

# America in the 2000s: George W. Bush and All That!

Stan Katz

## Course Information

Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m.–noon for six weeks beginning March 6 through April 10.

**Hybrid – Lecture/Discussion – Unlimited**

## Course Description

This will be another of my courses on a recent decade in American political history. Each class session will rely upon a series of YouTube videos commenting on the major developments of the decade. I will lecture for most of the rest of the class, although each week I will respond to questions from the group, and will reserve the last portion of the class for discussion. This course will be hybrid, accepting both personal and Zoom participation. No reading will be assigned, but prior to the start of the course, I will suggest several recent books and articles for those students who wish to go into the topic more deeply.

This course is a natural and chronological follow on to my current course on America in the 1990s. We will start with the contested election of George Bush 43 as president of the United States, and ask how Bush distinguished himself from his father and from other leading Republicans? What constituted "compassionate conservatism"? How did the Bush political program differ from the centrist politics of the Clinton-Gore administration? And then we will have to consider the terrible events of 9/11 and the origins/consequences of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). How did Bush 43 differ from his father as a wartime president? Why did Bush 43 attack Iraq? Why did the Iraq war play out as it did? How did the United States become so entrapped in Afghanistan? Why was Bush reelected president in 2004? How was the Republican party transformed by the GWOT? How did the Democratic Party respond to the years of Bush/Republican dominance, and why was a political neophyte like Barack Obama successful in defeating Hilary Clinton for the Democratic nomination in 2008? We will then look at the origins of the Obama administration -- and the resituation of the Democrats in foreign policy

during the early years of Obama's presidency. How much was Obama able to accomplish during the first two years of his presidency, when his party controlled both houses of Congress?