

**SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**COURSE OUTLINE**

INSTRUCTOR: Nicholas Antonucci

DEPARTMENT: Social Science

CATALOG NO.: HIS 104

COURSE: Modern American History

**REACTION PAPERS TOPICS**

Directions: All students must write three (3) reaction papers. With the exception of reaction paper number 1 (Due date **10/3**), you may **choose two (2)** of the following reaction paper topics listed below. (Choose one topic with the due date **10/31** and one with the due date of **12/5**). Each reaction paper **MUST** be approximately **2 pages** and must answer the chosen questions. Full credit will be given to students whose papers demonstrate satisfactory reading, writing and comprehension skills. In addition, each paper must be turned in with a signed plagiarism statement. Please be aware that I will not accept late reaction papers (even if you are absent from class on the date the paper is due). In an **emergency** you may email your reaction paper on or before the date it is due.

**Reaction Paper #1 (Due 10/3)**

Read Professor Hugh Rockoff's, 'The "Wizard of Oz" as a Monetary Allegory,' taken from the Journal of Political Economy. Share your thoughts on why you feel L. Frank Baum's 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz' is or is **not** an allegory concerning the monetary policy debate we see around the time of the election of 1896. Be sure to provide arguments based on facts as you understand them. Feel free to use other sources as well. (Warning – Do not rely solely on your recollection of the 1939 movie.)

**Reaction Paper #2 - Chapter 20: From Business Culture to the Great Depression (Due 10/31)**

Supreme Court Justice Brandeis wrote that the founding fathers believed that to think and speak as you wish were "indispensable" for the country's political system to flourish. He went on to say that the greatest menace to freedom is an inert people." Write an essay using this observation from Brandeis to comment on how important civil liberties are to the principles of the United States and to sustaining those principles in times of fear and war in America. You may wish to comment on how a nation can accurately draw a line as to when the American Civil Liberties Union goes too far or not far enough.

**Reaction Paper #2 - Chapter 21: The New Deal (Due 10/31)**

Liberalism took on its modern meaning during the New Deal. Discuss what liberalism meant before Roosevelt and what it referred to during the New Deal.

**Reaction Paper #2 - Chapter 22: Fighting for the Four Freedoms: World War II (Due 10/31)**

Explain the relationship between labor and the government during the war. Be sure to discuss strikes, company owners, federal legislation, and minorities in your essay. Did the war help the labor movement? Why, or why not?

**Reaction Paper #2 - Chapter 23: The US & the Cold War (Due 10/31)**

Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson delivered a major speech defending Harry Truman's pledge to aid "free peoples" who were protecting their "democratic institutions" that was outlined in the Truman Doctrine. Acheson's audience was a Mississippi organization, the Delta Council. While its members enjoyed genuine freedom and democracy, most of the residents of the Delta region did not. Write an essay that analyzes the complexities of a foreign policy that warns of the liberties endangered by communism and yet denies those very liberties at home to its own citizens under the banner of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

**Reaction Paper #2 - Chapter 24: An Affluent Society (Due 10/31)**

Explain the role of women in 1950s American society. What were women expected to do? What kind of work did they perform? How was this idealized lifestyle supposed to be a weapon in the Cold War? Be sure to use Richard Nixon's kitchen debate in your answer, as well as the idea that the home became the center of freedom.

**Reaction Paper #3 - Chapter 25: The Sixties (Due 12/5)**

Lyndon Johnson said that **economic freedom** meant more than **equal opportunity**. Explain what he meant by that statement and how his Great Society program attempted to redefine the relationship between freedom and equality.

**Reaction Paper #3 - Chapter 26: The Triumph of Conservatism (Due 12/5)**

Offer a critique as to how America's golden age had come to such an abrupt end by the end of the 1970s, after peaking only a decade and a half earlier in the mid-1950s. What were the causes of its decline? What were the consequences for American organized labor and American consumers?

**Reaction Paper #3 - Chapter 27: Globalization and Its Discontents (Due 12/5)**

Compare the stock market boom of the 1990s with that of the 1920s. What fueled the markets in each decade? Who participated in the market in each decade? Why did each market's proverbial bubble burst?

**Reaction Paper #3 - Chapter 28: September 11 and the Next American Century (Due 12/5)**

Fully discuss and examine the limitations placed on freedom after September 11. Then compare the surrounding circumstances with those during both the McCarthy era and World War I. What is the balance between security and freedom during war? Does the Constitution protect citizens' rights during wartime? Should dissent be equated with lack of patriotism? Why, or why not?