

FALL 2018

AMERICAN STUDIES COURSE OFFERINGS

AM 101W 001 Eating in America

TR, 9:010-11:00, Professor Beck Krefting, 4 credits

This course is an interdisciplinary analysis of the evolution of American cuisine and food politics. Beginning with Native American and early European settler's foodways, we will study regional food patterns of the colonial period. The United States is host to a unique amalgamation of cultures, nationalities, and food traditions. In this class we will examine ethnic/national foodways and the impact of social and political conditions on them, i.e., enslavement, poverty, regional differences, pressures to assimilate, etc. We will also consider the development of distinctively American styles of cooking and eating in the 19th century with special attention to the effect of immigration, and explore the impact of science, business, technology, globalization and changing family patterns on U.S. food in the 20th and 21st centuries. This course will introduce you to disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives on American food and foodways as a way of deepening and broadening student understanding of American culture. Since American Studies focuses on identity, course assignments and readings will focus on race, gender, and class and the ways such identity categories influence the ways we eat in America.

AM 101W 002 Civil War in American Memory

MWF, 11:15-12:10, Professor Gregory Pfitzer, 4 credits

This course considers how Americans have remembered and commemorated the Civil War from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. Drawing on depictions of the war in fiction, film, popular history, television, music, and re-enactors' conventions among other cultural sources, it focuses on how memory and history interact in the popular imagination to shape the cultural legacy of the conflict.

AM 231 001 Ethnic and Immigrant Experience

MW, 2:30-3:50, Visiting Professor Emma Newcombe, 3 Credits

An introduction to the historical experience of several American ethnic and immigrant groups, including Native Americans, African Americans, and people from Latin America, Asia, and Europe. Emphasizing both the larger society's view of a particular ethnic group and that group's perception of its own experiences, the course examines the processes of the assimilation and acculturation, racism, nativism, ethnic conflict, and cultural survival mechanisms as found in historical monographs, films, novels, biographies and autobiographies, demographic materials and oral histories.

AM 252 001 Hudson River

MWF, 9:05-10:00, Professor Gregory Pfitzer, 4 credits

This course is designed to introduce students to the culture of the Hudson River Valley. It deals with the Hudson River as an environmental entity, an economic and political concern, and especially as a cultural symbol. The focus will be local and national. Students will be asked to consider how popular and official attitudes toward the Hudson have reflected changing cultural priorities for residents of the valley and for the nation at large.

AM 265 001 Post-Apocalyptic Film and Literature

TR, 3:40-5:30, Professor Beck Krefting, 4 credits

Fear of nuclear warfare in the mid-twentieth century led to a surge in family home bomb shelters and elaborate underground fortresses intended for high-profile public officials and authorities. A computer glitch that threatened to bring an end to the electronic age, spurred the Y2K problem, prompting people to hoard water and provisions on the millennium's cusp. Religious groups continue to forecast an apocalypse and the Mayan calendar predicted December 21, 2012 as that "end date." The DIY and self-subsistence movements reflect a desire to broaden our skill sets as much as they reflect a desire for readiness in the face of imminent disaster. Threats of an apocalypse shape human behavior, practices and identity. How these are imagined and what happens in the aftermath can tell us about who we are, how we will behave in crisis, what we are afraid of and who matters.

AM 361D 001 American Material Culture

TR, 2:10-3:30, Visiting Professor Emma Newcombe, 4 credits

This course is an introduction to the material aspects of American culture—the variety of ways in which artifacts serve as social and cultural documents. Artifacts include three dimensional objects such as furniture, clothing, toys, buildings and other structures, architecture and art styles, as well as industrial archaeology and other aspects of the built environment that serve as tangible records of life and culture in the United States over time.

AM 374 00 Senior Seminar

MW, 4:00-5:50, Professor Gregory Pfitzer, 4 Credits

Exploration of primary and secondary sources in the interdisciplinary examination of a particular topic in American culture. Students will pursue a major research project or prepare an honors thesis proposal. Required of all senior majors. Open to majors only; normally taken in fall semester of senior year.