

Modern America

Chris Johnson
chrisjohnso@earthlink.net

Web Site
<http://blackvistas.com/index.html>
password "culture"

This course will explore topics in twentieth century American culture relating to image and identity.

All readings and visual materials will be available via the course web site.

Participants are required to write two essays of approximately ten pages in length. The first essay will be due at mid semester and the second near the end of the term. Essay topics will be chosen from course readings and themes.

All writing assignments must be typed. Please double-space the lines and use one-inch margins on all sides of the page.

Final grades will depend 60% on submitted written work and 40% on class participation.

Please inform me of any medical issues that may influence your attendance and performance in class.

More than four class absences result in automatic failure of the course. Recurring tardiness will be reflected in the final grade.

Plagiarism occurs when one writer copies the words of another writer without attributing the words to the source. Unattributed copying will result in course failure.

Course Calendar (subject to change)

Week

Theme

One

The Classes

Two

Antimodernism

Three

Desire

Four

Jookin’

Five

The Central Metropolis

Six

The American West

Seven

First Essay

The Depression

Eight

Ideology

Nine

Advising

Ten

The (Black) Cold War

Eleven

The Imperial Arts

Twelve

Into the Mirror

Thirteen

Second Essay

Revolution

Fourteen

Evolution

Conclusions

Class Schedule (subject to change)

The Classes

Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in American Working-Class and Social History. Herbert Gutman. 1976.

The Theory of the Leisure Class. Thorstein Veblen. 1899, 1991.

Antimodernism

No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture. T. J. Jackson Lears. 1981.

Consuming Power: A Social History of American Energy. David Nye. 1998.

Desire

Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture. William V. Leach. 1993.

Satisfaction Guaranteed: the Making of the American Mass Market. Susan Strasser. 1989.

Jookin'

New York Modern: the Arts and the City. William Scott. 1999.

Jookin': the Rise of Social Dance Formations in African-American Culture. Katrina Hazzard-Gordon. 1990.

The Central Metropolis

Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West. William Cronon. 1991.

The American West

The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West. Patricia Nelson Limerick. 1983.

Cadillac Desert: the American West and its Disappearing Water. Marc Reisner. 1986.

The Depression

The Great Crash: 1929. John Kenneth Galbraith. 1989.

Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class. Robin D.G. Kelley. 1994.

Ideology

Manliness & Civilization: a Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917. Gail Bederman. 1995.

Insatiable Appetite: the United States and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical World. Richard P. Tucker. 2000.

The (Black) Cold War

Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940. Mary A. Renda. 2001.

Cold War and Black Liberation: the United States and White Rule in Africa, 1948-1968. Thomas J. Noer. 1985.

The Imperial Arts

Coca-Colonization and the Cold War: the Cultural Mission of the United States in Austria after the Second World War. Reinhold Wagnleitner ; translated by Diana M. Wolf. 1994.

Mr. Smith Goes to Tokyo: the Japanese Cinema Under the American Occupation, 1945-1952. Kyoko Hirano. 1992.

Into the Mirror

Bourgeois Utopias. The Rise and Fall of Suburbia. Robert Fishman. 1987.

Engendering Culture. Manhood and Womanhood in New Deal Public Art and Theater. Barbara Melosh. 1991.

Revolution

The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment. Barbara Ehrenreich. 1983.

Daring to be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975. Alice Echols. 1989.

Evolution

1968: a Student Generation in Revolt. Ronald Fraser. et al. 1988.

The True and Only Heaven: Progress and its Critics. Christopher Lasch. 1991.