

American Studies 200E
Advanced American Studies

Tuesdays 11:30-1:30 SSC 3103

Professor Rob MacDougall
Department of History

Office Hours: **Mondays** 3:00-5:00 SSC 1003 or by appointment

Course Description

This course explores the history, politics, and culture of the United States from multiple points of view. We will examine the theory and method of American Studies, and we will engage in our own interdisciplinary explorations of American society, values, regions, and ideas. This class will not provide a comprehensive survey of U.S. history—instead, it highlights a number of places and moments in time where the meaning of “America” was constructed, contested, or otherwise up for grabs. Our goal is to locate and define both “American Studies” as an academic field and “America” itself.

Assignments and Evaluation

Students will write **two short papers** based on the required reading (each 5-8 pages long, each worth 10% of the final grade) and **one longer paper** demanding additional research (10-15 pages, worth 30%). Students will take turns giving **in-class presentations** on topics related to the readings for that week (probably 2-3 times over the course of the year, depending on class size); these presentations are worth 20% of the final grade. **Class participation** will account for 30% of the final grade. This is a bigger percentage than many courses assign to participation; my expectations for class participation are higher too. Active and informed involvement in class discussion is crucial in this course. There will be no midterm or final exam.

First short paper	10%	due November 1
Second short paper	10%	due February 7
Research paper	30%	due April 11
In-class presentations	20%	weeks and topics will be chosen/assigned in class
Class participation	30%	

Required Texts

The only **required** text for this course is the **American Studies 200E Course Pack**. There are two volumes: the first volume should be available now; the second will be available before the start of the second term. There is another **optional** text: *Locating American Studies: The Evolution of a Discipline*, edited by Lucy Maddux. We will read a number of essays from this collection, but not the whole book. You may wish to own this book, particularly if you will be continuing in American Studies. If you do not wish to buy it, however, all the articles in this collection can be found in the journal *American Quarterly*, which is available at Weldon Library and also online.

First Term

Week 1 September 13 What's American about America?

From the Course Pack:

- John Kouwenhoven, "What's American About America."

Week 2 September 20 America and Americans

From the Course Pack:

- J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, "Letter III from an American Farmer."
- Mark Twain, "What Paul Bourget Thinks of Us."
- H.L. Mencken, "On Being an American."
- John Kouwenhoven, "The Dispraising of America."
- Sacvan Bercovitch, "The Music of America."
- Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself."

Week 3 September 27 Classical American Studies

From *Locating American Studies* or *American Quarterly*:

- Henry Nash Smith, "Can American Studies Develop a Method?" *LAS* pp. 1-16 or *AQ* vol. 9, no. 2 (Summer 1957) pp. 197-208.
- Bruce Kuklick, "Myth and Symbol in American Studies." *LAS* pp. 71-90 or *AQ* vol. 24, no. 4 (October 1972) pp. 435-450.

From the Course Pack:

- Leo Marx, "American Studies: A Defense of an Unscientific Method."
- Ann Fabian, "Back to *Virgin Land*."

Week 4 October 4 The New American Studies

From *Locating American Studies* or *American Quarterly*:

- George Lipsitz, "Listening to Learn and Learning to Listen: Popular Culture, Cultural Theory, and American Studies." *LAS* pp. 310-334 or *AQ* vol. 42, no. 4 (December 1990), pp. 615-636.
- Alice Kessler-Harris, "Cultural Locations: Positioning American Studies in the Great Debate." *LAS* pp. 335-352 or *AQ* vol. 44, no. 3 (September 1992), pp. 299-312.

From the Course Pack:

- Richard Horwitz, "Introduction to *The American Studies Anthology*."
- Alan Wolfe, "Anti-American Studies."

Week 5 October 11 Massachusetts Bay Colony, 1630-1693

From the Course Pack:

- John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity."
- Perry Miller, "Errand into the Wilderness."
- Sacvan Bercovitch, "The Puritan Errand Reassessed."
- David Harlan, "A People Blinded from Birth: American History According to Sacvan Bercovitch."

Week 6 October 18 Virginia, 1676-1776

From the Course Pack:

- Thomas Jefferson, "Declaration of Independence."
- Thomas Jefferson, Excerpts from "Notes on the State of Virginia."
- Edmund Morgan, Excerpts from *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia*.
- Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?"

Week 7 October 25 Boston, 1773-1776

From the Course Pack:

- Philip Deloria, Excerpts from *Playing Indian*.
- T.H. Breen, "Bonfires of Tea."

Week 8 November 1 New Orleans, 1814-1860**FIRST SHORT PAPER DUE NOVEMBER 1**

From the Course Pack:

- Walter Johnson, Excerpts from *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market*.
- Harriet Beecher Stowe, "The Slave Warehouse."
- George Fitzhugh, "Sociology for the South."
- Eugene Genovese, "Paternalism and Class Relations in the Old South."
- George Fredrickson, "The Role of Race in the Planter Ideology of South Carolina."

Week 9 November 8 The Burned-Over District, 1830-1848

From *Locating American Studies* or *American Quarterly*:

- Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860." *LAS* 43-70 or *AQ* vol. 18, no. 2 (Summer 1966), pp. 151-174.

From the Course Pack:

- Paul E. Johnson, "Class, Liquor, and Reform in Rochester."
- Mary Ryan, "Middle Class Women and Moral Reform."
- Judith Wellman, Excerpts from *The Road to Seneca Falls: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the First Woman's Rights Convention*.
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "To Be Free as Man is Free," and "Declaration of Sentiments."

Week 10 November 15 Philadelphia, 1844-1865

From *Locating American Studies* or *American Quarterly*:

- Alexander Saxton, "Blackface Minstrelsy and Jacksonian Ideology." *LAS* 114-142 or *AQ* vol. 27, no. 1 (March 1975), pp. 3-28.

From the Course Pack:

- "Paddy's Lament."
- Noel Ignatiev, Excerpts from *How the Irish Became White*.
- Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class*.

Week 11 November 22 Gettysburg, 1863 and after

From the Course Pack:

- James McPherson, “Long Remember: The Summer of ’63.”
- Abraham Lincoln, “The Gettysburg Address.”
- David W. Blight, “Quarrel Forgotten or a Revolution Remembered?”
- Steve Goodson, Excerpt from *Highbrows, Hillbillies & Hellfire: Public Entertainment in Atlanta, 1880-1930*.
- John Hope Franklin, “*The Birth of a Nation*: Propaganda as History.”

Week 12 November 29 Chicago, 1871-1894

From the Course Pack:

- Rudyard Kipling, “A Visitor’s View of Chicago.”
- Carl Sandburg, “Chicago Poems.”
- Jane Addams, “The Subjective Necessity of Social Settlements.”
- Donald L. Miller, Excerpts from *City of the Century*.
- Louis Menand, “Chicago.”
- Alan Trachtenberg, “White City.”

Week 13 December 6 Buffalo Bill’s Wild West, 1883-1916

From the Course Pack:

- Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History.”
- Patricia Limerick, “The Legacy of Conquest.”
- Richard White, “The Imagined West.”
- Richard Slotkin, “Buffalo Bill’s Wild West and the Mythologization of the American Empire.”

Second Term**Week 14 January 10 Globalizing American Studies**

From the Course Pack:

- Benedict Anderson, excerpt from *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.
- Randolph Bourne, “Trans-National America.”
- Charles Bright and Michael Geyer, “Where in the World is America? The History of the United States in the Global Age.”

Week 15 January 17 Oz, 1892-1907

From the Course Pack:

- Michael Kazin, excerpt from *The Populist Persuasion: An American History*.
- Henry M. Littlefield, “The Wizard of Oz: Parable on Populism.”
- William Leach, “A Trickster’s Tale: L. Frank Baum’s *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.”

Additional Material:

- L. Frank Baum, excerpt from *The Wizard of Oz*.

Week 16 January 24 Cuba & The Philippines, 1898

From the Course Pack:

- Emily Rosenberg, excerpt from *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945*.
- Peter W. Stanley, "U.S. Misunderstanding of the Philippines."

Additional Material:

- Theodore Roosevelt, "The Strenuous Life."
- William Jennings Bryan, "The Paralyzing Influence of Imperialism."
- Albert Beveridge, "In Support of an American Empire."
- Mark Twain, "To the Person Sitting in Darkness."

Week 17 January 31 New York, 1920-1929

From the Course Pack:

- Joel Dinerstein, excerpt from *Swinging the Machine: Modernity, Technology, and African American Culture Between the World Wars*.
- George Chauncey, excerpt from *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Makings of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940*.

From *Locating American Studies* or *American Quarterly*:

- Houston Baker, "Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance." *LAS* pp. 261-278 or *AQ* vol. 39, no. 1 (Spring 1987), pp. 84-97.

Additional Material:

- F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Echoes of the Jazz Age."
- Langston Hughes, "Let America Be America Again."

Week 18 February 7 The Dust Bowl, 1931-1939**SECOND SHORT PAPER DUE FEBRUARY 7**

From the Course Pack:

- James N. Gregory, excerpt from *American Exodus: The Dust Bowl Migration and Okie Culture in California*.
- Michael Denning, "Grapes of Wrath: The Art and Science of Migratin'."

Additional Material:

- John Steinbeck, excerpts from *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Week 19 February 14 Hawaii, 1941-1945

From the Course Pack:

- John W. Dower, excerpt from *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*.

Additional Material:

- Beth Bailey and David Farber, excerpt from *The First Strange Place: Race and Sex in World War II Hawaii*.

Week 20 February 21 Suburbia, 1950-1963

From the Course Pack:

- Stephen J. Whitfield, "Seeing Red."
- Elaine Tyler May, "Explosive Issues: Sex, Women, and the Bomb."

Conference Week (February 27-March 3)**NO CLASS FEBRUARY 28****Week 21 March 7 The Mississippi Delta, 1955-1966**

From the Course Pack:

- Nicholas Lemann, excerpt from *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How it Changed America*.
- Anne Moody, excerpt from *Coming of Age in Mississippi*.

Week 22 March 14 San Francisco, 1966-1969

From the Course Pack:

- W.J. Rorabaugh, excerpt from *Berkeley at War: The 1960s*.
- Louis Menand, "Life in the Stone Age."

Additional Material:

- Tom Wolfe, excerpt from *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*.

Week 23 March 21 Orange, Cobb & Johnson Counties, 1971-1994

From the Course Pack:

- Lisa McGirr, excerpt from *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*.
- Peter Applebome, excerpt from *Dixie Rising: How the South is Shaping American Values, Politics, and Culture*.
- Thomas Frank, excerpt from *What's the Matter with Kansas: How Conservatives won the Heart of America*.

Week 24 March 28 Los Angeles, 1991-2001

Additional Material:

- Anna Deavere Smith, excerpt from *Twilight: Los Angeles 1992*.
- George Lipsitz, "Learning from Los Angeles: Another One Rides the Bus," *American Quarterly*, vol. 56, no. 3 (September 2004), pp. 511-529.
- Henry Yu, "Los Angeles and American Studies in a Pacific World of Migrations," *American Quarterly*, vol. 56, no. 3 (September 2004), pp. 531-543.

Week 25 April 4 The Rest of the World, 2001-present

From the Course Pack:

- Mary Yoko Brannan, "Bwana Mickey: Constructing Cultural Consumption at Tokyo Disneyland."
- Dana Heller, "Salesman in Moscow."

Additional Material:

- Anthony Shadid, excerpt from *Night Draws Near: Iraq's People in the Shadow of America's War*.

Week 26 April 11
RESEARCH PAPER DUE APRIL 11