

AMERICAN STUDIES COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Spring 2009

Inside Courses

AMERICAN SCENE

AMST 30104

C. Meissner – TR 9:30-10:45

Track 1

"To make much so much money that you won't, that you don't mind, don't mind anything that is absolutely, I think, the main American formula." Henry James, *The American Scene*, 1907. "Greed, for lack of a better word, is good, is right, it works, and it will save that malfunctioning corporation called the U.S.A.," Gordon Gecko, *Wall Street*, 1987. After a 20-year absence, Henry James returns to America to examine the country of his birth. His tour brought him to the above quote and dismaying conclusion. This course tries to contextualize and understand James's remark by placing it within a broader atmosphere of late 19th- and early 20th-century American culture. We will look at works that predate, are contemporary with, and follow James's American tour. We will look at works of literature and biography, of politics and philosophy, and of theology and economics. Throughout, we will keep circling around and back to James's notion of "The Main American Formula" and asking not only what exactly he meant, but how other major thinkers of the age understood or conceived of an "American Formula," and how that "formula" could be measured at the level of the individual, the corporation, the country, and, with Conrad's *Nostramo*, the world. Readings will include works of Joseph Conrad, Theodore Dreissner, Henry Ford, Henry James, Theodore Roosevelt, Thorstein Veblen, and Edith Wharton. In addition, we will view several movies, the focus of which is directly related to the course's central questions.

WITNESSING THE SIXTIES

AMST 30112

B. Giamo – 12:30-1:45

Track 1 or 2

The purpose of this interdisciplinary course is twofold: to examine the social context and cultural change of the sixties, on the one hand, and on the other to explore the various journalistic and aesthetic representations of events, movements, and transformations. We will focus on the manner in which each writer or artist witnessed the sixties and explore fresh styles of writing and cultural expression, such as the new journalism popularized by Tom Wolfe and the music/lyrics performed by Bob Dylan. Major topics for consideration include the counterculture and the movement--a combination of civil rights and anti-war protest.

ADVANCED REPORTING IN AMERICA

AMST 30138

J Colwell – MW 1:30-2:45

Track 3

This is an advanced course in journalistic reporting and writing devoted to learning how to prepare, in a professional manner, in-depth articles on issues and events of community interest for Notre Dame and in this area. Emphasis will be on the techniques, ethics and responsibilities of conducting interviews and research and crafting pieces for newspapers and other publications. Completion of a writing course above freshman level and/or news experience is required.

MILLIONAIRE IN AMERICA

AMST 30161

C. Meissner – MW 11:45-1:00

Track 1 or 3

Few figures in American history have so defined the nation as the millionaire. For good or bad, the millionaire has been an object of equally intense scrutiny and fascination. This course will examine the role of the millionaire in fiction by writers such as Wharton, James, and Fitzgerald. We will also look at the millionaire as savior and agent of corruption in children's literature by writers such as Margaret Sidney and Louisa May Alcott. In looking at the millionaire historically, we will devote special attention to the Gilded Age with its "robber barons" such as Andrew Carnegie, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and Henry Ford, figures whose industry and greed also fueled the establishment of vast charitable enterprises that helped define American culture. In politics we will pay special attention to Theodore Roosevelt who harbored a deep suspicion of inherited wealth and questioned whether or not the "virtuous republic" could sustain the presence and efforts of so many men of "inherited wealth." And in contemporary society, we will try to understand how the celebrity millionaire, i.e., Donald Trump, Paris Hilton, Ivan Boesky, has become a celebrated cultural icon.

LATINOS IN AMERICAN FILM

AMST 30162

J. Ruiz – TR 2:00-3:15

Track 1 or 2

This course will survey the history of representations of Latinos in American cinema from the silent era to the present. We will examine how stereotypes associated with Latinos have been produced, reinforced, and challenged in American films—from "greasers" and "Latin lovers" to gangsters, kingpins, and border crossers. We will explore the fascinating contradiction that, despite a long history of misrepresentation and underrepresentation, Latinos have made significant contributions to Hollywood and independent cinema. We will also examine the rise of Latino directors in recent years and their drive to reframe the Latino image for American audiences. Screenings will range from the silent epic *Martyrs of the Alamo* (1915) to more recent films such as *Maria Full of Grace* (2004). Our interdisciplinary approach to the subject will draw upon readings from history, film theory and criticism, and ethnic/American studies. Students will take a midterm exam and make class presentations.

KEROUAC, THE BEATS, AND DYLAN

AMST 30163

B. Giamo – TR 3:30-4:45

Track 1

This seminar will re-examine Kerouac and his prose in relation to Beat subculture and the larger context of post-World War II American society. Although the work of other Beat writers, such as William S. Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, and Gary Snyder will be considered, the primary focus will be on Kerouac. Moreover, the seminar will question the cultural codification of Kerouac as "King of the Beats" and advance the notion that he was a prose artist on a spiritual quest. Or, as Ginsberg aptly put it--an "American lonely Prose Trumpeter of drunken Buddha Sacred Heart."

CATHOLICS IN AMERICA

AMST 30164

K. Cummings – MW 3:00-4:15

Track 2

Since 1850 Roman Catholics have constituted the single largest religious denomination in the United States. This course explores what the presence of Catholics has meant for the American experience, focusing on themes of church/state separation, religion and politics, education, and social reform. We will also examine how the American context has transformed the practice of Catholicism, with attention to ethnicity, gender, region, race and class as variables that have shaped the American Catholic experience. Assigned readings range from excerpts of anti-Catholic publications to first-hand accounts written by American Catholics from the colonial period to the present. In addition we will study the representation of Catholics in American film, themes of Catholic fiction, material culture relating to Catholic devotional life and the sacraments, and the shifting position of American Catholics in the universal Roman Catholic Church.

FASHIONING IDENTITIES

AMST 30165

S. White – TR 9:30-10:45

Track 1 or 2

Did Puritans really only wear black and white, or did they wear fashionable lace, silk ribbons and bright colors? Did early settlers wash their bodies to get clean? What role did fashion play in the making of the American Revolution? And how did slaves and Native Americans adorn their bodies? This course will address such questions by focusing on dress and material culture. We will consider the role of dress in the construction of colonial identities, and examine the ways that bodies operated as sites for negotiating class and ethnic encounters.

MAGAZINE WRITING

AMST 30166

K. Temple – MW 1:30-2:45

Track 3

This course will examine various forms of magazine journalism, from the direct presentation of information to narrative journalism to the art of the first-person essay. The class, requiring students to complete a variety of written assignments while performing in a workshop setting, will emphasize those storytelling techniques essential to writing for publication.

SEMINARS

DEATH IN AMERICA

AMST 43142

E. Doss – MW 3:00-4:15

Track 1

This senior seminar will focus on changing understandings of death, dying, and mourning in America. Until recently, the United States was often characterized as a death-denying society, and death itself relegated to the institutional, private, setting of the hospital. Contemporary debates about abortion, euthanasia, gun control, organ transplantation, and stem cell research, as well as popular interests in "good death," the afterlife, bereavement therapy, funeral pre-planning, and cyber memorials suggest new concepts of death and dying. Examining different visual and material cultures—including memorials, roadside shrines, cemeteries, obituaries, TV shows like *CSI*, online tributes, and death-related rituals—this seminar considers how, and why, death has been "reclaimed" in contemporary America. Field trips and guest lecturers included.

AMERICAN TRAVELS

AMST 43143

J. Ruiz – TR 5:00-6:15

Track 1 or 2

What does it mean to travel or to call oneself a traveler? This and several other deceptively simple questions will frame this senior seminar: What do we want when we travel? What is travel's significance to American cultures, places, and identities? Rather than a traditional history of American travel, this course will challenge students to explore travel's power to transform landscapes, cultures, and practices. We will consider, for example, the invention of Las Vegas in the 1950s and the fact that we can now visit "Paris" in the Nevada desert; similarly, we will explore what it means to visit "Main Street USA" at a giant theme park in suburban Paris. From destinations such as beaches to ski slopes to urban centers, this course will also explore the intimacies between travel and various modes of identity—including race, class, gender, sexuality, and nation. Students will write short reflection papers and will produce a final research project.

Outside Courses

FROM WORK TO TEXT: REPRESENTING LABOR IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICA

AMST 30252

R. McCormick – MWF 12:50-1:40

This course is designed to introduce you to the ways in which American novelists, poets, artists, musicians, and filmmakers have attempted to represent labor and labor issues throughout the twentieth century. In traditional approaches to literary studies, labor is often subsumed within broader discussions of class or literature's general engagement with political or social questions. This course, on the other hand, will focus as much as possible on direct representations of actual laboring bodies and the labor movement and their evolution throughout the twentieth century. Our engagement with these issues will focus specifically on the relationship between labor and American identity and the ways in which representations of labor raise

questions about the literary treatment of race and gender throughout the same time period. Although the primary objective of the class will be to get you to bring these issues to bear on literary interpretation, the course will also have to include a very basic introduction to American labor history. This will include a discussion of recent phenomena, such as the WGA strike, which bring the relationship between labor and culture into sharp relief, as well as the cultural repercussions of labor in its current form under globalization. The texts we will look at will include novels by Upton Sinclair, John Steinbeck, Jack London, and Richard Wright; labor songs by Joe Hill, Woody Guthrie, and Pete Seeger; films such as Harlan County U.S.A. and Modern Times; and poetry by Langston Hughes and Tillie Olsen.

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN LITERATURE

AMST 30240

M. Benedict – MW 8:00-9:15

Track 1

What does it mean to write fiction in the "Naughts" (2000-2010)? In the age of MySpace, RSS feeds, American Idol, and YouTube, is the term "fiction" even valid anymore? Or, for that matter, books? In this class, we will read several novels published since January 2001. In addition to covering the "usual" topics (plot, character relationships, themes, etc.), we'll also think about what it means to write "fictions," to write "novels," in a world, in an "America," that is increasingly being parsed into smaller and smaller pieces. A partial list of texts include (subject to change): Mark Danielewski, *Only Revolutions: A Novel*; Jennifer Egan, *Look at Me*; Joshua Ferris, *Then We Came to the End*; Dinaw Menegstu, *The Beautiful Things This Heaven Bears*; and Dana Spiotta, *Eat the Document: A Novel*. We'll also view excerpts of television shows, movies, and other media, as well as attend some campus literary events. Required work: two short essays, midterm, final, occasional quizzes.

U.S. LATINO/A POETRY, ART AND FILM

AMST 30226

J. Rodriguez – MWF 12:50-1:40

Track 1

The literature of Latina/o immigration and migrancy brings together a range of contemporary concerns, from identity, to the transnational, to definitions of the literary. How does international movement inflect notions of American identity? How do writers create and describe communities in constant movement? These are only two questions that can be posed to the literatures of Latina and Latino transnational and intra-national movement. In this course, we will read a range of recent materials dealing with immigration between Mexico and Latin America and the United States, and with intra-national migrancy. Key texts will include, Luis Alberto Urrea's *The Devil's Highway*, Julia Alvarez's *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*, Cristina Garcia's *Dreaming in Cuban*, Tomas Rivera's *Šand the Earth did not devour him*, and Elva Treviño Hart's *Barefoot Heart: Stories of a Migrant Child*. In addition, we will draw upon various critical readings focusing on transnationalism, displacement, and new theories about contemporary globalization. Students will write three short essays and a final exam, and will be required to participate actively in class.

CONTEMPORARY WOMEN WRITERS

AMST 30253

V. Sayers – TR 3:30-4:45

We'll read, discuss, and write about a wide range of contemporary writing by women, with a particular concentration on the short story and the writers visiting Notre Dame's Women Writers Festival. Our readings

will include realistic fiction as well as innovative and experimental work, including graphic fiction; some of our readings will focus on women's experiences and perspectives, but some will "make the leap" to imagine men's consciousness and reality. We'll also read critical essays and reflections by the writers themselves to situate the work within the history of women writers; we'll be especially interested in the publishing and critical realities facing women writers today. Reading journal, midterm and final, brief presentation, and 8-10 page critical paper.

LITERATURES OF THE AMERICAN HEMISPHERE

AMST 30255

J. Rodriguez – MWF 3:00-3:50

National borders mark our Americas today, but for the first European explorers the landscapes of their "new world" were uncharted and unbounded. The newly encountered land invited utopian dreams even as it became the arena for genocidal violence. To reconsider these moments of violence and possibility, we will approach early American literature intra-hemispherically, reading not just from the British colonial record, but also Spanish documents in English translation. We will read comparatively in order to ask key questions about American identity both then and now. For example, what do we learn when we juxtapose Cortés' invasion of the Mexican empire to King Philip's War in the New England colonies? To what degree do these legacies of imperialism still shape our modern world? What comparisons arise between the poetry of Anne Bradstreet and Sor Juana Inés de La Cruz; between the captivity adventures of Cabeza de Vaca and Mary Rowlandson? How might these contact points continue to shape our views of "others"? How have Native Nations across the Americas written or spoken the loss of worlds? The authors and subjects noted above will serve as key markers, but we will also read primary works by William Bradford, Bernal Díaz, John Smith, William Apess, and others as we reconsider the literatures and histories of the Americas in a cross-national paradigm. Students will be expected to write three short papers, take a final exam, and participate actively in class.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN FEMINIST FICTION

AMST 30222

J. Brogan – MW 11:45-1:00

Track 1

In this course we will read a number of works, by both women and men, which may be described as feminist fiction. In so doing, we will raise issues about the relation of aesthetics to politics, about the process of canonization, and about aesthetic integrity. Ultimately, we will also be examining the place of women within American culture during the twentieth century - how it has changed, how it has remained the same. At the end of the course, students should feel that they have discovered a new body of exciting literature, as well as new ways of reading some of our best-known literature.

Requirements: Two papers, a mid-term, and a final examination (25% each).

HARLEM'S AMERICAS

AMST 30227

C. Johnson-Roullier – TR 2:00-3:15

Track 1

What was the Harlem Renaissance? While traditional notions of this time in literary history have conceived of it as a brief but luminous flowering of the arts in African-American culture, not so much attention has been given to the many different voices that contributed to the movement, and which shaped its representations of

race in the early twentieth century. In this course, we will examine the meaning and significance of the Harlem Renaissance as conventionally understood, then move on to an exploration of Harlem's Americas, or the many cultural locations from which race and racial representation were being considered both inside and outside the movement's accepted parameters. Thus, rather than studying the Harlem Renaissance solely as an African-American phenomenon, we'll also explore the interrelationships between a number of its core works, along with several others from the same period not generally studied in this context. In seeking to understand the writing of Harlem's Americas, we'll investigate how all of the texts we examine are engaged in a larger dialogue on the meaning of race in the early twentieth century, both in the United States and beyond. In so doing, we'll try to gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of the Harlem Renaissance, while considering what this may have to tell us about race and racial representation not only in the early twentieth century, but on into the twenty-first.

Course Texts: Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery*; W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*; Jessie Fauset, *Plum Bun*; Nella Larsen, *Quicksand & Passing*; Sherwood Anderson, *Dark Laughter*; Jean Toomer, *Cane*; Carl van Vechten, *Nigger Heaven*; Claude McKay, *Home to Harlem*; Anna Julia Cooper, *A Voice from the South*

Course Requirements: Three five-page essays, in-class writing, 20-minute group presentation

AMERICAN FICTION SINCE 1945

AMST 30254

B. Krier – TR 2:00-3:15

Many contemporary writers began long and productive careers during the decades after the second world war. In this course we will study some of them, using representative texts to try to work out an aesthetics of the time. We will need to look at questions of personal identity, as they embrace spiritual, sexual, social, and racial dimensions. And we will also give close attention to the elasticity of the novel form itself.

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN WOMEN POETS

AMST 30251

J. Brogan – MW 1:30-2:45

Although the range and productivity of American women writers over the last two centuries has been enormous, the proliferation of extremely accomplished and important women writers has virtually mushroomed in the last few decades, embracing leading poets (such as Elizabeth Bishop and Adrienne Rich), leading novelists (such as Alice Walker, Joyce Carol Oates, and Toni Morrison) and altogether new voices such as the Chicana poet Lorna Dee Cervantes, the Asian-American novelist Amy Tan, and the Native-American Susan Power (to name only a few). To narrow the range of this explosive development in American literature, we will primarily focus on the work of women written in this country after WW II, with special interest on the last two decades. In addition to a small sampling of a number of different writers to be found in our class reader, we will ultimately focus on 7 writers: Elizabeth Bishop (poetry), Adrienne Rich (poetry and essays), June Jordan (poetry and essays), Amy Tan (fiction), Lorna Dee Cervantes (poetry), Susan Power (fiction), and Sandra Gilbert (poetry and essays).

THE POETICS OF BLACK POPULAR CULTURE

AMST 30250

T. Irving – TR 9:30-10:45

This interdisciplinary course focuses on "cultural studies" as a critique of larger systems of domination and will introduce you to major voices of African American critical theory. Paul Gilroy suggests that, "popular culture always has its base in the experiences, the pleasures, the memories, the traditions of the people." Black Cultural Studies is interested in the wider sphere of critical practice, national politics and how popular culture can both resist and perpetuate the idea of America.

While visual and literary studies have been seen as historically separate disciplines, we will use theories from each to study those forms of self-representation that defy disciplinary boundaries. With an eye on the way black popular culture is mythologized through commodification and rife with contradictions, we will examine the conflicted ways in which "racial" identities and differences have been constructed throughout U.S. culture. We will consider how new debates about the history of race have changed American literary, historical and cultural studies. We will put theoretical tracks in conversation with literature, music, visual art, the body, film and food and use these cultural texts as a method of engaging sustained social and political critique.

POETRY AND PAINTING IN MANHATTAN 1950-1965

AMST 40220

J. Wilkinson – TR 2:00-3:15

Track 1

This course approaches the poetry and painting of Manhattan during its rise to international pre-eminence as an artistic center through the work and friendships of Frank O'Hara (1926-1966), poet and curator at the Museum of Modern Art. It introduces the New York School of poetry, referring to visual art from de Kooning to Warhol and with side-glances at film, photography, music and dance. The course will develop primarily through reading poems, although students will be directed to the critical and historical context. Readings will draw on The Collected Poems of Frank O'Hara (ed. Donald Allen); John Ashbery, *The Mooring of Starting Out*; Ted Berrigan, *The Sonnets*; and a course pack. Course requirements are written analyses of poems (every two weeks), a final exam, and a 5-7 page paper.

US CIVIL WAR ERA, 1848-1877

AMST 30331

L. Przybyszewski – TR 11:00-12:15

Track 2

This course begins in 1848 and examines the coming of the Civil War, the experience of the war itself, and the period of Reconstruction up to 1877. The emphasis will be on the political, social, cultural, and legal events and decisions that were made by governmental and civilian participants, by men and women, by whites and blacks. Why were so many willing to go to war? What did they believe each side was fighting for? The sectional conflict touched every aspect of American life. In order to understand it fully, we will read not only political speeches, military reports, and judicial decisions, but also poetry, fiction, and private letters. We will examine the beliefs and values of veterans and nurses, of abolitionists and slaveowners, of politicians and voters. We will also consider the way historians evaluate the war and the way in which the public remembers it. The mode of instruction will be a mix of lecture and discussion.

US HISTORY SINCE WWII

AMST 30335

E. Blantz – MWF 9:35-10:25

Track 2

The purpose of this course is to study the political, diplomatic, economic, social, and cultural development of the United States from 1945 through the presidency of George H.W. Bush. Although the military and diplomatic history of World War II will be considered by way of background, the principal topics of investigation will be the Fair Deal Program of President Truman, the Cold War, the Korean Conflict, the Eisenhower Presidency, the New Frontier, Vietnam, President Johnson's Great Society, the Civil Rights Movement, the Nixon Years, the social and intellectual climate of this post-war era, and the presidencies of Gerald Ford through George H.W. Bush. There will be a required reading list of approximately six books, two smaller writing assignments, and three examinations.

LABOR & AMERICA SINCE 1945

AMST 30362

D. Graff – MW 1:30-2:45

Track 2

This course explores the relationship between workers and the labor movement to American politics and culture since 1945. The United States emerged from World War II as the strongest global power, and its citizens subsequently enjoyed a long postwar economic boom that created what we might call the first truly middle-class society in world history. At the heart of that new society was the American labor movement, those unions like the United Auto Workers and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters who ensured that at least some of the postwar profits made it into the wallets of workers and their families. Today, however, unions represent only a sliver of workers in the private sector. What accounts for the decline of organized labor since the 1950s? What has the decline of the labor movement meant for workers specifically, and the American economy and politics more broadly? How and why have popular perceptions of unions changed over time? What has been the relationship of organized labor to the civil rights movement, feminism, and modern conservatism? What is “globalization” and what has been its impact upon American workers and their unions? Through an exploration of historical scholarship, memoirs, polemical writings, and Hollywood films, this course will try to answer these questions. Students interested in politics, economic development, international relations, social justice, human rights, peace studies or mass culture are particularly welcome.

IRISH-AMERICAN HISTORY

AMST 30389

P. Griffin – MWF 10:40-11:30

This course will explore the Irish-American experience from Atlantic, global, and comparative perspectives. We will, of course, cover traditional topics, such as labor, politics, and religion. And we will encounter many colorful characters and fascinating stories. But we will do so by viewing the Irish who came to America as part of a broader, dynamic diaspora that would span the globe. Viewing migration to the American colonies (including the Caribbean) and the United States from this vantage point means that we must consider the changing relationship between Ireland and America, as well as the ways in which both regions were parts of broader economic and cultural systems. As such, we will examine dynamics that occurred within the Atlantic basin, such as movement and adaptation to a New World, within a global context. Needless to say, we will cover the history of both sending and receiving societies in rigorous fashion. Only by doing this sort of work

can we understand what defined the Irish-American experience. Evaluations will be based on short essays and mid-term and final exams. Students must also participate in a weekly discussion section.

RELIGION AND AMERICAN POLITICS

AMST 30365

M. Noll – MWF 12:50-1:40

Track 3

Since the early 1950s, religion has been an obviously major factor in American political life driven first by the African-American leaders of the Civil Rights Movement and then, in more recent decades, by the concerns of the Religious Right. Especially after the election of John F. Kennedy in 1960, Catholics have also been fully recognized participants in the nation's political uses of religion as well as in debates over whether and how religion should be used politically. This class tries to show that modern political-religious connections are but new instances of what has always gone on in the American past. The shape of contests over religion and politics may have changed considerably over time, but not the fact of dense connections between the two spheres. Readings for the course include primary and secondary accounts that treat notable incidents, problems, debates, and controversies from the colonial period to the present. Lectures spotlight major issues of historical interpretation, like religion and the Constitution, religion and antebellum debates over slavery, religion and Reconstruction, Catholic versus Protestant understandings of liberty, and civil rights and the New Christian Right. Opportunities for student writing will feature responses to primary documents and historical interpretations.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY IN AMERICAN HISTORY

AMST 30376

M. DeGruccio – MW 4:30-5:45

Track 2

From the heated trenches of America's "culture wars" few things are as polarizing as marriage and the family. At the extremes, some hearken back to less troubled days when one man and one woman made enduring commitments to each other; others imagine a narrative of progress with women throwing off the shackles of patriarchy, as both men and women forged new kinds of relationships informed by individual needs. Through intensive reading and writing students will grapple with these conflicting narratives of decline and triumph. We will explore Native-American families, polygamy, free-love communities, Cold War homemakers, the black family, and gay marriage. In all of these we will flesh out the ways in which defining "the family" has always been entangled with citizenship, national politics, and religious intolerance.

GREAT DEPRESSION IN U.S. HISTORY

AMST 30384

T. Gloege – TR 9:30-10:45

Track 2

This course explores the political, economic, cultural, and social history of the Great Depression and New Deal years in the United States, from the stock market crash of 1929 to the beginning of World War II in 1941. It will trace the historical causes of the Great Depression, the multiple effects of the Depression on society and culture during the long 1930s, and the ways these changes continue to affect our lives in the present. Other topics will include the New Deal, popular political movements, the environment, religion, science, and psychology. We will also examine how categories of race, class and gender both shaped and were shaped by the experience of the 1930s. A particular effort will be made to trace these diverse historical

changes in the cultural artifacts of the period. This class will use secondary texts as well as a variety of primary sources, including essays, correspondence, fiction, theatre, photography, music, film and other forms of mass media. Assignments include a research paper using primary sources, two short critical reviews, a midterm and final exam, and a group presentation.

U.S. DURING THE 1960s

AMST 30390

T. Swartz – MW 8:00-9:15

Track 2

"History with a capital H had come down to earth," wrote New Leftist Todd Gitlin of the 1960s, "People were living with a supercharged density." This course probes the decade's ferment, exploring the political, economic, social, cultural, and religious development of the United States from roughly 1960 to 1974. Placing the era in historical and global perspective, this course covers major events and trends including the New Frontier of John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, the civil rights and feminist movements, the Vietnam War, the New Left, the counterculture, Richard Nixon and Watergate, and seeds of the New Right.

COMPARATIVE SLAVERY

AMST 30391

M. Hauser – MW 3:00-4:15

For many Americans, the history of slavery is synonymous with plantations in the Atlantic world. This course seeks to expand our view of Atlantic slavery by looking to the Ancient World, Africa, Asia and Europe in historic and contemporary contexts. This course examines slavery as a labor system and a social form intimately connected with the political economies and cultural groups within which it arose. It will also examine debates about contemporary forms of bonded labor and slavery emerging from global encounters today. By examining different types of bonded and unfree labor, such as chattel, domestic, and wage slavery, we will form an inquiry about slavery's relationship to the following: person-hood and social death; the emergence of market economies; systems of differentiation used to maintain the social condition of the enslaved; and power and violence. This course will take an interdisciplinary approach relying on archaeology, anthropology and history for our case studies in understanding this particular social form.

U.S. & THE VIETNAM WAR

AMST 40324

S. Brady – MWF 8:30-9:20

Track 2

This course examines the participation of the United States in its "longest war" -- the conflict in Vietnam. The course is taught primarily from an "American" as opposed to a "Vietnamese" perspective. Broad topics to be covered include: Vietnamese background (land, people, history, culture); American political and diplomatic decision making; 1950-1975: how the war was fought; debating the war; the war at home; the aftermath of war; and lessons of the war. This is a lecture AND a discussion course. Attendance at BOTH is required. Approximately six books will be assigned.

SPORT AND THE COLD WAR

AMST 40328

J. Soares – MW 3:00-4:15

Track 2

This course explores the ways that sport reflected the political, ideological, social, economic and military struggle known as the Cold War. Sport permitted opportunities to defeat hated rivals or to develop competition more peacefully. It reflected the internal politics and societies of nations, and also illuminated relations among allies. Using a variety of readings, media accounts and film clips, this course looks at a number of crucial teams, athletes and events from the Cold War, including the 1980 U.S. Olympic hockey team, the controversial 1972 Olympic basketball final, "ping pong diplomacy," Olympic boycotts, East German figure skater Katarina Witt, Romanian gymnast Nadia Comaneci, the ferocious Soviet-Czechoslovakian hockey rivalry following the Soviet invasion of 1968, and more.

AMERICAN CONGRESS

AMST 30423

J. Roos – TR 2:00-3:15

Track 3

This course will approach the United States Congress from several perspectives. First Congress will be viewed from the perspective of the American Founding. Then we will read several major studies Congress including Mayhew's Congress: the Electoral Connection, Cox and McCubbins' Legislative Leviathan, and Jacobson's Congressional Elections. Students will also learn how to do basic roll call analysis through short data assignments. In addition they will prepare a complete Legislative History, using primary materials. In addition to these writing assignments, there will be a mid-term and a final.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

AMST 30438

M. Doppke – TR 3:30-4:45

The first half of the course provides an overview of major American environmental policies such as regulating land use and preservation, water, air, and endangered species. The second half of the course deals more directly with issues of policy formulation, implementation and enforcement. This course requires significant student participation in addition to the 20-page research paper.

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL SECURITY DECISION-MAKING

AMST 30440

M. Desch – MW 11:45-1:00

The purpose of this class is to introduce students to the role of intelligence (collection, analysis, and covert action) in U.S. national security decision-making. The course will begin with a discussion of the evolution of U.S. national security decision-making apparatus and the Intelligence Community. It will then explore major issues of intelligence in U.S. history since the Second World War. Finally, it will conclude with a discussion of some the future intelligence challenges the United States is likely to face in coming years.

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

AMST 30439

B. Connolly – TR 11:00-12:15

This course examines the intersection of international law and international relations, examining international law not as a technical specialty but as part of international relations more generally.

U.S.-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS

AMST 30409

F. Hagopian – MW 11:45-1:00

Track 3

The primary goal of the course is to understand the bases for the political, economic, and security relations of Latin American states with the United States. The course begins with a theoretical and historical examination of the competing perspectives on what determines United States policy toward Latin America: its normative ideals, its security interests, or its economic interests. It then takes up several enduring themes in U.S. - Latin American relations, including the response of the United States to dictatorships, expropriations of United States-owned property, and revolution, and efforts to promote development, democracy, and human rights. Next, it considers the relations of several Latin American states with each other and the United States, from the Latin American point of view, with special attention paid to the foreign policies of Cuba and Mexico. Finally, it examines several new issues in U.S.-Latin American relations, including regional free trade agreements and trade policy, the environment, migration, and drugs, in a post-Cold War environment.

CHURCH AND STATE IN AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW AND POLITICS

AMST 30437

R. McCumbers – TR 5:00-6:15

This course analyzes different approaches to understanding the separation of church and state, and examines how these approaches have played out in political practice and Supreme Court decisions.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN POLITICS

AMST 30411

D. Pinderhughes – MW 1:30-2:45

This course explores the basic elements associated with Black Politics in the US: the role of Black institutions such as the Black Church, the importance of the civil rights movement in challenging barriers to Black political participation, the mid 20th century legal framework created to create access to the political system, and an exploration of Black political participation in northern cities, where there are also increasing numbers of Latinos and other nonwhite groups. Since the course will be taught in spring 2009 immediately after the 2008 Presidential campaign, we will also have the chance to explore the impact of Illinois Senator Obama's campaign on national politics, whatever the outcome, and to consider the impact on African American Politics itself.

AMERICAN POLITICAL PARTIES

AMST 40421

C. Wolbrecht – MW 1:30-2:45

Track 3

Political parties play many vital roles in American politics: They educate potential voters about political processes, policy issues, and civic duties. They mobilize citizens into political activity and involvement. They provide vital information about public debates. They control the choices--candidates and platforms--that voters face at the ballot box. They influence and organize the activities of government officials. Most importantly, by providing a link between government and the governed, they are a central mechanism of representation. These roles--how well they are performed, what bias exists, how they shape outcomes, how they have changed over time--have consequences for the working of the American political system. This class explores the contribution of political parties to the functioning of American democracy.

JUDICIAL POLITICS

AMST 40422

F. Colucci – TR 5:00-6:15

This course examines the effect of the legal system on American politics, government and society. We begin by reviewing the institutions, actors and processes of the legal system, focusing on the institutional and individual influences on judicial decision-making. In the second part of the semester, we will closely analyze the political consequences of legal decisions in areas such as criminal law, race and education--including desegregation, school finance and school choice--abortion, the death penalty and homosexual rights. We conclude by evaluating the extent to which courts can or should be expected to bring about social and political change.

RELIGION AND SOCIAL LIFE

AMST 30507

K. Christiano – MW 3:00-4:15

Track 2

How does social life influence religion? How does religion influence society? What is religion's social significance in a complex society like ours? Is religion's significance declining? This course will consider these and other questions by exploring the great variety in social expressions of religion. The course examines the social bases of churches, sects, and cults, and it focuses on contemporary religion in the United States.

AESTHETICS OF LATINO CULTURE

AMST 40511

G. Cardenas – T 3:00-5:00

Track 1

This course will analyze the philosophy and principles underlying the social and political aspects of Latino art. We will approach this by examining a range of topics, including Chicano and Puerto Rican poster art, muralism, Latina aesthetics, and border art. The readings will enable us to survey a number of important exhibitions of Latino art and to explore new possibilities for exhibition and representation. We will examine descriptive material and critical writings concerning issues pertaining to the representation and interpretation of Latino culture and art as well as how these questions surface in a national museum context.

POPULATION DYNAMICS

AMST 40515

R. Williams – MW 1:30-2:45

Track 2

Demography, the science of population, is concerned with virtually everything that influences, or can be influenced by, population size, distribution, processes, structure, or characteristics. This course pays particular attention to the causes and consequences of population change. Changes in fertility, mortality, migration, technology, lifestyle, and culture have dramatically affected the United States and the other nations of the world. These changes have implications for a number of areas: hunger, the spread of illness and disease, environmental degradation, health services, household formation, the labor force, marriage and divorce, care for the elderly, birth control, poverty, urbanization, business marketing strategies, and political power. An understanding of these is important as business, government, and individuals attempt to deal with the demands of the changing population.

BLACK ARTS

AMST 30618

J. Ford – MW 1:30-2:45

Track 1

This course offers a survey of black diasporic artistry. At the same time, it is an ongoing analysis of how these artists asked, 'what constitutes the African diaspora' in divergent and convergent ways. The main goal of the course is not simply to label certain artists as part of this diasporic formation, but to understand how artists reflected upon their participation in it (and, in some ways, outside of it). We will focus primarily on this conversation's development from the Interwar period of the twentieth-century to the turn of the twenty-first century through poetry, prose fiction and nonfiction, film, television, and dance. From the United States, we will look at how creative intellectuals like the poet Langston Hughes, dancer and anthropologist Katherine Dunham, novelist and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston, fiction writer and essayist Richard Wright, and journalist Alex Haley used art to understand their relationship to black peoples in the Caribbean, Europe, and Africa, along with key events impacting those different geographies. But the course will also consider how black creative intellectuals outside the United States reflected on their relationship to the diaspora. These will include Algerian philosopher Frantz Fanon, Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén, Nigerian musician Fela Kuti, and Pulitzer-Prize winning poet Derek Walcott. In exploring different conceptions of diaspora, we will encounter other themes including the idea of overlapping diasporas, black nationalism, the body, and the significance of translation to cultural solidarity and difference.

CARIBBEAN DIASPORAS

AMST 30609

K. Richman – TR 2-3:15

This course examines the development of Creole societies in the French, Spanish, Dutch, and British Caribbean in response to colonialism, slavery, migration, nationalism and, most recently, transnationalism. The recent exodus of as much as 20 percent of Caribbean populations to North America and Europe has afforded the rise of new transnational modes of existence. This course will explore the consciousness and experience of Caribbean diasporas through ethnography and history, religion, literature, music, and culinary arts.

HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

AMST 40608

D. Rotman – MWF 9:35-10:25

Track 1

Course description coming soon!

THE HYPHENATED AMERICAN

AMST 30702

Y. Prizant – TR 2-3:15

Course description coming soon!

HISTORY OF TELEVISION

AMST 30703

S. Ohmer – TR 3:30-4:45

This course analyzes the history of television, spanning from its roots in radio broadcasting to the latest developments in digital television. In assessing the many changes across this span, the course will cover such topics as why the American television industry developed as a commercial medium in contrast to most other national television industries; how television programming has both reflected and influenced cultural ideologies through the decades; and how historical patterns of television consumption have shifted due to new technologies and social changes. Through studying the historical development of television programs and assessing the industrial, technological, and cultural systems out of which they emerged, the course will piece together the catalysts responsible for shaping this highly influential medium.