SUMMER SESSION 1

Introduction to American Studies

AMS 10

Jun 20 - Jul 29

Olson 159 | MTW 2:10p.m.–4:25p.m. | Instructor: Dr. Audrey Russek

What links noise-cancelling headphones and 1960s lunch counter sit-ins? This course will explore answers to this question and other unexpected and useful connections between culture, politics, history, and our everyday lives. American Studies examines the richness and complexity of United States history, culture, and society through the study of cultural objects (e.g., television, literature, photographs, and advertisements) and social practices. This course is framed by a series of deceptively simple questions: Who is an American? What metaphors, images, and materials have been used to envision the nation? And what are the connections between the United States and the rest of the world? By focusing on particular moments and core themes, we will draw from a wide variety of sources to interrogate the intersecting ideals, conflicts, and material realities that have defined U.S. culture during the past century. Topics include popular culture, cultural diversity, social activism, design, and communication. The course consists of a mix of lecture, in-class discussion, popular music (Los Tigres del Norte, Beyoncé, Merle Haggard), and films including documentary Eyes on the Prize, The Reconstruction of Asa Carter, classic Hollywood Imitation of Life, Apocalypse Now, Children of a Lesser God, and vintage commercials.

GE: ArtHum or SocSci, Div, Wrt | ACGH, DD, SS, WC, WE

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SUMMER SESSIONS
AMS 05: TECHNOLOGY IN AMERICAN LIVES

Instructor: Megan Bayles

TWR 11AM - 1:15PM, OLSON 244

Does our use of technology make us more or less human? How does technology mediate our relationship to our bodies and our cultures? What are the politics of technology? This class intimately ties together the cultural and material impacts of technologies on human bodies from conception through decomposition. The course texts will draw from multiple disciplines, including: Science and Technology Studies, American Studies, disability studies, environmental studies, and food studies.

GE CREDIT: ARTHUM OR SOCSCI, WRT I AH OR SS, WE
SUMMER SESSION 1
Images of America and Americans in Popular Culture
AMS 30
Jun 20 - Jul 29

Olson 163 | MTR 11:00-1:15 | Instructor: Eric Smoodin

The United States government is the leading media industry in the country. This quarter we’ll study movies, posters, paintings, songs, along with other artifacts and documents, all of it produced by the government to tell us about everything the government does, from fighting wars, incarcerating citizens, housing the poor, and much more. Along the way, we'll try to figure out how and why the government presents "us" to ourselves.


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The Lives of Children in America
Immigrants & Refugees
AMS 152, Summer Session 2
TWR 2:10-4:25pm, Hunt 110
Instructor: Megan Bayles

The US is a “nation of immigrants,” but where do children fit in to the rhetoric, history, and imagery of immigrants, migrants, and refugees? This course looks at the ways that children have been made invisible or hyper-visible in debates and crises of global mobilities. We will read a variety of texts, from news articles to scholarly works to fiction, to consider how the shaping and reshaping of the US and other nations have impacted children’s lives and stories historically and in the present moment, and to analyze how children’s images are deployed in public transnational debates about who does and doesn’t belong in which nation.

GE CREDIT: ARTHUM OR SOCSCI, DIV, WRT | ACGH, AH OR SS, DD, WE
In this course, we’ll be learning about several models of how to analyze pop culture, including but not limited to critical race theory, feminist theory, and Marxist cultural theory. Your task will be to: 1) consider these models in relation to your own pop culture preferences and experiences, and 2) write a series of essays that apply these models and experiences to specific forms of pop culture, like the novel, film, music, and sports.