

AMERICAN STUDIES 130
AM. BELIEFS & CULTURAL VALUES
Spring 2005

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to key cultural themes in American life. Our purpose is to explore primary American beliefs and cultural values as they have evolved on this continent and have been expressed in sermons, histories, governmental documents, poems, essays, autobiographies, and other literary forms. We will examine, as comprehensively as possible, the cultures and traditions of the dominant and marginalized peoples who came to call themselves "American." Class meetings will combine specific reading assignments, lectures, student presentations, and discussions.

Texts

Richard P. Horwitz, ed., *The American Studies Anthology*.
Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography and Other Writings*.
Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*.
Arthur Miller, *The Crucible*.
Jack Weatherford, *Native Roots*.
Oscar Zeta Acosta, *The Revolt of the Cockroach People*.
Osha Gray Davidson, *Broken Heartland*.
Class Handouts.

FILMS

Thomas Jefferson: A View From the Mountain.
Adam Clayton Powell.
Martin Luther King: I Have a Dream.

REQUIREMENTS

Writing:

Six one-page response essays related to assigned readings.

Two papers (5-7 pages); each an argumentative essay in which you engage a specific issue raised in our consideration of eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century American beliefs and values.

Papers must be neatly typed and double-spaced. Problems with the functioning of a computer do not constitute an excuse for late work. Papers are due in class and are not accepted if late. The grade on any paper turned in with seven or more errors in spelling or basic grammar will be lowered one full grade (A to B, etc.); in other words, proofread final copies carefully!

Oral Presentations:

There will be several in-class presentations. You will be teamed with two or three of your classmates and asked to make a group presentation or lead a class discussion on one of the assigned readings. There will be no make-up opportunity with this assignment.

GRADING

The course grade will be based on overall performance. Percentages: attendance and class participation 30%, papers 50%, oral presentation 20%.

SCHEDULE - MWF

Week 1	Jan 24, 26, 28	Spring Break	Mar 19-Apr 3
Week 2	Jan 31, Feb 2, 4	Week 9	Apr 4, 6, 8
Week 3	Feb 7, 9, 11	Week 10	Apr 11, 13, 15
Week 4	Feb 14, 16, 18	Week 11	Apr 18, 20, 22
Week 5	Feb 21, 23, 25	Week 12	Apr 25, 27, 29
Week 6	Feb. 28, Mar 2, 4	Week 13	May 2, 4, 6
Week 7	Mar 7, 9, 11	Week 14	May 9, 11, 13
Week 8	Mar 14, 16, 18	Exams	May 16-20

- Week 1 Introduction: Course Goals and Structure.
American Studies: Overview and Definition.
Film: *Martin Luther King: "I have a Dream."*
Horwitz, "Introduction," *The American Studies Anthology* (ASA xvii-xxxvii).
- Week 2 *Visions of America and the Multi-Cultural Roots of American Culture*
Zinn, "Columbus, the Indians, and Human Progress" Class Handout (CH).
Wilkinson, "Indian Tribes and the American Constitution" (CH).
Weatherford, *Native Roots*.
- Week 3 Weatherford, *Native Roots* (cont.).
Lake, "How America Was Discovered" (ASA 3-6).
- Week 4 *A New Commonwealth*
Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity" (ASA 12-18).
Karlsen, "The Demographic Basis of Witchcraft," (CH)
Miller, *The Crucible*.
- Week 5 *Rebels and Ethical Pragmatism*
Jefferson, "The Declaration of Independence" (ASA 63-69)
Film: *Thomas Jefferson: A View From the Mountain*.
Woman's Rights Convention, "Declaration of Sentiments" (ASA 70-76).
Douglass, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" (ASA 105-223).
Quinney, "Independence Day Speech" (ASA 77-82).

- Week 6 Truth, "Ain't I a Woman?" (ASA 143-45).
Franklin, *The Autobiography and Other Writings*.
- Week 7 *Sovereignty of the People*
Crèvecoeur, "Letter III from an American Farmer" (ASA 23-32).
Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*.
- Week 8 Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (cont.).
ESSAY #1 due Friday, Mar. 18.
- Week 9 *America as an Empire*
Madison, "The Federalist, No. 10" (CH).
Hamilton, "The Utility of the Union" (ASA 250-55).
Ignatieff, "The Burden" (CH).
Kipling, "The White Man's Burden" (ASA 266-67).
- Week 10 *America as Invisibility*
Davidson, *Broken Heartland*.
Guthrie, "This Land Is Your Land" (ASA 183-84).
Haggard, "An Okie from Muskogee" (ASA 235-36).
- Week 11 *America as a Place to Belong*
Wilson, "Americanism and the Foreign-Born" (ASA 127-30).
Linton, "The One-Hundred Percent American" (ASA 174-77).
Hongo, "Kubota" (CH).
- Week 12 Acosta, *The Revolt of the Cockroach People*
- Week 13 Film: *Adam Clayton Powell*.
Conferences (Wed. & Fri.).
- Week 14 Emerson, "The American Scholar" (ASA 301-18).
Kessler-Harris, "Cultural Locations: Positioning American Studies in the Great Debate" (ASA 353-65).
ESSAY #2 due Friday, May 13.