Man to Die: Vietnam and the Citizen Soldier” <i>All in the Family</i>	<b>Friday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 8</b>
Week 11	Monday, April 12th	“Chapter 3: Homosexual Tendencies: Gay Men and Sexual Citizenship,” <i>All in the Family</i>	<b>Monday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 8</b>
	Wednesday, April 14th	Documentary TBA	
	Friday, April 16th	“Chapter 4: The Working Mother Has No Wife: The Dilemmas of Market and Motherhood,” <i>All in the Family</i>	<b>Friday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 9</b>
Week 12	Monday, April 19th	“Chapter 5: Bodies on Trial: The Politics of Reproduction,” <i>All in the Family</i>	<b>Monday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 9</b>
	Wednesday, April 21 <sup>st</sup>	“Chapter 6: American Sappho: The Lesbian Political Imagination,” <i>All in the Family</i>	<b>Wednesday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 9</b>
	Friday, April 23rd	Documentary TBA	
Week 13	Monday, April 26th	“Chapter 7: Wild Before the Fire: The Sexual Politics of an Erotic Revolution,” <i>All in the Family</i>	<b>Monday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 10</b>
	Wednesday, April 28th	“Chapter 8: A Process of Coming Out: From Liberation to Gay Politics,” <i>All in the Family</i>	<b>Wednesday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 10</b>
	Friday, April 30th	“Chapter 9: No Steelworkers and No Plumbers: Liberalism in Trouble,” <i>All in the Family</i>	<b>Friday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 10</b>
Week 14	Monday, May 3rd	“Chapter 10: A Strange but Righteous Power: The Breadwinner Conservatism of Forgotten Americans,” <i>All in the Family</i>	<b>Monday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 11</b>
	Wednesday, May 5th	“Chapter 11: The Price of Liberty: Antifeminism and the Crisis of the Family,” <i>All in the Family</i>	<b>Wednesday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 11</b>

	Friday, May 7th	“Chapter 12: Go Ye into All the World: God, Family, and Country in the Fourth Great Awakening,” <i>All in the Family</i>	<b>Friday Discussion Leaders: Leadership Task 11</b>
Week 15	Monday, May 10th	“Chapter 13: Ancient Roots: The Reagan Revolution’s Gender and Sexual Politics,” <i>All in the Family</i>	
	Wednesday, May 12th	Final Paper Workshop via Zoom	<b>Book Analysis Paper 3: <i>All in the Family</i> Due</b>
	Friday, May 14th	Final Paper Workshop via Zoom	
<b>Final Paper due at end of Final Exam time. See AccessPoint for Final Exam time.</b>			

**NOTE: This syllabus is a general plan. Changes may be announced in class, via email, or on Canvas.**

The “Discussion Leadership Task Sheet” is available on the next page. It’s also posted in Canvas.

<b>History 395 Special Topics: The 1970s</b>	<b>Discussion Leadership Task Sheet</b>	Task Number:
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Name:	Leadership Group:	Chapter and Book:
Please Title, Save, and Submit This File in This Fashion: <b>History 395 Last Name Group Name Task Number</b>		
<i>To Complete This Sheet: Fill out the boxes below but feel free to augment them according to your needs. For example, you may add a fourth supporting claim. Or, you might find the need to expand a box. In short, customize as need be.</i>		
Chapter Topics:		
Main Idea in Your Words:		
Supporting Claim:		
Evidence:		
Important Quotes:		
Supporting Claim:		
Evidence:		
Important Quotes:		
Supporting Claim:		
Evidence:		
Important Quotes:		
How does this chapter advance our understanding of the 1970s?		
Additional Comments:		

