

## **SSN 240-1821 (49822), HISTORY OF NEW YORK CITY**

Class: 10:30 to 12:45 on Wednesdays and online

Instructor: Louis Mazzari, louis\_mazzari@hotmail.com, lmazzari@lagcc.cuny.edu

Office hours: 1:00 to 2:00 on Wednesdays and online by appointment

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

We will explore the history of New York City through the lens of both cultural and political history, which means, in part, that we'll look at and listen to the ways that New Yorkers have described and thought about themselves, mostly through the last two hundred years. In the last hundred years, especially, New Yorkers have been part of the exploration asking, what does it mean to be modern? And we'll look at the way New York, as the first modern city, has responded to the peculiar circumstances of its geography, politics, economics, and technology? We will read not only historical accounts of major events in New York history, but we'll examine the way Americans expressed themselves scientifically, philosophically, and in literature, theater, architecture, music, and the visual arts.

The course will be unusual, in part, because it will include numerous walking tours and field trips in Manhattan and Queens. And I want to strongly encourage you to write me at this address any time if you have any question about any aspect of the course. I want to stress that I am available throughout the semester, by email and/or in class or afterwards. And I will be glad to skype or what's app or zoom with you. Please let me know if you would like to talk, and we can set a time and technology for the meeting.

### **GRADING**

Grading will be based on a final exam and several short essays and projects relating to the various topics we'll cover.

### **SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

Wed., Sept. 11

**1600-1750: Introduction, Dutch Golden Age**

**Reading:** "1600s, Dutch Trading Colony"

**Music:** Vivaldi, "The Four Seasons"; Franz Josef Haydn, "Symphony 103"

Wed., Sept. 18

**1750-1865: Revolutionary New York, the Erie Canal, and the Civil War**

**Reading:** 1819, "Rip van Winkle"; Great Fire of New York, Slavery and Civil War; 1863, "New York City Draft Riots"

**Film:** [National Canal Museum: Erie Canal](http://canals.org/erie.htm) <http://canals.org/erie.htm>, New York State Archives website <http://www.archives.nysed.gov/projects/eriecanal/index.html>

**Music:** Gioachino Rossini, "Barber of Seville," 1816, and "William Tell Overture," 1829

**Fieldtrip:** Metropolitan Museum of Art/Dutch and Renaissance art, American Wing

Wed., Sept. 25

**1865-1890: "The Gilded Age" in New York City**

**Reading:** Kate Chopin, "A Pair of Silk Stockings"; George Will, "The Special Century"; "160 Years of Central Park"

**Music:** Antonin Dvorak, *New World Symphony*

**Film:** "1876 to 1900 Industrialization" and "Invention, Capital, and Consumerism"; 1981, Ken Burns, *The Brooklyn Bridge*; "Stanford White"

**Fieldtrip:** Upper East Side Gilded Age Mansions

Wed., Oct. 2 **No class**

**1900-1920: "Beaux Arts New York" and "Skyboom"**

**Reading:** 1900s, "Skyscraper City" and "Harlem"

**Music:** *Lullaby of Broadway*

**Film:** "Classical Rome in 19<sup>th</sup> Century New York"; 1900 to 1930, "Automobile in America"; 1910s, "Mass Culture"; "Coney Island": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GegiQXsFal4>; 1911, New York street scene, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rx5sUa\\_2SD8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rx5sUa_2SD8)

Wed., Oct. 9

**1890-1910: Ellis Island and New York City immigration, Progressivism**

**Reading:** "1898 to 1914, The Progressive City"; "Ethnic New York"; "20<sup>th</sup> Century World City"; *Gotham* Ch. 22, 23, and 27

**Music:** "East Side, West Side"

**Film:** "1890 to 1915, Immigration and Ellis Island" and "Progressivism"; 1903, New York street scene, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jvUrAtwbgc>

**Fieldtrip:** Grant's Tomb, Morningside Heights, Columbia University

Wed., Oct. 16

**1920 to 1930: Jazz Age New York**

**Reading:** "New York Roars Into The Twenties"; 1923, "Bowery Savings Bank"

**Music:** George Gershwin, *Rhapsody in Blue*; Louis Armstrong, Hot Sevens; Irving Berlin, "Puttin' on the Ritz," 1927

**Film:** 1920s, "Roaring Twenties," "Airminded Aviation and Skyscrapers," "Prohibition"; 1921, *Manhatta*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGKsVY23D2s>; 1928, Harold Lloyd and Babe Ruth; 1928, Harold Lloyd, *Speedy*; 1927, "New York City Street Life"; 1927, *Metropolis*; 1949, *The Fountainhead*

**Fieldtrip:** Grand Central Station, New York Public Library, Bowery Savings Bank

Wed., Oct. 23

**1930 to 1945: New Deal in New York**

**Reading:** 1931, "James Thurber, Empire State Building"; "Living New Deal" website, "Rise and Fall of NYCHA," Gore Vidal on Robert Moses; 1940, Berenice Abbott, "Changing New York"

**Music:** Duke Ellington, "Take the A Train," 1935; Cab Calloway, "Bang a Gong," 1935

**Film:** 1933, *King Kong*; 1933, *Goldiggers of 1933*; 1933, *Forty-Second Street*; 1935, Charlie Chaplin, *Modern Times*; New Deal in New York and 1939 World's Fair powerpoints; 1937, "A Better New York City,"

<https://archive.org/details/ABetterNewYorkCity1937>; 1939, *The City*,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGL1jZ4Zxv8>; "New York mid-1930s in color"; 1939, "Swingin' New York," 1937, "Easy Living"

**Fieldtrip: Tudor City, Chrysler Building, and Daily News**

Wed., Oct. 30

**1945 to 1975: Suburbia and the International Style**

**Reading:** "1941 to 1960, Capital of the World"; Doris Kearns Goodwin, "Wait til next year!"; 1947 Smallpox Scare; 1938 to 1945, "Walker Evans, New York Subway Photos"

**Music and film:** Francis Ford Coppola, *The Godfather*, 1971; Leavitt and Agee, *In the Street*, New York City, 1948, Elvis Presley, "Hound dog," 1955; Billie Holiday, "Strange Fruit," 1959; The Beatles, "A Hard Day's Night," 1964; 1965, Bob Dylan, "Subterranean Homesick Blues"; Leonard Bernstein, *West Side Story*, "America," 1961;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7aH7I52gP6E>; "1964 World's Fair"; 1965, Bob Dylan, "Subterranean Homesick Blues"; "The Beatles at Shea Stadium," 1965; "Car 54," 1950s; "Naked City," 1950s

**Fieldtrip: New York Life, Met Life, and Flatiron Building at Madison Square**

Wed., Nov. 6

**1975-2000: The fall and rise of New York City**

**Reading:** "Take New Yorkers Back to the 1970s"; 1981, "New York Thrash Night"; 1982, "Music Television Revolution"; 1994, "Rise of Graffiti Art"; 1990, "Mayor Ed Koch's epic feud with Donald Trump"; 1993, "Seinfeld and Stern"

**Music:** The Ramones, ""; David Byrne, XXXX; John Travolta, "Saturday Night Fever," 1977

**Film:** 1970s MOMA home movies: <https://www.moma.org/magazine/articles/276>; 1979, Woody Allen, *Manhattan*; 1987, *Wall Street*; 1985, *After Hours*; 1995, *Blue in the Face*, 1995; Martin Scorsese, *Taxi Driver*, 1976

**Fieldtrip: Guggenheim Museum, Park Avenue, and United Nations Buildings**

Wed., Nov. 13

**2001-2008: September 11 in New York City**

**Reading:** 2001, *The New Yorker*, "September 11"; 2002, Billy Collins, "The Names"; 2006, "An Imam in America"; 2000s, "How the 9/11 Attacks Sparked Gentrification"

**Music:**

**Film:** Bush Administration and September 11 powerpoint

**Fieldtrip: Park Plaza to Trump Tower to Rockefeller Center to Empire State Building**

Wed., Nov. 20

**2009, "The Great Divide"**

**Reading:** "The Great Divide" article

**Music:**

**Film:** "The Great Divide" powerpoint

**Fieldtrip:** LaGuardia and Wagner Archives

Wed., Nov. 27

**2010-2020: Queens and Long Island City**

**Reading:** 2017, "Times Square Reborn"; "Five Quirky Houses in Queens"; 2018, "Amazon in LIC"; 2022, "A Stainless Steel Status Symbol"; 2000, "Donald Trump, Golden Boy"; 2022, "To Understand Trump, Start With Queens"

**Music:**

**Film:** 2009, Obama takes on Trump at the Correspondents' Dinner; 2022, Daily Show, "New York Subway Shooter Caught"

**Fieldtrip: Flushing Meadows/Queens Museum Panorama**

Wed., Dec. 4

**2020: Pandemic New York**

**Reading:** Student writing on the lockdown; *New York Times*, "Where are the Big Ideas?"; 2020, "NYC Bodegas Going Viral on TikTok"

**Music:**

**Film:** New York Landmarks Commission, "Tourist in your own town":

[https://nylandmarks.org/explore-ny/?fwplandmark\\_categories=colonial-new-york](https://nylandmarks.org/explore-ny/?fwplandmark_categories=colonial-new-york)

**Fieldtrip: Museum of the City of New York**

Wed., Dec. 11 **Final exam**