

UCSD

Department of Ethnic Studies

ETHN 87 1960s: Race, Politics, and Culture

(<http://weber.ucsd.edu/~dsilva/ETHN87-1960s/ETHN871960s.html>)

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Office hours:

Tuesday: 3:00-4:40p @ 225 Social Sciences Bldg

Wednesday: 1-2:30p @ 8 Gildred Latin American Studies Bldg or by appt.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Civil Rights, the Vietnam War, Hippies, Women's liberation: What is it about *The Sixties*? Why every other turn along the way, they seem to come back either to remind (the Iraq War) or to make us forget (the dismantling of affirmative action) the implications of today's most crucial political decisions and acts? Why do we so easily find a relationship between music, protests, films, TV shows, and public policies of those years? How did it happen that their (re)formulations of old concepts and the new ones they introduced would so immediately enter our political vocabulary and define how we make sense of our everyday existence. By mapping the main sites of struggle characteristic of the 1960s -- racial subjection, imperialism, and domesticity -- this course looks at how *The Sixties* re-configured political concepts such as class and imperialism and how they placed social categories such as race, gender, sexuality, and culture itself at the center of the political stage.

REQUIREMENTS

For each meeting, you should be prepared to discuss the guiding questions by consulting the materials assembled in the course website and introduced in class.

SCHEDULE

April 16 – Introduction

April 29 – The Mountain Top: The Civil Rights Movement and the challenge of the US American Dream

May 6 - To the Streets: Black Power, the Vietnam War Protest and the critique of State Violence

May 13 - Bodies & Minds: Bras, Guitars and the privatization of the political

GUIDING QUESTIONS

We approach the 1960s as a determining moment, a few years that transformed the ways in which we think about and participate in political matters. Why? Three In our study of this period, three developments are of great importance. First, after a brief period about 10 years following the Second World War, the two main global powers emerging from that conflict, the United States and the Soviet Union, engaged in the rhetorical and actual conflicts, which came under the umbrella of the Cold War. Second, European colonies in Africa and Southeast Asia engaged in struggles from independence, which revealed to many the limits of the ideals of freedom and equality said to distinguish the winner of the Second World War, United States and the Western European nations.

Finally, after the celebration of the "American Dream" that prevailed in the 1950s, people of color in the United States and young people (mostly college students) across the globe – influenced by the previous two developments – took the streets not only to protest the hot conflicts (the war in Southeast Asia) of the Cold War and to show support to the peoples fight colonialism, but also to demand the realization of universal freedom and equality at home.

When doing so, they radically transformed the political stage, as racial and gender/sexual subjection would finally enter into consideration in academic and official settings. By the end of the decade, this transformation of the political had reached the most intimate spaces, as the body itself became signifier of one's view of Western ideas and practices.

When consulting the materials assembled for this course, you should attempt to identify:

- 1 – What are the main views of US American (and Western) Society conveyed in the materials? What are the similarities and differences between those exposed by authorities and those articulated by the protestors?
- 2 – What kind of strategies do the protestors use? How do they express their discontent? What are their grievances and demands, that is, what do they want to change in the world, the US society, and their personal life?
- 3 – What kind of society do the protestors propose? What, they think, is necessary for the realization of freedom and or equality?
- 4 – At least one contemporary form of protest you find similar to the one covered this week? What are the similarities and differences between them?