

History 579  
Fall 2024  
Devine

### **Paper #1, Option B**

This assignment is due **Saturday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>**. Please send it to me as an email MS Word attachment or share in google docs any time before 11:59 pm on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. If you would like to discuss the assignment, I'd be happy to meet with you in person or on Zoom this coming week. Email me with a few dates and times that you are free and I will get back to you. If you would like me to read a complete draft before you submit the final version on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, please send it to me by November 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **DIRECTIONS**

Papers **should be 1500 words** (and no more than 1900 words!) They should be double-spaced and the pages should be numbered.

Give your essay a title that indicates what the paper is about and makes clear which question you are answering. (Something more revealing than "Essay #1" or "Option B") Clever titles will be duly noted.

Base your essay **entirely** on the assigned course reading. You do not have to (nor should you) draw on any outside sources.

### **HOW DO I CITE?**

If you are quoting directly from a source, cite the author and page number in parentheses within the body of the text, i.e. (Studlar, 47). All direct quotes **MUST** be in quotation marks and must be cited. Paraphrases of ideas drawn from the readings **MUST** also be cited. If you feel more comfortable using footnotes in Chicago style format, that's fine. Just make sure you are using the correct citing format.

### **HOW WILL I BE GRADED?**

You will be graded on:

- 1) **focus** (do you start the essay with a thesis statement and does it answer the question asked?)
- 2) **evidence** (do you back up your argument with specific information from the reading and is the supporting information especially effective in making your case?)
- 3) **coherence** (is your argument consistent and understandable throughout the piece? Does each paragraph introduce ONE idea and do the paragraphs flow logically?)
- 4) **scope** (does your paper deal with the question in appropriate depth and breadth?)

## **THE ASSIGNMENT**

Address **ONE** of the following prompts:

- 1) Choose **one** of the silent film actors discussed in Gaylyn Studlar's *The Mad Masquerade* and explain why his portrayals (or constructions) of masculinity resonated\* with contemporary audiences (male and/or female) and how he (and his performances) shaped and reflected ideas about masculinity and the "ideal man" that were circulating throughout American society during the silent film era.

\*- note that depending on which actor you choose, the "resonance" could be positive or negative and that the reaction might be different depending on whether one is discussing men's or women's reactions.

- 2) How does exploring the growing popularity of sports and the emergence of larger-than-life sports figures shed light on the transformations occurring in American culture during the 1920s? How, for example, did participating in sports, attending (or listening to) sporting events, or embracing sports celebrities help many Americans adjust to a "modern" society that featured new technologies, new values, new notions about gender and gender roles, new class dynamics, and even "new ways of knowing"? (You need not directly address all of these aspects of the modern society of the 1920s, they are meant rather to guide your thinking.)
- 3) Choose **one** of the themes from *The Maltese Falcon* study guide and write an essay that engages the questions under the heading. (You need not directly address all the questions, but use them to guide your thinking.)
- 4) William Marston, creator of Wonder Woman, believed that he was a champion of women's rights and women's equality. Had the term been used in his time, he likely would have considered himself a "feminist." To what extent do you concur with this self-assessment? In answering, you might consider his views on gender relations, sexuality, gender roles, family life, and how he expressed these views through the character of Wonder Woman.