

REGIONAL CULTURE: THE SOUTH
Spring 2010, Skidmore College

Professor: Winston Grady-Willis
Times: M/W 2:30-3:50pm
Location: Tisch 303
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Office: Tisch 328
Hours: M 12:00-2:00pm
W 4:00-6:00pm
Phone: 580-8022

Course Description and Objectives

Employing an analytical frame that interrogates race, class, gender and ethnicity, this course provides an exploration of the development of the distinctive culture(s) of the Southern region of the United States. The course examines the terrain between myths and realities of the Old South, including that covering the origins of the plantation system, southern womanhood, and the development of the enslaved and free Black communities of the region during the antebellum period. The course also examines the terrain between myths and realities of the New South, including that covering the legacy of the Civil War and Reconstruction, the imposition of segregation, modernization of agriculture and industry, and the migration of African Americans northward. The course seeks to illuminate the cultural importance of particular sites within the region, such as Appalachia and the Gulf Coast. The course culminates in a study of recent demographic, economic, and political changes. (Note: the course fulfills the social science requirement.) Through lecture-discussions, readings, films and an essay, students will meet the following objectives: (1) gain knowledge about Southern culture and its connection to US society and culture, including popular culture specifically; (2) understand the concepts of Creolization, folklore, intersectionality, paternalism, populism and states' rights; (3) evaluate myth in relation to constructions of identity and ideology; (4) and develop skills in written and oral communication.

Required Texts

Pippa Holloway, ed., *Other Souths: Diversity and Difference in the U.S. South, Reconstruction to the Present*

Zora Neale Hurston, *Dust Racks on a Road*

K. Michael Prince, *Rally 'Round the Flag, Boys: South Carolina and the Confederate Flag*

Each book should be available for purchase at the Skidmore Shop. Every effort also will be made to have the texts available on reserve in the Lucy Scribner Library. Students also will be provided with handouts and other supplementary materials throughout the semester.

Evaluation

- 1) Class preparation, discussion, performance on quizzes, and attendance at specific outside-class events of relevance to the course, will constitute **25** percent of each student's grade.
- 2) Performance on the midterm and final examinations will constitute a combined **50** percent of the grade, with each midterm comprising 25 percent. Each exam will be a combination of short answer and extended essay questions.
- 3) An 8-page response essay due during the first half of the semester will constitute **25** percent of the course grade.

Attendance

Although attendance is extremely important, there may be instances when absences are unavoidable. Nevertheless, students with more than two unexcused absences from class sessions will receive a *one-half letter-grade* deduction for the course. An effort will be made to conduct roll at the beginning of each class session. A student not present 10 minutes after class has begun will be considered late. Being late three times constitutes one absence.

Class Meetings

Most classes will be conducted according to a lecture-discussion format. For that reason, it is very important that students prepare themselves by reading the necessary material before coming to a given class session. Stimulating class discussions result from informed participation. Food is not permitted during class time. Cellular telephones should be turned off or silenced prior to the start of each class session. (If this poses a problem, however, please notify the professor prior to a given class.) Text messaging during class time is unacceptable. Students using laptop computers to take notes are not to engage in other computer related activities, such as Web-surfing, instant messaging or email. Any student considered to be disrespectful or disruptive during a given class session will forfeit their right to remain in class that day. In turn, however, it is the obligation of the professor to be respectful, prepared, organized, and punctual. If a student has concerns about the conduct or performance of the professor, they should express those concerns to Professor Daniel Nathan, Chair of the Department of American Studies.

Disability and Accessibility Accommodations

Students with disabilities should provide their semester memorandum of accommodations to me as soon as possible. Those students who do not have accommodations, but who believe that they may be in need of them, should arrange a meeting with Ms. Meg Hegener, Coordinator for Students with Disabilities, in the Office of Student Academic Services, located in the Starbuck

Center (580-8150). Students should speak with the professor one week prior to any given exam date to ensure full use of testing accommodations.

Academic Integrity

Students should uphold the Skidmore Honor System and the policies outlined in the *Student Handbook* and *Student Academic Handbook* regarding academic integrity. As noted in the 2009-2010 Skidmore Course Catalog: "Skidmore not only promotes intellectual honesty vigorously but responds severely to such offenses as plagiarism and cheating on exams. Any Honor Code violation may affect the student's graduate school or transfer recommendations and the student's eligibility for academic prizes and awards, for Dean's List or graduation honors, and for membership in Skidmore or national honor societies." Students should also consult the Office of Academic Advising Website (<http://cms.skidmore.edu/advising/integrity/index.cfm>).

COURSE SCHEDULE (Always Subject to Revision!)

- January 25 - **Introducing the Course and Syllabus**
- January 27 - **The Making of the Old South**
- February 1 - **First Revolution: the South and the War for Independence**
- February 3 - **Second Revolution: Haiti and Its Impact on the South**
Vincent Harding, *Rebels, Resistant, and Outliers*, in
There Is a River, 52-74 (handout)
- February 8 - **Patriarchy and Paternalism**
- February 10 - **Resistance to Paternalism on Several Fronts**
- February 15 - **Civil War Contradictions**
- February 17 - **Reconstruction and Myth I (ESSAY DUE)**
Film: *Birth of a Nation*
- February 22 - **Reconstruction and Myth II**
Film: *Birth of a Nation*
Leslie Schwalm, "'Sweet Dreams of Freedom':
Freedwomen's Reconstruction of Life and Labor
in Lowcountry South Carolina," in *Other Souths*, 9-37

- February 24 - **Reconstruction and Reality I**
Finish *Birth of a Nation*
Lu Ann Jones, Gender, Race and Itinerant Commerce in the Rural New South," in *Other Souths*, 67-88
- March 1 - **Reconstruction and Reality II**
Discuss Schwalm and Jones Essays
- March 3 - **Populism**
Sara Gualtieri, "Becoming 'White': Race, Religion, and the Foundations of Syrian/Lebanese Ethnicity in the United States," in *Other Souths*, 89-116
- March 8 - **Constructions of Race in an Apartheid Society**
J. Douglas Smith, "The Campaign for Racial Purity and the Erosion of Paternalism in Virginia, 1922-1933: 'Nominally White, Biologically Mixed, and Legally Negro,'" in *Other Souths*, 167-207
- March 10 - **Midterm Examination**
- March 22 - **World War I Era**
Jeanette Keith, "The Politics of Southern Draft Resistance, 1917-1918: Class, Race, and Conscription in the Rural South," in *Other Souths*, 117-147
- March 24 - **Southern Progressivism**
Andrew Doyle, "'Fighting Whiskey and Immorality' at Auburn: The Politics of Southern Football, 1919-1927," In *Other Souths*, 148-166
Susan Cahn, "Spirited Youth or Fiends Incarnate: The Samarcand Arson Case and Female Adolescence in the American South," in *Other Souths*, 208-234
- March 29 - **Class, Gender and Morality in the Interwar Years**
Discuss Doyle and Cahn Essays
- March 31 - **Black Folklore**
Scott Reynolds Nelson, "Who Was John Henry? Railroad Construction, Southern Folklore and the Birth of Rock and Roll," in *Other Souths*, 38-66

Zora Neale Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road*, Foreword-Chapter 11

- April 5 - **Meaning of Hurston for the South**
 Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road*, Chapter 12-Afterword
- April 7 - **The Significance of World War II**
 Jennifer E. Brooks, "Winning the Peace: Georgia Veterans and the Struggle to Define the Political Legacy of World War II," in *Other Souths*, 235-276
- April 12 - **Cold War Cultural Repression**
 Stacy Braukman, "'Nothing Else Matters But Sex': Cold War Narratives of Deviance and the search for Lesbian Teachers in Florida, 1959-1963," in *Other Souths*, 278-297
- April 14 - **From Blues to Rock 'n' Roll**
 Film: *The History of Rock 'n' Roll*
- April 19 - **Black Freedom Struggles**
 Danielle L. McGuire, "'It Was Like All of Us Had Been Raped': Sexual Violence, Community Mobilization, And the African American Freedom Struggle," in *Other Souths*, 298-327
- April 21 - **White Southerners and Societal Change**
 Alex Macaulay, "'An Oasis of Order': The Citadel, the 1960s, and the Vietnam Antiwar Movement," in *Other Souths*, 328-343
 Scott H. Dewey, "The Fickle Finger of Phosphate: Central Florida Air Pollution and the Failure of Environmental Policy, 1957-1970," in *Other Souths*, 344-380
 Kevin M. Kruse, "The Politics of Race and Public Space: Desegregation, Privatization, and the Tax Revolt in Atlanta," in *Other Souths*, 381-407
- April 26 - **Battle Flag or Lynching Flag?**
 K. Michael Prince, *Rally 'Round the Flag, Boys!*, Prelude-Chapter 4
- April 28 - **Battle Flag or Lynching Flag?**
 Class Dialogue on the Confederate Flag Controversy
 Prince, Chapter 5-Postlude

- May 3 - **The Future of the South**
Raymond H. Mohl, "Globalization, Latinization, and the
Nuevo New South, in *Other Souths*, 408-442
- May 13 - **Final Examination**
9:00am-12:00pm