

Beacon Summer Reading: History 2009: 12th Grade American 20th Century Social History

Please Read 1968: The Year That Rocked The World, Random House: New York 2004, by Mark Kurlansky.

The summer reading will prepare you for themes in 12th grade history next year. There will be a writing assignment on the reading at the beginning of the school year.

This summer all rising seniors will read Mark Kurlansky's book 1968: The Year that Rocked the World. Upon their return to school in the fall students will be asked to complete an assignment based upon the book. In preparation for the assignment students should do the following:

- 1) Read the entire book.
- 2) Examine and understand Kurlansky's thesis (in the Introduction); he writes:

Four historic factors merged to create 1968: the example of the civil rights movement, which at the time was so new and original; a generation that felt so different and so alienated that it rejected all forms of authority; a war that was hated so universally around the world that it provided a cause for all the rebels seeking one; and all of this occurring at the moment that television was coming of age but was still new enough to have not yet become controlled, distilled, and packaged the way it is today. (xviii)

- 3) Take notes (on index cards or in a word document) on the best pieces of evidence in each chapter that prove or disprove Kurlansky's thesis, while trying to resolve for yourself: "To what extent do you find Kurlansky's thesis convincing?" [These notes MUST be submitted to receive full credit for the summer reading assignment in the fall.]