Course Description:
This course examines the post-1945 United States through the lens of the American counterculture. From the 1950s to the 1970s, the counterculture was far more than a hodgepodge of dropouts and pleasure seekers with no direction in life. Instead the counterculture was a meaningful movement that pursued what one historian has called “right livelihoods.” That process was informed by the major shifts in American society after World War II: suburbanization, mass consumerism, the Cold War, nuclear weapons, and the social change movements that both influenced and consumed the ideology of countercultural authenticity. We will study how the movement was neither utopian nor futile, but instead a process of negotiating postwar America that would subsequently transform American society in the post-1980 years.

Professor Information:
Ryan Edgington (Please call me Ryan)
Office: Old Main 308
Office Hours: Fridays 10-1 and by appointment.
Email: redgingt@macalester.edu
Phone: 651-696-6834
Course Outcomes:
- A basic understanding of the long-Sixties from the end of World War II to the first years of Ronald Reagan’s presidency.
- A firm knowledge of how the counterculture shaped the history of that era.
- The facility to explain how the complex social change movements of the era influenced the counterculture.
- Hone the skill of presenting arguments in a seminar style setting.
- Develop a capacity for writing about the past in assignments of various lengths.
- By the end of the course students should have the ability to apply the parables of the past to modern day issues.

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Course Readings:
- Andrew Kirk, Counterculture Green: The Whole Earth Catalog and American Environmentalism.

All books are available at the Macalester Bookstore, Amazon.com, online used books retailers, and most are for rent. There will be copies on reserve in the library.

There will also be several required readings on Moodle.

Films:
No Direction Home.
Hearts and Minds.
Easy Rider.
From the Back of the Room and/or Dogtown and Z-Boys.
Course Evaluation:
Participation: 30%
Historical Briefs: 20%
Periodic Papers: 30%
Final Research Project: 20%

Due Dates:
Final Research Project Proposal: 10/6
Periodic Paper #1: 10/17
Periodic Paper #2: 12/12
Final Research Project: 12/17

Please consult the assignments supplement at the end of the syllabus for more information on what is expected in each assignment.

Communards on the Cover of Life, 1969
Course Decorum:

- **All readings are required.** Every student should acquire the assigned readings. All readings should be with you in class (bring the book, print out the article). Mark it up! Students not prepared for discussions will lose participation points for that day.

- **Cell phones should be off.** Following one warning the student will lose 2 total points from their final grade for each infraction.

- The straight dope on electronic narcotics: **Computers and I pads should be off** unless you have prior approval from the instructor.

- When the instructor is talking or another student is talking everyone else should be listening. You should absolutely write down the things your colleagues have to say. They are important.

- Sleeping counts as an absence, even if a student only nods off for a minute.

- While I expect you in class as scheduled, students have 2 free absences that will not count against the final grade. After that, students will lose 2 total points off the final course grade for each absence.

- **Late Papers: are accepted.** However, for each day it is late a student will lose an entire letter grade (So an A- paper will be a B-, a C- paper a D- and so on). This begins immediately following the class for which the paper is assigned. I reserve the right to no longer offer this generous provision if a student is abusing it.

- Language matters. Please think about the diverse backgrounds of your fellow students when discussing course materials.

- I reserve the right to ask any student to leave class if s/he is disrupting the ability of other students to learn. That student will be counted as absent for the day.

- **Take note! You must turn in all of the written work to receive a passing grade in this course.**

- **Incompletes are offered only in exceptional circumstances.** Macalester’s policy in short: 1) at least three-quarters of the required work for the course has been completed, 2) unforeseen circumstances beyond the student’s control (usually restricted to illness or family emergency) preclude completion of the remaining work for the course by the semester deadline, 3) the student is not on strict academic probation. Note that poor planning or having a lot of work to complete at the end of the term are not, in fairness to other students, considered circumstances beyond a student’s control. See: http://www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/grading/

- **This syllabus is subject to change.**

Course Caveats:

- This is a history course that deals heavily in the history of race, gender, and class. Therefore we may come across language that by our standards is bigoted. Rather than eschew those instances and move on, we will deal with it head-on and talk about why that language is important in its historical context and what it says about our society today.

- I often screen films in class, which for some students may seem like a waste of time. However, what is wonderful about watching films as a group is that we experience the important moments of the film together. Collective viewing also
has utility to me: I know you have consumed the entire film rather than skip around or read a synopsis online.

- As an academic I from time to time will need to be out of town for conferences and/or research. Please see this as an opportunity to prepare ahead for our next meeting.

**Statement on Disabilities:**
Macalester College seeks to create a welcoming environment in which all students can reach their academic potential and have equal access to academic opportunities and co-curricular activities. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, individuals with disabilities are protected from discrimination and assured services. The College is committed to responding in a flexible manner to the individual needs of all members of the Macalester community with appropriate documentation.

Accommodations are made upon the approval of the Associate Dean of Students, the designated coordinator of services for students with disabilities at Macalester. Any student who is interested in requesting services should contact the Office of Student Affairs (651-696-6220) early in the semester to schedule a meeting with the Associate Dean of Students.

**Statement on Academic Honesty:**
Students at Macalester are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their college work. Forgery, cheating, and plagiarism are serious offenses and students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action.

SEE:
http://www.macalester.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/academicpolicies/academicintegrity.html
Part One: Influences 1: From Hard Times to Mass Consumerism

9/3: Introductions: Welcome!

9/5: Depression:

Scheduled: Minute Around: A-F

Complete: Historical Brief #1
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box ☐]

9/8: War:

Scheduled: Minute Around: G-M

Complete: Historical Brief #2
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box ☐]
9/10: **Suburban Dreams:**

Scheduled: Minute Around: N-Z

Complete: Historical Brief #3
[ I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □ ]

9/12: **Suburban Nightmares:**

Scheduled: Minute Around: A-F

Complete: Historical Brief #4
[ I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □ ]

9/15: **Atomic America:**

Screening: *Duck and Cover*, 1951.

Scheduled: Minute Around: G-M

Complete: Historical Brief #5
[ I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □ ]

**Part Two: Cracks in the Consensus**

9/17: **The Birth of A Counterculture:**
The Making of a Countercultural Enclave:

9/19: Screening: Martin Scorsese, No Direction Home, Part One, continued.

Part Three: Influences 2: Many Movements

9/22: Civil Rights:

Scheduled: Minute Around: N-Z

Complete: Historical Brief #6
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box ☐]

9/24: Finding Community in the Black Power Movement:
Screening: Goran Olsson, Black Power Mix Tape (2011, 96 minutes).

9/26: The Life and Death(?) of A Movement:
Screening: Black Power Mix Tape, continued.

9/29: The New Right:

Scheduled: Minute Around: A-F

Complete: Historical Brief #7
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box ☐]

10/1: Participatory Democracy and Free Speech:

Scheduled: Minute Around: G-M

Complete: Historical Brief #8
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box ☐]
10/3: Vietnam:


**Final Research Project Proposal is Due: 10/6 by 5 pm (upload to Moodle).**

**Part Four: Inventing The Underground**

10/8: The Underground Press in the Age of the SDS:
Required Reading: John McMillian, *Smoking Typewriters*, 1-30.

Scheduled: Minute Around: N-Z

Complete: Historical Brief #9
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]

10/10: Finding the Counterculture in Underground Newspapers:
Required Reading: John McMillian, *Smoking Typewriters*, 31-81.

Scheduled: Minute Around: A-F

Complete: Historical Brief #10
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]

10/13: Trials and Tribulations:
Required Reading: John McMillian, *Smoking Typewriters*, 82-139.

Scheduled: Minute Around: G-M

Complete: Historical Brief #11
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]

10/15: No Class—I will be at the Western Historical Association Conference in California.

10/17: No Class—I will be at the Western Historical Association Conference in California.

**Periodic Paper #1 is due: 10/17 by 5 pm (upload to Moodle).**
10/20:  From Underground to Mainstream:
Required Reading: John McMillian, *Smoking Typewriters*, 140-190.

Scheduled: Minute Around: N-Z

Complete: Historical Brief #11
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]

**Part Five: Countercultural Environmentalism, Work, and the Birth of Appropriate Technology**

10/22:  Right Livelihoods:

Skype conversation with Professor David Farber, Temple University.

Scheduled: Minute Around: A-F

Complete: Historical Brief #12
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]

10/24:  No Class: Fall Break.

10/27:  The Invention of Appropriate Technology:
Andrew Kirk, *Counterculture Green*, 1-42.

Scheduled: Minute Around: G-M

Complete: Historical Brief #13
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]

10/29:  Inventing the Whole Earth Catalog:

Scheduled: Minute Around: N-Z

Complete: Historical Brief #14
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]
10/31:  Technologies to Change the World:  

Scheduled: Minute Around: A-F

Complete: Historical Brief #15
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]

11/3:  Countercultural Libertarianism and The Legacy of a Movement:  

Scheduled: Minute Around: G-M

Complete: Historical Brief #16
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]

**Part Six:** Scripting the Counterculture


11/7:  Screening: *Easy Rider*, continued.

**Part Seven:** Back to the Land

11/10:  The Politics of Communal Living:  

Scheduled: Minute Around: N-Z

Complete: Historical Brief #17
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]

**Part Eight:** The Problems and Possibilities of a Counterculture

11/12:  Women and the Counterculture:  

Scheduled: Minute Around: A-F

Complete: Historical Brief #18
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]
11/14: The Gay Community and the Counterculture:

Scheduled: Minute Around: G-M

Complete: Historical Brief #19
[I have completed this brief, ✓ in box □]

11/17: The Politics of Race in the Counterculture:

Scheduled: Minute Around: N-Z

Complete: Historical Brief #20
[I have completed this brief, ✓ in box □]

**Part Nine: Countercultural Food Systems and the Neoliberal Turn**

11/19: Inventing the Countercuisine:

Scheduled: Minute Around: A-F

Complete: Historical Brief #21
[I have completed this brief, ✓ in box □]

11/21: A Countercultural Food Movement:


Scheduled: Minute Around: G-M

Complete: Historical Brief #22
[I have completed this brief, ✓ in box □]
11/24: **Challenging the Radical Food Movement:**

Scheduled: Minute Around: N-Z

Complete: Historical Brief #23
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]

11/26: No Class: Thanksgiving Break.

11/28: No Class: Thanksgiving Break.

**Part Ten: The Counterculture in the Age of Reagan**

12/1: **The Countercuisine Goes Mainstream**


Scheduled: Minute Around: A-F

Complete: Historical Brief #24
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]

12/3: **The Bohemian Bourgeoisie:**


Scheduled: Minute Around: G-Z

Complete: Historical Brief #26
[I have completed this brief, ✔ in box □]

**Part Eleven: New Countercultures: Youth Cultures of the 1980s and 1990s:**

12/5: Screening: *From the Back of the Room* (2013, 104 mins).

12/8: Screening: *From the Back of the Room*, continued.

12/10: Conclusions and Celebration.

**Periodic Paper #2 is due: 12/12 by midnight (upload to Moodle).**

**Final Research Project is due: 12/17 by midnight (upload to Moodle).**
Syllabus Addendum

A. Reading an Academic Article or Book:

Reading an academic article may seem foreign at first, but there are a few tools here to help you navigate your way through academic theory, evidence, and jargon.

FIRST:

• 1. Roadmap.
  
  A. Academic articles are generally broken into four sections.
  1. The first is the introduction. This is where you will find the author’s argument. Most introductions are from 2-4 pages.
  2. The second is the body of the essay where the author presents their evidence. Take note that the narrative and the figures, tables, and pictures are all considered evidence and therefore have relevance to the claim the author is making.
  3. Conclusion. This should explain how the author has proven their thesis with the evidence used.
  4. Citations. This will come in the form of footnotes or endnotes where a reader can further interrogate an author’s evidence.

B. Academic Books are also broken into four sections.
  1. The first is the introduction (sometimes the preface or alternatively the first chapter), which is where you should find the author’s argument. Most introductions are from 1-25 pages. They may also include a helpful chapter by chapter roadmap of the book.
  2. The second is the body of the book where the author presents her/his evidence. Take note that, like an academic article, the narrative and the figures, tables, and pictures are all considered evidence and therefore have relevance to the claim the author is making.
     
     The body of the book is broken into chapters. Think of each chapter as a mini-article with its own introduction, body, and conclusion that should support the main thesis of the book.
  3. Conclusion. This should explain how the author has proven their thesis with the evidence used.
  4. Citations. This will come in the form of footnotes or endnotes.

SECOND:

• 2. Analysis.
  
  A. Find the author’s “claim.” What is the author’s argument (or thesis)? Why should we care about what s/he has written? In other words, what is the “so what” of the book or essay?
  B. Find the author’s evidence. What sort of examples does the author offer to support their claim?
  C. Assess the validity of the author’s argument. Do they claim to overturn another approach to the subject? Are they adding to an already existing idea on a particular topic?
  D. Is there a counterargument to a part of or all of what you have read? Is the essay or book effective?
  E. In three sentences, how would you explain this essay/book to a colleague?
The Five C’s of Historical Analysis

**Change**
Consequences in the short and long term
Requires *comparison* to things before and after
Sources can both document and produce change

**Causality**
When one person, event, or process *influences* another (or many)
Intersection of individuals and conditions

**Context**
Everything else that was going on
Conditions in the past
Life at that time

**Complexity**
The past was *more than simply* good and bad

**Contingency**
Just because things happened does not mean they had to happen that way

---

Is she sleeping, blinking, or winking at you?
Context can help you decide.

Who dumped whom?

What roads were not taken?
What could have been?
What were the other options?

Relationship Status: It's Complicated
B. General Semester Assignments

1. Minute Around:

The minute around is a tool to facilitate collective discussion. It asks that when scheduled each student talk before the class for one minute about the materials assigned for that day. This gets everyone involved in the discussion. Generally the minute around is staggered by name so you will not have to do it every time. I will be writing down comments as you talk and then I will offer questions to the class based upon some of those comments.

Some ways of approaching this assignment include proposing questions about the reading, suggesting greater discussion about a particular theme or idea, and raising questions about what you found confusing or compelling.

This is your chance to help set the tone for our meeting.

*You may opt out of two minute arounds over the course of the semester without penalty.

What I expect: I anticipate that when you are scheduled to complete a minute around you are prepared to do so (please see the course schedule for more information). A well-rounded minute around is subjective, but I anticipate that each student will present a response to the readings that is compelling and lucid. In other words, you should be able to show that you have read and thought sincerely about the materials assigned.

The minute around is factored into your final participation grade. As I take notes on each minute around I generally assign a grade based upon what you have presented.

Why it matters: The ability to present complex arguments to audiences of your peers in a short amount of time is a critical skill not only in the classroom, but also in collective environments ranging from non-profits to the halls of governance.

2. Historical Brief:

The historical brief is based on the idea of a law school brief, which asks a student to lay out the argument of a legal case, unpack the evidence presented, and explain the conclusion reached by a court. (the form for our course is available on Moodle). I have added the requirement of raising two questions per brief.

What I expect: I anticipate that no matter the length of reading, a student will pinpoint what they deem the major “claim” or claims the author makes. Each student will then offer what he or she sees as the most relevant two pieces of evidence that they found. This is not a summary. What I mean by that is one should not pluck evidence from the reading (especially only the introduction and conclusion). One should instead attempt to historicize their two pieces of evidence by showing why those points matter. Finally a successful brief shows breadth of knowledge by using diverse examples from the readings.

* You can use your historical brief to frame your minute around.

** You can skip three briefs over the course of the semester without penalty.

*** This must also be typed and printed out prior to coming to the class that it is due. It should be no less than one whole page and no more than two pages.

**** Historical briefs are due as scheduled in the syllabus.

Why it matters: Like the minute around, short-form memos and reports act as a critical ways of communicating to colleagues beyond academia.
3. Periodic Paper:

The periodic paper asks a student to construct a 6-7 page essay based upon readings assigned over one-half of the semester. Generally, students will be asked to answer one of two prompts. The choice is yours.

What I expect: I anticipate that each student will shape a persuasive claim that answers the prompt they have chosen to answer and that s/he will offer evidence to support that claim. Consider this a mini-essay on a topic that you might present to other scholars.

Why it matters: Periodic papers are more than reports, they are position papers that reveal an author’s ability to concisely present to the major arguments, themes, and events of several scholars. They show a mastery of the subject and establish your credentials as an expert.

**There will be two periodic papers, which are scheduled in the syllabus.**

On Citing Materials: For the purposes of this course we will use a basic MLA format. This means a citation will look like this: (Author, Page Number). Keep in mind even if you are simply paraphrasing, or giving statistics or numbers, you must still cite that material.

Example: Joan Scott argues that “This usage rejects the interpretive utility of the idea of separate sphere, maintaining that to study women in isolation perpetuates the fiction that one sphere, the experience of one sex, has little or nothing to do with the other. In addition, gender is also used to designate social relations between the sexes. Its use explicitly rejects biological explanations” (32).