

AMERICAN CULTURE STUDIES

American Studies 500.001
Fall 1999
Monday 2:00-4:45
Ortega Hall 313

Professor James Treat

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The American Culture Studies (ACS) proseminar introduces students to current theories and methods in the field, to the history of American Studies nationally and at UNM, and to the faculty in the department. It is the required, introductory seminar for all American Studies graduate students and is open only to those who have been accepted into the MA or PhD programs. This pro-seminar is based on the departmental graduate reading list, "American Culture Studies: Selected Interdisciplinary Perspectives and Paradigms," and is geared toward the fall 2000 ACS exam, which will be administered and graded by the instructors of this seminar. During the course of the term, each of the other American Studies faculty members will visit the seminar to introduce themselves and to lead discussion on an assigned text in their area of specialization.

Texts:

These texts are available in the UNM Bookstore. Like all the reading list books, they are on permanent (3-day) reserve in Zimmerman Library, listed under American Studies 500.001 and cross-listed under Norwood on the professor list. If you have trouble with any reading list, syllabus, or reserve matters, contact the instructors.

Clifford, James, THE PREDICAMENT OF CULTURE: TWENTIETH-CENTURY ETHNOGRAPHY, LITERATURE, AND ART (1988)

Cronon, William, CHANGES IN THE LAND: INDIANS, COLONISTS, AND THE ECOLOGY OF NEW ENGLAND (1983)

Fregoso, Rosa, THE BRONZE SCREEN: CHICANA AND CHICANO FILM CULTURE (1993)

Lipsitz, George, THE POSSESSIVE INVESTMENT IN WHITENESS: HOW WHITE PEOPLE PROFIT FROM IDENTITY POLITICS (1998)

McDannell, Colleen, MATERIAL CHRISTIANITY: RELIGION AND POPULAR CULTURE IN AMERICA (1996)

Maddox, Lucy, ed., LOCATING AMERICAN STUDIES: THE EVOLUTION OF A DISCIPLINE (1998)

May, Elaine Tyler, HOMEWARD BOUND: AMERICAN FAMILIES IN THE COLD WAR ERA (1988)

Rand, Erica, *BARBIE'S QUEER ACCESSORIES* (1995)

Rose, Tricia, *BLACK NOISE: RAP MUSIC AND BLACK CULTURE IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICA* (1994)

Saldívar, Jose David, *BORDER MATTERS: REMAPPING AMERICAN CULTURAL STUDIES* (1997)

Sarris, Greg, *KEEPING SLUG WOMAN ALIVE: A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO AMERICAN INDIAN TEXTS* (1993)

Trinh T. Minh-ha, *WOMAN, NATIVE, OTHER: WRITING POSTCOLONIALITY AND FEMINISM* (1989)

White, Richard, *IT'S YOUR MISFORTUNE AND NONE OF MY OWN: A NEW HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN WEST* (1993)

Requirements:

A. Participation (20 points of the final grade, 10 points possible for the first eight weeks and 10 points for the second eight weeks)

- Regular attendance. Except for medical and family emergencies, only one excused absence will be allowed, and that must be cleared in advance with one of the instructors.
- Consistent, prepared, and appropriate participation in class discussion of readings and topics.

B. Two Book Dialogues (40 points of the final grade, 20 points each)

At the beginning of the semester, you will be assigned (based on the preferences you indicate) two of the "paired texts" that appear on the syllabus. You will be responsible for presenting each of these texts to the class, and for writing and distributing a "book dialogue" on each text.

For each of the Book Dialogues, find at least one scholarly review of the book. Analyze the book, including a brief summary of its argument, and then discuss the review you selected in terms appropriate to American culture studies as they are developed in the seminar. Attach a copy of the review or reviews you selected.

Each paper should be 5-7 pages (no longer than 2200 words), due at the class meeting for which the text is assigned. Make enough copies so that each member of the seminar and both instructors will have a copy by the start of class on the assigned day. These papers will also be posted to the course web site, so a computer disk (to be returned) containing the paper is required.

C. Final Paper (40 points of final grade)

Fifteen to twenty pages (no longer than 6,500 words), based on your choice from two questions that will be handed out in mid-semester.

Papers are due at the start of seminar on December 6. Extensions and incompletes will be given for documented family and medical emergencies only.

****Hand in two copies; one will be graded and returned, the other retained in the course files.****

D. Grading

A range: 91-100 points

B to B+: 84-90 points

C to B-: 75-83 points

- Participation: 20points; Book Dialogues: 40 points; Final Paper 40 points.
- Students earning less than a B (or fewer than 84 points) must retake the proseminar.

Schedule

Note on readings for the first two classes, August 23 and 30: Everyone should read all the articles assigned for the class meeting, but each student will be assigned major responsibility for one specific article from *Locating American Studies*. You will have 5 minutes (and only 5 minutes) to present the important points of the article(s). Write a one-paragraph synopsis and bring enough copies to the seminar meeting for each member of the class and both professors (15 total, yourself included).

August 23: Introductory Matters, Key Themes in American Studies

American Studies Graduate Handbook, 1999-2000.

OPTIONAL: Susan Kilgore, "American Studies UNM Centennial History: 1944-1989," from *The College of Arts and Sciences Centennial History: 1889-1990*, pp. 46-63. (on reserve, Zimmerman Library)

Maddox, ed., *Locating American Studies*,
first seven articles (Smith, Susman, Welter, Kuklick, Kelly, Saxton, and Kerber).

August 30:

Maddox, ed., *Locating American Studies*,
final ten articles (Wise, Baym, Radway, Baker, Berkhofer, Lipsitz, Kessler-Harris, Gutierrez, Mumford, and Wong).

September 6: Labor Day, NO CLASS

September 13:

White, *It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own* (Prof. Treat)

paired texts: Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America* (Rob Mead)
Vizenor, *The People Named the Chippewa* (Lloyd Lee)

September 20:

Cronon, *Changes in the Land*

Guest: Prof. Vera Norwood

paired texts: Davis, *City of Quartz* (Joe Renouard)
Albanese, *Nature Religion in America* (Rebecca Hernandez)

September 27:

May, *Homeward Bound* (Prof. Bailey)

paired texts: Kelley, *Race Rebels* (Arif Khan)
Berger, ed., *Constructing Masculinities* (Joseph Gonzales)

October 4:

Trinh, *Woman, Native, Other*

Guest: Prof. Ruth Salvaggio

paired texts: Williams, *The Alchemy of Race and Rights* (Felicia Caton Garcia)
Takaki, *Strangers from a Distant Shore* (Donna Knaff)

October 11:

Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*

Guest: Prof. M. Jane Young

paired texts: Whisnant, *All That Is Native and Fine* (Rebecca Hernandez)
Behar and Gordon, eds., *Women Writing Culture* (Michelle Potter)

October 18:

Sarris, *Keeping Slug Woman Alive* (Prof. Treat)

paired texts: Reed-Danahay, ed., *Auto/Ethnography* (Ben Jacobs)
Groth and Bressi, eds., *Understanding Ordinary Landscapes* (Shawn Jimmerson)

October 25:

McDannell, *Material Christianity* (Prof. Treat)

paired texts: Toelken, *The Dynamics of Folklore* (Arif Khan)
Gaspar de Alba, *Chicano Art* (Juan Buriel)

November 1:

Rand, *Barbie's Queer Accessories* (Prof. Bailey)

paired texts: Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, v. 1* (Wesley Chenault)
Roscoe, *The Zuni Man-Woman* (Donna Knaff)

November 8:

Rose, *Black Noise*

Guest: Prof. Eric Porter

paired texts: Frank, *The Conquest of Cool* (Rob Mead)
Collins, *Black Feminist Thought* (Felicia Caton Garcia)

November 15:

Fregoso, *The Bronze Screen*

Guest: Prof. A. Gabriel Melendez

paired texts: Spigel, ed., *Private Screenings* (Shawn Jimmerson)
Paredes, "With a Pistol in His Hand" (Juan Buriel)

November 22:

Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness* (Prof. Bailey)

paired texts: Dower, *War Without Mercy* (Ben Jacobs)
Harding, ed., *The Racial Economy of Science* (Joseph Gonzales)
Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the U.S.* (Joe Renouard)

November 29:

Saldivar, *Border Matters*

Guest: Bazan Romero

paired texts: Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge* (Wesley Chenault)
Sando, *Pueblo Nations* (Lloyd Lee)
Pulido, *Environmentalism and Economic Justice* (Michelle Potter)

December 6:

Paper presentations

December 13:

Paper presentations and final discussions