“Math”: the old-English term for harvest. When the cutting is done and the field is barren, there arises a new growth, stunted, near deformed, but alive and reaching upwards for the light. This is the aftermath.

We shall together explore and investigate the violent transformations wrought by the Second World War and the attempts of Americans and Europeans to make sense of their recent pasts and begin the difficult, but necessary work of social reconstruction, economic reconversion, and political reintegration.

**Writing:** There may be a few brief writing assignments during the semester. My initial thought for final papers is to ask students to prepare and write a lecture in which they introduce advanced undergraduates to the issues, themes, and dilemmas associated with the study of the immediate postwar period. Students may also choose a specific topic or issue on which to write. These topics must be approved by fourth week of class.

**Reading:** There will be common readings assigned each week. Each student will also, in the course of the semester, be asked to read and briefly report on at least two works of fiction, one memoir, and two films.
Weekly assignments:

“Getting to Know You:”
Introductions and Assignments

August 31:
   No reading assignment, though students are advised to read one of the first two books listed for September 10.

The War Ends, but Not the Suffering:

September 10: Choose at least one of these:

September 21: Please read both of the following:
   John Hersey, *Hiroshima*

Coming Home:

September 28:
   Choose at least one:
   Alan Allport, *Demobbed: Coming Home after the Second World War*. (Yale, 2009)
   FILM: *The Best Years of Our Live*
   MEMOIR: Henriette Roosenburg, *The Walls Came Tumbling Down*
   MEMOIR: Primo Levi, *The Reawakening*
   MEMOIR: Göran Rosenberg, *A Brief Stop on the Road from Auschwitz*

Disruptions of War

October 5:
   FILM: *Brief Encounter*
   FICTION: Graham Greene, *The End of the Affair*

October 19:
   Karen Hagemann and Sonya Michel, *Gender and the Long War Postwar* (JHUP, 2014), 1-185, 227-273
Working Class Dreams? Nightmares?

October 26:
  George Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight: Labor and Culture in the 1940s* (Illinois, 1994), 1-203

Consumer Cultures

November 2:
  Harry Truman, Address on Foreign Economic policy, Baylor University, March 6, 1947: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=12842.
  FICTION: Laura Hobson, *Gentlemen’s Agreement*

DOUBLE V

November 9:
  FICTION: Chester Himes, *If He Hollers, Let Him Go*
  FICTION: Ann Petry, *The Street*

November 16:

The Cold War Cometh

November 23:
  Choose at least one:
  Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *The Vital Center* (Houghton Mifflin, 1949)

November 30:
  Arnold Offner, *Another Such Victory: President Truman and the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Stanford, 2002).
  FILM: *The Third Man*
December 7:
  Susan Carruthers, *Cold War Captives: Imprisonment, Escape, and Brainwashing* (California, 2009)
  FICTION: George Orwell, *1984*
  FICTION: Albert Camus, *The Plague*
  FILM: *The Day the Earth Stood Still*

December 14:
  FILM: *The Bicycle Thief*