

In-Class Meetings: Friday 2pm – 3:15pm 128 CCC

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-3pm
(or by appointment)

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Freedom is the most contested idea in American history. Its widespread use in today's political culture derives from a long past in which Americans—of all types—turned to the word as a symbol for their many hopes and dreams. In this course, we will ask a seemingly simple question: **What does freedom actually mean?**

As we will see, Americans have defined the word in several different ways, often depending on their own circumstances. As we investigate the meaning of this uniquely American word, we will tour the nation's past. On our trip, we will see that not only did Americans in different time periods use "freedom" differently, but Americans in the same time period often fought over the word.

The goal of this tour is to leave us with an understanding that the vocabulary of our public culture is the result of not only our hopes and dreams, but also long-lasting battles over the meaning of America.

Enduring Understandings

- Americans have long fought over the *meaning* of freedom.
- Understanding *why* Americans fight about the meaning of freedom widens our perspective of diverse American experiences.

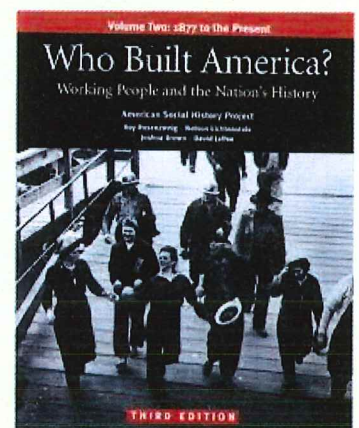
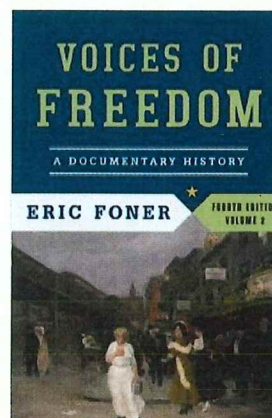
Learning Outcomes After taking this course, students will be able to:

- understand how 'freedom' became a central idea in modern American culture
- understand the potential and limitations of various media to represent the past
- evaluate sources to construct an historical argument

Required Materials: For this course, you need access to D2L and the four books listed below.

From Text Rental *Who Built America? Working People and the Nation's History*, Third Edition, Volume 2 (Boston and New York: Bedford St. Martin's Press, 2008). This is our textbook for the semester.

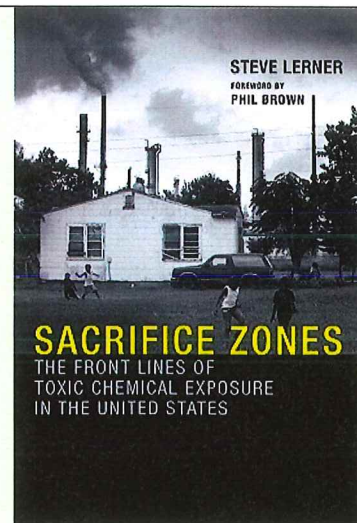
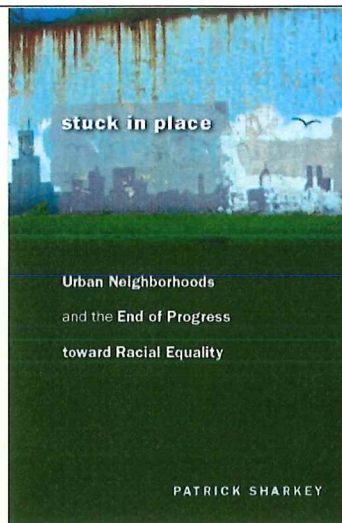
From Text Rental Eric Foner, *Voices of Freedom*, Fourth Edition, Volume 2 (New York: Norton, 2011). ISBN 9780393935684. This collection of voices from the past will help us listen to how Americans from all walks of life have defined 'freedom.'



Purchase Patrick Sharkey, *Stuck in Place: Urban Neighborhoods and the End of Progress toward Racial Equality*.

Purchase Steve Lerner, *Sacrifice Zones: The Front Lines of Toxic Chemical Exposure in the United States*.

For the purchase books, feel free to buy them wherever you like. There are lots of used copies out there. Borrowing from a library is also fine. We'll dig into them after Spring Break.



A Hybrid Course: This is my first time teaching in the hybrid format, although I have taught in-person and online for years. I became interested in hybrid teaching when I started to think it could offer not just a different format, but a new type of experience for the student. My hope is that it offers just the right amount of student-professor interaction and independent student work.

In teaching History 177 in person, I have generally followed the lecture format. I've certainly made great use of small group work, classwide discussion, and in-class writing, but overall the lectures keep the in-person course together. For some students, it works quite well. They need to hear a professor talk. For some of those students, listening is a better way to learn information than reading. For others, they need to witness how a professor puts together ideas and information to form an argument, and so listening for them is all about watching how the historical mind works.

And yet lecture courses can become a bit much, even when they work well. There's a general stir on campuses for something different. The obvious solution is the discussion seminar, but that format does not really work for large courses. Online seems to promise a reasonable alternative.

Online courses, however, feel to me like a long-distance relationship. They work for awhile...but our attention always turns to the people around us. So, meeting in person matters. Hence, my interest in the hybrid format.

But we won't just be meeting more than an online class and less than an in-person class, we're also going to be meeting in a different way. Read "Course Structure" for more.

Course Structure: We meet on Fridays only. When you arrive in class, you will have completed the Weekly Studyguide, which will consist of about ten key terms to define and one big question to answer in writing.

Class will begin with a quiz on that work. These routine quizzes will test if you have done the reading and given it some thought, *not* if you have mastered the material. For students who read, the quizzes will form a nice pile of easy points.

After the quiz, we will grade it together. This exercise will clear up misunderstandings and fill out your knowledge, with regard to the key terms. We won't take too long doing this because we want to leave the bulk of our time together for answering that one big question.

As a group, we will put together the best possible response to the question. These questions, by the way, are not random questions from nowhere. Each advances our understanding of what freedom can mean in America. The weekly studyguide will give you some pointers on how to write a response on your own. The class discussion will

help sharpen your response. At times, I might have students complete an in-class writing or other similar exercise. These may be for your notes only or folded into the quiz grade for that week.

All of this work translates directly into solid exam preparation. The two exams will feature multiple choice questions only (no written work). Key terms will be the subject of multiple choice questions, as will be the big questions—although they will likely have several multiple choice questions inspired by them and these will likely be weighted more heavily than key term questions.

Finally, in April we'll break some of this pattern. We'll finish the semester by reading two great books on the history of diversity, inequality, and environmental pollution. More on these later in the semester.

Assignments: Each week, you will complete a Weekly Studyguide based upon assigned readings. Note that while the readings may seem lengthy, they must be to take the place of traditional lectures. The Weekly Studyguide will stay with you and not be turned in. However, it will be the best preparation for the Weekly Quiz. The two Exams will be based directly on our weekly discussions. Toward the end of the semester, there will be two Papers, each based on one of the two purchase books, which are required reading.

Grade Formula and Scale: Weekly Quizzes (60 points) + Exam One (40 points) + Exam Two (40 points) + Paper One (30 points) + Paper Two (30 points) = 200 points

Divide your semester point total by two to get your percentage grade, then match it to the letter grade below.

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		

Some wonderful tips for exam studying are available at UWSP's Learning and Tutoring Center <http://www.uwsp.edu/tlc/> and online via the University of North Carolina <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/essay-exams.html>

For notetaking, consider using the Cornell Method: <http://coe.jmu.edu/learningtoolbox/cornellnotes.html>

Life Happens: 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.

Office Hours: *You are welcome to visit me in my office.* I set aside office hours so that I have the chance to talk with students one-on-one. During that time (Wednesdays 1-3pm 473 CCC), I do not have any other commitments. My only commitment is to speak with my students.

Course Policies: During the class, **laptops, cell phones and other electronic devices are prohibited.** If you are a parent or are otherwise obligated to be available to your family via cell phone, then please discuss that situation with me, so I know that you have a good reason for keeping your phone turned on.

The prohibition of electronics also extends to laptop computers (unless approved by the Disability Services Office). While laptops are great aides in studying, the focus in class is on class, not the computer screen. Further, the ability to take notes longhand is actually an important skill to develop, one that will be useful in any career you choose. If you do prefer to have your notes in a computer file, you will find that typing them from your handwritten notes will aid you greatly in digesting the material.

For information on plagiarism, consult <http://www.uwsp.edu/centers/rights>. See Chapter 14, *Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures*, pages 5 -10, for the disciplinary possibilities if you are caught cheating. As an instructor deeply concerned with fairness in the classroom, I pursue each and every case of plagiarism and cheating. Please note that turnitin.com is used for the essay assignments.

Equity of Educational Access: If you have a learning or physical challenge which requires classroom accommodation, please contact the UWSP Disability Services office with your documentation as early as possible in the semester. They will then notify me, in a confidential memo, of the accommodations that will facilitate your success in the course. Disability Services Office, 103 Student Services Center, Voice: (715) 346-3365, TTY: (715) 346-3362, <http://www.uwsp.edu/special/disability/studentinfo.htm>.

Note: The syllabus is a general plan for the course. Deviations announced in class may be necessary.

Tips from Previous Students in My U.S. History Courses:

“Come to class with an open mind. It’s not the same class you took in high school.”

“Take your own notes with your own thoughts, so you aren’t just copying down the slideshow.”

“Show up to class every day because it’s really fun and you could learn a lot.”

“Keep up on your reading.”

“Take notes on the chapter and try to relate each section of the chapter to the question each week.”

“Read the chapters ahead of lecture because it makes the lectures more interesting and you will have a better understanding of the material.”

“Take the reading seriously.”

“Read Voices of Freedom. It is more interesting than it looks and a great tool for exams.”

“Always read Voices of Freedom before coming to class.”

“Don’t be afraid to reread the Voices of Freedom...because they can be confusing.”

“Read, Read, Read! But don’t try to capture every detail. Look for evidence to help with your argument.”

Schedule *Reading assignments may change. Check Weekly Studyguides and class announcements for up-to-date information.*

Introduction: After the abolition of slavery, why did African Americans still have to struggle for freedom?

Week 1 *Voices of Freedom* # 95, 96, 97

Jan 25-30 *Who Built America?*, pages 4-11

Why did industrialization lead to new ideas of liberty?

Week 2 *Voices of Freedom* # 102, 106, 107, 116, 117

Feb 1-5 *Who Built America?*, pages 26-49, 91-120, 134-144, 255-269

In what ways did Americans often see the United States as a source of liberty for the world?

Week 3 *Voices of Freedom* # 112, 113, 122, 125

Feb 8-12 *Who Built America?*, pages 157-172, 312-326

During the Depression, how did Americans disagree about the meaning of freedom?

Week 4 *Voices of Freedom* # 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144

Feb 15-19 *Who Built America?*, pages 392-439, 480-490

Why did Americans use “freedom” to explain their reasons for fighting World War II?

Week 5 *Voices of Freedom* # 145, 147, 150, 151, 152

Feb 22-26 *Who Built America?*, pages 496-547

Week 6 **Exam One Friday March 4th**

Feb 29-

Mar 4

Why did the Cold War challenge how Americans thought about freedom at home?

Week 7 *Voices of Freedom* # 155, 156, 158, 160

Mar 7-11 *Who Built America?*, pages 556-579

How did the civil rights movement define freedom?

Week 8 *Voices of Freedom* # 168, 169, 176

Mar 14-18 *Who Built America?*, pages 614-636

SPRING BREAK

During the 1950s and 1960s, how did liberals and conservatives differ in their use of “freedom”?

Week 9 *Voices of Freedom* # 164, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175

Mar 28-
Apr 1 *Who Built America?*, pages 580-603, 637-675, and review 626-636

In the 1970s and 1980s, why did many Americans turn away from New Deal and Great Society ideas about freedom?

Week 10 *Voices of Freedom* # 178, 181, 182, 183, 184, 186

Apr 4-8 *Who Built America?*, pages 682-729

Week 11 **Exam Two Friday April 8th**

Apr 11-15

Stuck in Place: Urban Neighborhoods and the End of Progress toward Racial Equality

Week 12 *Stuck in Place, pages TBA*

Apr 18-22

Week 13 *Stuck in Place, pages TBA*

Apr 25-29

Paper One Due in D2L by 5pm Monday, May 2nd

Sacrifice Zones: The Front Lines of Toxic Chemical Exposure in the United States

Week 14 *Sacrifice Zones, pages TBA*

May 2-6

Week 15 *Sacrifice Zones, pages TBA*

May 9-13

Final

Exam

Week May

16-20

Paper Two Due in D2L by 5pm Monday, May 16th