

HIST 1302: U.S. History 1865 to the Present
Assignment for Paper #2: Book Review, 3-5 pages
Due November 12

Select and read a book from the attached list. All are primary sources dealing with events that occurred during the author's life or that give us some insight into a particular historical era.

Many of the books on this list are available at the DMC or Corpus Christi Public Library, as well as area book stores. In some cases, however, you may want to request a book through interlibrary loan: ask a librarian for help making the request. **Please Note:** It can take a week or more for books requested this way to arrive, and even then you may not be able to get your first choice. Select a few possibilities for this project, and PLAN AHEAD to be sure you have time to complete the assignment.

Begin your paper with a brief description of the work. What kind of writing is it: fiction (that is, a novel or short stories), poetry, essays, journalism, letters, or something else? Who is the author, and where and when was the work produced? What are the work's subject and major themes? Do not provide a detailed plot summary. And please note, there is no such thing as a "fictional novel": *all* novels are fictional.

Next, use the book as a primary historical document. What (in detail) do you learn from it about the period it comes from? What were the major events of the day? How did people live and relate to each other? What important ideas, beliefs, and values were being discussed and debated, and how are these conflicts presented in the book? Consider that the writer may give us clues about the past without really meaning to: read between the lines for what they may be saying without really saying it.

Finally, think about the author's opinion and interpretation of the events they describe. What do they think about important matters of their day, and how do they convey these attitudes in writing? How do they feel about the characters, issues, and/or ideas they include in the book? What is their purpose in writing? Does the author have a particular point to make, what is it, and do they make their point effectively?

Be sure to provide as many specific, relevant details as possible. Direct quotations are always helpful, but don't forget to cite your source if you use quotes.

The key to this assignment is to think critically about a piece of writing. Always consider *what* the author says and *how and why* they say it. And along the way be sure to enjoy reading the book – there are some real classics here!

Reading List for Paper #2

Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House* (progressivism, settlement houses)
Mary Antin, *The Promised Land* (immigration, cities, Judaism)
James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time* (civil rights, Nation of Islam)
Bruce Barton, *The Man Nobody Knows* (1920s, business history)
Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward* (progressivism, utopianism)
Willa Cather, *O! Pioneers* (homesteading, Great Plains)
Charles Chesnutt, *The Marrow of Tradition* (black assimilation, racism)
Kate Chopin, *The Awakening* (women's independence)
Douglas Coupland, *Generation X* (alienation of youth in 1990s, contemporary concerns)
Stephen Crane, *Maggie, a Girl of the Streets* (urban decay)
John Dos Passos, *1919* (World War I, Lost Generation)
W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (African-American studies, racism, progressivism)
Vine Deloria, *Custer Died for Your Sins* (Native American rights)
Bret Easton Ellis, *Less Than Zero* (youth culture in the 1980s)
Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (race and racism)
M.F.K. Fisher, *How to Cook a Wolf* (food history, WWII, feminism)
Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (women's equality, suburban life)
William Gibson, *Neuromancer* (digital revolution, science fiction)
Joseph Heller, *Catch-22* (World War II)
Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms* (World War I, Lost Generation)
Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* (World War I, Lost Generation)
Michael Herr, *Dispatches* (Vietnam)
John Hersey, *Hiroshima* (World War II, nuclear bomb)
Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (African-American women)
Roger Kahn, *The Boys of Summer* (baseball, immigration)
Jack Kerouac, *On the Road* (Beat Generation, suburban life)
Sinclair Lewis, *Babbitt* (suburban life, the 1920s)
Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar* (women's independence, the 1950s)
Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (civil rights, Nation of Islam)
Norman Mailer, *The Armies of the Night* (Vietnam, anti-war movement)
Norman Mailer, *The Naked and the Dead* (World War II)
Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi* (race, civil rights)
John Niehardt, *Black Elk Speaks* (Native Americans, spiritualism)
Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (cities, immigration, progressivism)
Jackie Robinson, *I Never Had It Made* (baseball, civil rights)
J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye* (1950s, suburban life, alienation of youth)
Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (factory laborers, immigration)
Luther Standing Bear, *Land of the Spotted Eagle* (Native Americans, boarding schools)
John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (Dust Bowl, Great Depression)
John Steinbeck, *In Dubious Battle* (Great Depression, labor unions)
Thorstein Veblen, *Theory of the Leisure Class* (economics, class)
Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five* (WWII, peace movement?)
Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* (progressivism, racial equality)
Ida B. Wells, *A Red Record* (progressivism, racial equality, lynching)
Edith Wharton, *The Age of Innocence* (gospel of wealth, class differences)
Richard Wright, *Black Boy* (African-American life, racism)
Richard Wright, *Native Son* (African-American life, racism, crime)
Anzia Yezierska, *Bread Givers* (immigration, Judaism, cities, women's equality)