

American Studies 445
The Cold War and American Culture
Essay #1
Due March 1 at 7 p.m.

Write an original essay based on one of the following guiding questions:

1. To what extent do you find the containment metaphor a useful way of thinking about American culture in the early Cold War?
2. To what extent do you find American culture in the early Cold War period to be shaped by a fear of communist aggression?
3. To what extent do you find American culture in the early Cold War period to be shaped by a fear of nuclear annihilation?

Keep the principles of good writing in mind – state a thesis clearly and defend it with evidence. Your writing must be analytic, not merely descriptive. Your essay should reflect your familiarity with course materials and your consideration of these materials. Regardless of the question you choose, you should refer explicitly to *Homeward Bound*, a piece of popular literature (Spillane or one of Savage’s comics), and a film (*High Noon*, *On the Beach*, or *The Manchurian Candidate*). Essays will be assessed based on the development and defense of a suitably sophisticated thesis.

Undergraduates: Your essays should be 4-6 pages in length.

Graduate students: Your essays should be 6-8 pages in length and should include, in addition to the requirements stated above, explicit discussion of the positions developed in the review essays that you have read.

All essays should be typed, double-spaced, with reasonable margins and a font no smaller than the one on this page. Quotations and references to texts should be cited appropriately and consistently.

Essays are due at 7 p.m. and will be considered late thereafter – there is thus no advantage to be gained from coming to class late in order to finish the essay.

Please place the following information in a header in the upper right corner of the first page:

Your Name
AMST 445 Essay #1
March 1, 2007