

# **American History and Society sections 2018/2019**

## **Reading list for the BA Exam in 2021**

The course discusses primary texts in their historical context that are crucial for understanding of past and present American society and politics. Each class focuses on a particular theme and a selection of primary sources that have shaped American identity and are still debated by the American public.

- **New land, new society**

J. de Crevecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, Letter III, "What Is an American," pp. 1-7

- **American values: Liberty and equality**

Declaration of Independence: <http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/document/>

Declaration of Sentiments: <http://ecssba.rutgers.edu/docs/seneca.html>

Martin.Luther King Jr, I have a dream: <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/i-have-dream-address-delivered-march-washington-jobs-and-freedom>

- **American values: Individualism and community**

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Introduction, 3-6, Vol. 2 Part Two Influence of Democracy on the Sentiments of the Americans, ch. 1 Why democratic people show a more ardent and more lasting love for equality than for freedom, 479-482, ch. 2 On individualism in democratic countries, 482-484, ch. 4 How the Americans combat individualism with free institutions, ch. 5 On the use that the Americans make of association in civil life, 485-492

- **Slavery and racism as American experience**

The "peculiar institution". Slaves tell their own story, pp. 177-197

- **Post-abolition dilemmas**

Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* Chapter 14:

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/washington/ch14.html>

W. E. B. DuBois, *Souls of Black Folk*, Chapter 3:

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/dubois/ch03.html>

- **American expansionism and imperialism**

President Andrew Jackson's Message to Congress 'On Indian Removal' (1830):

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=25>

J. O'Sullivan, *Annexation* (1845) <https://pdcroas.webs.ull.es/anglo/OSullivanAnnexation.pdf>

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Manifest Destiny, Continued: McKinley Defends U.S. Expansionism:  
<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5575/>

- **Frontier society**

Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” ch. 1:  
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/TURNER/>

- **Nation of immigrants?**

Emma Lazarus, “The New Colossus,” <http://www.libertystatepark.com/emma.htm>

Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, new edition 2010 ch. 3 The Mixed Crowd,

Jacob Riis’s biography and photographs, Museum of City of New York:  
<http://collections.mcny.org/Explore/Highlights/Jacob%20A.%20Riis/>

- **Religion**

Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the 'Spirit' of Capitalism and Other Writings*, New York: Penguin Classics, 2002, pp. 203-217 ('Churches' and 'Sects' in North America, 1906)

- **Economy, work and consumption**

Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the 'Spirit' of Capitalism and Other Writings*, New York:

Penguin Classics, 2002, pp. 8-15 (The Protestant Ethic, 1905, ch. The Spirit of Capitalism)

Andrew Carnegie, *The Gospel of Wealth*:

<http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/rbannis1/AIH19th/Carnegie.html>

- **Cities, suburbs and cars**

Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, ch. 8 The need for mixed primary uses, pp. 152-168:

[http://www.evanfriss.com/wp-](http://www.evanfriss.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Death_and_Life_of_Great_American_Cities_143_to_199.pdf)

[content/uploads/2012/08/Death and Life of Great American Cities 143 to 199.pdf](http://www.evanfriss.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Death_and_Life_of_Great_American_Cities_143_to_199.pdf)

*American Graffiti* movie (1973)

Kenneth Jackson, Suburban nation interview, *The First Measured Century*, PBS, 2000:

<http://www.pbs.org/fmc/interviews/jackson.htm>

- **Black strategies in the 1960s**

M.L. King, Letter from Birmingham Jail:

[http://okra.stanford.edu/transcription/document\\_images/undecided/630416-019.pdf](http://okra.stanford.edu/transcription/document_images/undecided/630416-019.pdf)

Malcolm X, The Ballot or the Bullet:

[http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/speeches/malcolm\\_x\\_ballot.html](http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/speeches/malcolm_x_ballot.html)

Todd Gitlin's Introduction (pp. 1-7) and Preface to the new edition (pp. XIII- XXIII) of his *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Years of Change*

- **Feminism as an American social movement**

Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, Chapter 1 – The problem that has no name

Stephanie Coontz, *A Strange Stirring: The Feminine Mystique and American Women at the Dawn of the 1960s* (2012), ch. 9: Women, Men, Marriage and Work Today. Is Feminine Mystique Dead?