

History 596
Fall 2025
Devine

Paper Option B

This assignment is due **Sunday, November 23rd**. Please send it to me as an email MS Word attachment or share in google docs any time before 11:59 pm on the 23rd. If you would like to discuss the assignment or ask for clarification regarding what the prompts are asking you to do, I'd be happy to meet with you in person or on Zoom. Email me with a few dates and times that you are free and I will try to accommodate your schedule. If you would like me to read a draft of your essay, be sure to send me a complete draft by Thursday, November 20th.

If you did the Option A paper, you do not need to do this assignment, however, if you want to submit a second paper, I will count only the higher of the two grades.

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, including AI-generated content.

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. (Radchenko, 247). 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. In the readings on sports, movies, and music, we see how Cold War-generated preoccupations, priorities, and prejudices could (and did) permeate these aspects of high and popular culture. What effects – both good and bad – did this “politicization” of culture generate? For example, did the infusion of Cold War concerns into cultural products such as sports, movies, and music make these products more complex, compelling, or artistic? Or did this process corrupt, oversimplify, and degrade them? Or, does the answer vary depending on whether one is talking about sports, movies, or music?

[In answering, you should include examples from at least two countries – China, the US, the Soviet Union, Canada, Czechoslovakia, etc. – and at least two aspects of culture – sports, movies, or music.]

2. Why did Ngo Dinh Diem lead both South Vietnam and the United States down the path to disaster and ultimate defeat? Why was he able to remain in power despite being such a “difficult” ally for the US and so unpopular with his own people?
3. “Oil, not ideology drove the history of the Middle East both during and after the Cold War.” To what extent do you think this assertion is correct?

[In answering, keep in mind that “ideology” could encompass more than communism, anti-communism, liberal democracy, or capitalism. It can also include other systems of thought and belief such as radical Islam, Zionism, or pan-Arabism.]

4. Drawing on either Radchenko’s or Friedman’s books (or both) to support your answer, to what extent would you say that Moscow’s insatiable desire for respect, legitimacy, and recognition as both a superpower and the leader of the global communist revolution contributed to the Soviet Union’s ultimate demise? Did the goal of recognition as a superpower or the goal of recognition as the leader of the global communist revolution play more of a role in shaping the fate of the USSR?