AMER_ST 301-2-20 (24732) SEMINAR FOR MAJORS: Black Internationalism
Kate Baldwin | M 2:00 - 5:00PM | University Hall 018

**Description:** Throughout the twentieth century, African American cultural producers used international travel to see beyond the limits of racial discrimination in the U.S. Traveling abroad allowed these authors to imagine new configurations of race, gender, and class back at home. This course will trace the vibrant, ongoing tradition of black internationalism, focusing on its often utopian undercurrents—in particular its frequent crossing of racial and sexual hierarchies. In so doing, this course will address the relationship between internationalism as a unifying movement of resistance and nationally enforced oppressions; between a solidarity of what Richard Wright termed “scattered but kindred spirits” and enfranchisement at home. Some of the questions we will pursue include: Where exactly is the connection between dissent in one place and expressions of solidarity in another? Can these networks help produce change in social relationships across great distances? If so, how? And, how do we conceive of the collectivities that are called into being by these networked communications?

Authors and figures considered will include Du Bois, McKay, Hughes, Graham, Hansberry, Childress, Robeson, Wright, Jones, Baldwin, Simone, and others.

AMER_ST 310-20 (24733) STUDIES IN AMERICAN CULTURE: Bad News
Lawrence Stuelpnagel | TTh 12:30 – 1:50PM | University Hall 018

**Description:** Bad News. That is what Americans are experiencing as a result of the corporate media mergers that took place in the closing years of the last century. Today there are six major companies that control much of what people read, hear and see. Those firms are AOL-Time Warner, General Electric, Walt Disney, News Corporation, Viacom/CBS, and Bertelsman.

As the firms passed from largely family owned to publicly traded companies, the pressure for profit from Wall Street has led to cutbacks in the size of the firm's news divisions and a change in news story values that have "softened" the types of news that people see on television.
This course will begin with an examination of the monetary forces that are driving the industry away from its primary mission of information. Critics, of whom the professor is one, contend that the drive for increasing profits is coming at the expense of both the quality and quantity of news that appear on television and radio, newspapers and magazines, and the Internet. The ever-diminishing number of news providers is also threatening democracy by limiting the number of voices that can be heard in our society.

We will examine the impact of these mergers on several areas of news coverage and public discussion:
1. Privacy and scandal, particularly the stories about President Bill Clinton. 2. The transformation of how the press has covered wars from Vietnam to the second Iraq war and the war in Afghanistan. Has the media gone from watchdog to lapdog? 3. Race. Former U.S. Senator Bill Bradley has said, "America is a nation obsessed with the interplay between African Americans and White Americans." We will examine how the press has covered the issue of race in America and how the press deals with the issue in its own newsrooms. 4. Politics. Reporting of scandals and personality has replaced critical evaluations of policy. The "horse race" with its poll-driven coverage is now the norm. We will examine the phenomenon through the lens of the 2000 and 2004 presidential races.

**Evaluation Method(s):** Your grade will be determined in the following way; 35% for an OP-Ed piece on a subject of your choice that is germane to the class and approved by the professor; 50% for a 10-12 page term paper and 15% class participation. No P/N. I do not grant extensions for any written assignments. They are due at the beginning of the class as noted on the syllabus. Failure to make the deadline will result in a lower grade for that assignment.

**Description:** “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free.” Those lines from Emma Lazarus’ sonnet, “The New Colossus,” are well known to most Americans. Alongside the Statue of Liberty (on whose pedestal Lazarus’ words are etched) and Ellis Island, they are often called upon by those seeking to point out that the United States is a nation of immigrants. However, popular discourse and policies regarding immigration to the United States have consistently vacillated between welcoming newcomers and rejecting “the immigrant menace.” Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, while some groups of immigrants were depicted favorably as new Americans and offered important forms of support, others were vilified and marked as forever foreign. This course will explore contemporary immigration, particularly how immigrants and immigration processes are portrayed in the public sphere. We will use ethnographic work, fiction, autobiography, popular press accounts, politicians’ campaign speeches, and film to understand the significance of particular narratives of immigrant America in the 21st century.
**AMER_ST 310-22 (27411) STUDIES IN AMERICAN CULTURE: Native American Literature: Place & Historical Memory**

**ENGLISH 378-20 (25466) STUDIES IN AMERICAN LITERATURE: Native American Lit: Place & Historical Memory**

Kelly Wisecup | TTh 2:00PM – 3:20PM | tba

**Description:** This course will explore the strategies with which Native American writers have maintained and reconfigured their relations to place. We will focus in particular on the strategies with which these writers have represented the histories attached to various places, against attempts by U.S. Americans to forget or efface them. While European colonists and U.S. Americans conceptualized land as an alienable asset (as something that could be bought and sold), Native Americans’ views of land were founded on kinship: land and animals were natural resources integrated with human life and thus resources that should be used carefully. Similarly, because the land held the bones of past generations, it localized the past and created opportunities for unity in the present. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as U.S. Americans claimed increasingly large plots of land and restricted Native groups to increasingly small, bounded areas, Native writers and activists contested dispossession, removal, and environmental catastrophe with a range of strategies, from political advocacy, to public lectures, military action, and public protests.

We’ll read these early arguments for place and remembering alongside several contemporary novels and poems that recall the devastating effects of colonialism and that mobilize that past to assert Natives’ ongoing presence.

**Teaching Method:** Lecture and discussion.

**Evaluation Method:** TBA


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**AMER_ST 310-23 (27412) STUDIES IN AMERICAN CULTURE: Digitizing Folk Music History**

**HISTORY 395-33 (class#) RESEARCH SEMINAR: Digitizing Folk Music History**

**HUM 325-4 (class#) HUMANITIES IN THE DIGITAL AGE: Digitizing Folk Music History**

Michael Kramer | TTh 3:30PM – 4:50PM | tba

**Description:** The United States folk music revival is typically thought of as an antimodern, even a Luddite, movement. Acoustic guitars, camp fires, overly sincere singers, and "Kumbaya" politics are the clichés many call to mind. To study it through digital means, however, reveals important connections between the history of the revival and issues of technology, culture, and politics in the modern world. In this research seminar, we examine the history of the US folk music revival through readings, audio listening,
documentary films, seminar discussions, and, most of all, extensive digital analysis to investigate these connections.

Working in platforms such as Omeka and WordPress, with tools ranging from Audacity sound editing software to mapping, annotation, and timeline programs, we use the archives of the Berkeley Folk Music Festival (in Northwestern’s Special Collections), the Old Town School of Folk Music (in Chicago), and the Alan Lomax Collection (online) to probe what was at stake in the folk revival in relation to American culture and politics; questions of race, class, gender, age, and region; and the strange workings of music-making, memory, and power. As we do so, we ask how digital technologies might help us to interpret history more meaningfully; simultaneously, we explore how both the folk revival itself and the methods of historical study might be crucial to understanding our contemporary digital moment more effectively.

Each student will be evaluated based on class participation, weekly digital mini-project experiments, presentations, and a final multimedia interpretive digital history podcast project that is the multimedia equivalent of a 15-20 page analytic essay based on original research.

No previous digital or musical training is required for the course. For students with advanced digital media/programming skills or musical training, the course presents an opportunity to connect that background to deep historical study; for students interested in acquiring digital or musical skills, the seminar offers an excellent introductory pathway to these areas of knowledge.

AMER_ST 310-24 (27413) STUDIES IN AMERICAN CULTURE: Comparative race + Ethnicity
LEGAL_ST 347-20 (class#) COMPARATIVE RACE + ETHNICITY
Shana Bernstein | MW 11:00AM – 12:20PM | tba

Description: This course explores the comparative history of various racial and ethnic groups in the twentieth-century United States. While tensions between and relations among African Americans and whites have shaped U.S. history in important ways, this course also recognizes the historical significance of multiple racial and ethnic groups, particularly Asian Americans and Latinos. We will consider the histories of the various groups alongside one another and U.S. History more generally, as well as intersections among the various groups, and will consider how law shapes (and is shaped by) the racial and ethnic categories in question. Students will write two short primary source analysis papers (3-5 pages) and one 6-8 page research proposal.

Learning Objective(s):
• Understand twentieth-century U.S. history through the lens of race.
• Consider similarities and differences among various racial and ethnic groups’ twentieth-century experiences.
• Understand how law shapes racial and ethnic categories, as well as how such categories shape the law.
• Foster analytical, reading, discussion, and writing skills.
• Help students think and communicate critically about historical and contemporary society and politics.
• Learn to analyze the past using both primary and secondary sources.

Teaching Method(s): (Lecture; Lecture and Discussion Sections; Seminar; etc) Seminar

Evaluation Method(s): (Discussion; Presentations; Papers; Final exam worth 25% of grade; etc.)
Papers worth 70% of the course grade (20%, 20%, 30%) Discussion worth 30% of the course grade

Class Materials / Reading List:
• Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar* [any publisher and year is fine as long as it’s paperback—there are multiple versions, ISBN 0553272586]
• Course Packet (will be available at Quartet)

**AMER_ST 390-2 (24735) SENIOR PROJECT**
Shana Bernstein | W 2:00PM – 5:00PM | University Hall 018

*Description:* Unlike most courses, the purpose of this course is not to introduce a series of texts or a corpus of concrete information, but rather to provide a framework within which you can pursue your own interests and develop your own ideas. More than anything else, this course is a hybrid of the research seminar and the writing workshop, and we will confront the challenges of both researching and writing in a collaborative manner. To that end, some of our sessions will be devoted to reading and responding to one another’s work. While it can be difficult and intimidating to publicly present your work, and to publicly critique or question another’s work, we shall undertake both in the spirit of support and assistance. Becoming a careful reader, responder, and recipient of constructive criticism are also invaluable skills that fundamentally inform the process by which virtually all scholarly work is produced.