

FRPG 188U, Living with the Bomb—Spring 2007
Tu/Th 10-10-11:40 a.m.: Griffiths Modular Classroom
Tu 12:40 to 2:10 p.m.: Noble Center 225

Professor Donna Alvah

Office: 211 Piskor Hall, Department of History

Office hours: Mondays 11-12; Tuesdays 2:30-3:30; Thursdays 12:15-1:15; and by appointment (No office hours during spring break or finals week)

Office phone: 229-5867

E-mail: dalvah@stlawu.edu Note: Please keep e-mail messages brief; my responses will be likewise.

Please see me during office hours for matters requiring more extensive discussion.

Mentor: Claire Plagge, e-mail ceplag05@stlawu.edu

Claire's office hours (when & where): _____

We are very fortunate to have Claire as the mentor for this seminar. She completed Professor Alvah's FYS on the Cold War last year, and also assists Professor Alvah with her research. Additionally, she works as a Writing Center tutor. Claire will attend several of our class meetings, and will hold office hours in ODY Library. All students will be required to meet with Claire at least once this semester.

Course Overview & Goals

In this seminar we will examine how the creation, use, and proliferation of nuclear weapons have influenced aspects of American society and culture between the 1940s and the present. This period includes the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to end World War II, the Cold War arms race and resistance to this, and current concerns about the threat of nuclear terrorism as well as the United States' own maintenance of a substantial nuclear arsenal and its goal of creating a "missile shield." The texts we'll analyze include historical scholarship, literature, music, and film. Possible topics for students' seminar projects include (but certainly are not limited to) music about nuclear weapons, 1950s experiences of childhood and/or adolescence in a nuclear world, activism opposing nuclear testing and proliferation, environmentalists' responses to nuclear weapons and materials, and representations of nuclear disaster in films. Although this course emphasizes American society and culture, students are welcome to consider creating projects that examine cultural and social responses to nuclear weapons in other countries.

This course is also designed to improve your skills in three interconnected areas: reading, communication (both oral and written), and research. Through active reading, students will work to better understand and evaluate authors' arguments and more effectively engage with the ideas of others. Students will develop communication skills through regular informal and formal writing assignments, class discussions, and oral presentations. In addition, each student will gain experience in developing an original research project.

Angel

Please sign up for the FRPG 188U Angel site (for Spring 2007). We will go over how to do this on the first day of class. I can help you sign up, or you can do it on your own by going to <http://angel.stlawu.edu/angel/frameIndex.htm>, logging in, and following the instructions posted there. I will post the course syllabus and assignments on this site.

Required Course Texts

These texts are available for purchase at Brewer Bookstore. Those with an asterisk (*) also will be on reserve at ODY Library.

- * Coupland, Douglas. *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* (1991)
- * May, Elaine Tyler. *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* IMPORTANT: PLEASE OBTAIN THE REVISED AND UPDATED EDITION (published in 1999)
- * Vonnegut, Kurt. *Cat's Cradle*. (Dial Press Trade Paperback edition, published 1998)
- Winkler, Allan M. *Life Under a Cloud: American Anxiety about the Atom* (1999 edition)

You are also expected to have and use the following:

Diana Hacker, *A Pocket Style Manual*, 4th edition

Also:

- Primary sources handed out in class
- Chapters from *Writing about Film* by Timothy Corrigan (T-Drive/Angel)
- 2006-2007 SLU Student Handbook
- *What Use Are Flowers?* by Lorraine Hansberry (T-Drive/Angel/E-Reserves)
- Items on *Dr. Strangelove* and *The Day After*
- All other documents distributed in class or made available on Angel, the T-Drive, or E-Reserves, including the readings on leading a discussion, on plagiarism, and for the last day of class

Summary of Assignments and Percentages of Course Grade

Class Preparation, Participation, & Attendance = 17.5% of course grade

Primary Source Analysis = 5%

Midterm Test = 10%

Research Project

Research question

Notes on sources (Part 1) = 3.5%

Revised research question, preliminary thesis, & preliminary bibliography = 5%

Notes on sources (Part 2) = 3.5%

Functional outline (includes preliminary introduction and revised thesis) = 10%

Research presentation = 10%

Full draft of research paper (10-12 pages) = 13.5%

Revised research paper (12-15 pages) = 13.5 %

Quiz on readings assigned for April 17 = 3.5%

Seminar Portfolio = 5%

Total = 100%

In order to pass this course, you must turn in all of the above assignments.

Class Preparation, Participation, & Attendance

Your mantra for our class meetings: “Be here, now.” This means that not just your physical presence, but also your mental presence, are required during every class.

Attendance: To state the obvious: Attendance is fundamental to earning your class preparation and participation grade. The more you’re absent, the fewer opportunities you’ll have to earn this grade.

Furthermore, there is a strong correlation between attendance and grades because students who come to class know what is going on and therefore receive significantly better grades than those who do not attend class.

Arriving late or leaving class early will bring down your preparation and participation grade.

Absence policy: You are allowed a maximum of **three** absences for the semester (the equivalent of missing one week of class), **for any reason**—illness, family events, extracurricular activities, driving your friend home, etc. I advise you to reserve your absences for truly important occasions, and if possible, to avoid missing any classes. For each additional day that you are absent from class, your course participation grade for the semester will be reduced by 1 grade point. Keep in mind that you’re responsible for teaching yourself what you’ve missed in class.

Preparation & Participation: To earn a good participation grade, it is not enough merely to attend class; you also must **prepare** for and **participate** in class.

Occasionally a student will say that s/he is unwilling to speak in class because “I just don’t like talking in class.” While this may be true, it does not excuse anyone from class participation. You may not like doing the assigned readings or writing papers, either, but that doesn’t excuse you from completing these assignments! Remember that SLU’s list of objectives for students includes “[t]he ability to read, write, speak, and listen well.”¹ We will take all this very seriously in this class.

Students are expected to come to every class prepared to talk about readings and assignments. Demonstrate that you have done the reading and that you’ve thought about it and are engaging with it. As you read, think of questions and ideas to discuss. Our discussions will provide an opportunity to analyze historical questions, problems, and issues that arise as we proceed through the semester.

I would like students to listen to each other and respond thoughtfully and constructively. Discussions and debates can be informative and useful for thinking through ideas. Feel free to take issue with interpretations put forward by the course texts and members of our class, but do so in a respectful manner that facilitates discussion. Please bring assigned readings to class

The following criteria will serve as the basis for your class preparation and participation grade:

- Your regular, thoughtful, informed discussion of the readings, assignments, and audio-visual documents (this presupposes your habitual and punctual attendance throughout the semester)
- Attention and responses to other students’ comments and questions (including in student-led class discussions/activities)
- Creation of discussion questions (with other students) for a chapter from of the assigned readings & leading this discussion
- Attention to and engagement with students’ research presentations
- Engagement with questions posed by me to the class
- Discussions in pairs or small groups, and other in-class spoken (and written) activities

I soon will provide a handout with even more information about how you will be graded on this aspect of your course work.

¹ *St. Lawrence University Catalog 2005-2006*, 6.

Research Project

You'll spend a good deal of time and effort in this seminar developing your research project, which will culminate in a formal paper on a topic related to the subject. I will provide detailed instructions for all of the assignments related to this project. In the meantime, here are brief descriptions of various preparatory assignments:

- **Research questions:** In composing this you will articulate your initial (but informed) thoughts on possible topics and consider how to focus your research project.
- **Revised research question, preliminary thesis, and preliminary bibliography:** This assignment asks you to refine your approach to your research project, and to consider what sources you will need to do a good job answering your research question.
- **Notes on sources:** These will help you to assess sources you locate in your research. There are two parts to this assignment.
- **Functional outline:** In this assignment you will present a revised thesis, as well as a detailed outline of 1) the main points of the paper's argument, and 2) the evidence (sources) you will use to support each of these points.
- **Research presentation:** In April, students will do formal presentations of their research projects. This will entail creating preliminary and revised research plans, and meeting with Claire and Prof. Alvah.
- **Full draft of research paper (10-12 pages):** Note that I don't call this a "rough" draft; you're expected to turn in something more refined than this. I will grade this as a work-in-progress. The policy on academic honesty applies to this draft just as it does to all other assignments.
- **Revised research paper (12-15 pages):** Your grade on this will be based on the quality of your thorough revision of the previous draft. The changes you make must be more than cosmetic (e.g., fixing typos that I caught).

Although most of the assigned readings and above topics deal with the United States, you are welcome to construct a project that examines culture and society in relation to the theme of "Living with the Bomb" in another place (e.g., Japan, the Soviet Union, Germany [East or West or both], North or South Korea, or anywhere else—as long as you are able to find sources that are in a language that you can read).

Formal Writing Assignments

Expectations for Primary Source Analysis and Research Project Assignments

Students are responsible for crafting well-organized, carefully proofread, thoughtful papers that demonstrate original analysis and meet the assignment requirements. The opportunity to improve your writing is one of the most valuable aspects of your college education. Writing well requires time and effort. Make good use of Diana Hacker's *A Pocket Style Manual* by referring to it frequently. We will discuss the writing assignments in class. Do everything you can to cultivate your writing and analytical skills, which are, of course, interconnected.

Basic format for formal writing assignments:

- double-spaced
- 12-point font
- Approximately 250-300 words/page
- 1 to 1.25-inch margins all around
- Be sure to title the paper
- You do not need to include a cover page
- Documentation style: Chicago (footnotes) or MLA (in-text). Consult *A Pocket Style Manual* for correct formats.
- Please number pages and staple them together—no paper clips, please

It is your responsibility to keep back-up copies of all assignments turned in.

Hard copies of assignments are due on the designated dates and times. **Do not send papers by e-mail unless you have express permission from me to do so.**

Penalties for late papers = 1 point (on the 0-4 scale) if turned in after the deadline; another point will be deducted for every subsequent 24-hour period. I will grade late assignments at my convenience, which means that they'll be returned later than those handed in on time.

It is the student's responsibility to make sure an assignment has reached me. An item not handed to me personally or properly submitted to the Department of History will receive a late penalty that extends from the official deadline to the point at which I receive it. If you give your paper to someone else to turn in and it does not reach me, this late penalty will apply.

Printing, Paginating, & Stapling Papers:

I have neither the time nor the patience to print out, staple, or number students' papers. Therefore, I will enforce the following policies:

- Late penalties will accrue until you get a hard copy to me.
- If you do not paginate your paper, there will be a .25-point penalty.
- If you do not staple your paper, there will be a .25 point penalty.

If you need more help with your writing, please talk with me about this as soon as possible. I also recommend working with a tutor in the Munn Writing Center (a.k.a. the Word Studio) at ODY Library (on-line at <http://www.stlawu.edu/writing/>) or the Academic Achievement Office (on-line at <http://web.stlawu.edu/acskills/>).

Midterm Test (March 15) + Quiz on Readings (April 17)

The midterm will be based on the assigned readings and other texts we have examined (including illustrations, films, etc.). There also will be a section testing you on research and citation skills.

The quiz on April 17 will ask you for basic information about the readings assigned for that day (from *Life Under a Cloud* and the novel *Generation X*) and also probably one or two questions requiring longer answers.

Students must take the midterm and the quiz as scheduled. See section titled “Emergencies” below.

Please note: If you are authorized by the university to receive extended time on exams, or other special accommodations, please let me know right away so that we can make the necessary arrangements.

Seminar Portfolio

At the end of the course, you will have the opportunity to reflect on how your ideas and abilities have evolved. The seminar portfolio will allow you to evaluate your progress in developing your written, oral communication, and research skills (including reading, analyzing texts, writing, and speaking). You may also consider the evolution of your understanding of course themes. Using all of the semester’s work, you will reflect on your trajectory in this course: what you did at different points, and how it reflected your ideas at the time; and how your ideas and/ or means of articulating them may have changed over the semester. **Please save all of your written work, which you will include in the portfolio.** Please keep all these things together in a 3-ring binder, organized and tabbed.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty

I will not tolerate academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism in papers or cheating on exams) and will uphold SLU’s policy on this. I expect students to familiarize themselves with the following:

- The discussions of plagiarism in the most recent version of the *SLU Student Handbook*
- Diana Hacker’s discussions of plagiarism in *A Pocket Style Manual* (assigned for class)

You are **not** allowed to turn in papers, or parts of papers, written for other courses. I will refer suspicious papers and exams to the Academic Honor Council for investigation.

Please save all notes you make as you compose your papers, as well as all drafts (should issues of plagiarism arise).

Emergencies

In the event of illness or serious personal crisis, I will be sympathetic. I might also be able give an extension for an exam/quiz **if and only if** you alert me **immediately and in advance** of the exam, and your adviser or a University official (such as the Dean of Student Life) verifies the emergency and makes a convincing case on your behalf. Otherwise you will receive a “zero” for the exam and/or may fail the course. If I allow a student to submit an assignment later than the official due date, I will determine the new deadline for that student. Late penalties apply if the student does not meet this deadline.

More about Students' Basic Responsibilities

- **Take responsibility for your grade in the course.** It is up to **you** to come to class and to do the necessary work to earn the grade you would like for this course.
- **Read the course syllabus (this is assigned reading!)** as well as all other course documents provided throughout the semester. You are responsible for knowing all the information and rules laid out in these documents.
- **Come to class.** This can only help your grades. This is not a “distance learning” course. Do not ask me to rehash missed classes in their entirety during office hours because you were absent; this is not the purpose of office hours. Some of the audio-visual documents presented in class might not be available for viewing outside of class.
- If you miss a class, you might miss important announcements or handouts. It is up to you to find out what you missed.
- It is your responsibility to make sure that you are enrolled in the course and to drop the course if you decide not to stay in it.
- Keep up with reading assignments.
- If you have trouble studying, or with other academic skills, consult the Academic Achievement Office (online at <http://web.stlawu.edu/acskills/>)—the earlier, the better. You should talk with me about this, too.
- Do not turn in an assignment late and then ask me not to mark it down because you were ill or had an emergency. You need to get in touch with me **immediately** and **in advance** if you know you will not turn in an assignment on time.
- Please arrive for class on time. Latecomers distract the instructor and the other students.
- Be courteous. Do not hold personal conversations during class; these disturb the instructor and the other students. Don’t watch the clock—I’ll let you know when class is over. Turn off cell phones and pagers before class. Take your trash with you when you leave. Do not start packing up to leave until I indicate that class is over.

Even More Suggestions for Doing Well in This Course

- Searching for loopholes in assignment instructions and course policies makes a poor impression on the instructor and is a waste of time. It is far better to channel your energy into meeting with the professor constructively, doing your best work, and turning in assignments on time.
- Do not tell me that you turned in an assignment in class, or to the History department, and cannot imagine why I never received it. I get this excuse once or twice each semester, often accompanied by the claim that, for whatever reason, there is no back-up copy of the missing paper! (Note that this may constitute academic dishonesty, and may be brought to the Academic Honor Council.)
- Do not turn in a paper and then a few days later inform me that you “accidentally” turned in a “draft” and now intend to turn in the “correct” version. Your best bet is to get an early start on writing assignments and consult me ahead of deadlines for help.
- Don’t send me an upset e-mail message telling me that you are shocked, shocked! by an assignment grade or a mid-term warning notice, and that you demand reconsideration. If you’re serious about doing better in the class, the best way to begin is by re-evaluating your approach to your coursework and the time and effort you’re putting into the class. Of course you also should meet with me to discuss how you’re doing in class and how you could do better. But always remember that ultimately it’s up to you.
- Get to know other students in the class. If you miss a class, ask another student if you can make copies of his or her notes. Do not, however, make excessive demands of fellow students by missing many classes and depending on them to help you out. And remember that although you might be able to get a classmate to lend you notes, there is no substitute for being present in class.
- If you need clarification, please ask questions.
- Please feel free to see me in my office hours to discuss the readings, assignments, or anything else about the course.

COURSE SCHEDULE

- Please complete all readings **before class meets** on the date for which they're assigned.
- Please bring assigned readings to class.

Week 1

- **Tuesday January 23**

Morning Session: Take roll; discuss syllabus; introductions; Angel

Afternoon Session: Analyzing primary sources (oral histories from *The Good War*—handouts)

- **Thursday January 25:** The “Atomic Age” Begins

Reading: *Life Under a Cloud*, Preface to the Paperback edition (pp. ix-x) + Prologue and chapters 1, 2, & 3 (pp. 3-83 in 1999 edition) + Bibliographic Essay (pp. 251-253)

Week 2

- **Tuesday January 30:**

Morning Session:

Readings: *Life Under a Cloud*, chapters 4 & 5 (pp. 84-135 in 1993 ed.)

Hacker, *A Pocket Style Manual*, chapter on research (pp. 101-111) **and either** the chapter on MLA-style papers (pp. 112-154—you can skim pp. 135-154 for now but refer to as necessary when writing papers) **or** the chapter on Chicago-style papers (pp. 183-208—you can skim pp. 195-208 for now but refer to as necessary when writing papers).

Afternoon Session: **Meet in ODY Library [Joan Larsen—Finding a Topic]**

Thursday February 1: Analyzing Film (Discuss Corrigan chapters)

Reading: Corrigan chapters on film (T-Drive/Angel)

*****Analysis of primary source due at the beginning of class*****

Movie: *On the Beach* (1959) on the SLU network over the weekend

Days & times: Friday Feb. 2, Sat. Feb. 3, Sun Feb. 4: 5:00 & 9:00 p.m. on channel 77

Mon. Feb. 5: 5:00 & 9:00 p.m. on channel 71

Week 3

- **Tuesday February 6**

Morning Session: Presentations of Research Questions; Discuss movie *On the Beach*

*****2 copies of research question(s) due at the beginning of class + also have your research question available for the class to view on PowerPoint or another file that can be displayed on the Smartboard*****

Afternoon Session: **Meet in ODY Library [Joan Larsen—Finding Primary Sources on Your Topic (Including Using *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* and *New York Times Index*)]**

- **Thursday February 8:** Families in the Nuclear Age

Reading: *Homeward Bound* Introduction + chapters 1-2 (pp. ix-xxvi & pp. 10-48)

Week 4

- **Tuesday February 13**

Morning Session: How to Lead a Good Discussion (Class discussion & group meetings)

Reading: Printout on leading class discussions (T-Drive/Angel/E-Res)

Also: Read the chapter from *Homeward Bound* assigned to your group

*****Notes on sources (Part 1) due at the beginning of class*****

Afternoon Session: **Meet in ODY Library [Joan Larsen: Finding books on your topic (including scholarly books and chapters/essays in scholarly books)]**

Thursday February 15: Groups meet with Professor Alvah in her office (Piskor 211) to discuss plans for leading a discussion

*****Revised research question, preliminary thesis, & preliminary bibliography due at the beginning of class*****

Week 5

- **Tuesday February 20**

Morning Session: Groups 1 & 2 lead discussions on *Homeward Bound* chapters

Reading: *Homeward Bound* chapters 3 & 4 (pp. 49-99)

Afternoon Session: **Meet in ODY Library [Joan Larsen—Finding scholarly articles on your topic]**

- **Thursday February 22:** Groups 3 & 4 lead discussions on *Homeward Bound* chapters

Reading: *Homeward Bound* chapters 5 & 6 (pp. 100-142)

Week 6

- **Tuesday February 27:**

Morning Session: Groups 5 & 6 lead discussions on *Homeward Bound* chapters

Reading: *Homeward Bound* chapters 7, 8, & 9 + Postscript to 1999 edition (pp. 143-208)

Afternoon Session: **Meet with Joan Larsen in ODY—Finding and Evaluating Internet Sources**

Thursday March 1: Ethics of Using and Citing Sources (also CSQ scheduled 11:20-11:40)

Readings:

- Review *A Pocket Style Manual* pp. 115-118 (MLA) or pp. 185-189 (Chicago) on avoiding plagiarism
- Printouts on Academic honesty and plagiarism (T-Drive/Angel)
- SLU Student Handbook on plagiarism & academic honesty

*****Notes on sources (Part 2) due at the beginning of class*****

Week 7

- **Tuesday March 6**

Morning Session: Living with the Bomb [think of a better heading]

Readings: *Life Under a Cloud* chapters 6 & 7 (136-186); Begin *Cat's Cradle* (chapters 1-20/pages 1-47)

*****Research Presentation plan due at the beginning of class*****

Afternoon Session: **Writing Center/Word Studio visit**; then work in ODY Library

Thursday March 8: Envisioning Life After the Bomb

Readings: *Cat's Cradle* chapters 21-75/pages 47-167

What Use Are Flowers? (E-Res/T-Drive/Angel)

Movie: *Dr. Strangelove on the SLU network over the weekend*

Days & times: Friday March 9, Sat. March 10, Sun. March 11: 5:00 & 9:00 p.m. on channel 76

Monday March 12: 5:00 & 9:00 p.m. on channel 61

Week 8

- **Tuesday March 13**

Morning Session: Discuss *Dr. Strangelove* & conclude discussion of *Cat's Cradle*

Readings: Finish *Cat's Cradle* chapters -127/pages -287

Review(s) of *Dr. Strangelove* (handout)

Afternoon Session: Reflection

Thursday March 15: Midterm

Spring Break Saturday March 17 - Sunday March 25

Week 9

- **Tuesday March 27**

Morning & Afternoon sessions: Students meet with Professor Alvah in her office (Piskor 211) to discuss research presentations (please bring a copy of the plan you turned in to me before the break so that we can go over this together)

- **Thursday March 29** Creating Effective Presentations [Claire]

Readings: Handouts

Week 10• **Tuesday April 3**

Morning Session: Research Presentations (3)

Afternoon Session: Research Presentations (3)

• **Thursday April 5:** Research Presentations (3)

*****Functional outline due on Friday April 6 by noon: Turn in at Professor Alvah's mailbox in the Department of History (1st floor of Piskor Hall) or put in the bin on Prof. Alvah's office door (Piskor 211)*****

Week 11• **Tuesday April 10**

Morning Session: Research Presentations (3)

Afternoon Session: Research Presentations (3)

• **Thursday April 12:** Research Presentations (2)**Week 12**• **Tuesday April 17**

Morning Session: **Quiz** on today's readings; discussion of readings

Readings: *Generation X* pp. 3-86

Life Under a Cloud chapter 8 + Epilogue (pp. 187-214)

Afternoon Session: Work on research papers in ODY Library

• **Thursday April 19:**

*****Full draft of research paper due today in class*****

Week 13• **Tuesday April 24:** Student conferences with Professor Alvah (morning & afternoon sessions)• **Thursday April 26:** Student conferences with Professor Alvah, continued

Movie: *The Day After* (ABC television movie from 1982) on SLU network over the weekend

Days & times: Friday April 27, Sat. April 28, Sun. April 29: 5:00 & 9:00 p.m. on channel 73

Monday April 30: 5:00 & 9:00 p.m. on channel 71

Week 14

- **Tuesday May 1:**


Morning Session: Discuss movie *The Day After* and finish discussion of *Generation X*

Readings: *Generation X* pp. 87-183

Handout on movie *The Day After*

Afternoon Session: Class Discussion on Revising Research Papers (**Attendance is mandatory!**)

- **Thursday May 3:** Conclusion: Living with the Bomb after the Cold War

Readings: Printouts from E-Reserves/Angel/T-ve

**Seminar portfolio and revised research paper due
by no later than noon on Monday May 7—
Turn in at Professor Alvah's office (Piskor 211)**

First-Year Seminars Commonality Requirements

A First-Year Seminar will be approved if students:

- a) are given diverse and repeated opportunities to write and speak, including opportunities to benefit from detailed formative feedback from instructors and peers.
- b) are asked to assess adequately the research requirements of a particular assignment and to seek out efficiently the means of meeting those requirements.
- c) are given diverse opportunities to incorporate appropriate illustrative or persuasive detail in oral and written communication.
- d) are required to complete at least one and no more than two projects comprising some combination of formal and informal oral, written, and research activities that demonstrate a satisfactory grasp of the program's communication goals.
- e) are instructed in and held responsible for the ethical use of sources.
- f) are required to assemble all their work in a portfolio that includes a written assessment of that work, and to submit the completed portfolio to their faculty for review.