The Spring semester of the 512:104 United States History Survey will cover the entire sweep of history from post-Civil War “Reconstruction” on: the making of an industrial economy (Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller), the immigrant experience (that brought the great grandparents of some students from Europe to America between 1880 and 1917), the birth of a consumer culture (the movies, baseball, Atlantic City, flappers), the United States rise to world power (the Philippine War, Spanish American War, World War I); The Great Depression, the New Deal, and the creation of the Modern Welfare State; World War II; the Civil Rights Movement, the 1950s (from Elvis to Kinsey, rock to sex); Vietnam; 1968 (“Coming Apart”); Nixon; Watergate; Reagan, the Persian Gulf War; Clinton, Bush II and the War in the Middle East; the 2008 Presidential Election.

Every second week, instead of lecture, students will attend a discussion section. In classes of less than 30 students you will have the opportunity to discuss the documents and books described below.


The other books are Elaine Tyler May, Great Expectations: Marriage and Divorce in Post-Victorian America (Chicago, ISBN: 0226511707) – and you’ll have a chance to write a paper doing some on-line research about divorce cases in early 20th-century New Jersey; Melba Pettillo Beals, Warriors Don’t Cry (Washington Square Press, (Simon & Shuster) ISBN: 97806718666396) – that will give you a chance to think about the difference between the high school that you attended and that of a black girl in Little Rock, Arkansas in the mid 1950s; and Philip Caputo, A Rumor of War (Holt, ISBN: 080504695X) - which autobiographically tells the story of one the first marines sent to Vietnam in the 1960s. Note: if you buy these books on line, try to get the unabridged, non-juvenile edition of Beals’ Warriors Don’t Cry.