

**Assignments** = required readings, films, etc. for everyone, regardless of project completed.

**Projects** = graded work; students must do two per week, only one per section (350-600 words; 12-point Times Roman; double-spaced)

Section #1 projects must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. Tuesday.

Section #2 projects must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. Thursday.

Section #3 projects must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. Saturday.

**Responses/Comments** = responses to projects & classmates' comments (150-200 words)

Must complete two a week.

**Summary** = weekly list of projects and comments (with i.d./dates); due by Sunday, 11:59 p.m.

Indicate additional research in a bibliography (following Chicago/Turabian format) at the end of a project. (Words do not count towards the 350-600 project total.)  
See chart under INSTRUCTIONS on website for locating Chicago Manual information.

End each project with "I pledge" and with word count.

**General text:** American Yawp--A Free and Online, Collaboratively Built American History Textbook ([americanyawp.com](http://americanyawp.com)):

- The Cold War 25
- The Affluent Society 26
- The Sixties 27
- The Unraveling 28
- The Rise of the Right 29
- The Recent Past 30

## **WEEK TWO: At Home – 1940s-1950s**

### **Reading:**

"From the Truman Doctrine to Scrabble: As the World Turned in 1947 and 1948" (2007 1 p.)

### **SECTION 1: Men and Women in War and After**

### **GI Bill:**

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

### **Youtube:**

The G.I. Bill History (9:25)

How the G.I. Bill Transformed the American Dream (9:49)

### **Film:**

*The GI Bill: The Law That Changed America*

([videos.umwblogs.org](http://videos.umwblogs.org) [password: ferrellhistory])

## Readings:

*The G. I. Bill* excerpts ([website](#))

Onkst, "First a Negro . . . Incidentally a Veteran": Black World War II Veterans and the G.I. Bill of Rights in the Deep South, 1944-1948" (1998 27 p.)

Greenberg article (1 p.) ([website](#))

## PROJECT OPTIONS:

- Look up the obituary of two of the following ex-G.I.'s who used the G.I. Bill: Art Buchwald, Tony Curtis, Johnny Carson, Gene Hackman, Rod Serling, Steve McQueen (late 1940s), Gerald Ford, and Joseph Heller. What do the stories reveal about the role that the G.I. Bill in their lives? Are the men cited for their use of the bill or quoted about the value of the bill to their lives after 1945? Do the obituaries emphasize the men's World War II service and its impact on them?
- Read the *Fredericksburg Free Lance-Star* article about the G.I. Bill and UMW after WWII ([website](#))? How did the vets' experience in Fredericksburg compare to that of vets discussed in the assigned films and readings? What problems and successes did the men experience in the previously exclusively female school? What additional information would you need for a fuller study of the G.I. Bill?
- Look up President Lyndon Johnson's remarks upon signing the Vietnam-era G.I. Bill. How do the issues, questions, concerns, and confidence expressed by Johnson compare to the issues and concerns of the World War II nation?

## Women in war and after:

### ASSIGNMENTS:

**Film:** *The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter* ([videos.umwblogs.org](https://videos.umwblogs.org) [password: ferrellhistory])

### Readings:

Harris, "Rosie the Riveter Remembers" (1984 10 p.) ([website](#))

National Women's History Museum ([nwhm.org](http://nwhm.org)) for women in WWII

Litoff and Smith, "U.S. Women on the Home Front in World War II" (1995 12 p.)

Hughes, "Women at War: Redstone's WWII Female 'Production Soldiers'" ([website](#))

## PROJECT OPTION:

- Write a two-part “conversation”: a former Rosie explains to a returning G.I. why she should have a job after the war; a returning G.I. responds with why it is best that he should have the job.

## SECTION 2: Suburbs and the Home

### ASSIGNMENTS:

#### Youtube:

- “In the Suburbs - 1957 American Society / Educational Documentary – Val73TV” (19:28)
- “The 1950's: The Life of an Average American” (8:20)
- “1950s Homelife Suburban Sprawl and the Baby Boom” (3:41)

#### Readings:

- Clarke, “Parties Are the Answer’: Gender, Modernity, and Material Culture” (1994 17 p.) ([website](#))
- Bax, “Entrepreneur Brownie Wise: Selling Tupperware to America’s Women in the 1950s”
- Gansky, “Frozen Jet Set: Refrigerators, Media Technology, and Postwar Transportation (2015 13 p.)
- Vaughan, “Icon: Tracing the Path of the 1950s Shirtwaist Dress” (2009 11 p.)
- Baum, “All-American Automobile” (1956 6 p.)

## PROJECT OPTIONS:

- Go to <http://www.thepeoplehistory.com/50sclothes.html>. Read the commentary and look at the images. What conclusions can you draw about how Brownie Wise and other working women, as well as housewives, lived, were seen, and saw themselves based on the information in the website?
- Interview someone who lived through (and remembers) the 1950s. Ask him/her questions about—and report on—the issues/developments that he/she experienced. Consider most vivid memories, family and educational issues, entertainment options, relationships with peers.
- Watch **A Word to the Wives (1955) (13:28)** on Youtube and **Mother Takes a Holiday (1952)** through Prelinger Archives on [archive.org](#). What do they clarify about “wives” and “mothers”—as well as husbands and fathers—in the 1950s? Find other such informational films from the 1950s that help clarify families, women/wives/mothers, and men/husbands/fathers during the decade. Choose two which you most recommend that your classmates watch to better understand the period.

- Watch one of the sets of 1950s commercials on [archive.org](https://archive.org). What do they reveal about American values and concerns? What do they suggest about the American family and home and lifestyle?

- Read Logan Thomas Snyder's "'Broader Ribbons across the Land': The Creation of America's Interstate Highway System" (2006 8 p.) and Robert L. Reid's "Paving America: From Coast to Coast" (2006 9 p.). Explain the significance of the interstate highway system as a demographic, engineering, social accomplishment.

### **SECTION 3: Food, Cooking, and Gender**

#### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

##### **Readings:**

Hurley, "From Hash House to Family Restaurant: The Transformation of the Diner and Post-World War II Consumer Culture" (1997 26 p.)

Newhaus, "The Way to a Man's Heart: Gender Roles, Domestic Ideology, and Cookbooks in the 1950s" (1999 25 p.)

Cinotto, "'Everyone Would Be around the Table': American Family Mealtimes in Historical Perspective, 1850-1960" (2006 17 p.)

#### **PROJECT OPTIONS:**

- Watch an online episode of *Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives* from the Food Network. (Episodes are available on Hulu.com and Netflix, etc.) What references do Guy Fieri and the people whom he interviews make that the Hurley article sets up and clarifies? What supporting evidence or additional angles does the program present for the article?

- Visit a local diner (if possible, one that opened before 1960) and interview the owner/customers about the elements covered in the Hurley article. Explain what you found that clarifies how it is a case study for "From Hash House to Family Restaurant."

- Find a cookbook from the 1950s. Compare its phrasing and emphasis to those described in "The Way to a Man's Heart." Does it suggest a different view of women, men, and families? Point out a couple of key differences—or, if none, similarities—and explain.

- If you know a woman in her eighties/nineties who was married during the 1950s, interview her about her role in the home and attitudes in the fifties about cooking, cleaning, childcare? Did she work outside the home? What pressures did she face from family and friends (and herself) to live her life differently than she was? (A resident of a nursing

home might love the opportunity to spend time with a college student eager to hear about her life.)

- Attend a Tupperware Party and write a narrative describing it in terms of how it clarifies or updates the section's readings and films.

**Summary of week's work due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday.**