

## American Studies Courses Fall 2003

**AMST 71.10**  
CRN # 73031

**Introduction to American Studies**  
MW 11:00-11:50

**Murphy**  
B07

This course will examine how American culture has evolved since the first contact between Europeans and Indians. We will examine the inter-relationship between intellectual and economic change as well as the impact of ideas about race and gender on American social life. We will also consider the extent to which we should speak of a unified American culture or different American cultures. This course will use an interdisciplinary approach to study these issues, drawing on art, artifacts, literary texts, and historical documents.

Discussion Sections:

CRN# 73032	R 10-10:50	P201
CRN# 73033	R 11-11:50	P201
CRN# 73034	R 12-12:50	P201
CRN# 73035	R 1-1:50	P201
CRN# 73036	R 2-2:50	P201
CRN# 73037	R 3-3:50	P201

**AMST 130.80**  
CRN #

**Sexuality in U.S. History**  
TR 11:00- 11:50

**Heap**

This course introduces students to the histories of U.S. sexual identities and subcultures. Course readings and films will be used to analyze the changing social organization and cultural meaning of sexual practices and desires in the United States, beginning with those that existed before European settlers landed on the continent. We will examine the establishment of sexual norms in colonial America; the relationship between sex and slavery; the contested boundaries drawn between same-sex sociability, friendship and eroticism during the nineteenth century; early twentieth-century cultural conflicts centered around prostitution, cross-racial sex, and racial and sexual violence; as well as the relatively recent emergence of heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality and transsexuality as the predominant categories of sexual experience and identity. Class time will consist of two weekly lectures and one smaller section meeting where students will discuss the week's assigned readings and films.

Discussion Sections:

CRN# 74071	R 12:30-1:20
CRN# 74073	R 2-2:50
CRN# 74949	R 12:30-1:20
CRN# 74950	R 2-2:50

**AMST 139.80**  
CRN#

**Women in the United States**  
MW 2-3:15

**Murphy**

This course will examine the experience of women in the United States during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, to understand how gender shapes social, economic, and political roles. The exploration will include the impact of class, religion, race, and ethnicity on women's role on men. Same as HIST/WSTD 140.

**AMST 167.80**  
CRN # 74081

**Themes in U.S. Cultural History**  
TR 12:30-1:45

**Staff**  
111

DESCRIPTION UNAVAILABLE AT THIS TIME

**AMST 168.10**  
CRN # 73066

**Cultural Criticism in America**  
TR 4:10-5:25

**Staff**  
201

This seminar introduces students to major methods for understanding and interpreting cultural materials. We will explore how and why culture particularly mass culture like film, music and television, is such a significant aspect of our lives. Different units in the course will examine 1) the institutions (corporations and individuals) that produce culture, 2) the ideological messages that circulate in cultural products and 3) how different audiences interpret the culture they consume. This course is writing intensive and discussion oriented. American Studies majors by permission of instructor.

**AMST 171.80**  
CRN # 73038

**U.S. Social History**  
MW 2:00-3:15

**Staff**

History 171 is a survey class in American Social History. It will study the lives of common working people in their struggle for survival and achievement from the earliest "pre-discovery" and "settlement" of North America to the Civil War. In the process we will draw upon the latest historical research and theories. We will investigate some of the most recent and promising research techniques and methods. Students will be encouraged to think like historians. This means more than memorizing lists of dates and names. It means developing the ability to think in historical and comparative perspective. We will be especially interested in the role of family, work, class, race, ethnicity and gender as they helped to shape American development of our contemporary ideas, problems, fears and dreams. In short, we hope to examine our collective ancestry and the historical roots of the things Americans now often think of as "common sense." Most of all students will be exposed to some of the excitement and dynamics of today's American historical profession. Learning is not a passive process; therefore this class will require the active participation of every student. In addition to required readings there will be a few field trips that will take students to the variety of research facilities which enrich the Washington, DC area and make it one of the best locations in the world in which to study American social history.



positions Western feminism, especially U.S. in a context of shifting definitions of gender, class, race, and nation. The second two-thirds of the course focuses on theoretical developments of the mid- and late-20<sup>th</sup> century – also around issues of gender, race, and nation – but also sexuality, body, labor, dependence, and globalization. Readings will cover basic theoretical positions linked to 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave feminism, and also give some examples of how these are applied to issues of public controversy and of public policy.

**AMST 226.80**  
CRN # 76168

**U.S Media and Cultural History**  
MW 9:30-10:20 W 11-11:50

**Staff**

DESCRIPTION UNAVAILABLE AT THIS TIME

**AMST 231.10**  
CRN # 73065

**Scope and Methods**  
R 4:10-6:00

**Mergen**  
PHIL 415

This seminar focuses on the history of American Studies and the theories and methods for the study of American culture, beginning with Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* and concluding with recent studies in literary history, ethnohistory, cultural history, material culture, political culture, popular culture and the internationalization of American Studies. Required of all MA candidates and first year PhD student without a Master's in American Studies. A 10-15 page paper on a topic raised in the seminar and a 3-5 page book review for *American Studies International* are required. A reading list will be available upon request after April 15.

**AMST 244.80**  
CRN #

**Sexuality in the United States**  
TR 11:00-11:50 R 12:30-1:20

**Heap**

This graduate course introduces students to the histories of U.S. sexual identities and subcultures. Using methodologies drawn from social history, ethnography and cultural studies, we will ask what the history of sexuality is and how it should be written. Course readings and films will be used to analyze the changing social organization and cultural meaning of sexual practices and desires in the United States, beginning with those that existed before European settlers landed on the continent. We will examine the establishment of sexual norms in colonial America; the relationship between sex and slavery; the contested boundaries drawn between same-sex sociability, friendship and eroticism during the nineteenth century; early twentieth-century cultural conflicts centered around prostitution, cross-racial sex, and racial and sexual violence; as well as the relatively recent emergence of heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality and transsexuality as the predominant categories of sexual experience and identity. Class time will consist of two weekly lectures and a smaller graduate section meeting where students will discuss the week's assigned readings and films.

**AMST 250.10**  
CRN # 73042

**American Material Culture**  
M 2:10-5:00

**Mayo/Mergen**  
STHN

This seminar is concerned with the use of objects in historical research. Material culture is a synthesis of theories and methods from art and architectural history, anthropology and archaeology, the history of technology, decorative arts, geography, folklife, environmental history, and cultural history. Readings include Thomas Schlereth's *Material Culture Studies in America*, Ann Smart Martin & J. Ritchie Garrison's *American Material Culture*, and Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's *The Age of Homespun*. Visits to exhibits and collections will also be assigned. Each class session will include discussions of the readings and presentations by Smithsonian curators, and other guests. At least one full-day field trip will be arranged. Students are required to write three short (7-10 page) papers on an object or collection of objects. One paper may be an exhibit review.

**AMST 251.10**  
CRN # 73043

**Museum Research and Education**  
TBA

**Staff**

Internships & independent study at the Smithsonian. To be arranged with Professor Mergen before registration.

**AMST 252.10**  
CRN # 75371

**American Decorative Arts**  
R 10:00-11:50

**Nickles**  
STHN

This seminar is an object-based study of a diverse range of goods from t-shirts to Tupperware to explore the politics of consumption in 20<sup>th</sup> century American daily life. Through a historical examination of museum objects, readings, and discussion, the class will engage in a debate at the center of consumer culture scholarship: what is the relationship between goods and the consumers who use them and what are the possibilities and limitations of consumption for promoting social change. Starting with a look back at the early revolutionary politics of "homespun" and anti-slavery material culture, this course will address the ways Americans in the past century have used goods to challenge labor and political systems; construct and contrast race, class, and gender hierarchies; and express cultural identity. We will also consider the role of the government in shaping the market and meaning of goods from traditional crafts to modern appliances, and of public institutions in collecting and interpreting them. The process of exploring these objects will offer a unique perspective on major historical developments and issues, including the arts and crafts movement, the New Deal, civil rights, feminism, and globalization.

**AMST 256.80**  
CRN # 74958

**Folklore Theory**  
M 6:10-8

**Vlach**  
P201

This course presents a survey of the intellectual history of the development of the academic field of folklore and folklife study in the United States. We will trace the rise of various theories of culture and modes of analysis and interpretation starting in the second half of the nineteenth century and concluding with contemporary times. The class will be conducted in semi-seminar fashion. The instructor will lecture for the first half of each class meeting with discussion being

lead by a designated student or students for the second half. Student discussions will focus on the biographical profiles of key figures whose careers are emblematic of a particular interpretive techniques or positions. As can be seen from the syllabus, these individuals include many of the outstanding leaders in the fields of literature, social science, and museum work.

In addition to participation in class discussions, students will be expected to write a seminar paper (20-25 pages) on some aspect of American folklore scholarship and practice. The specific topic will be selected in consultation with the instructor.

**AMST 268.80**  
CRN #

**American Cultural History**  
T 4:10-6

**Murphy**  
P201

This course is a rapid-fire, highly selective exploration of histories of pre-1900 American Culture. For most of the semester, we will read recent monographs in American cultural history on topics such as cultural contact, the frontier, systems of political and religious belief, the creation of the public sphere, gender relations, and racial formation. We will analyze the theoretical frameworks informing these studies and we will try to assess cultural history's ability to address traditional historical questions about power, agency, and causality.

**AMST 270.80**  
CRN #

**Theory and Practice: Public History**  
W 4:10-6

**Frankel**  
P201

This graduate seminar in Public History will focus on how historians present history to the public and the actual practical work in which public historians are engaged. The class will discuss controversies surrounding historical interpretation including disputes over the symbols of the Civil War. We will also analyze the role of scholars outside the academy in educating the public in the places where the majority of American people learn. Among the topics we will consider will be the how people including children learn about and conceptualize history, lobbying efforts on behalf of history, and the efforts of the historians employed by the federal government to present history in different venues. Requirements will include class presentations, exhibition reviews, and a research paper. Representatives from a number of institutions and agencies will participate in the seminar, providing a first-hand account and inside information about the field.

**AMST 284.10**  
CRN # 74566

**American Visual Studies**  
R 6:10-8

**Goodyear**  
P201

This reading seminar serves as an introduction to American visual studies, paying particular attention to the field's theories and methods. Though a variety of historic periods will be considered, the course will be structured around an examination of different visual documents and the often divergent ways in which scholars have looked at them. The course is designed to provide students with an introduction to some of the classic primary and secondary sources in American visual studies. In the process of investigating these texts, we will address larger cultural issues, such as identity formation and cultural hierarchies in America. Students will be required to write a five-page book review and a twenty-page research essay.

**AMST 286.80**  
CRN # 73045

**Interpretation - Historic House Museum**  
T 9:30-12:15

**Stapp**  
LISH 430

An interdisciplinary course integrating advanced practices in museum education with current scholarship in architectural history, material culture, social history, women's studies and more. The class visits and analyzes about a dozen DC-area house museums, with an emphasis on National Park Service sites.

**AMST 289.10**  
CRN #

**The City and Urban History**  
R 4:10-6

**Heap**

This graduate seminar examines the role of the city in recent U.S. social and cultural history. Reading selectively from the field, we will ask how the city and urban life have been conceptualized historically and how these various conceptualizations have structured recent scholarly analyses of urban culture and space. We will consider how Americans' experience and understanding of the city has been shaped by their social and cultural affiliations and identifications, their sensory perceptions (especially, smell, hearing, taste and sight), and their familiarity with representations of urban culture and space in literature, film, architecture and other media. Among the works likely to be discussed are Janet L. Abu-Lughod's *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles*, William Cronon's *Nature's Metropolis*, Sarah Deutsch's *Women and the City*, Mona Domosh's *Invented Cities*, David M. Henkin's *City Readings*, James Sanders's *Celluloid Skylines*, and Nayan Shah's *Contagious Divides*, as well as a selection of related theoretical articles.

**AMST 289.11**  
CRN #

**Preservation Planning**  
M 6:10-8

**Ramirez**

Preservation Planning will examine issues related to the role of historic resources in land-use planning. Communities are shaped by local, state, federal, and private decision. Historic places and cultural resources are affected by these decisions and by their economic, social, environmental, and cultural values. This course will examine how historic resources are treated in local planning activities in DC, VA, or MD, and to make recommendations for ways in which historic preservation objectives can be achieved with other institutional growth. Students are expected to know how historic resources are identified and the basic preservation process. The class will include readings, fieldwork, and analysis and recommendations for a specific preservation planning issue. Required reading will be put on reserve; there is no textbook for this course.

**AMST 289.12**

**Cultural Property Law & Policy**  
M 6:10-8

**Hutt**

The term cultural resources management has not been used herein as it has become a term of art to describe a field within archaeology in which cultural, often archaeological, sites are explored, recorded, stabilized and analyzed. CRM professionals are proficient in environmental laws and compiling the necessary environmental assessments. Cultural property law and policy looks at the intersection of historic preservation and environmental protection and asks additional questions such as: whose property is being impacted, what groups have an interest in the

property and what additional factors should be considered. Certainly in an environmental assessment community groups are to be consulted, but consultation with such groups has grown in importance to prompt academic inquiry into methods and techniques for successful interaction.