

32050 AMERICA AS A FOREIGN COUNTRY

INSTRUCTOR: Takakazu Yamagishi

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class is cross-offered by the CJS and the Department of British and American Studies. Conducted in English, the main aim of this course is to view the United States in comparative perspectives. More specifically we will discuss whether or not the United States is an “exceptional” country. If it is unique, which aspect is unique? You are strongly encouraged to bring your own opinion to our discussion. This class offers CJS students an opportunity to learn how Japanese students perceive the United States, which may in a manner very different to that of non-Japanese.

CJS students are expected to make a group presentation with Japanese students at least once during the semester. Each group is composed of about three students who give a 15-minute presentation about the assigned literature. I hope that we can include some outside materials. Students are required to have at least two questions for discussion.

COURSE SCHEDULE

1. Class introduction
2. Introductory overview of American history
3. American political ideas
Ch. 1 “Ideology, Politics, and Deviance,” pp. 31-52
4. American “Manifest Destiny”
Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” pp. 1-38 in Turner, *The Frontier in American History*
5. American religion and economy
Ch. 2 “Economy, Religion, and Welfare,” pp.53-76
6. American health care
Jill Quadagno, “Why the United States Had No National Health Insurance,” *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 45 (2004): pp. 25-44. (Watching SiCKO, is strongly encouraged.)
7. American biotech policy
Adam Sheingate, “Promotion Versus Precaution: The Evolution of Biotechnology Policy in the United States,” *British Journal of Political Science* 36:2 (April 2006): pp. 243-68
8. American labor power
Ch. 3 “Socialism and Unionism in the United States and Canada,” pp. 77-109
9. American blacks
Ch. 4 “Two Americas, Two Value Systems: Blacks and Whites,” pp. 113-50
10. American Jews
Ch. 5 “A Unique People in an Exceptional Country,” pp.151-75
11. American professors
Ch. 6 “American Intellectuals,” pp.176-210
12. America and Japan as Unique Countries
Ch. 7 “American Exceptionalism—Japanese Uniqueness,” pp. 211-63
13. Is there “American Exceptionalism”?
CH. 8 “A Double-Edge Sword,” pp.267-92
14. Conclusion

TEXTS

Textbook: Seymour Martin Lipset, *American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997)

ASSESSMENT

Attendance 20%; Group presentation 20%; Discussion participation 30%; Response paper 30%