The United States’ past is one of making and remaking the nation – as a government, a place, and a concept. This course surveys that dynamic process from the post-Reconstruction period through 9/11. Examining the people, practices, and politics behind U.S. nation building, we will consider questions of how different groups have defined and adopted “American” identities, and how definitions of the nation and citizenship shifted in relation to domestic and global happenings. This will include considering how ideas of gender, race, ethnicity, and citizenship intersected within projects of nation building. We will cover topics that include domestic race relations, U.S. imperialism, mass consumption, globalization, and terrorism, and developments such as legalized segregation, the Depression, World Wars I and II, and modern social progressive and conservative movements.

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