Slide 1


[Photo of Robert Kennedy, Jacqueline Kennedy and her children at John F. Kennedy’s funeral]

Audio: I have entitled this lecture the Soul of a Super Power because amidst the tremendous economic growth and enhanced international stature of the United States following World War II, there were also questions raised as to this country's fundamental values and to what extent was our political and social systems really supporting those values. So while we're going to see a real rise in American power during this time period, we're also going to see that power humbled through war in Southeast Asia. We're going to see fundamental American practices called into question through the modern Civil Rights Movement. We're going to see ongoing debates over the role of government in people's lives and there will be real questions raised as to how well the United States dealt with the ideological threat of Communism during this postwar period as well. Let me also provide a little background to the picture that you see here, this was from the funeral procession of John F. Kennedy after he had been assassinated as America's president in November 1963. Shown here in the center of the picture are his widow Jacqueline and their two children, Caroline and John Junior. And John Junior, as he had learned to do is saluting his father's casket as it goes by. And this picture is not only very poignant in its own time but became even more so in 1999, when John Junior, himself, died in a plane crash, along with his wife and his sister-in-law, a plane that he, himself, was piloting so it added another layer of tragedy to the Kennedy family here during the second half of the Twentieth Century. And before this lecture is through, we'll be talking about the death of another Kennedy, Jack Kennedy or John F. Kennedy's younger brother, Robert, who would be running for president in 1968.

Slide 2

Text: Baby Boom generation

[Image of a Social Security card with “1946-1964 this number has been established for Baby Boomers” written on it]

Audio: As World War II came to an end, and of course keep in mind that the great depression was only recently in America's background as well, there was a real encouragement on the part of the U.S. government that American citizens should now be able to enjoy the benefits of all of their sacrifices in recent years. And so there was a real push for Americans to just settle down, start having families, start you know having babies. If you were a returning veteran, the GI Bill was a piece of legislation that made it very easy to have a government-sponsored education. And this was true not only for World War II veterans but a few years later when the Korean War broke out in the early 1950's, those veterans will also get the benefit of the GI Bill. And so to a great extent, American citizens were encouraged to try to enjoy the good life, they were
encouraged to feel as though the economy was going to continue to grow. We weren't close to having another one of these severe catastrophes like the great depression that had begun in 1929. There was a real push for middle class Americans to buy homes and move out into suburban communities that were springing up in America's urban areas. Again, settle down, start having families, let's try to put many of the hardships of the recent years behind us. And therefore, beginning in 1946, you have the birth of what was eventually dubbed the baby boom or baby boomer generation. It ends up being this demographic bulge, if you will, in the population patterns in the United States because for a period of time those who had been adults during the great depression in World War II are having children at a very prodigious rate. And I chose this particular image, which refers to the baby boomers on a social security card because as some of you are probably aware of today, questions have been raised as to whether or not the social security system can really survive baby boomers now hitting retirement age because they are such a sizeable portion of the overall U.S. population that there may not be enough workers from younger generations to be able to support baby boomers in retirement. Now not to get too far afield but it also doesn't help that for years Congress has been raiding social security funds to pay for other initiatives and had that not happened we would be looking at a much more stable scenario so I'm just trying to make sure that you're familiar with the larger problem of which this is a part. But in any case, in the more optimistic years in the late 1940's on into the 1950's, you do have this population explosion through what becomes the baby boom generation and again it goes hand in hand with this idea of encouraging Americans that stability is here to stay, that they can focus on domestic pursuits, that they can settle down and stop having to make the sort of tough choices that have been common during the great depression and World War II years.

Slide 3

Text: Suburbanization – linked to conformity

[Ad for suburban houses from 1957]

Audio: So as I alluded to a moment ago, during the late 1940s and on into the 1950s one of the dominant themes of domestic life in America was this push for suburbanization; for the growth of communities really geared towards a rising middle class, especially wartime veterans taking advantage of the GI Bill. And one name of this becomes synonymous with suburbanization is Levittown. William Levitt owned a company that helped to lead the way in terms of putting together relatively low-cost, easy to build housing. So you see an advertisement here for this company that was behind much of this construction. The thing about these homes though, there didn't tend to be a tremendous amount of variation in the models available to you so if you looked at aerial photographs or other pictures of these communities, they did have something of a cookie-cutter feel to them and I wanted to link that to a broader theme. When we talk about the late 1940s, and especially the 1950s, although again on the surface plenty of things are going very well for this country again in terms of economic growth and a rising standard of living and
an ability to influence events overseas like never before, but there were critics who were suggesting that in various ways American life in the 1950s was pushing conformity to an unhealthy degree. And I'm not saying that the fact that you didn't always have a tremendous range of home construction choices; I mean I'm not suggesting that that in and of itself is a terribly harmful thing, but I did want to link it for a moment to some other trends. When you look at the prevalence of segregation in the former Confederate states that have continued to have a very pronounced color line, now decades and decades after the Civil War and Reconstruction, it does make you wonder about the extent to which there is a kind of conformity being pursued here. When you look at the fact it was very difficult to defend yourself against charges of being a communist or a communist sympathizer, or being what was sometimes called "pink" which suggested that you were leaning a bit too dangerously in the direction of supporting the red menace of Communism. You know we're about to talk about the second red scare and ideological life in America, so we'll come back to that. Many people commented that in these suburban communities, there was a great deal of pressure to go to church, not so much because of whatever might be going on in your heart in terms of feeling a sense of faith, but more about...well it's how you kept up the proper image for your neighbors; that going to church was just more of a social function and less of an emphasis, again, on matters of the heart and soul that would arguably be more important. We certainly have plenty accounts of college students who felt as though there wasn't enough variation in the kind of curricula that they had to choose from and, therefore, they felt like the college experience to some extent was about turning young people into you know this sort of cookie cutter image of what a young adult was going to be emerging from college. So I'm trying to keep it short and sweet as these are part of the basic lectures in this series, but the 1950s has been criticized for having this kind of emphasis on conformity. Another way in which this played itself out; the 1950s was a decade in which large numbers of American households really got accustomed to watching television regularly. TV's became widespread enough and inexpensive enough that you would see them in plenty of homes and so if any of you have ever seen the black and white reruns of I Love Lucy with Desi Arnaz and Lucille Ball for example, that was one of the hit shows of the time period. But if you looked at much of what was offered, especially in prime time television, it did give you this very whitewashed if you will image of American life and especially American family life. I mean you just would have this impression that all families were basically white middle class and you know teenagers didn't have serious problems with substance abuse or identity issues and so forth. Typically on these shows, spouses would sleep in separate beds and it just gave you this very watered-down image of how complex that American life might be and certainly that people of color were an important part of the American experience. So to some extent, popular culture was also encouraging people to conform to this very over-simplified version of what American life was like during this time period.

Slide 4

Text: Realities of International Politics
Audio: What I would like to do now is to turn to the subject of foreign policy and military affairs; in other words, the origins we came to call the "Cold War." Now the idea behind a Cold War is that the two primary nations involved in it, the United States and the Soviet Union, were never directly shooting at each other; although certainly there were times when their spies were taking each other's lives. But by and large, the United States and the Soviet Union had this lengthy period of competition where they found just about every way to challenge one another short of actually going to war with each other so often times they'd use their allies or client states. In other words, for example, the Soviets used to some extent the North Vietnamese and Vietcong gorillas in Southeast Asia as a way to fight the Cold War against the United States. And much later, it won't be covered in this lecture but when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979, the United States eventually helped the Mohiuddin Afghan resistance which did include radical Islamists, but used them to help fight the Soviet Union, again, kind of fighting the Cold War by proxy. The Cold War ended up involving economic competition, international athletics got swept up in it; it was very difficult to escape the Cold War during this period of time and there was a real fear that there would be some kind of exchange of nuclear weapons, especially during its earlier years. So we have to make some sense out of the Cold War here so as an introduction to it, I've listed a few realities of international politics that Americans were gradually waking up to after World War II. First of all, there is another superpower on the black so to speak and that is the Soviet Union. Despite the fact that at least 20 million...I'll say that again, 20 million of its citizens were killed by the Germans during World War II and a fair part of the country was occupied; tremendous damage done to it. Nevertheless, the Soviets emerged from World War II as the world's other superpower. I would suggest definitely not as powerful as the United States, but it didn't always look that way to Americans and some American politicians deliberately created the impression that the Soviets were stronger than was actually the case. But be that as it may, the Soviet Union with its rival communist model for politics and economics and social live and so forth, the Soviet Union was now standing to some extent in opposition to the United States. These two countries had been allies in World War II, but if you go back to my lecture on World War II I said a few things about how it was always an uneasy partnership at best. And, in the final stages of World War II, Soviet troops occupied Eastern Europe. I'll be showing you a map in a little bit that will discuss this in more detail. But the Soviets were basically leaving their troops in place and encouraging communist movements in those countries. They rationalized it by saying that after being invaded twice by Germany in the 20th century; they were entitled to use Eastern Europe as a buffer zone in the event that Germany might rise again. And at least in World War II, there had been some eastern European countries that had...
joined with the Germans in attacking the Soviets but again, this was also to a large extent a rationalization for very aggressive foreign policy on the part of the Soviet Union. So there is a concern if the Soviets are occupying Eastern Europe, many Americans wondered, "Are they going to stop there? Will they move into other countries that have closer ties to America, such as France, Italy, perhaps even Britain?" Who knew where Communism would stop. Another fact to consider was that in Asia communist movement was making tremendous progress. There had been a long civil war taking place in China between communists and nationalists going all the way back to the 1920s. By the late 1940s, it's clear that the communists were winning and in fact in 1949, they finished off their triumph; Mao Zedong becoming the communist leader of China and his nationalist opponents fleeing to the island of Taiwan, not too far offshore of the mainland of Asia. And the final point that I'll make about these realities that Americans were facing: I'd just like you to keep in mind that up to this point in history, the typical practice for this country was always to draw down its military at the end of a major conflict; to go back to a very small peacetime permanent military. You know not to be spending a great deal of money on research and development of new weapon systems; definitely to focus on domestic pursuits and I already told you to a fair extent, Americans are being encouraged to do exactly that. But when we look at the first post-World War II president, Harry Truman, as much as he wants Americans to experience prosperity and on some level not to worry, not to have to sacrifice, he also feels that in order to meet this communist threat, the United States is going to have to be more vigilant than it's ever been in peacetime before and that its going to need a larger, more robust, and more extended military apparatus than this country has ever had before in time of peace. And so it's obviously going to cost a great deal of money to make that happen and so this is another direction in which America is headed as World War II comes to an end. So the cold War which at the time you know many Americans thought this was something that their grandchildren would eventually would be dealing with, the Cold War, it doesn't have one moment. I mean it's not like for example when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Obviously the United States was drawn into World War II and that's one of these clarifying, crystallizing moments where plenty of Americans can tell you who were alive back then what they were doing when they learned about the Pearl Harbor attack. And in terms of orienting Americans to the reality of modern day terrorism, obviously the September 11th attacks served as another galvanizing moment. But the Cold War, it sneaks up on Americans a bit. There isn't one moment; there isn't a Fort Sumter or a Lexington Green kind of moment or a Pearl Harbor kind of moment, but certainly by about 1947, when Harry Truman announces that America's primary foreign policy doctrine will be one of containing radical ideologies. He doesn't use the word Communism, but everybody knows ultimately what he's talking about. By 1947, there's a pretty widespread sense that there's a new kind of conflict on. It's not a shooting war per se, at least in terms of Americans and Soviets shooting at each other, but that this is going to be a very pervasive struggle. And so that is what I'm beginning to outline here; the Cold War.

**Slide 5**
Text: Divided Germany

[Map of the division of Germany after World War II between Britain, France, the United States, and the Soviet Union]

Audio: During the late 1940s, the focus of this emerging Cold War was Europe, even more specifically, Germany. Because Germany had surrendered unconditionally to the allied powers at the end of World War II, as a part of the peace settlement, the four major allied countries and their flags are shown here. Moving in a counter clockwise direction from the upper left-hand corner you have Britain, France, the United States, and the Soviet Union. And France's position here, by the way, is a little bit ambiguous because the French had been steamrollered by the Germans in 1940 and surrendered after 6 weeks and there were a fair number of French who actually collaborated with the Nazis; others who just kind of kept their heads down and didn't really do anything actively for either side. But there was also a French Resistance and Free French military units who contributed to the allied victory and there was feeling after the war, especially on the part of the British, that they needed France rehabilitated to be an ally in political and military affairs on the continent. So the French get a seat at this table, even though you could to some extent question whether or not they really belong there. But these are the four major allied powers and they basically divide up Germany between them in what is supposed to be a temporary arrangement. The idea is to try to root out former Nazis, prosecute them, make sure that the situation is stabilized, and then eventually Germany would be put back together again. The problem is it was not put back together again until 1989 into 1990 so that will be a subject for a different lecture here. But just to work with the geography a little bit, you see here that Great Britain occupies the bulk of what was northwestern Germany shown there in green, the French in blue have a portion of southwestern Germany, the United States predominately is in the south to southeastern Germany, and the Soviets have eastern Germany. But to make this situation a little more complicated, the former capital of Berlin, former German capital, is located pretty much right smack in the middle of that Soviet zone so where you see that small cluster of different colors, Berlin itself was also divided up four ways between these countries and so geographically, this presented a very odd situation. As we moved through the late 1940s, it became increasingly clear that the Soviets had a different vision for what was to happen to Germany than the French, the British, and the Americans generally agreed upon. So as these three western European countries were increasingly cooperating with one another in how they administered their German territories, the Soviets were increasingly the odd man out with, again, a different agenda. And so for the French, American, and British zones of Berlin, they increasingly came to feel like these very isolated outposts of democracy surrounded by a much larger communist world. In a moment, we're going to talk about one of the key episodes where differences over Germany are going to raise tensions in this emerging Cold War. But anyway, keep in mind, this was supposed to be a temporary arrangement; it ends up going on for decades and I will come back to this story here shortly. And I'll also say, by the way -- and this is where I do want to be fair to the grievances that the Soviets had against the west -- in the interest of anti-
Communism, U.S., French and British officials to some extent would be willing to look the other way with certain former Nazis if they felt that these individuals could be of assistance in building spy networks and economic networks and in various ways strengthening Germany against the possibility of a communist takeover. So the desire to root out former Nazis leftover from the war, that desire will be gradually weakened by the new political considerations of the Cold War and it makes it easier, for example, for Germans who want to sweep the Holocaust under the rug. In other words, who don't want there to be too many tough questions asked as to who knew about the genocide of the Nazis and who may have actually supported it; who may have cooperated in it. That effort to really...to get at the justice of the situation is going to be diminished by the new political realities of dealing with the communist threat and I mean the communist threat was certainly a very real thing. The Soviets had a horrible human rights track record with their own people and certainly in the countries that the Soviets occupied, they weren't Boy Scouts either. But I just want to show you some of the shades of grey in this very complex situation.

**Slide 6**

**Text:** Berlin Blockade/Airlift 1948-1949

[Ad for the Douglas Company]

**Audio:** So to build upon the previous slide with the map of Germany in 1948 you see one of the major showdowns of the early Cold War between East and West. I've already mentioned the precarious position that West Berlin was in. West Berlin basically, the combination of the British, the American, and the French zones of what had been the German capital. West Berlin was very vulnerable because it did lie in the middle of this broader Soviet Communist zone of eastern Germany. And what the Soviets were doing however, was in the early post-war years, the Soviets were allowing certain highways be opened for westerners to ship supplies into West Berlin because the city could not feed itself and the Soviets were not inclined to be terribly supportive themselves but they allowed a certain highway routes to be opened so that the people of West Berlin could have ties to the outside democratic world and get the supplies that they needed to function. But the Soviet leader in 1948 is still Joseph Stalin whom I talked about in a previous lecture, a man who ultimately was responsible for more deaths among his own people than Hitler killed through the holocaust which again I don't bring up to try to let Hitler off the hook in any way. But Stalin is still the Soviet leader at this point and he doesn't like the extent to which the other allied powers are disagreeing with him over Germany, and as I mentioned in the previous slide, are already beginning to try to orient their German zones into a kind of anticommunist position. So he decides to force the issue in 1948. He basically closes off those highway routes that allowed the western allies to get supplies and so forth into West Berlin. And what Stalin is hoping to do is to force these Western countries to come to the bargaining table on his terms and be more amenable to his vision for the future of Germany, one that is going to be more suitable to Soviet needs. But President Harry Truman, and the White House, decides that
he doesn't wish to back down to the Soviets. After all, for U.S. leaders of his generation, a big lesson that they've got in the back of their minds from recent history is what happened in the early through the late 1930s when democracies kept backing down against Hitler. And you can think of the Munich Pact of 1938 that I described in my previous lecture, as the ultimate example of appeasement in modern history. And so the lesson that many U.S. leaders are operating with now and the 1940s and on into the 50s and 60s is that the worst thing you can do is to appease or to appear as though you are appeasing a rival. So Harry Truman was determined to be tough. So when the Soviets carried out what I'm referring to here as the Berlin Blockade, the United States and England also played a pretty important role in this began a massive airlift. The Berlin Airlift that would go on for more than 300 days and it was basically because the airport facilities in West Berlin were pretty limited, it would have been difficult to land enough of these planes and off load the supplies to make things efficient, so instead, what tended to happen is that you'd have air drops. Primarily military aircraft would fly over West Berlin and drop with parachutes and would drop out packages of food and other things that West Berliners needed. And as far as Harry Truman was concerned, he'd keep on doing this for as long as was necessary for the Soviets to decide that this whole thing was just silly. And so like I said, it went on for more than three years. Millions of tons of supplies were dropped and ultimately the Soviets decided that this was embarrassing to them. Because when you saw pictures of, for example, children cheering as American planes were dropping out food it's difficult for the Soviets to put a spin on this that didn't make them look pretty heartless. But instead of showing you an actual photograph of Berliners waiting for their supplies, I thought I'd show you how one U.S. Company sought to take advantage of this. Douglas, today it's the McDonald Douglas Company but the Douglas Company was one of the producers of military aircraft for the United States and there's nothing wrong with the fact that they did this but they're trying to put together a marketing campaign that takes advantage of recent events. So here you see an advertisement indicating that milk is now a new weapon of democracies. So if you think about it and if you make planes that ultimately can drop ordinance and will kill people, it does at times make it a little bit difficult to present the most family friendly image to consumers. Now of course you could argue that these planes are protecting our country and that's fine. But here in the particular situation of the Berlin Airlift here is a chance to present a somewhat kinder, gentler, if you will, version of an American company that is a part of the National Defense industry. So in any case, as I said in 1949 Joseph Stalin finally decided that this just wasn't getting him the results that he was looking for so he did back down and life went back more or less to usual. I would like to fast forward for a moment because I don't cover this in a separate slide. But eventually, in early 1960s while Jack Kennedy was president of the United States, the Soviets through their East German allies will build a series of fortifications loosely called the Berlin Wall, to basically cut off West Berlin from the larger Soviet controlled zone of East Germany. What many in the West rightfully pointed out was that it was a real condemnation of communism that they had to build walls not to keep their enemies out but to keep their own citizens from escaping. And that was the basic reason why the Berlin Wall was constructed was because there was a sort of brain drain. Many of your talented
Germans who were still living under communist rule were going into West Berlin and using that as a conduit to escape into the democratic world. Therefore, in order to put a stop to that the Berlin Wall went up and it was gradually improved over the years. It first went up in 1961, which just happened to be the first year that John F. Kennedy was in office and then gradually over the years it was strengthened. And it was over 80 miles of fortification if you had stretched it out in a straight line. And there were Germans living under communism who died trying to escape. There were also others who were successful but the East German guards around the Berlin Wall had orders to shoot to kill, so it was difficult to get back and forth. You might try to bluff your way through with forged papers. You might try to tunnel underneath. There were a few people who even tried to use hot air balloons or other techniques of going over the wall. If you're interested in spy novels certainly Berlin was the center of Cold War espionage. So if you like to read historically based fiction there's plenty out there. But in any case it's really back here in the late 1940s that Berlin begins to become this hot spot in the Cold War. And please excuse the quote that I'm about to use. Historians do like to look for exotic quotes. The Soviet leader who succeeded Joseph Stalin into power, Nikita Khrushchev, who had been a protégé of Stalin's, Khrushchev eventually referred to West Berlin as the "testicles of the West" in the sense that the easiest way to put the pressure on the West and cause discomfort was to somehow put pressure on this vulnerable West Berlin outpost of democracy. So if that helps you understand things a little better so be it. And please excuse the analogy but it is historically accurate.

**Slide 7**

**Text:** Europe’s “Iron Curtain”

[Map of Europe during Cold War]

**Audio:** So to build upon the previous few slides and bring a bit more geography into the story here, as I've said, Europe is really the initial focus of the Cold War in the late 1940s. And gradually individuals were speaking about the Cold War as a battle of East versus West, and the division of Europe itself seemed to symbolize this larger Cold War struggle. As I mentioned in the previous lecture, the Soviets did occupy much of Eastern Europe in the closing stages of World War II and eventually, beginning in 1946 British Prime Minister Winston Churchill referred to areas under Soviet control as "languishing behind what he called an Iron Curtain." So that metaphor would stick and there would continue to be this idea Europe was separated by an Iron Curtain with Communist dominated countries on the wrong side of that curtain and relatively democratic nations on the other side gravitating towards the United States. Now the Iron Curtain metaphor is not a perfect description of what was going on here and I'll talk more about it here in a moment. But let me just summarize the geography that you're looking at here. In the early years of the Cold War there were certain Eastern European countries that were referred to as satellites of the Soviet Union, countries that did not have the complete freedom to determine their own political and economic and social affairs because the Soviets kept troops
nearby and in various ways encouraged Communist movements. Those countries were Poland, the eastern zone of Germany that eventually became East Germany or the German Democratic Republic. The word democratic probably deserving to be in quotes, also the nations of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria and so the Iron Curtain metaphor held reasonably true for those countries. Now there was an independent Communist country in Europe namely, Yugoslavia, to some extent, Albania as well and the Iron Curtain metaphor doesn't work so well in those cases but the Soviets certainly had a block of countries in Eastern Europe that were in one way other another beholding to them. Meanwhile, the United States, eventually what happens is that the French, British, and American zones of Germany were combined into one country called the federal Republic of Germany also known as West Germany. So again, what was supposed to be a temporary arrangement with the Germany of World War II is now becoming a more lasting situation. And because both sides had a fundamental distrust of one another, in 1949, all of the countries that are in green here banded together to form what was called the North Atlantic Trade Organization, also known as NATO. And NATO was basically mutual defense organization. The idea being to prevent the kind of scenario that had started World War II, in other words, if any member of NATO was attacked and even if it was a very small country, for example, let's just throw one out there, Belgium. You know, even if a small country like Belgium was attacked it would be considered an assault upon all of the other members of NATO that by the way, include Canada and the United States on the other side of the Atlantic. In 1955, the Soviets responded with the creation of the Warsaw Pact that banded together the various countries, in purple or lavender that you see here on the map. So basically, Europe, and to some extent, the broader world was dividing into armed camps. And it was a real sign of the growing mistrust between the United States and the Soviet Union that you had these kinds of arrangements in place. And unfortunately, although both sides tended take moves that they saw as defensive the other side would tend to feel that your defensive move was actually threatening to them and therefore they feel that they had to take some retaliatory action. And then when they took retaliatory action you felt like well now you're just upping the ante and making things more dangerous and so now we have to perform our own countermeasure. And so this kind of spiraling just went on and on, whether it was an arms race, whether it was with international agreements but be that as it may, there is a strong sense now of Europe being very politically divided according to this idea of an Iron Curtain. You do see there are a number of non-alliance states but most of Europe is pretty intimately swept up in this new international rivalry.

**Slide 8**

**Text:** Korean War (1950-1953)

[Map of North and South Korea]
Audio: With the possible exception of the war of 1812 the Korean conflict of the 1950s might be the most forgotten war in U.S. history, as far as U.S. citizens are concerned. But it's important for our purposes here because it signals that the focus of the Cold War was moving into Asia by the 1950s. To set the stage for what we're about to talk about here, in the early 20th century and up into World War II the Japanese had dominated the Korean peninsula basically turning that area into a colony where the Korean people were severely abused. When the Japanese defeat in World War II it would if now be the United States and the Soviet Union that would dictate political events on the Korean peninsula. Basically, what happened was that North Korea was set up as a Communist state and a client of both Soviet Union the Communist Chinese. Remember by 1950 main land China is 1992 firmly in the hands of the Communists. Meanwhile South Korea had been set up as a client of the United States. It was not a democratic country, at least not at the time, not for the most part. But I would say nor accurately, I would say anti-Communist state rather than I would call it a democratic state. And that is not just a difference in semantics. But in any case, you've got one Korea aligned with Communist powers and then there's another Korea that's aligned with anti-Communist powers. And plenty of Koreans on both sides of the border between these two countries were anxious to reunite the peninsula behind their particular political movements. So in other words, this was a very volatile situation just waiting for a spark. That is spark was provided when North Korean troops came across the border and attacked South Korea. And for the United States, especially President Harry Truman this was seen as a key moment now to enforce his fundamental foreign policy doctrine which was the idea of containment. Harry Truman had made this America's official policy a few years earlier back in 1947. The idea behind containment was essentially that the United States would stop the spread of communism. Now when he initially announced it he didn't use the word communism because the Soviets were to some extent still supposed to be partners. He didn't want to be too offensive about it but he laid out his case in such way that everybody knew at the end of the day that Truman was talking about communism. And therefore the containment doctrine was stating that the United States would spend whatever amount of money was necessary and if it required it use whatever amount of military force was necessary to stop the spread of communism. And again, containment really has that pre-World War 2 lesson of avoiding appeasement at its core. The idea being that Hitler was allowed to push around some weaker countries because the major democracies, for various reasons, were not inclined to challenge him. So now the containment doctrine is looking at the new aggressor, the Soviet Union but to some extent China as well and saying that the last thing we're going to do now is the to make the mistake that had helped to bring on World War II. This time we're going to hold firm. So Harry Truman saw it as a real test of the collective wills of the West that with South Korea being attacked here that he needed step in. Now Harry Truman acted through the United Nations, which had been recently created back in 1945. The United Nations to this day has a security council with several countries who are permanent members. And each of those countries has a veto power over any potential military operations. And back in 1950 the Soviet Union was one of those countries on the Security Council. So the Soviets could have vetoed the use of U.N. troops in Korea. However, the Soviets
at the time were boycotting the United Nations because they claimed it was basically a puppet organization for the United States, that this U.S. government was pulling all the strings. So the Soviets missed their opportunity there and in 1950 U.N. troops were injected into the fight, although the vast majority of them were U.S. troops. I want to be clear. America is doing most of the heavy lifting here. And as shown on the map, in the early stage of the war things went very well for the North Koreans. They actually push today South Koreans down to this rather small piece of land in the southeastern portion of the peninsula. So things were looking very desperate. But leading the U.N. force that would get involved in this conflict was one of America's biggest heroes from World War II, General Douglas MacArthur. And he made an am fib I couldn't say landing behind enemy lines, at a place called Inchon, which is near the South Korea capital of Seoul, there on the western shore of the peninsula about halfway up, and that began to change the character of the war. The North Koreans were caught now with danger of being cut all as U.S. and other forces moved in from the rear. So the North Koreans began a retreat. And this put Harry Truman in a bit of an awkward position because as you U.N. forces were re taking South Korea the whole within arose, "Well, should they push on into North Korea?" Because it was one thing to say they you were there to protect the South Koreans and repel an invasion. In terms of public opinion and selling that to Americans and others, it was pretty clear of course, it's appropriate to do that. But now is it also appropriate to move into North Korea? And even if it is, what happens if you ultimately good for regime change? North Korea borders on Communist China and the Soviets of course are not far away either as shown on this map. And given that the Soviets by the early 1950s, they have atomic bombs as well and as the Chinese also have a massive military there is the risk that if you go too hard after North Korea you might bring one or both of these larger powers into the war. And if that happens you may actually have a war in which atomic weapons are exchanged and it escalates into something that could potentially become World War 3 and as Albert Einstein was known to say. Now he wasn't sure exactly how World War II was going to be fought but you he knew how World War 4 would be fought, and that would be with sticks and stones because there wasn't going to be a great deal of civilization left if we had a World War 3 so this is something Harry Truman is keeping in mind but his military commander Douglas MacArthur is very gung ho that U.N. forces need to push on through South Korea continue north. As a matter of fact as U.N. forces did move into North Korea and get closer to the borders of China, Chinese officials began warning the West that they weren't going to look too kindly at U.N. forces on their border. And so again President Truman continued to have some concerns that his agenda might be getting too aggressive but Douglas MacArthur as far as he was concerned, U.N. forces shouldn't only occupy North Korea but they should go on ahead and push into China itself. Well, as U.N. forces did get closer to China in 1950 suddenly the entire nature of the changed. Suddenly there were plenty of opposing forces against the U.N. and they looked suspiciously Chinese rather than Korean. Basically, the Chinese declared that hundreds of thousands of "Volunteers" had decided to join to North Korean war effort. In other words China was not really admitting officially that it had a declared war and become part of this thing but obviously Chinese forces were a major part of the conflict now.
And so U.N. forces found themselves terribly outnumbered? In frigid conditions now in North Korea by late-1950 they were force to retreat. They pretend to find the better firepower, the better weapons but the Chinese were just relying on sheer numbers to threaten U.N. forces. So U.N. forces had to retreat a bit and eventually the war settled into a kind of stalemate. As a matter of fact, it was not the Vietnam conflict what was the first stale mate of the atomic era for the United States. It was really the war in Korea and the war had such a lengthy stalemate that it became very unpopular in this country and here Truman did take a bit of a hit for it politically. It is one reason why he chose not to run for toot term in 1952. And the war did not end up coming to an end until 1953 about which time Dwight Eisenhower was the President of the United States. And in there still is to this day there is not a full-fledged peace settlement to bring this conflict of the 1950s to an end. There is an arm miss cities, which was basically a temporary agreement to stop shooting alternative each other. And there is a demilitarized zone that divides North and South Korea and the boundaries between those two countries are very similar to what the boundaries were before this war began. But to this day there had not been a complete resolution of the conflict. There have been some small agreements over the years but as you might know because it occasionally comes up in the news there also continuous to be the occasional exchange of artillery shells and other violent actions between these two countries. So there are thousands of U.S. troops who are stationed on the South Korean side of the demilitarized zone. This is still seen as one of the world's hot spots. So the Korean War is largely treated as another Cold War show down. Technically the war was fought to a draw. There is some tendency to remember it as a U.S. victory because of course is the United States did safe South Korea. It was also a war in which more than 50 thousand servicemen died. As a matter of fact, not too many less than would die in the Vietnam conflict but it took a long time for a Korean War Memorial to be built in this country. And again, for a long time it did seem like this was the forgotten conflict. I would like to come back to Harry Truman and Douglas MacArthur for just a moment. Whether Douglas MacArthur felt as though his Commander-in-Chief, President Truman was not sufficiently tough enough in prosecuting the war he began to make public statements criticizing the President's perspective on the conflict suggesting that he needed to have to military fight for more concrete and aggressive objectives. And this really violated this principle of civilian control of the military. Senior military officer may privately suggest alternatives to a President and indicate that they don't entirely agree but once they have their official orders they're supposed to do their utmost to carry them out or else they should resign. And Douglas MacArthur wasn't doing that. He was speaking out publicly. Some people wondered if MacArthur was planning to come back to the states and run for president in 1952. And for a while it looked like Truman himself might run. So this had all kinds of overtones to it and ultimately, in 1951, Harry Truman who was very sensitive to the fact that he had only served a few years in the military. You know Truman had been a veteran of World War I, serving in the Missouri National Guard. He had been a junior officer, whereas Douglas MacArthur, even back in World War I had been a general. And to some extent I think MacArthur still looked at President Truman as the former Captain Truman of the World War I years. And President
Truman felt a little bit inferior because he didn't have the sort of military track record as MacArthur. But Truman stood on principle, stood on the rule of law and civilian control of the military and he forced MacArthur to resign and retire from the army because he had know publicly critical of the president. Be that as it may, the Korean War will gradual peter out by 1953, another show down in this larger Cold War struggle.

**Slide 9**

**Text:** Second Red Scare

[Image of TIME magazine cover with Senator McCarthy]

**Audio:** I've already mentioned that there was a strong ideological component to this Cold War struggle. Going back to when the Soviet Union was first created in 1917, thanks to a communist revolution, there had been a fair amount of uneasiness in the United States over how communism stood as an antithesis to American values. And there had actually been what was called the first red scare back from about 1918 to 1920 when in immediate aftermath of the creation of the Soviet Union there was a real concern that immigrants to this country from Eastern Europe were bringing over that radical ideology, they were using labor unions to try to destabilize the U.S. economy and bring about anarchy, chaos, ultimately to bring communists to power. And so there had been a real crack down on civil liberties even before World War I had come to an end but continuing shortly thereafter. That was the first red scare. Well now beginning in late 1940s but intensify in the 1950s was the second red scare. And although it began before the man shown here in this picture really became prominent, we often refer to the second red scare by another name and that is McCarthyism because Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin was really the one figure who capitalized on what would ultimately be a kind of paranoia in this country and capitalized upon it more effectively than any other public figure. Now McCarthy happened to be a Republican but I want to be very clear that there were plenty of Democrats and Republicans who were using the communist threat as a way to advance their careers and were not being responsible about it. But again, probably the most outrageous of all of them was Joseph McCarthy. So our attention tends to focus on him when we look back upon this period of history. At the beginning of the year 1950, Joseph McCarthy was a long way from a household name in this country. He was a junior senator from Wisconsin looking for an issue that would really propel him onto the national stage. And we know from research that he was considering several different issues. So it wasn't as though he had this tremendous passion for the issue of communism. He chose it more for opportunistic reasons then because there was any true passion and conviction on his part that this was a problem that needed to be solved. But be that as it may, in 1950 in a speech in West Virginia he began making a claim that would continue to be repeated except the numbers kept changing. And that was to claim that he had a list of members of the U.S. State Department who practiced this country's diplomacy who were card-carrying communists as he referred to them. In other words, members of the communist party committed
to treasonous acts that would ultimately bring down the United States. And so what he began in his speech in West Virginia would grow into this larger anticommunist crusade. And McCarthy was a very good showman. He recognized that if he kept throwing fresh charges out there it would be difficult for the media to verify individual charges, that he could build up a kind of momentum and keep his opponents on the defensive. And he ended up for several years really being the hottest political commodity in Washington because of the kind of press and momentum he generated behind this anticommunist crusade. And both President's Truman and eventually President Eisenhower, both of them even though they had very strong credentials as patriotic Americans, both of them were reluctant to take McCarthy on directly because of the kind of popularity they felt was associated with him. He eventually was able to turn a rather insignificant senate committee into a powerful investigating force to go after suspected communists, communists in the State Department, communists eventually in the U.S. Army and other sensitive positions in the U.S. government and military. And he did have a real tendency to operate with questionable evidence and to smear reputations before he'd really gathered all the facts. And therefore, the tail of Joseph McCarthy has really become a fable in political responsibility. To be fair to both sides I would like to say that on the one hand the communist threat to the United States was very real. There was a Soviet spy network operating in this country. Portions of the U.S. atomic weapons program, for example, were compromised. No question about that. Especially since the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 archives have opened up which have helped to reveal the extent of Soviet spying. The Soviets were very successful in putting a number what are sometimes called moles in the espionage world into the CIA and also into British intelligence. And especially certain British agents who had close ties to the American CIA. So ultimately they compromised American National Security through working through the British government. So it's not that Joseph McCarthy was, you know, making up a threat completely out of thin air. Of course there was a very serious threat posed by the Soviet Union. But unfortunately what we also see, if we're going to be responsible with the historical record, is that there were a variety of public officials who for their own personal agendas sought to exaggerate that threat to mischaracterize its nature at times and to either falsely or in other very irresponsible ways to accuse certain American citizens of being a part of a communist support network. And so I would like you to keep, you know, both of these facts in mind. I'm trying to cover this in a very balanced way. Joseph McCarthy ended up being able to legitimately investigate and impugn the character of a rather small number of Americans. I mean in his case it ended up being far more smoke than fire. And eventually he became a victim of his own popularity. While there were highly televised trials of U.S. Army Officers who supposedly had been supporting communism, McCarthy got out of hand even by his standards. And it eventually became clear the man had a severe drinking problem. And that, with the pressure of being in the spotlight, he was having more and more trouble controlling his alcohol consumption. He was making, you know, he was showing up on camera appearing rather disheveled, making wild and slurled statements and eventually the senate basically shut him down and censored him for his conduct. And he ended up dying a broken man in 1957. But again for several years in the 1950s,
I mean, this was the one figure in Washington, D.C. whom you did not want to mess with. So technically, the second red scare began before him in the 1940s. Harry Truman for example had signed off on a program that was quite rigorous in investigating government employees and making various assumptions about what kind of behavior could, you know, basically out you as a communist. So I'm not trying to say that McCarthy is responsible for everything that went wrong with the second red scare, but more than any other single figure I think historians will tell you that he bears the most responsibility for what ultimately transpired. So I guess what I'm getting at is that although the United States will eventually win the Cold War because of course the Soviet Union collapses in 1991, but in some ways you did not see the best of this country's collective character in the process. This episode of the second red scare is not one that for the most part we look back upon favorably. And I do discuss this in more detail in another lecture that talks about Richard Nixon and Watergate but sets the stage by talking about the second red scare because Richard Nixon was building his career using the second red scare as well. And I do talk about this in more detail. But basically it was very easy to associate communism with homosexuality, therefore to suggest that if you are gay then you're more likely to be a communist and vice versa. Also, segregation as politicians found it very convenient to suggest that those who were fighting for civil rights were somehow communist supporters. So there are all kinds of sub-agendas going on here when you look back on the second red scare.

**Slide 10**

**Text:** Space Race

[Photo of display of Soviet and US space race]

**Audio:** Let me turn to another dimension of the Cold War that I have not discussed yet, and that was the space race. In the year 1957, the Soviets shocked the Western world by putting two satellites into orbit, that both were powered by rockets. Rockets that, of course, potentially could carry missiles someday. So, even though a satellite by itself does not necessarily pose a military threat, the launching of the Sputnik satellites in 1957 did portend the possibility of space-based weapons raining down into the airspace of the United States. The first Sputnik was an unmanned satellite. But the second Sputnik launch in 1957 did put the first organic life form into space -- a Russian dog named Laika. So, of course, you could see the potential, now, that soon a man could be put into space, as well. And so, with the Soviets taking the lead in this technology, there was a real concern that this could tip the balance of power in the Cold War. And so, by the time that Jack Kennedy becomes President in 1961, he will promise that the United States will take over the lead in the space race and be the first nation to put men on the moon. And unfortunately, Kennedy himself would not live to see that progress. But in 1969, while Richard Nixon was President, the United States, of course, did have the first moon landing. And the United States would eventually take the lead in the space race. But I just wanted to bring this up briefly, because this is another important component of the larger Cold War struggle.
Slide 11

Text: Emergence of Modern Civil Rights Movement

[Photo of Little Rock Nine escorted by soldiers]

Audio: Despite the reputation for conformity, in a white washed way of life that I referred to earlier when it came to the 1950s, I'd like you to appreciate that the 1950s also sees some tremendous victories for an emerging modern Civil Rights Movement. Now let me be clear, going all the way back to about the year 1790 when the first anti-slavery society petitioned Congress against the practice, there's always been and continuously been a Civil Rights Movement in this country, really extending right on up to the present but of course its strength has varied for a variety of reasons in the amount of public attention paid to the civil rights movement has fluctuated for a variety of reasons but when we look back on the 1950s and 60s, this was really the heyday of the modern Civil Rights Movement so what I would like to do here is to talk about a few episodes that helped to put this movement into the spotlight for many Americans. What you're seeing here in this photograph is a portion of what was a pretty dramatic episode that began in 1957 and here the focus will be on central high school in Little Rock Arkansas. As I'm about to discuss in the next slide, back in 1954 there had been a landmark Supreme Court decision that had opened the way for the desegregation of American Public Schools. Basically sticking down a previous law that said that you could keep a separate educational facilities by race, as long as supposedly, they were equal and quality, although everybody had known for a long time that they were not equal in quality, white school would get much better funding and so forth, but be that as it may by going all the way back to the 1890s, the Supreme Court decision had allowed this injustice to stand. Finally in 1954 that had been struck down by the Supreme Court but it was one thing for the court to make a decision like this, it was another thing for governors in other executive branch officials to be willing to enforce it. In what you saw in many communities in the former confederate states, was an unwillingness on the part of various southern politicians to enforce what the Supreme Court had decreed. So as a school year was about to begin at Central High School in Little Rock, there was a very ugly episode in the making. The governor of Arkansas at the time, a man by the name of Orval Faubus was trying to make a political statement about being very tough in maintaining the color line and therefore even though, again the law of the land was that black students should be allowed into this high school to begin the new school year, he threatened to actually call out National Guard troops in Arkansas to physically block black students from entering the school. Now that ended up being a bluff but on the first day of school because of all the publicity generated over this possible show down, there was a large and angry crowd of white segregationists who did try to prevent nine African American teenagers including a couple of these women shown here from going to school. Basically, hurling epithets at them and of course there as a real potential for physical violence. So in the White House President Eisenhower, even though he himself was not terribly concerned about trying to get the Federal Government
involved in enforcing desegregation, he didn't want this to become violent, he certainly didn't want on his watch four teenagers to end up being harmed so what he did was to take some active duty US military forces shown here in the background of this picture, and he actually deployed them to Little Rock and for a period of time these soldiers were literally escorting these teenagers to and from school, also being on the grounds to make sure that during their school day that no harm befell them, so this was a very unique use of the US military and it really dramatized how bad things were which you had to use US soldiers just to guarantee that some of this country's own citizens would be able to get an education and so the press talked about the Little Rock Nine, these original African American teenagers who were trying to desegregate Central High School. Now eventually high school officials decided that they would rather shut down the school and see to it that no one got an education, rather than allow the black students to complete their studies and so for a period of time the high school was shut down but eventually it did re-open and most of the original Little Rock nine did get their diplomas from this high school. So I bring up this episode because it was one of the more dramatic cases of something that was happening throughout these former confederate states, which was that gradually in all white school was more desegregating, in some cases it happened with much less fanfare than in others, and it happened at a different pace, depending upon the dynamics of individual communities, I mean some of this is happening in the 50s, some of this is continuing on to the 60s and even in some cases into the 1970s. So you really have to be careful where you look but the battle in Little Rock here at Central High School was one sign of an emerging Civil Rights movement that was becoming more aggressive, more militant in pursuing its goals in the sense of being a victory for them here in Little Rock.

**Slide 12**

**Text:** key events in 1950s Civil Rights

- Brown vs. Board of Education decision on segregation of schools (1954)
- Arrest of Rosa Parks and resulting Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955-1956)
- Desegregation of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas (1957)

**Audio:** So building off of the previous slide, I just wanted to mention a few other episodes from the 1950s and on into the early 60s that shows the crystallization of this modern Civil Rights Movement. I'd mentioned a few moments ago it was the Brown vs. Board of Education decision in 1954 that had struck down a Supreme Court ruling from back in the 1890s known as Plessy vs. Ferguson that had justified this very dubious principle of separate but equal and as I said a few moments ago, the separate conditions were by no means equal and that was an open secret and nobody was fooled by that claim and so the Brown vs. Board of Education decision did open the way for the desegregation, not only of schools but hopefully also the desegregation of all other sorts of public facilities. Now the term that we apply to these former confederate states we talk about them as the Jim Crow South because Jim Crow became the label for a wide series of
laws that segregated public life in the south, right down to the level drinking fountains and the
bible that you might use if you're sworn in during the legal proceeding, to you know bathroom
facilities, to sections of public transportation and on and on, and so the feeling was by using this
landmark decision concerning schools, eventually you could attack the segregation of any aspect
of public life and so this is one reason why the Brown v Board of Education decision was so
important. Another episode, and I know this gets covered extensively in High School so I'd
rather not say too much about it, but Rosa Parks who had been working with the NAACP, in
other words she had already been something of an activist with the National Association for the
Advancement of Colored People's. Rosa Parks decided to make a statement in the city of
Montgomery Alabama by sitting in the white section of a bus and refusing to get up when asked
to do so and of course she knew she was likely to be arrested and she became a great symbol of
the modern Civil Rights Movement in being arrested and growing out of her efforts African
Americans in Montgomery, with the help of an up and coming minister by the name of Martin
Luther King Junior, a Baptist minister, African Americans in Montgomery began a lengthy
boycott of the local bus company as a way to try to hit them in the pocketbook to force a change
in policy. This boycott would begin in 1955, continue on into the following year and eventually
the bus company backed down. Now it was a rough time and there was a church blown up in
Alabama while this was going on and a number of small African American children were killed
as a result but ultimately the bus boycott would produce another early victory for the Civil Rights
movement and I'm going to turn in a few moments to talk about the phases that the Civil Rights
movement would go through but I'm going to kind of jump to different subjects, get into a little
bit of foreign policy here as well. By the way, I'll also mention by the early 1960s, college
students are playing an increasingly prominent role in the Civil Rights Movement. In one
technique the college students came up with was the idea of the sit in. It was typical in southern
communities; you'd have drug store chains with pretty nice eateries somewhere on their property.
Today I don't know if you're in Target or Wal-Mart that you necessarily want to go to their snack
bar, no offense anybody who may have relatives employed there but you know back in the day in
the south, you know you could get a pretty decent meal in many of these chain drug stores, but of
course their eateries were segregated and so what college students began to do especially you
know black college students, was to sit in the white section, to have a kind of sit in, knowing that
they weren't going to be served, knowing that they could expect plenty of verbal abuse and if
things really got out of hand, they could expect physical abuse and that they weren't going to get
much assistance if any from local police either, who tended to be far more sympathetic to
segregationists than to African Americans and Civil Rights activities so the sit in also became
another expression of this emerging modern Civil Rights movement.

Slide 13

Text: Election of 1960

[Photo of John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon]
Audio: In many ways, the symbolic beginning of the 1960s was the election of Jack Kennedy or John F. Kennedy shown here on the left in this photograph, standing next to the man who was eventually his main opponent in that campaign, Richard Nixon. Now I talk about these two men in much more detail in another lecture in this series, but for now I'd like you to keep in mind I mean even if you haven't studied much history in your life so far, you probably know the 1960s has a reputation as a particularly tumultuous decade. It's the time when the Vietnam War is going to become very controversial in US society, it's a time when race relations are going to be at one of their worst points in our nation's history, you're going to see the birth of the women's liberation movement before this decade is over, there's going to be activism in a wide variety of areas. All kinds of politically motivated violence, some of which I'm going to cover later in this lecture and when Americans who were alive in the 60s look back on this period, there is a tendency to wonder you know what would have happened if Jack Kennedy had lived longer in this decade, maybe if he'd been elected to a second term as president because when he came into office in 1961, more or less at the beginning of this decade, he really seemed to epitomize what was possible and you know he was full of optimism, he was full of energy, or at least appeared that way, he was actually in terrible health but he had a quack doctor who was loading him up with all sorts of pain killers and God knows what else, but he did convey the impression of energy and optimism and hope and you know you might think of him as one of the more original hope and change political candidates, long before Barack Obama, and of course he'll ultimately be taken from Americans in late 1963. But let me go back to the beginning. In 1960, these two men John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon were both the rising stars of their respective parties, Kennedy and democrat, Nixon a republican. These two men had come into public office in the same year in 1946 when they were both elected to Congress, Kennedy from Massachusetts, Nixon from California. They were both navy veterans of WW11, they were both very strong anti communists, certainly Nixon used that issue more aggressively than Kennedy did but they shared many of the same assumptions about the Cold War. Both eventually became Senators. In Nixon's case it was very briefly because he then went on to become Vice President of the United States for much of the 1950s. He had been Dwight Eisenhower's Vice President, and the two men eventually became the nominees of their parties for president in 1960, and they ran what turned out to be a very close campaign. It included the first televised presidential debates in the history of this country and of course the classic story you hear again and again is that in the first debate, those who watched it on television were really struck by the charisma, the physical attractiveness of John F. Kennedy and therefore tended to feel that he got the better of it, whereas a majority of those who listened to the debate on the radio and therefore didn't have those visual cues tended to feel as though Nixon got the better of him. But in any case, these two men waste a very close battle in which Jack Kennedy ended up winning narrowly. There were some very serious allegations of voter fraud in certain states that went democrat and to the best of my knowledge, researching this, and at least some places such as Cook County Illinois that included Chicago, yes there was voter fraud. There also was pretty likely at least some fraud on the Republican side as well and Richard Nixon ultimately decided that he just wasn't going to make an issue out of
this, he conceded the election and Jack Kennedy won narrowly. But he came into office he had been talking about a new frontier for the American people. In his inaugural address and what was really kind of a swipe at FDR and certain fellow democrats, you know he argued to ask not what your country could do for you, again kind of a swipe at FDR's new deal, but instead ask what you can do for your country and he really tried to encourage a new notion of public service and international public service. I mean it would be Jack Kennedy's administration that will create the peace corps for example, and in many ways Kennedy will be somewhat contradictory figure because the same man who created the Peace Corps, will also provide a major escalation of US forces in South East Asia to you know move America closer to full involvement of the Vietnam War, it'll create the green beret as a special counter insurgency force within the US military, he'll do some very aggressive things with respect to Fidel Castro's Cuba and I'm about to talk about that but he'll also be a man who will get a major treaty signed with the Soviet Union to limit the testing of nuclear weapons because he was concerned about their damage to the environment and he was trying in his own way to limit the nuclear arms race a bit. So I just I wanted to emphasize Jack Kennedy because again he seemed to epitomize so much of the hope that people had for the 1960s and now retroactively you know given everything that we know happened in the 1960s there is this tendency to romanticize Kennedy and wonder had he been able to live for a second term as president, could we have avoided some of the problems that this country went through and I think there is a bit too much Romanization when we look back on Kennedy in this regard, I don't know if the evidence bears out that he would have had the magic solutions here, but in any case, the battle between Kennedy and Nixon, who actually had been friends in their early political career, this battle was very symbolic for where America was headed as this decade began.

**Slide 13**

**Text:** Bay of Pigs Invasion (Apr ’61)

[Image of cover of Life magazine covering Bay of Pigs invasion]

**Audio:** Kennedy did not start out of the gate terribly well as president, as a matter of fact, you could hardly have scripted a more embarrassing opening act for a presidency than what happened to Jack Kennedy so let me give you a little bit of background here. On the island of Cuba, just 90 miles from the shores of Florida, there had been a revolution coming to an end in 1959 that had brought a movement to power headed to what was then a young Fidel Castro and Castro had overthrown a government that had been very friendly with the United States for years, a government with a horrible human rights track record that had misspent plenty of US money given to it but had been corporative with US business interests and had been anti communist and frankly during the Cold War, many times that's all that US leaders were really terribly concerned about in dealing in foreign countries. If you were willing to be a tough anti communist then all other sorts of sins could be overlooked. When now Fidel Castro came to power with a movement
that included plenty of communists, whether Castro himself was initially a communist is a matter for some debate, and I'm not going to get sidetracked on that right now, but certainly his movement included diehard communists and Castro had come to power with a rather Anti American message that he had used to help rally the Cuban people. Never the less once he took control of the country he did extend an olive branch to the United States, recognizing that in the western hemisphere you weren't going to get too far without playing ball with America, but because of his communist ties, Castro's overtures were rejected and he then turned firmly to the Soviet Union and he made Cuba a client of America's biggest rival in the Cold War and so of course by 1961 when Jack Kennedy took office as president, there was a real fear in this country that communism was about to spread now into the western hemisphere, into America's backyard. So Jack Kennedy became very obsessed with doing something to get rid of Fidel Castro. A man whom to some extent he had initially welcomed, because Kennedy had not been a big fan of the previous government that had been running Cuba but as he saw Castro moving closer and closer to communism, Kennedy now felt betrayed and embarrassed for having ever said good things about this man so Kennedy was increasingly pushing his administration to come up with a way to get rid of Castro and he eventually learned that the CIA actually had a plan on the books going back to when Dwight Eisenhower had still been president and that plan was to take Cuban exiles who had left that country because they had resisted Castro, was to basically train Cuban exiles as commandos, to have the CIA train them, you know give them some proficiency with weapons and military tactics and to send in those exiles as an invasion force. Now by themselves they were not going to re-conquer Cuba but the hope was that they could become the nucleus of a gorilla army that other Cubans would join and that gradually this could be a kind of counter revolution to knock Castro out of power and Kennedy, while he did make some key changes to this plan, he basically endorsed it and in April of 1961, allowed this business to go forward and this invasion was to place on a particular portion of the Cuban coastline called the Bay of Pigs and to this day, this is the ultimate failed clandestine operation in US history. It was a disaster. Right from the start these invaders were pinned down, Castro knew they were coming; they ended up surrendering after a short period of time. The whole plan was very poorly conceived, the CIA had largely kept the US military out of it because there was sort of a turf war and the central intelligence agency wanted to retain its own control over this. There had been an effort to try to make it seem as though the United States was not involved with this but very quickly the media and everybody else figured out that yes this was absolutely a US backed operation and after initially lying to the public, Jack Kennedy had to go forward and admit that yes America's fingerprints were all over this and he took personal responsibility for it. So of the more than 1400 of these commandos that went ashore in Cuba, more than 100 of them were killed, the rest went into captivity and the United States had to negotiate for their release and give Fidel Castro certain economic assets in exchange for getting these commandos back. So at a time when the ultimate political liability in America was to be seen as soft on communism, for President Kennedy to suffer this set back in trying to get rid of Fidel Castro, when Jack Kennedy is already the youngest elected president in US history so people did have some concerns, is he really up to
the challenge of this job. It was just so embarrassing, I cannot emphasize that enough and this is very, excuse me, very early in his term as president, April of 1961 but I do bring up this episode because it is the failure at the Bay of Pigs that will in many ways lead to an even more famous episode involving the United States and Cuba, one that you are more likely to be familiar with from your high school history classes and that's the Cuban Missile Crisis but you can't really understand the Cuban Missile Crisis unless you know something about the Bay of Pigs so here is where I begin.

**Slide 15**

**Text:** Background of U. S. involvement in Vietnam War

- U.S. government had backed an independent Vietnam in 1945 even though led by communist-trained Ho Chi Minh
- But French used priorities of the Cold War to secure U.S. assistance in retaking control of their former colony in Southeast Asia
- U.S. bankrolled much of the failed French war effort and then tried to prop up South Vietnam as an anti-communist state

**Audio:** Before turning to the Cuban Missile Crisis, I'd like to bring you up to speed on where America stood with respect to the turbulent region of Southeast Asia, a scenario that will eventually produce America's involvement in the Vietnam War and please excuse the fact that I'm going to try to take a very complex subject and really distill it down into a fairly short set of comments here. If I can step back to WW11 for a moment: The Japanese had taken control of the land that today we call Vietnam as part of its aggressive foreign policy during WWII and the Vietnamese people did create a resistance movement with one of its most prominent figures being a gentlemen who went by the Sudan am of Ho Chi Minh, he was communist trained, he was more concerned about Vietnamese independence than anything else but he had spent time with Russian and Chinese communists and I bring this up because he therefore made sort of an unlikely partner for the United States, much as Joseph Stalin had as the head of the Soviet Union. Never the less, towards the end of WWII because Ho Chi Minh was leading his supporters against the Japanese, the United States had provided some commandos and some supplies and certain US soldiers had actually fought alongside Ho Chi Minh towards the end of WW11 to help defeat the Japanese and in the aftermath of WWII, when the Japanese obviously being kicked out of Southeast Asia, Ho Chi Minh saw this as his moment to declare and independent Vietnam and I should mention that prior to WWII the land that today we call Vietnam had been a colony of the French going all the way back to the late 19th century. So the Vietnamese people had been very accustomed to dealing with foreign invaders, actually you go back farther in their history, they spend a good 1,000 years fighting off the Chinese but more recently they've been fighting off the French and then the Japanese. So Ho Chi Minh declares Vietnamese independence in 1945 and the US government does not initially stand in the way of that. It's seen
as a pretty good idea at the end of WWII for countries that have colonial empires to step away from that practice, which is becoming increasingly controversial. The United States was freeing some of its own colonies such as the Philippine islands that were granted independence in 1946 so standing behind the Vietnamese did not seem like such a bad idea in 1945. The problem is the French wanted to re-establish themselves in this part of the world and knowing that America desperately wanted French assistance in Europe with the emerging Cold War against the Soviets, the French knew how to gain leverage over Washington DC. Basically French officials wanted a quid pro quo. If the French were going to cooperate with the United States in Europe, then they wanted US cooperation in South East Asia and that meant helping the French to retake control of their former colony in what used to be called Indo China that does include what today we call Vietnam. So in the late 1940s, the United States began to bank roll the French war effort and now Ho Chi Minh went from being a US partner, even if you know in some respects maybe an uneasy one, to now being one of America's primary enemies because of course Ho would turn around and lead a resistance army against the French and therefore by extension against the United States and by 1954 the United States was bankrolling about 75% of the French war effort that was going very badly and in the year 1954, the French suffered their final defeat and lost control of that land. Meanwhile a diplomatic agreement was re-drawing the map of South East Asia and what ended up happening was that Vietnam the lands occupied by the Vietnamese people were divided into northern and southern sections, this is going to sound awfully familiar to Korea. Basically North Vietnam is set up as a communist state under Ho Chi Minh's rule that has ties to both the communist Chinese and to the Soviet Union and meanwhile South Vietnam, based out of its capital of Saigon, is set up as an anti communist state. Now US officials like to refer to South Vietnam as a Democratic country, I cannot overstate that that was so far from the truth as to be just you know absolutely preposterous but in any case during the 1950s, while Dwight Eisenhower was still president, the United States becomes the primary ally of a very weak South Vietnamese state, a highly corrupt regime running that country but it's got plenty of US aid money pouring in and also beginning while Dwight Eisenhower was president, US military advisors coming in to help the South Vietnamese military and it's government, try to fight off gorillas and just to survive as a country. Now this advisory effort began while Dwight Eisenhower was president. When Jack Kennedy comes in he will significantly increase the number of US military advisors in South Vietnam and also how much US money is going to that regime so I wanted to bring this story up into the Kennedy years now which I will do with my next slide. So just one more thing I want to say: Here in the 1950s and even in the early 60s there are not US combat troops in huge numbers in Southeast Asia so this doesn't tend to be the period of hostilities in Vietnam that the American public knows the most about, these are earlier years but they're very important in laying the kind of foundation for what was to come.

**Slide 16**

**Text:** Advisory Effort in Vietnam
Audio: So as I said a moment ago, one the initiatives that John F. Kennedy will introduce in South Vietnam as president is to increase the number of US advisors in Southeast Vietnam and one reason he's doing that is that it's clear that gorilla fighters are having increasing success against America's allies in South Vietnam and that regime is in increasing danger of collapsing and one sign of how unpopular America's South Vietnamese ally was, was the fact that there were Buddhist monks in the early 1960s who were willing to very calmly set fire to themselves as a political statement against the South Vietnamese government. Nothing against Catholics, but the South Vietnamese regime happened to be occupied almost entirely by Catholics, kind of a holdover from the French influence of that area, whereas the country was majority Buddhist, a very strong majority Buddhist and the ZM regime running South Vietnam had a strong track record for persecuting Buddhists and so again you did have a number of situations where Buddhist monks arranged to have themselves set on fire in public places, not to kill anybody else, I mean these were not terrorists, they're not attempting to inflict any other casualties but they're using the taking of their own lives as a way to make a political statement and unfortunately American's did not stop and think too much about the implications of a practice like this, I mean what did it say about the behavior of our allies that people were willing to take this kind of a step to protest their policies. Unfortunately I would argue the most fundamental mistake that US officials made in Vietnam was in our choice of partners. We got behind a series of very corrupt governments in South Vietnam, governments that many Vietnamese were not willing to fight for so South Vietnamese military units didn't end up being of much assistance to US forces but it's because the South Vietnamese government and military are so weak that US officials are pumping more and more money and more and more military advisors into this part of the world. Now by the time that Jack Kennedy had lost his life, there was a clear recognition in Washington that the advisory effort in Vietnam was failing so one of two things had to happen. Either the United States had to make a major escalation of its commitment to South Vietnam and start sending in large numbers of combat troops, or else this country had to decide that South Vietnam was no longer a priority and just extricate ourselves from the situation. There continues to be a debate to this day as to which direction Jack Kennedy was heading before he lost his life in 1963. In other words, had there been especially if he'd won a second term in 1964, would there have been a major reverse course in Vietnam. There are many who again with sentimentality look back on the Kennedy years and argue that yes he would have done that had he lived and certainly compared to America's next president Lyndon Johnson, I give Jack Kennedy credit for being more astute about what was really going on in South Vietnam but the fact remains that there's really not much in the way of concrete evidence that Jack Kennedy was willing to institute a major reverse course in Vietnam. It's just not there and so I tend to be pretty skeptical. I mean you could certainly argue that Kennedy would not have put in quite as much of an escalation as Lyndon Johnson would do after him but I think you know by in large America's
course was pretty well set by this point and that there was going to have to be a tragedy of a major US military commitment that will ultimately go awry.

Slide 17

Text: Cuban Missile Crisis (Oct '62)

Cuban Missile Crisis (Oct '62)

[Photo of missiles in Cuba from the Defense Department]

Audio: Let me turn now to what is widely seen as one of Jack Kennedy's victories. Although certainly for a while the outcome was very much in doubt. Getting back to the island of Cuba, there had been an offer on the table for Fidel Castro from the Soviet Union that if he was willing to agree to it, the Soviets would actually install nuclear weapons launching facilities and actual nuclear missiles in Cuba as a way to try to deter the United States from ever attacking that island. You know, if you felt that the Bay of Pigs invasion from 1961 was not going to be the last time that America tried to overthrow Castro, then maybe putting Soviet missiles in Cuba was the way to go. Now Castro had originally said he was not interested because he saw this as a very provocative move. He didn't want to get America that stirred up. But after the Bay of Pigs invasion and as the United States continue to explore ways to assassinate Castro and destabilize his regime, he decided eventually that he had nothing left to lose and allowed the Soviets to begin construction of launching facilities for nuclear weapons. And the Soviets wanted to try to do it quietly so that they could finish the construction and get the missiles in place before America could do anything about it. And then present it as what the French call fait accompli, basically, a situation that you cannot change. But while the Soviets were attempting their secret construction of these sites, U.S. surveillance aircraft in October of 1962 picked up details of the construction. And photographs like these shown here on the slide were presented to President Kennedy in October of 1962. And needless to say, just about all other business in the Oval Office came to a halt when Kennedy got the word here. Basically, you know, things like having a local Boy Scout troop come visit the White House and, you know, giving speeches to different groups, you know, some of the routine activities that you see in a President's schedule was very quickly tabled so that this situation could be dealt with. And I guess I'm trying to be a little bit flippant here and I shouldn't do that. But basically once this information hit the President's desk, the world now began a roughly 13 day period and that included the closest that we know of that the two superpowers ever came to a nuclear showdown. This begins what we call the Cuban Missile Crisis. Jack Kennedy decided very early on that he was going to put the Soviets on notice not just through private communication but by letting the entire world know what the Soviets were trying to do. So he went on television and it wouldn't be hard if you want to look in YouTube to find a clip like this, but he went on television and he told the world what the Soviets were doing. And he announced that America would not stand for it. You know, Kennedy also believes in the containment doctrine. And so he announced that the United States was going to use naval forces to quarantine the island of Cuba. Now technically what he was really doing was blockading the
island but because a blockade is an act of war, Kennedy was careful not to call it that. But one way or another U.S. naval forces were promising that any vessels trying to get into Cuba were going to be searched. Of course a special emphasis on Soviet vessels because they might be carrying more equipment and perhaps even nuclear weapons to make this deployment here a reality. And that's obviously something that the White House did not want to happen. And it was unclear at first how the Soviets were going to respond. I mean, what would happen if Soviet ships decided they didn't want to stop to be inspected by the U.S. navy? That could very quickly lead to some kind of a shooting conflict and that might escalate into an exchange of nuclear weapons. I mean, you just didn't know. So this was obviously a major Cold War showdown.

**Slide 18**

**Text:** Cuban Missile Crisis Details

- U.S. and Soviet officials eventually agreed that missiles would be removed in exchange for U.S. promise not to invade Cuba
- Secret provision of deal had Kennedy promise to remove U.S. nuclear missiles from Soviet neighbor of Turkey (though missiles were defunct – not known by Soviets)
- U.S. forces went to DEFCON-2, which was highest level of readiness short of nuclear war

**Audio:** Again I am compelled to make a long and complex story short. But this 13-day standoff was eventually resolved with President Kennedy and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev actually finding in each other a rather unlikely ally. Both of these leaders felt rather trapped by hard line advisors who really wanted them to take a very serious risk of going to war over Cuba. And in Kennedy's case he was getting quite a bit of advice to at least bomb, if not invade Cuba, before diplomacy had really been attempted as a way to resolve this thing. And I think looking back on it now we tend to feel very grateful that Kennedy decided to give diplomacy more of a chance. And there certainly were rocky moments and misunderstandings but in the end, U.S. and Soviet officials did reach a deal that allowed this situation to be resolved without going to war. Basically the Soviets agreed that they would dismantle their missile launching systems and get those weapons out of Cuba in exchange for a promise by the United States not to invade that island. That way, I mean, the Soviets, you know, could save a bit of face. They could say they had defended their ally Fidel Castro and of course U.S. officials could say that we removed this threat just 90 miles from the shores of Florida. There was also a secret provision of the deal. The Soviets had indicated privately that they didn't care for the fact that America's ally of Turkey had U.S. nuclear missiles positioned on its soil right next to the Soviet Union. So the United States did agree to remove those missiles. But what the Soviets didn't realize is they'd actually been nonoperational for a number of years. So this was kind of a throw away. Kennedy was basically throwing the Soviets a bone. But Kennedy made the Soviets promise to keep this part of the deal secret because Kennedy really wanted to come out of this thing looking more like the winner,
which by the way, he did. So the Soviets did get something else out of the deal or at least they got the appearance of getting something out of the deal. But this was not made public for a long time. And just one other thing I'll say about the missile crisis for now, just to give you some idea of how serious the whole thing had become, U.S. forces, military forces have five levels of readiness for the possibility of nuclear war. They're called defense conditions or they're shortened to be known as DEFCONs. DEFCON one is actually using nuclear weapons in combat. During the missile crisis, U.S. forces went to DEFCON two which is basically putting the U.S. military on the highest level of readiness short of actually using nuclear weapons. So it meant that U.S. long-range bombers were just outside of Soviet airspace awaiting orders to run missions into that country. It meant that U.S. intercontinental ballistic missile silos out west and U.S. submarines that could launch long range nuclear missiles were doing their final pre-firing checks and were within a good 15 to 20 minutes of being able to deploy their weapons in a combat function. So, this is not something to be taken lightly. And the Soviets actually had tactical nuclear weapons on Cuban soil with officers who had the independent ability to use them if they were threatened. So if the United States had actually invaded Cuba, this very easily could have escalated into a larger war. So the general feeling at the time was that the Soviets had blinked, that Khrushchev had blinked. The Soviets had backed down. Even though both sides got something out of the deal, Kennedy did come off looking better in the long run. I think the more that you look at the actual details behind this showdown; the more you'd have to say that both sides were lucky with how this thing actually turned out. But again, at the time, Jack Kennedy got a fair amount of credit for what he had done. Even though by the way, if you read the transcripts of the meetings Kennedy had with his top people, he was really overcome with stress much of the time and had trouble being very coherent. And plenty of other people did too. But again, I don't want to get too deep in the behind the scenes weeds here. Basically seen as pretty much a victory for the United States.

Slide 19

Text: Birmingham Demonstrations

[Photo of police with dogs and demonstrators]

Audio: In looking back on Jack Kennedy these days, there is a tendency to remember him as a great supporter of civil rights. But I would like to suggest in reality he was something of a latecomer to the movement. As a matter of fact, for most of his presidency, though of course he did not realize how soon it would be brought to an end, but for most of his presidency he had actually ducked the issue. In part because southern segregationist democrats had such a stranglehold on power in the U.S. Congress that if you wanted to get just about any sort of legislation through, you had to be willing to play ball with them. And one of their preconditions for cooperation was that you weren't supposed to attack the southern way of life too aggressively. You know, you weren't supposed to attack segregation. So as I said, for most of
what turned out to be his roughly 1,000 days in office, Jack Kennedy had sort of laid low on this particular issue. But in the summer of 1963 there was some events taking place most notably in Birmingham, Alabama that really compelled the President to put his political neck on the line on behalf of civil rights. And so it's more because of these events that Jack Kennedy has the kind of reputation that we associate with him today. In the summer of 1963, much of the focus of the modern civil rights campaign would be on the community of Birmingham, Alabama. It was a very segregated city. And it had a Mayor by the name of Bull Connor that was known across the south as one of your most staunchest defenders of the color line, of the Jim Crow south. And so there was an effort, I mean, Martin Luther King, Jr. eventually came to Birmingham and there was an effort by himself and his various supporters to use peaceful demonstration as a way to symbolize the point that it was time for a change in communities like Birmingham. And Bull Connor used his police force very aggressively to deal with this. In one of the most infamous moments in the history of resistance to civil rights, there had been one march that was organized to include almost entirely high school children, you know, high school kids from amongst the African American community in Birmingham. Because the concern was, I mean, usually it was adults who were carrying out most of these demonstrations and getting arrested but he problem was, you know, many of these people they didn't have the sort of economic means and income that they could afford to spend much time in jail. You know, that meant lost wages and that really put their households in danger. So there had been an effort to set up one march that would be composed primarily of high school kids as a way to still try to get the point across but make things a little bit easier for financially strapped adults. So now you have adolescents who are out there on this march. And the Birmingham police force used dogs, as shown here in this picture, as well as high pressure water hoses to deal with these peaceful demonstrators. Again, these are kids, they don't have weapons, they're behaving very modestly and appropriately for the situation. But this is what civil disobedience is all about and this is how the Birmingham police force chose to deal with it. So you have scenes like this where dogs are attacking relatively helpless teenagers and also high pressure water hoses which, you know, if the, if the stream is turned on strong enough, I mean, getting hit with a high pressure water hose is like getting beaten. You know, it's like somebody, you know, pummeling you with some sort of a weapon. And I could have included one of those photographs too. It doesn't take a lot of effort on the Internet to find these pictures. But according to accounts when photographs like this hit President Kennedy's desk he was personally sickened. And the Birmingham demonstrations really were part of the tipping point for President Kennedy that now he was going to really make civil rights a priority of his administration. So before his death, and of course his death is just a few months after these images were taken here, but before his death President Kennedy had put together a civil rights bill that he was trying to get through congress. And as a tribute to the fallen President, his successor Lyndon Johnson will take that bill in 1964, will get it through as a piece of civil rights legislation. But in any case, during the summer of 1963 plenty of eyes were on Birmingham, Alabama, as it became the focal point of civil rights struggles.
Slide 20

Text: Phases of Modern Civil Rights Movement

- Mid-1950s – focus on using legal system to break down barriers
- Late-1950s to Mid-1960s – focus on using forms of peaceful protest to desegregate, i.e., integrate communities
- Mid-1960s to early 1970s – rise of Black Nationalism encouraged greater militancy and disagreement within African American community

Audio: In sticking with the subject of race relations and the Civil Rights movement, I'd like to try to give you a bit of overview here to help you make sense of the period. I've tried to breakdown this era that we're looking at in this lecture in terms of which groups had most of the power within the Civil Rights Movements and what tactics they were using most commonly. But I'd like to emphasize that these are pretty rough generalities that I'm making here because there were so many different voices and groups that were part of the Civil Rights movement or at least groups that were fighting for racial equality whether or not they wanted to call themselves part of the Civil Rights Movement. So it was a very chaotic time period but I'm going to try to impose some order over it to help you to be able to understand the period. I'd like to suggest that generally speaking there are three phases of this heyday of the modern Civil Rights Movement. We begin in the mid-1950s. In many ways you could think of the Brown versus The Board of Education decision as ushering in this first phase. There was tremendous excitement, tremendous optimism when the Supreme Court made that ruling against segregation. And so at first there was a real feeling that you could work within the system, especially the legal system, to enact the change that you wanted that all you had to do was to marshal your lawyers to win certain legal battles and the system would change on your behalf and that would be essentially all it would take to ultimately breakdown the color barrier and have more of a color blind society. However, as I've already indicated in some lecture material, by the late 1950s, it was increasingly clear that just having your lawyers duke it out in court was not going to be enough. There was obviously tremendous resistance in many southern communities. The law enforcement establishment would not be on your side. Local and state level politicians would not be on your side, so this led the Civil Rights Movement to become a bit more aggressive, a bit more militant. Now still I'm going to be very clear, sticking to peaceful protest but feeling like you've got to use acts of civil disobedience, you've got to have peaceful public protest where you know that plenty of your supporters are going to be thrown in jail. You've got to have sit-ins at segregated lunch counters and other segregated facilities. You've got to have the moments like Rosa Parks or the college students sitting-in at drug stores or other college students who rode interstate buses to violate certain laws against segregation that you got to ratchet up the intensity of your tactics a bit if you're ultimately going to achieve your goal. So from the late 1950s to mid-1960s, in general terms I'm suggesting this was where the focus of the movement was. And it was during this time that the group that was really in power within the Civil Rights Movement was what we call...
"integrationists." And of course, integrationist of all was Martin Luther King Jr. himself. Integrationists are basically those who are focused on peaceful protests. They want colorblind standards to create an integrated America. I'm not saying that they aren't on some level angry but they tend to operate more with the biblical principle of turn the other cheek. They recognize that they're going to have to take some physical risks to make their point but they certainly never suggest that you need to strike back at the people who are potentially doing you physical harm. So their heyday is from the late 50s to the mid-1960s. In some ways the highlight of this second phase and the highlight of the integrationist's message was the 1963 March on Washington where more than 100,000 supporters of equality and they weren't all African-Americans. There were certainly idealistic Whites who were part of this as well. But more than 100,000 Americans gathered in our nation's capital for a series of speeches and just a general celebration of the cause of racial equality. And back in high school you probably heard at least portions of the "I Have A Dream" speech by Martin Luther King Jr. He gave that speech as part of this March on Washington in 1963. So in many ways this was the highlight of his influence in the Civil Rights Movement. Now sure there were already tensions at this point. There were many younger Civil Rights activists who felt like the older generation men like, Martin Luther King Jr. were holding them back a little bit, not giving them the voice that they deserved. King had actually been very worried. He wanted local liquor stores to stay closed during the March on Washington because he was afraid that young people were going to get their hands on alcohol and end up making a fool of themselves in front of media outlets that were covering the event. So there were tensions within the movement even during the second phase. But at least at this point the integrationists pretty well held sway over The Movement. Their agenda was really the primary one. But as I move down my list here beginning in the mid 60s and continuing on into the early 70s, until the heyday of the Civil Rights Movement has passed, the situation became more complicated. There was a rise of another phenomenon, a phenomenon ultimately aimed at racial equality but coming at it from a very different perspective. And here I'm summarizing the rise of Black Nationalism. Whereas integrationism had been primarily a southern phenomenon designed to deal with segregation in those former Confederate States, Black Nationalism is going to have a strong component from outside the South. And among other things Black Nationalists are going to suggest that we need to be looking at all communities not just southern ones and dealing with problems of race and Black Nationalism is going to be an angrier voice, collectively speaking, when we look at the struggle for racial equality. Some Black Nationalists are going to advocate defending themselves if you're met with some kind of physical attack from the police force or other supporters of segregation. In the more extreme cases, there are going to be some Black Nationalists who ultimately advocate acts of terrorism against this country. It's a very diverse phenomenon and I'm not trying to suggest that a majority by any means were in favor of acts of terrorism but that's going to part of what we call Black Nationalism. Now Black Nationalism, I mean, some Black Nationalists will actually take part in the Civil Rights Movement. They'll try to make it a bit more radical but they'll agree to cooperate with it. Other Black Nationalists will say that they have no use for the Civil Rights Movement at all. But the rise of Black Nationalism
will complicate the Civil Right Movement. It will make it harder for everyone to kind of stay on the same tact along the same track and use the same tactics. Now in a moment, I'm going to talk about not only Martin Luther King Jr. as the leading integrationist but as Malcolm X as the most famous of the Black Nationalist. And as I compare and contrast those two men, hopefully it will be easier for you to compare these two concepts integrationism versus Black Nationalism.

**Slide 21**

**Text:** Black Nationalism vs. Integrationism

[Photo of Malcolm X] [Photo of Martin Luther King, Jr.]

**Audio:** When we talk about the Modern Civil Rights movement its two most dominant figures, almost anyone would say are the two gentlemen that you see here before you, Malcolm X on the left and Martin Luther King Jr. on the right. Now to this day, it's pretty clear that more Americans are likely to know something about Martin Luther King than about Malcolm X. And let's face it for White America Martin Luther King Jr. was much easier to stomach than the more radical Malcolm X. And that's one reason why we have a Martin Luther King Jr. holiday today, whereas I don't think you're going to see a national Malcolm X holiday anytime soon. But we also sometimes forget that over the course of his career Martin Luther King Jr. did become angrier and more militant than especially high school and elementary school students are encouraged to remember the King during the last few years of his life was closer to a Malcolm X than you might think in terms of where his outlook had evolved. But let me take these two men in isolation a little bit first and then compare them to each other. As I said during a previous slide, Martin Luther King Jr. was a product of the South. He was a Baptist minister. He was a very articulate speaker. And he was the fundamental voice of the integrationist message. Now he was not a perfect man. It's gradually come out that there was plagiarism in his academic background and that he did cheat on his wife. As a matter of fact, we know this in part because the FBI was carrying out illegal wiretaps to learn more about King and his operation. And at one point they sent tapes that revealed his infidelity. They sent them to his wife in the hopes that the resulting turmoil in the King household would cause him to drop out of the movement, perhaps even to take his own life. Now I'm not in anyway justifying his marital transgressions but I'm just trying to give you a fuller picture of what's going on here. He certainly was in some ways, as human as anybody else. But be that as it may, this was also a man who put himself at tremendous personal risk, was routinely arrested while carrying out his acts of civil disobedience but King consistently operated with a Christian message. Again, the idea of turning the other cheek, trying to convince people of the rightfulness of your cause, and quite frankly, by creating a sense of shame. One of the toughest features of being an integrationist is that on some level you recognized that if you were going to get the media coverage necessary to dramatize your cause then there had to be physical risk and even more so that your movement was actually going to have to take some lumps. And so activists who were swept up in this integrationist message of a
Martin Luther King Jr., they knew that they had to put themselves in a position where some of them were probably going to get hurt and that images of unarmed protesters being roughed up were probably going to be necessary to advance their cause. And so when you read accounts by integrationist who followed Martin Luther King Jr. many of them, quite frankly, got burnt out after a while of doing this because the constant stress of putting yourself in that kind of position really took its toll. But in any case having said a little bit about Martin Luther King Jr., let me switch over to Malcolm X. He was originally born Malcolm Little in the Detroit area. And as a rather young boy his father was gunned down by white supremacies and this is part of the reason why Malcolm X will walk around with a bit of a chip on his shoulder that you don't see with someone like King. Now as a young man Malcolm did turn to a life of crime. He was quite wayward and while eventually being put in prison, actually in New England, he ended up while he was in jail converting to the Islamic faith, more specifically, becoming a member of the Nation of Islam which was the premier Black Muslim Church in this country and continues to be to this day to the best of my knowledge. So by the time that he was released from prison Malcolm X now felt that he had a mission in life and he was now calling himself Malcolm X. That was a part of his conversion to the Muslim faith and he became this very militant advocate of Black Nationalism. And as far as he was concerned you should defend yourself if you are physically assaulted by some opponent of racial equality. Now there continues to be some debate to this day as to whether or not Malcolm X ever advocated being proactive in looking for trouble and looking for violence. At least in terms of his public statements the best that I've always been able to tell, he was only about self-defense, again not about initiating any forms of violence. But while his career was in progress, certainly people had some concerns that maybe he was something of a terrorist at the end of the day. But Malcolm X really felt that an integrationist like Martin Luther King Jr. was too tame. The kinds of solutions that you might here from Martin Luther King were half way measures at best. As a matter of fact, Malcolm X really felt that Martin Luther King Jr. was a sellout to the white power structure. That his version of integrationism was really just Blacks becoming like Whites rather than a rather equal exchange of ideas and cultural values and a true blending. He felt that, Malcolm X felt that being an integrationist was essentially caving in to the white power structure and its expectations. And I'm not endorsing one view or another, I'm just trying to give you a sense here of where Malcolm was coming from. Now both of these men end up losing their lives in the course of their careers. Malcolm X was gunned down in 1965, as best as we can tell, by several members of the Nation of Islam Church. What had happened was that Malcolm had grown disenchanted with the leader of the Nation of Islam. A gentleman by the name of Elijah Mohammed who among other things was being routinely unfaithful to his wife, Malcolm saw that as a real betrayal of Muslim principles. Also Elijah Mohammed had grown somewhat resentful of the charisma and the popularity of Malcolm who was going about the country giving speeches and becoming an increasingly powerful figure. So Malcolm eventually left the Nation of Islam. He did not renounce the Muslim faith in general, but he stopped being a member of that movement and again, as far as we can tell, he was murdered. I mean we know he was murdered. He was killed
publicly while speaking. But several of the men who shot at him have very close ties to the Nation of Islam. So this appears to have been kind of payback for leaving that movement. So in 1965 Malcolm X ceases to be part of the conversation. Martin Luther King Jr., as I'm going to talk about a little bit more later, was gunned down in 1968 while he was in Memphis, Tennessee. And again, what we tend to forget as American's because it doesn't get emphasized nearly as much in the textbooks as it should is that by 1968, while still essentially an integrationist, Martin Luther King Jr. was closer to a Black Nationalist in terms of seeing America's problems with race as more deeply rooted than he'd originally thought. He had become an opponent of the Vietnam War by this point, was very concerned about how the draft system in this country seemed to be placing a disproportionate share of the burden on people of color to go fight this war in Southeast Asia, whereas it was easier for young White kids to get out of military service. And Martin Luther King Jr. of course, was gunned down in Memphis, Tennessee in 1968. The shooter was a gentleman who was opposed to racial equality. To this day, there continues to be some speculation that this man James Earl Ray Jr. might have been part of a broader conspiracy late in his life because he ended up spending the rest of his life in prison until he died not too long ago. Near the end of his life he did suggest that there was a larger conspiracy and the King family was somewhat curious about it but there wasn't much of an investigation into this. So to this day, there continue to be some rumors about it. I can't really say with any great degree of certainty whether he was alone actor in this case or if there was others involved. But both of these men end up being taken out of circulation and I should also mention that after leaving the Nation of Islam Malcolm X was beginning to moderate himself a bit. Again, still very much a Black Nationalist but he had stepped away from some of his most extreme positions; so ironically, both of these men late in their lives' had begun to change their ways a bit. King becoming a bit more radical, Malcolm X becoming a bit more moderate but we never got to see the full trajectory of these changes because they were both taken from us before their time.

Slide 22

Text: LBJ’s Great Society

[Photo of Lyndon B. Johnson at a speech]

Audio: As I've mentioned a few times, Jack Kennedy was assassinated in November of 1963. And of course this has spawned the greatest obsession with conspiracy theories that I think we've ever seen in American society. And I decided that I really did not want to indulge in exploring what some of those theories are. I'll just say to make a long story short that I'm not comfortable that all of the relevant information has really been made public to help us understand whether or not someone was behind Kennedy's assassination other than the man who actually apparently killed him, Lee Harvey Oswald. I'm not going to endorse any particular conspiracy theory and some of them are pretty wild. But I like many Americans still have a degree of skepticism about the entire affair and I'm afraid I'm just going to leave it at that for now. With Jack Kennedy's
assassination his Vice President Lyndon Johnson of Texas took over. Johnson was a long time member of congress initially as a representative and then for quite a while as a senator. He was a real power broker in Washington, a real insider. He was the master of the, you know, the backroom political deals. Because he was a very tall man, well over six feet, he had this habit of getting into your personal space. You know, basically leaning up close, sometimes actually spitting on you while he spoke and he would get in your face to try to convince you to do something. And, you know, he wouldn't relent until you agreed. In other words, he'd make you feel physically uncomfortable and used that kind of intimidation as a way to get you on board with whatever he wanted from you. To make a long story short, Lyndon Johnson's great political idol was Franklin Roosevelt. As a matter of fact, when Johnson as a younger man had met FDR, FDR actually commented that Johnson might very well become president someday which turned out to be true. Johnson had run against Kennedy in the democratic primaries back in 1960. He'd been defeated. Ironically Kennedy offered him a chance to run with him for Vice President, not because Kennedy wanted Johnson to say yes but because he felt like he had to show Johnson the respect of asking him. He was actually figuring Johnson would say no so that he could move on to somebody else whom he really wanted. But LBJ surprised him and agreed to run alongside Jack Kennedy. The two men actually had a pretty strong dislike for each other and were not very cooperative with each other but that's the irony of the situation. So now Lyndon Johnson is the President. His idol is Franklin Roosevelt and like Franklin Roosevelt he would like to be remembered for having a very ambitious set of domestic programs to try to reform the country. So FDR had his new deal, which I covered a bit in an earlier lecture, and Lyndon Johnson is going to talk about creating what he called a great society. So he wants to try to make that the buzzword if you will around which his presidency is going to be centered. Now in a moment I'll talk about what this great society entailed but before I even get to that, I want to mention the irony, the ultimate irony of his presidency. Lyndon Johnson in his quest to become the next FDR and to be remembered for domestic activism will end up in many ways being destroyed by the Viet Nam War. Now let me be clear. There were plenty of politicians on both sides of the aisle, who ultimately escalated America's involvement in this conflict and therefore have some measure of responsibility for why it turned out as badly as it did. But no politician escalated it more than Lyndon Johnson. He really took ownership of this conflict like no one else. And he does ultimately end up being its greatest political casualty in this country. Another way to think of it proverbially speaking is that Lyndon Johnson tried to have guns and butter, so to speak. The butter referring again to domestic activism; the guns referring to an escalation of this conflict. In the end, his great society is going to be at best, and there's a debate about how successful it was, but at best it's going to be a modest success. And of course the Viet Nam War ends up as a debacle for him.

**Slide 23**

**Text:** Features of Great Society
• Two major pieces of civil rights legislation in 1964 and 1965 – ended widespread disenfranchisement of blacks in former Confederate states
• War on Poverty to include Medicare, Medicaid and food stamps

Audio: To hit the highlights of LBJ's great society, he was very concerned about the ongoing race struggles in this country. And despite being a southerner himself and despite being a man who quite frankly, used the N word in many of his private conversations with southern members of congress. We know this because he had a taping system in the Oval Office. I've personally listened to many of these communications through the LBJ Library in Austin, Texas. But despite that Lyndon Johnson will make civil rights a priority of his administration. I've already mentioned that he took the stalled Civil Rights Bill that Jack Kennedy had started and he was able to get it through congress in 1964 in large part by marketing and as a tribute to a fallen president, kind of laying a guilt trip, if you will, on many lawmakers. And then in 1965 he got through a voting rights act of his own. And among other things, this legislation ended up doing away with a widespread denial of the right to vote, another word for that is disenfranchisement, that had been in place in former confederate states going all the way back to the 1890s. There had been a variety of measures and they are covered in another lecture, but there had been a variety of lectures that had made an end run around the constitution and had kept large numbers of African Americans from being able to vote in southern states. And Lyndon Johnson was able to get legislation through congress that ultimately helped to eliminate those practices. He also took a political risk by declaring war on poverty. Now why do I call that a risk? Well because by declaring war on it you are creating expectations that you can actually win this particular struggle. And at the end of the day LBJ was ultimately not successful. But he did give us a number of programs, I'm just hitting a few of the highlights here on the slide, a number of programs designed to get the federal government more involved in dealing with poverty. For example, the Medicare program which is basically health insurance for older Americans who may be on fixed incomes and having a certain amount of trouble dealing with their health as they age. Also Medicare, which was health insurance for lower income Americans regardless of their age. And a food stamps program to make it easier for lower income households to be able to get some of the basic necessities of life. Quite a bit of money will go into this war on poverty and, you know, as the statistics showed however, by the time that Johnson's presidency was over there was a real debate as to how much progress he'd really made in the war on poverty. But certainly you can speak of Lyndon Johnson in the same breath as Franklin Roosevelt in terms of expanding the idea of an American welfare state and expanding what it means to have a government safety net in our lives. And of course there continues to be a heated debate in our political life over, you know, what degree of a safety net is really necessary. And I'm not going to take sides in that debate but I'm just going to suggest for now, that it would be a good idea to think of Lyndon Johnson as in many ways a fellow traveler with Franklin Roosevelt and actually being even more progressive then Roosevelt in terms of what he was ultimately to do with government.
Slide 24

Text: Gulf of Tonkin Incident/Resolution (Aug ’64)

[Map of major battles of Vietnam War]

Audio: Having said a few things about the domestic agenda of Lyndon Johnson's presidency I'd like to turn now to foreign policy again and bring us back to Southeast Asia. The map that you see here now shows what was by the time Lyndon Johnson became president, the new political realities in Southeast Asia. As I alluded to on an earlier slide the land that have been Indochina was divided in 1954 into four countries, North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. And our focus will really be on the two Vietnams here. As I said, North Vietnam is a nominally communist state run by Ho Chi Minh and South Vietnam is an anti-communist state with a regime that is tied very closely to the United States and really could not survive very long if America ever stops supporting it. By the time that Lyndon Johnson becomes president in late 1963, it was very clear that just sending money and U.S. military advisors to South Vietnam was not going to get the job done to put it plain and simple. And therefore, Lyndon Johnson was looking for an excuse to escalate America's military commitment. Now why do I say an excuse?

Because after all as President, as Commander-in-chief he could have just asked Congress to declare war on North Vietnam but Lyndon Johnson knew that the complexities of this conflict in Southeast Asia were such that it was going to be very difficult to justify a major military commitment to the American people. At the risk once again of getting too deep in the weeds, I'd like to suggest to you that what's really going on here in Vietnam is a Civil War that you have plenty Vietnamese on both sides of the 17th Parallel that you see on the map that would like to reunite the country under one political auspices or another. And therefore, civil wars are by their very nature particularly messy, complicated conflicts. And by the way, what many U.S. students don't know is that the United States had promised back in 1954 that it would support free elections to reunify this land, elections that were supposed to be held two years later in 1956. However, because it was clear that communist trained Ho Chi Minh was going to win those elections, U.S. officials never allowed those free elections to take place and therefore, the division of Vietnam continued. Now, I'm not trying to give you just one side of the story. Certainly, Ho Chi Minh and his supporters were willing to use very vicious tactics to get their way, so too by the way, were their enemies in South Vietnam. I mean, nobody's hands are completely clean when you look at the entire scope of this conflict. But civil wars are traditionally pretty difficult to justify to a public and a democracy because let me present the following hypothetical to you. Let's say there are two scenarios that the American people might be presented with. You ask yourself as I lay these out for you which scenario seems tougher to sell. Scenario A is one you where told that we have an ally somewhere around the world and that ally has been invaded by a neighbor, a hostile neighbor, and that because America has made a commitment to that ally our president wants to send in troops to repel that invasion to make the situation right. A second scenario is instead you were told that there's a particular land
somewhere around the world that is engaged in a civil war and that what the president wants to do is to pick one faction in this internal struggle, this civil war; to pick one faction and try to inject U.S. troops into the scenario to see to it that that one faction ultimately comes out on top. Hopefully, and I know I've been kind of leading with my comments, but hopefully it's beginning to be obvious that it's that second scenario that would be tougher to sell because among other things a civil war suggests that many of the combatants are going to be of the same race, the same ethnicity. It's going to be harder to tell them apart, to sort them out while you conducting military operations, and there's also a broader question of whether it's even rightful to get involved in another country's civil war because it is by definition an internal affair. It's much easier to sell the idea of repelling an invasion because an invasion is an illegal act, at least generally speaking. So I'd like to use these two scenarios to point out to you some of the complexities of the Vietnam Conflict. I would argue, and most historians would argue, that what was really going on in Vietnam was a civil war. I mean, yes, there is this division between North and South Vietnam but it was supposed to be temporary. The United States had had a role and seeing to it that it would not be temporary. Furthermore, most of those who were fighting America's allies in South Vietnam were actually southern villagers who had become part of a guerilla army or guerilla force called the Viet Cong. In other words, if you look at the actual combat that had been taking place in South Vietnam from 1954 right on up through the early years of Lyndon Johnson's presidency, most of that fighting against America's allies had been conducted by Vietnamese who lived in the southern part of this country. They were Vietnamese guerillas and the Viet Cong also known as the National Liberation Front. So if you're going to argue that this was an invasion, that this was just a North Vietnam invading South Vietnam, and so America has to come to the aid of its partner. How do we explain the fact that most of these enemy soldiers are actually being recruited out of southern villagers? That belies the whole notion that this is just the simple invasion scenario? So while certainly this war had elements of an invasion it was closer to a civil war than that simpler invasion scenario. But U.S. Officials will pretty consistently market the struggle to the American people as nothing more than an invasion. So just as we stepped in to help the South Korean's when they were invaded by North Korea, we need to step in to support South Vietnam. But I would like to suggest to you again that it is a far more complex scenario here in Vietnam than what had been faced in Korea back in the early 1950's. So we now have President Johnson. He knows the advisory effort is getting us nowhere. So he needs an excuse to escalate and again, it has to be an excuse because he knows that the American people are going to be a tough sell un-escalating this conflict. In August of 1964, the White House finds its excuse. There was a U.S. Navy destroyer patrolling in an area off the coast of North Vietnam known as the Gulf of Tonkin shown up here towards the top of your map. This destroyer was in the area because there was actually a South Vietnamese commando attack taking place on some small islands off North Vietnam. They're not shown in this map. But anyway, this U.S. vessel was in the area because it was supporting a South Vietnamese attack on North Vietnam. As the North Vietnamese detected this attack, they also detected the U.S. warship in the vicinity and sent out some gunboats to shoot at it. And so there
was a brief encounter. A number of bullets struck the warship and it got away safely and that was about it, at first. Two nights later that same destroyer returned with another warship accompanying it. And there was a report by some of its equipment operators that there were North Vietnamese torpedo's in the water trying to sink those vessels. So a nearby aircraft carrier was contacted to bring in some jets to kind of shore up the situation but when those jets arrived nobody could find any evidence that there were actually any North Vietnamese vessels in the area. So officials on the scene ultimately concluded that it had just been a phantom attack. It had just been operator error that in a kind of jittery atmosphere as sometimes happens, there had just been a misreading of the situation of North Vietnamese actually having done anything. So all of these details get back to Washington and I hope you can see from my convoluted explanation that what I've just described to you over these two nights, doesn't amount to a heck of a lot. You've got a very minor attack on U.S. forces who were involved in supporting the commando raid on North Vietnamese territory, so that first warship was not just minding its own business in August of 1964. And then you have a second night where nothing actually happened. So this is a long way from a Pearl Harbor or 911 attack to say the very least. Nevertheless, I mean, this is a long way even from Fort Sumter quite frankly, but nevertheless, President Johnson goes before the media and the American people and talks about how the United States has been grievously attacked by North Vietnam. Now he doesn't ask for a declaration of war but he does ask for a major escalation of U.S. forces. He asked Congress to give him the authority to make a major deployment of troops to South Vietnam. And he uses what I'm now going to call the Gulf of Tonkin incident as a way to do this. But when Johnson relates these details to the American people he leaves a few things out. He leaves out the fact that on the first night a U.S. warship was supporting the commando raid by the South Vietnamese. Leaves that detail out. And he also leaves out the fact that on the second night there was no verification whatsoever that the North Vietnamese had attacked at all. If you take those two details out of the narrative that I just gave you that it really changes the entire character of what happened. So in other words, Lyndon Johnson was very disingenuous with the American people. He over simplified his situation knowing that with the anticommunist climate of the times it would be easier to sell this escalation if he left out those details. So this does become one of the more famous moments in presidents fudging the truth with the American people. And Lyndon Johnson gets the vote in Congress that he wants. As a matter of fact, most members of Congress were kept in the dark just like the American people. So the Gulf of Tonkin resolution becomes the proverbial blank check in August of 1964 to escalate U.S. involvement in Vietnam. By the following year, there will be over 80,000 U.S. combat troops in South Vietnam. So we're not just advising anymore, grant it, even the earliest advisors weren't just advising either. But now there is a much larger number of U.S. forces in South Vietnam. The commitment has obviously been intensified. By the way, in 1970 it came out the full details of this incident came out and the Congress that was then in session ended up rescinding the Gulf of Tonkin resolution but by then it was pretty much too late and the war had, of course, taken on a momentum of its own. But this is not one of the finest hours for President Lyndon Johnson and his administration.
Text: LBJ & The Vietnam War

[Photo of Lyndon Johnson seated, with his head down]

Audio: As the Viet Nam War continued it really took its toll on Lyndon Johnson to the point where he became known for sobbing uncontrollably amongst some of his closest political allies. Whatever else you want to say about his decision-making concerning this war, he certainly took it hard and that's why I've got a photograph like this where you see Johnson in the White House overcome by some piece of news that he had received. He was known for getting up at all hours of the night to check the latest casualty reports coming in from Southeast Asia. Again, I mean, this is a man who really wore his heart on his sleeve when it came to the Viet Nam War. And it hurt him deeply that antiwar protestors would chant things like hey, hey, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today? The basic problem for LBJ was this. He didn't really want to fight this war to win, at least not in the kind of unconditional surrender of World War II style of victory because among other things he was afraid the communist Chinese and the Soviet Union would declare war on America if this conflict escalated too much. So what he was basically trying to do, I think the best way I could summarize this for you, is that he was fighting not to lose rather than to win. He was trying to calibrate what would be the level of American military commitment that would bring America's enemies to the bargaining table on our terms and allow South Viet Nam to survive. What was the bare minimum of military commitment that would get us that goal but not be any more expensive than that? Because he also didn't want the American people to feel the pinch of this war too much because if they did, they'd start asking tougher questions about why we were in Viet Nam in the first place. So again, he's trying to very finely calibrate this effort so he can get the political victory of saving South Viet Nam, which would then allow U.S. forces to pretty well pull out. And we could say look, we stuck up for our anticommunist ally, we allowed them to survive. But he knows he's not going to conquer North Viet Nam, you know, he can't do that. As a matter of fact the United States never invades North Viet Nam. Certainly this country dropped plenty of ordinance on North Viet Nam and we had clandestine operations up there to assassinate key officials and gather intelligence but the United States was never going to invade North Viet Nam because it was too risky in terms of escalating this into a broader war that might include both the communist Chinese and the Soviet Union. So Johnson in his quest not to lose rather than fighting this war to win, Americas always going to have the proverbial hand tied behind its back. And I'm not saying that there weren't some good reasons for doing so but Johnson ends up alienating a huge percentage of the American public. He basically finds himself trapped between two groups. One group that is primarily on the political left, that is a more liberal or what today we would call the more progressive group, one group will question the assumptions and the judgments that got America into the war in the first place. And therefore will tend to argue, it's time to go. And will emphasize that America may be committing war crimes, they'll refer to it as an illegal conflict and they'll just want America out. Another group
found primarily on the political right and therefore a more conservative group will say regardless of whatever got us in here in the first place, whether we think those are good motives or not, now that we're committed and now that American boys are dying in Southeast Asia, we need to fight this thing to win or else we need to get out. So we either, you know, get really serious about triumph here or else we just have no business being here. And Lyndon Johnson will never be able to really find a kind of middle ground that will keep enough of those two groups satisfied so that he can accomplish all of the goals of his presidency. Because again, keep in mind, he wants to be remembered as the next FDR so he's also got all these ambitious domestic programs as well. And the U.S. National Debt is going to increase dramatically while he's president because he's going to run deficits both, you know, trying to fight the Viet Nam War and trying to make his great society a reality as well. And it's just not going to work out well. In one of the most amazing statistics to me about the Viet Nam War, by the time this thing is all over, the United States will have dropped more ordinance on the entire land of Viet Nam, North and South, than was dropped by all combatants in World War II combined. So I'll say that one more time. The United States will ultimately drop more ordinance on a combination of North and South Viet Nam then were dropped by all combatants in World War II combined. And at the end of the day, U.S. officials are not going to get the solution that they're looking for. So America will eventually escalate to having more than a million troops in Viet Nam at one time at the height of America's involvement in this conflict. And of course more than 58,000 Americans will die before this is all over and at least two million Vietnamese will die as well. Lyndon Johnson as symbolized here by this photograph, his presidency and to a large extent his health will really be destroyed over the Viet Nam conflict.

Slide 26

Text: Tet Offensive – 1968

[Photo of South Vietnamese officer shooting a North Vietnamese soldier in the head]

Audio: The event that really marks the beginning of the end for Lyndon Johnson's presidency was the Tet Offensive of 1968. A Tet refers to the Chinese New Year which traditionally was a time for a truce fire, truce fire I'm sorry, a truce or a cease fire in Southeast Asia, a time when combatants would traditionally lay down their arms. But what happened in early 1968 is that America's enemies in Viet Nam used the occasion of the Tet New Year to launch a major surprise attack against U.S. and South Vietnamese forces. I haven't said too much about the military details of the Viet Nam War because I have another lecture that focuses on that but for the most part the United States had been fighting against guerrilla forces and against guerrilla tactics in waging the Viet Nam War. So for the most part, America's enemies were shadowy, they would not come out in the open in large numbers. It, you know, it was a very stealthy kind of campaign. But in 1968 America's enemies temporarily changed the rules and they came out in the open. Both North Vietnamese military units and Viet Cong guerrillas came out and over a
period of weeks captured just about all of South Viet Nam's urban areas. In other words, a war that was often fought largely in the countryside was now brought into the cities of the South Viet Nam. Even the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, the ultimate symbol of American power, was briefly taken over by Viet Cong guerrillas. Now U.S. forces and our South Vietnamese allies gradually counterattacked. And over a period of time in 1968 they did gradually recapture all of those areas. But the problem was this, even though the Tet Offensive ultimately became a military victory for the United States, it was a political disaster because Lyndon Johnson's administration had been saying for quite a while that victory was just around the corner, that America's enemies didn't have much fight left in them. The proverbial pot of gold was, you know, at the end of the rainbow, we were almost there, victory's right around the corner. The Tet Offensive made it clear that that was not the case that this was still going to be a long and bitter struggle. And to symbolize some of the controversy of the Viet Nam War, I've chosen this photograph which really, you look at all of U.S. history in the 20th century and I think this photograph would probably make your top 20. I don't know about your top 10 but at least your top 20 of the most symbolic photographs that have anything to do with the American experience in the 20th century. This is a photograph of the head of South Viet Nam's police force shown here on the left who has just taken into custody apparently a Viet Cong prisoner. Now this man, according to accounts, this man has recently, you know, just killed either a number of civilians or South Vietnamese soldiers or both. So I'm not suggesting that the man on your right is a Boy Scout or the ideal poster child for civil liberties but what happens here because this picture is part of a larger video clip, is that without the benefit of any legal procedure this guerrilla is summarily executed by this police chief who proceeds to shoot him point blank in the head. And if you watch the entire video this guerrilla or whatever he was basically sinks to the ground and bleeds out. And what I'm trying to suggest is that again, America's enemies have plenty of blood on their hands but what does it say about us that one of key allies here? The police chief for all South Viet Nam is willing to use these kinds of tactics. It does not speak very well for the kind of people that we've chosen to ally ourselves with because I don't mean to reduce the entire Viet Nam War to, you know, sayings that we give to our kids but, you know, we do often tell our kids you're judged by the friends that you keep. And I've been trying to suggest with some of my material that the greatest liability for the U.S. War effort in Southeast Asia is that we are judged quite harshly for the friends that we chose, most notably a very corrupt South Vietnamese regime. So again, while the young man on the right probably had some crimes of his own to answer for, the way in which his situation was dealt with does not speak very well of the kind of choices that America has made in the Viet Nam War. But bottom line, Lyndon Johnson in 1968 had started the year with a reelection campaign to win another term in the White House. As the Tet Offensive got underway and its enormity was revealed to him, Lyndon Johnson will make the decision to drop out of the presidential campaign in large part because he recognizes he may very well not win and he also wants to be able to devote more of his energy to try and get some kind of a solution to the war. So this is pretty big news. When a president drops out of a
reelection campaign that does not happen very often. And the Tet Offensive had quite a bit to do with it.

**Slide 27**

**Text:** Shocks to Political System in 1968

- Tet Offensive suggests war in Vietnam far from over
- President Johnson drops out of re-election campaign
- Assassination of MLK, Jr.
- Assassination of Senator Robert Kennedy while running for president
- Democratic convention in Chicago degenerates into street battles with protestors

**Audio:** I cover this in more detail in another lecture, but let me try to hit the highlights for now. With the exception of 1861, the year that the union literally dissolved and a Civil War began in this country, with the exception of 1861, I would say that 1968 was probably the single most politically divisive year in US history, and that there was an extraordinary series of events that, you know, ultimately led many Americans to really fear for the future of this country. And, it's important to note that the 1968 was a Presidential election year. Now, the first of the shocks to the political system, as I'm referring to them, was, again, the Tet Offensive, because for many Americans, you know, didn't have to be an anti-war protestor to recognize that things just weren't adding up in Vietnam. Opposition to the Vietnam War became much more mainstream thanks to the Tet Offensive, you know, it wasn't just a lot of young college students who were afraid of being drafted into the war, who felt that it was a bad idea now, I mean, it's really becoming a much broader, there's a much broader sense of unease with the Vietnam conflict. And Lyndon Johnson, you know, normally, if you're an incumbent President, seeking another term of office, there re-nomination of your part is an absolute slam-dunk. It's not something you should have to worry about. But, because of the Tet Offensive, Lyndon Johnson only won the first Primary, the first Democratic Primary, which happened to be in New Hampshire. He only won it by about 6 points against an anti-war Democrat who was not supposed to be a serious factor in this campaign, and yet he had a strong second place finished against the President. So, as I've said, in the spring of 1968, Lyndon Johnson drops out of the reelection campaign. So, this is, this and the Tet Offensive are two of your shocks to the system. Then, in April of 1968, as I've alluded to already, Martin Luther King Jr., one of the major reform voices on any subject in this country was gunned down. And so, for Americans who were still trying to believe that the system could work, that you don't have to get especially radical or militant to see positive change. They've, now, lost one of their most effective spokes persons. Meanwhile, there's been a new Democrat who's jumped into the Presidential race. He'd wanted to run right from the beginning, but he'd been pressured not to embarrass President Johnson, so he waited until after the President announced he was dropping out, but Jack Kennedy's younger brother Robert, who had become a Senator from New York, after serving as his brother's Attorney General, and
actually for a time as Lyndon Johnson's Attorney General, Robert Kennedy has jumped into the Presidential race. He and LBJ, by the way, really despised each other, but that's a story for another time. And Robert Kennedy took a very serious risk, as a white politician, of suggesting to African American's that if you were distraught over the loss of Martin Luther King Jr., and you really liked his reform integrationist message, that you now needed to get behind Robert Kennedy's Presidential campaign. And whereas many, you know, many people today would probably say, you know, you're just another politician seeking my vote, you'll say anything, Robert Kennedy really connected with the poor, with African Americans, with other minorities, and his Presidential campaign was really picking up steam by the early summer of 1968. But then, right after winning the California Primary, and giving a speech in Los Angeles in a hotel, while he was on his way out of that facility, he was gunned down and died very shortly thereafter, so another Kennedy brother of that generation, taken from the country before his time. And, Robert Kennedy, in many ways, seen as a fellow traveler with Martin Luther King Jr., another major reform voice, a critic of the Vietnam War, even though he'd supported while he'd been part of his brothers administration, a real support of aggressive efforts to end poverty, aggressive efforts to achieve racial equality, he's now gone as well, and so I hope you can appreciate that, for many Americans who were trying to retain hope in the system, the twin shocks of losing Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy in the space of a few months, this was a lot to handle. Well, with Lyndon Johnson dropping out of the race and Robert Kennedy being assassinated, there was now a real void on the Democratic side in working towards nominating someone for President, and ultimately, most of the leaders of the party decided to make what they saw as a safe choice, they decided to go with sitting Vice President Hubert Humphrey, who had a real reputation as a reformer himself, when he's been Mayor of Minneapolis, and eventually a Senator from Minnesota, but again, now he's the Vice President. And although Humphrey had some real reservations about the Vietnam War, keep in mind, he's still a member of LBJ's team, which means he has to still be a supporter of the conflict, because that's where the President is, and he, you know, he feels like he can't betray his President by being too critical. So, it becomes clear that the Democratic Party is going to use its Convention in Chicago to nominate a pro-war candidate in Vice President Hubert Humphrey. For many young people, whether they would traditionally vote Democrat or not, for many young people who were caught up in the anti-war movement, and other radical causes, they feel as though they've only got one more chance to try to encourage Democrats to make a different choice. So, what we have here is a battle in 1968, that is so incredibly symbolic of the larger maelstrom of the 1960's, and I do cover this in far more detail in a more specialized lecture that I hope you'll have a chance to hear. But, basically, thousands of protestors, most of them motivated by the war in Vietnam, although there are other issues effecting them as well, but thousands of protestors descend upon the city of Chicago, where the Democrats are holding their Convention, and of course, by and large, they don't have tickets to get into the Convention Hall, what they're going to do is to use the streets to make their point. And, ironically, Chicago was thoroughly Democratic city. The Daley family had a very strong political machine established there. The
Daley's had been Mayor's of Chicago for a while and would continue to be for a good while after 1968 as well, as a matter of fact. But, the Daley's represented more of a law and order, FDR style component of the Democratic party rather than a younger, more radical side that was appearing in the streets of Chicago. So, what ends up happening is you have this series of running battles in the streets of Chicago; between the police and the National Guard on the one hand and various protestors, most of them anti-war protestors, on the other, and it is ugly, and of course, much of this is being captured by the media, and you know, normally when you hold a Presidential Convention, you're trying to show that you're a Big Tent Party, you can make nice, you know, everybody's coming together, but the Democratic party, of course, with its Convention, was revealing precisely the opposite, it was revealing a tremendous degree of division and controversy. And so, yes, the party leaders end up selecting Vice President Hubert Humphrey, and as I'll talk about in a moment, the final campaign ends up being pretty close, but with the Democrats imploding and dividing, this really paves the way for Richard Nixon, who has already run for the Presidency in 1960, has already been a very controversial figure in politics, but Richard Nixon, on the Republican side, will capitalize on all of these divisions and he will triumph in 1968.

Slide 28

Text: Election of 1968

[Visual summary of 1968 election with photos of the candidates and an election results map]

Audio: So just to finish up my coverage of the election of 1968, the three major candidates are summarized here, you have on the far left Richard Nixon, who had really been to some extent out of politics for a while in the 1960's but he kind of redoes his image. He comes back as a more media savvy, media friendly kind of guy, even though he still hated the media but he created a different impression. So he gets the Republican nomination. I mentioned a sitting Vice President, Hubert Humphrey, gets the Democratic nomination but has trouble distancing himself from Lyndon Johnson. And then Alabama's one time governor, George Wallace, who's normally a Democrat but he doesn't like the direction in which much the Democratic party was going, in terms of supporting civil rights so George Wallace broke away as a third party candidate running essentially as a segregationist and so that made things even more complicated for Democrats. They've not only got those on the political left breaking away from the party over the Vietnam War but they have some of their more conservative elements in the south breaking away because they're dissatisfied with support for civil rights. So in the end it was still a pretty close result, at least in the popular vote, obviously not so much in the electoral college but you see that George Wallace took five deep southern states and then Richard Nixon takes most of the rest of the south and a huge part of the far west, a fair amount of the Midwest, Hubert Humphrey does primarily well in the northeast. And so Richard Nixon gets that victory that had eluded him and I will say a
bit more about his presidency as we move along here. But this was one of the more significant
elections in the modern history of the United States.

**Slide 29**

**Text:** Rise of Women’s Liberation

[Photo of Women’s Liberation protestors]

**Audio:** Stepping away from the purely political realm, I’d like to mention another social
movement that began in the 1960s, at least – again – in terms of its heyday. It will really peak in
the 1970s and will continue to have significant impact in more recent years. That’s the Women’s
Liberation Movement. Many of the Women’s Lib activists of the period actually got their start in
civil rights organizations. Ironically enough, what they found in fighting for civil rights is that
many of their male allies in fighting for racial equality were actually quite sexist when it came to
gender relations. For example, many Women’s Libbers were reporting that when they were in
civil rights organizations, it was always assumed they would be the ones to always go get the
coffee for every else; they’d be the ones to act as the secretaries. Even worse that many male
civil rights activists expected sexual favors from women in their groups. Women who were in
the anti-war movement also made similar comments. As a matter of fact, it was a common
expression in the anti-war movement that, “Women say yes to men who say no.” In other words,
for men who were saying no the Vietnam War, their female comrades were supposed to saying
yes when it comes to some kind of sexual liaison. Growing out of all of this sexism, there is an
increasing sense that if women are going to achieve their sexual liberation, if there’s going to be
gender equality in this country, that women might have to have more of a distinct movement of
their own. So you are going to see the rise of women’s lib. The media, to a large extent,
originally tried to play this off as something silly or quaint and they loved to find examples of
where women who actually opposed women’s liberation would then be debating feminists who
were in favor of it. A few scholars have described it as the media wanting to betray it as a cat
fight because that was a way to kind of trivialize the entire movement. But women’s lib was a
very serious phenomenon in this time period. For example, beauty pageants came under a certain
degree of assault, the argument being that they were objectifying women. There was the ritual of
bra burning that many of you, I’m sure, have heard about. There’s a great deal of talk about how
women could empower themselves, how they could break the glass ceiling of being promoted in
the private sector, getting managerial and executive positions in America’s corporations, in being
more accepted in places like graduate school programs and academia. There was an effort that
began in the 1970s to get an equal rights amendment passed in the Constitution. Actually, this
wasn’t the first effort. There had been another one back in the 1920s that obviously failed. But in
the 1970s another effort was made. Had the equal rights amendment gone into effect, it would
have basically made all legal documents or all legislation in this country gender neutral. The
ERA came pretty close to passing by the 1980s but the supporters came up just a little bit short in
terms of getting the necessary number of states to ratify the idea of amending the Constitution. This becomes another source of activism from this time period. Again it’s in many ways an outgrowth of women getting their start in other movements and discovering a certain degree of sexism and branching out on their own for this next cause. One scholar put this very well. There’s a scholar, Susan Douglas, who wrote a book, *Where the girls are.* It was basically a study of the post World War II mass media and what kind of messages were women getting from female characters in movies and television shows, and advertising campaigns that sold products primarily to women. What kinds of messages were women getting about body image, and about what was possible in their lives, and what sort of roles were most appropriate for them. One chapter of this book by Susan Douglas is titled “I’m not a feminist, but…. ” What that gets to is that when she was conducting interviews for her work, which was published in the early ‘90s, when she was doing interviews she found that if she asked especially young women, if she asked them if they identified with feminism the answer was often “no.” But then if she listed goals of feminists, these women would by and large say, “Sure. I’m for that, I’m for this, etc.” But they didn’t like the label of feminism. One thing that Douglas and other scholars tried to explore are the stereotypes that are associated with feminism, and why does feminism in some circles end up as an ugly word even if its goals are often celebrated. It is the Women’s Liberation movement that is going to bring these gender concerns to the forefront.

**Slide 30**

**Text:** Watergate Burglary & Fall of Richard Nixon

[Image of front page of The New York Times with headline “Nixon Resigns”]

**Audio:** This lecture is designed to wrap up in the early 1970's, so the event that I've chosen to close things out here is the single greatest political scandal in US history, and I have an entire lecture devoted to this, as part of a more specialized presentations that I've put together, so if you want to learn more about Richard Nixon and Watergate, there is a better lecture than this one for doing it. But, I would like to hit the highlights, just as a way to close out this period that I'm covering here. In 1972, a year, another Presidential campaign year, a year when Richard Nixon was running for his second term in the Oval Office, there was a break in at the Watergate apartment complex that included the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee, of course, the opposition party for Richard Nixon, a Republican. And, there were a number of men who were taken into custody for this burglary, but the fact that they were carrying electronic equipment, and the fact that they were rather well dressed led to some suspicion right off the bat, that whatever was going on here was not economically motivated, it wasn't about stealing anything, but perhaps was about a more political motive, and in fact, it was. As it turns out, the Watergate burglary was just one component of a much broader campaign by members of Richard Nixon's White House staff to secure unfair political advantages over opponents. There was a legal fundraising, there had been other break-ins to gather politically motivated intelligence, you
know, in other words, ways to discredit your enemies, and there was a much larger conspiracy that, ultimately, went all the way to the top, to the White House itself. It took more than two years, but ultimately, Richard Nixon will resign, as an investigation that included Washington Post reporters that eventually included Congress, an investigation will gradually work its way up the Executive Branch chain of command to Richard Nixon himself. More than 20 members of his administration will end up going to jail for some combination of perjury and obstruction of justice. Now, Richard Nixon, himself, probably did not order the Watergate break-in, and may not necessary have specifically ordered the use of other tactics that his White House team were involved with, but Richard Nixon most definitely set the tone, in terms of the people that he surrounded himself with, and the sort of implicit message that he sent to them, and he was also, we know for a fact, intimately involved in the cover-up. When Richard Nixon had learned what had happened and who was involved, he was very actively working with his team to try to discourage a legitimate investigation into what was taking place, all the while telling the American public that he had a, you know, a very pure administration and he was going to do everything possible to try to get to the bottom of it. Instead, he was actively lying to the American public and obstructing the process of justice to get to the bottom of this. Now, again, it took a period of time. This break-in took place in June of 1972, Richard Nixon did not resign from office until August of 1974, and, you know, it was a lot for the American public to follow, the various details of this business, but if you stuck with it, there was ultimately a very prolonged pattern of corruption in the Nixon White House. He fought it every step of the way. Like Lyndon Johnson before him, there was a taping system in Richard Nixon's Oval Office; he fought a legal battle to avoid having to turn these tapes or transcripts of the tapes over to investigators. Eventually he lost that battle. There was a mysterious gap in one of the tapes, Nixon claimed his Secretary had accidently erased a portion of the tape. Of course, there's great suspicion to this day that there must have been some very damming evidence in that particular segment, and that's why it was eliminated. But, in the end, Richard Nixon will step down as President. He'll be, to this day, the only President who's every resigned from office, and he did so because the House Judiciary Committee had voted articles of impeachment against him. Impeachment is, roughly speaking, a kind of indictment where the US House of Representatives, ultimately, decides that there are certain high crimes and misdemeanors that are worthy of removing a President from office, and if you are impeached, the next step is for the US Senate to hold a, kind of, trial and then vote on whether or not to actually remove a President. Now, Richard Nixon did not get quite to the point of being impeached. The House Judiciary Committee, by voting for it, was basically putting the issue in front of the entire House of Representative, but the handwriting was pretty well on the wall that Nixon was going to be impeached and quite possible removed from office, so rather than face all of that embarrassment, he stepped down. And, the man shown here on your left in this photograph, Gerald Ford, former Congressman from Michigan, well at the time he was a, make a long story short, Gerald Ford had been appointed as Nixon's Vice President when Nixon Vice President had to resign in order to go to jail for financial crimes that were actually unconnected to Watergate. So, this could not get, you could not script this to be
more bizarre. So, Richard Nixon's first Vice President had been a gentleman, a term I use loosely, of Spiro Agnew, who as a Governor of Maryland had committed a variety of financial crimes, taking kickbacks and so forth, so prosecutors had to get rid of him first, so that he would not become President if Nixon had to resign. So, Nixon appoints Gerald Ford as his Vice President, and then Nixon himself is forced to resign and Gerald Ford becomes the only President in this country's history, who was not elected either President or Vice President, so it was very bizarre, very unsettling. But in the end, Richard Nixon, who had had been intimately involved with trying to cover up the entire conspiracy related to Watergate, ends up resigning from office and then the new President Ford gives Nixon the ultimate get out of jail free card Presidential Pardon, which prevented investigators from going any deeper into Nixon's affairs. There was real evidence that he'd been engaged in income tax fraud, and as I said, there were all kinds of dirty tricks and illegal activities being committed by members of Nixon's White House staff, but the investigation came to a screeching halt when Nixon got his Presidential Pardon. And, in perhaps one of the ultimate ironies of this entire episode, back in 1972, when Richard Nixon was running for reelection, he was in a slam-dunk position. The Democrats had chosen a candidate who was widely seen as outside of the mainstream, Nixon ended up winning in a landslide, he didn't need to go to all of this extra and illegal effort to win, but being very paranoid, being very insecure, he will, again, set up a special team within his White House, to ultimately go outside of the law, commit all of this funny business, and it will come back to bite him. It took some time, you know, as I said, the burglary at Watergate took place several months before the American people voted in 1972, but not enough of the story was really out there yet, that people could be sure that this went all the way up to the top. So, I would like to suggest that one reason why many young people today are so cynical about politics is that the combination of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal really do a number on the American people, and so, while I try my best to encourage people to be politically engaged, you know, I certainly understand why some major features of US History would encourage you to do otherwise.

Slide 31

Text: Useful Primary Sources

- Winston Churchill’s “Iron Curtain” speech (1946)
- Truman Doctrine (1947)
- Senator Joseph McCarthy launching anti-communist crusade in Wheeling, WV (1950)
- President Dwight Eisenhower Farewell Address on “Military-Industrial Complex” (1961)
- John F. Kennedy Inaugural Address (1961)
- Port Huron statement by SDS (1962)

Slide 32

Text: Useful Primary Sources (continued)
• MLK’s “I have a Dream” speech (1963)
• Senator J. William Fulbright’s “Arrogance of Power” speech (1966)
• Stokely Carmichael’s “Black Power” speech (1967)
• Redstockings manifesto (1969)