

Syllabus

Reading US History, Jill Lepore, *These Truths: A History of the United States*

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Google Meet, Mondays, 9:30am-11:30am. September 12 through November 14, 2022. No class October 24 and 31.

This course offers reading and discussion of some of the best writing on American history. We will discuss the first half (1492-1865) of Jill Lepore's highly acclaimed history of the United States, which takes its title from the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident." In a narrative filled with "verve, wit, range, and insights," Lepore tells stories and introduces us to people who help us discuss her central question: when has America succeeded and when has it failed to live up to those "self-evident truths"?

All sessions will be held online. Optional in-person social events will be scheduled later. Participants should obtain a copy of the book and come prepared to discuss the Introduction and Chapter 1 at our September 12 session.

Buy or borrow a copy Jill Lepore, *These Truths: A History of the United States*. Paperbacks and e-books are widely available in book stores and on Amazon, and hardcovers can frequently be found in used book stores. The South Central Library System also has 34 copies.

How to participate

To join the group contact me at michaelstevens50@gmail.com

Do readings before each class (1 chapter each week)—not so much to overwhelm anyone—but long enough to allow a close discussion of the topics. **Read and be ready to participate in a lively discussion of the Introduction and Chapter 1 prior to the September 12 class.**

I will mail out a Google Meet notice every week with a link. Just click on the link and request to join the meeting. I will let you in. Desktop computer or laptop are preferred. No special software required, but if you are using a tablet or iPad, it's best to download the Google Meet app from the Apple Store or Google Play.

September 12 Introduction The Question Stated and Chapter 1, The Nature of the Past

September 19 Chapter 2, The Rulers and The Ruled

September 26 Chapter 3, Of Wars and Revolutions

October 3 Chapter 4, The Constitution of a Nation

October 10 Chapter 5, A Democracy of Numbers

October 17 Chapter 6, The Soul and the Machine

October 24 NO CLASS

October 31 NO CLASS

November 7 Chapter 7, Of Ships and Shipwrecks

November 14 Chapter 8, The Face of Battle

DATE TBD In-person holiday social. Details later.