

Introduction to American Studies

BMA-AMED-200

Tue 12:30-14:00, Rm 356

Instructor: Enikő Bollobás

Office hrs: Tue 11-12 or by appt

Description

This is an introductory course to the branch of learning we call American Studies. We will read and discuss some foundational texts, both historical and critical, from the colonial times to the present. By interpreting these texts in both “old” and “new” Americanist terms, we hope to develop a complex understanding of “American” “culture.”

Course requirements

Students are expected to do the (i) assigned readings for each class session. Other requirements include (ii) one in-class presentation, (iii) three pieces of homework, and (iv) the final in-class test. Presentations: each student is expected to do a book or text reviews. You can be very creative and imaginative here in how you connect your assignment with the theoretical topic of the day. Final test: this in-class test will cover all the readings and topics discussed over the semester.

Grading: Grades shall be based on (i) class participation, (ii) presentations, (iii) the homework, and (iv) the test.

All required readings have been collected in a Packet of Readings.

Students are advised to bring the Packets to class.

Schedule of Topics

February 9 **Orientation**

February 16 **America as a New World**

John Winthrop, “A Modell of Christian Charity” (1630)

John Cotton, from *A Treatise of the Covenant of Grace* (1636)

Alan Heimert, “Puritanism, the Wilderness, and the Frontier” (1953)

HOMEWORK: write an outline of Heimert

February 23 The gender of subversion in Puritan America

“The Examination of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson at the Court at Newtown”

“The Trial of Anne Hutchinson, 1637”

Carol F. Karlsen, “The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: The Economic Basis of Witchcraft” (1987)

HOMEWORK: write an outline of Karlsen

March 2 America as an Independent Nation

The American Declaration of Independence (1776)

Declaration of Sentiments (1848)

John Wannuacon Quinney, “Independence Day Speech” (1854)

Frederick Douglass, “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?” (1852)

March 9 Nature, the Wilderness, the Frontier, and Savagism

Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” (1893)

Ray Allen Billington, “How the Frontier Shaped the American Character” (1958)

POSSIBLE BOOKS FOR REVIEW:

Roy Harvey Pearce, *The Savages of America* (1953); rev. ed.: *Savagism and Civilization* (1988)

Leo Marx, *Machine in the Garden* (1965)

Perry Miller, *Nature's Nation* (1967)

Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (1967)

Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence--The Mythology of the American Frontier, 166-1860* (1973)

Barbara Novak, *Nature and Culture* (1980)

STUDENT: _____

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March 16 America as Land of the Free

Abraham Lincoln, “Gettysburg Address” (1863)

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, “The Four Freedoms” (1941)

POSSIBLE BOOKS FOR REVIEW:

Matthew Brady, *Civil War Photographs*

The Civil War Day by Day

James Agee, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*

STUDENT: _____

March 23 **America as a Place to Belong**

Woodrow Wilson, "Americanism and the Foreign Born" (1915)

Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I a Woman?" (1851)

Randolph Bourne, "Trans-National America" (1916)

POSSIBLE BOOKS/TEXTS FOR REVIEW:

Werner Sollors, ed., *Theories of Ethnicity—A Classical Reader* (1996)

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. *The Disuniting of America—Reflections on a Multicultural Society* (1991)

Ronald Takaki, *A Different Mirror—A History of Multicultural America* (1993)

David A. Hollinger, *Postethnic America* (1995)

G.D. Lillibridge, *Images of American Society—A History of the United States* (1976)

Linda K. Kerber, "The Stateless as the Citizen's Other" (2008)

<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/ahr/112.1/kerber.html>

STUDENT: _____

STUDENT: _____

March 30 **Evangelical Democracy**

William G. McLoughlin, "Pietism and the American Character" (1965)

HOMEWORK: write an outline of McLoughlin

April 6 **No class (spring break)**

April 13 **Evangelical Democracy cont.**

April 20 **The Intellectual History of Women I**

Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History" (1988)

Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth-Century America" (1975)

POSSIBLE BOOKS/TEXTS FOR REVIEW:

Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies. Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (1998)

Linda K. Kerber, *Towards an Intellectual History of Women* (1997)

Linda K. Kerber, Alice Kessler-Harris and Kathryn Kish Sklar, *U. S. History as Women's History* (1995)

Linda K. Kerber, and Jane Sherron de Hart, *Women's America. Refocusing the Past* (1995)

STUDENT: _____

April 27 The Intellectual History of Women II

Linda Kerber, "Can a Woman Be an Individual? The Discourse of Self-Reliance" (1991)

POSSIBLE BOOKS/TEXTS FOR REVIEW:

Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies. Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (1998)

Linda K. Kerber, *Towards an Intellectual History of Women* (1997)

Linda K. Kerber, Alice Kessler-Harris and Kathryn Kish Sklar, *U. S. History as Women's History* (1995)

Linda K. Kerber, and Jane Sherron de Hart, *Women's America. Refocusing the Past* (1995)

STUDENT: _____

May 4 In-class final test

May 11 Grade books signed

PACKET OF READINGS

1. John Winthrop, "A Modell of Christian Charity" (Horwitz, *American Studies Anthology* 12-)
2. John Cotton, from *A Treatise of the Covenant of Grace* (Hollinger-Capper, *American Intellectual Tradition* 16-)
3. Alan Heimert, "Puritanism, the Wilderness, and the Frontier" (McFarland, *Readings in Intellectual History* 60-)
4. "The Examination of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson at the Court at Newtown" (Hollinger-Capper, *American Intellectual Tradition* 29-)
5. "The Trial of Anne Hutchinson, 1637" (*Women's America* 47-)
6. Carol F. Karlsen, "The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: The Economic Basis of Witchcraft" (*Women's America* 50-)
7. The American Declaration of Independence (Horwitz, *American Studies Anthology* 63-)
8. Declaration of Sentiments (Horwitz, *American Studies Anthology* 70-)
9. John Wannaucon Quinney, "Independence Day Speech" (Horwitz, *American Studies Anthology* 77-)
10. Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" (Horwitz, *American Studies Anthology* 105-)
11. Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (Horwitz, *American Studies Anthology* 83-)
12. Ray Allen Billington, "How the Frontier Shaped the American Character" (McFarland, *Readings in Intellectual History* 272-)
13. Abraham Lincoln, "Gettysburg Address" (Horwitz, *American Studies Anthology* 187-)
14. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, "The Four Freedoms" (Horwitz, *American Studies Anthology* 199-)
15. Woodrow Wilson, "Americanism and the Foreign Born" (Horwitz, *American Studies Anthology* 127-)
16. Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I a Woman?" (Horwitz, *American Studies Anthology* 143-)
17. Randolph Bourne, "Trans-National America" (Horwitz, *American Studies Anthology* 145-)
18. William G. McLoughlin, "Pietism and the American Character" (McFarland, *Readings in Intellectual History* 420-)
19. Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History" (*Intellectual History of Women* 159-)
20. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth-Century America" (*Women's America* 169-)
21. Linda Kerber, "Can a Woman Be an Individual? The Discourse of Self-Reliance" (*Intellectual History of Women* 200-)