

STETSON UNIVERSITY
Program in American Studies and Department of History

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AMST 301B/H (CRN#4698)
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MW 12-1:15
Davis 207

American Cultural Traditions

a course about paths to the present and an introduction to the upper-division offerings in American Studies...
and a Culture and Belief (B), Historical Inquiry (H), and Africana Studies (AFST) course

The historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence.

-T. S. Eliot (1917), quoted in Michael Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture (New York: Knopf, 1991), 5.

Goals of the Course

This course is an opportunity to learn about American culture through a focus on a few topics. We will approach this learning goal in three ways: with learning about the facts of this history, with students developing their own interpretations about these facts, and with assignments designed to facilitate each student's ability to explain facts and interpretations in oral and written work. I summarize these goals with three key words: information, agency, and explanation.

A major purpose for the study of the American past is for the illumination of our present life in the USA and in the world. "The past is prologue," as Thomas Carlyle said, because it shows the paths we have taken (and not taken) to the present world; it can inspire about how change has happened (and how it has met resistance); and it can display patterns that have emerged (and still circulate) within the culture. This course will provide students with a sampling of significant and enduring cultural traditions as they emerged in key periods of the American past and as they still operate in recent times. In a sense, this is a course about memory: what happened back then, and how do Americans remember it and respond? Comparing earlier and current manifestations of a sampling of topics will provide contexts for students to gain a depth of understanding about the contemporary world—and for learning to work with it and live in it. The material of the course will be from the past and from our contemporary world; many contemporary ideologies are rooted in the stories and precedents of the past.

This course serves as an introduction to the upper-division thinking and course offerings in American Studies, in particular with its focus on five topics: presidential elections, Florida history, women and childbirth, evangelicals, and African American responses to injustice. In addition, because of the range of topics covered, and the focus on illuminating and contextualizing the present, the course will also serve as a useful supplement for students in many other majors, and contribution to preparation for diverse future careers. One or another American social or intellectual tradition is at the core of almost every discipline in the university, and a course examining their roots and current manifestation will complement the disciplinary work students do in their own majors; of course, it also serves as a piece of the interdisciplinary work for American Studies majors and minors.

Through your work with books and other texts, library research, films, class projects, lectures, and discussion, the course will emphasize your development of thinking, reading, writing, and speaking skills. Please fill out a card so I can begin to get to know your academic interests right away.

Course Requirements and Grading

-Attendance, Talking Points, involvement in discussions and projects, Explorations, and One-Page Essays	} 20% of final grade
-One Paper including preparatory work	20%
-Two Mid-Term Exams	20% each
-Final exam	20%

Extra Credit: Attend a related event, write a one-page essay, and briefly report your experiences to class; and/or arrange to make a class presentation on your research paper in relation to a particular day's topic.

I assume academic honesty. Anything less will be taken seriously at the department and university levels. Your work for this class must be your own, with quotations or references to the work of others clearly cited. On this topic and for ways to improve writing, you have resources from this class and at the Writing Center, Maggie Herb, Director, mherb@stetson.edu, located in the library near the East Room computer lab, writingcenter@stetson.edu,

822-7717; and the Academic Success Center, Stacy Collins, Director, and April Thompson, Assistant Director, www.stetson.edu/asc, asc@stetson.edu, scollin1@stetson.edu, 822-7127, 209 East Bert Fish (behind the CUB in between the Pi Phi House and the Honors House, for mail: 421 N. Woodland Blvd, Unit 8366, DeLand, FL 32723).

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, you should meet with me to discuss ways to ensure full participation and your best work possible. If disability-related accommodations are necessary, please register with the Academic Success Center and notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. You and I along with the Academic Success Center will plan how best to coordinate accommodations.

Have you noticed that small class sizes are rare in this world? How can you make use of this resource? Because so much of this course involves exchange of ideas in class and consideration of subtle values, I look forward to your views on this and more; your *attendance and participation* are crucial parts of your learning and make up a significant part of your grade. There are many forms of participation, including careful listening, reviewing notes after class, writing the One-Page Essays, and especially questions and discussion in class (as facilitated by all of the above). To help insure that your participation encourages your learning, every student is required to bring to every class, a Talking Point, *a topic or question derived from the day's reading, with a page reference* to help everyone follow your insight; extra credit for finding ideas that express the theme or themes of the reading! More than three unexcused absences will be reported to the administration and put your grade in jeopardy.

The *One-Page Essays* are places for you to capture your thoughts, practice writing, and prepare for class; in class, they can serve as a basis for comments and questions. The essays can allow you to test out ideas you are exploring, maybe even serving as your own experiments for longer writing assignments; they are practice in the art of explanation. I encourage you to write, even if only briefly, every time you do some work for the class (before or after class, after reading, or after a project). In addition to this general advice, there are *ten one-page essays* due as part of your participation grade—that is, one per week (allowing for a few crazy weeks!). Turn them in during the week of the material discussed; *Essays submitted late will contribute to a lower Participation grade*. Write a paragraph on one typed page in response to the class material; include your *report* on what you've learned and your *response* in evaluation of its facts and interpretations. This type of assignment will also be *a way to make up for excused absences* (that way, if you miss a class, you don't miss the material or fall behind).

The class-time *Explorations* (EXPs) will be student-led presentations for review of course readings, leadership of discussions, and pursuit of further insights; they are also exercises in the skill of oral communication, and contributions to the learning experience of all course members. The format will vary with the material involved, and with your thoughtful suggestions; in general, please choose small groups for each EXP, choose key readings generally of 30-40 accessible pages for your fellow students, present an overview with your theme(s) about the material, plan discussion questions, and be prepared for more questions. I will meet with each EXP group a few days before the event.

The work of the *Research Project* will grow during the semester; these *Writing Steps* on your own research project are separate from the ten One-Page Essays on the shared course material:

-Step 1, One Key Book: during the first month, think of topics and questions related to the course and that you find interesting; you may find a live issue in relation to your life, coursework, major, career goals, or avocational interests. In history, cultural studies, and related fields, books are the premier cultural products for good quality research and evaluation; find a history book on your topic, one that will help you answer your questions. *Turn in the citation of your book, with a one-page explanation about why you find it interesting, how it relates to the course, and what it is arguing about your topic.*

-Step 2, More Sources in Relation to Your Book: in the next few weeks, use the library and other resources to consult more related texts, including primary and secondary sources, to supplement your book; find about six of the following: encyclopedia entries (especially helpful when beginning), book reviews (especially helpful for understanding your book in relation to other texts), journal articles (academic evaluations), government documents (usually official statements), web pages (ranging from general information to convenient service as platforms for the other sources), newspapers and magazines (good for contemporary perspectives on your topic), audio-visual material (texts and artifacts using more than words), and/or interviews (for first-hand perspectives). *Turn in a one-page statement of the relation of these sources to your book, and how they illuminate your topic and your emerging theme; and*

-Step 3, The Final Paper: In addition to reporting on your topic, be sure to evaluate your sources (about six) with expression of your theme, using facts and explanations to support your interpretation. During the last week of classes, *turn in your final written Research Paper of 10 typed pages*—earlier is welcome!

The *Midterms* will be essay questions that ask you to analyze the material of the course. The *Final Exam*

will also be in essay format; one part of it will be a “second mid-term” and the other will be comprehensive. To encourage improvement, turn in your earlier writing with each successive writing assignment. In grading oral and written work, I will emphasize your understanding of the material, the persuasiveness of your argument, and your clarity of presentation (see Learning and Writing Guides below). Please print on used or two-sided paper and turn it in clipped, without any folders or binders.

The course is *carefully designed* with connection of class time and work at home, including all oral and written assignments, and with a comprehensive curriculum to encourage good learning at each step. Please see the *American Studies Web Page*, <http://www.stetson.edu/artsci/american-studies/>, for many postings designed to help you do your best work for this class and in general. In particular, click on Faculty >my name >Teaching, or go directly to <http://www.stetson.edu/artsci/american/pcteaching.php> to see the Learning Guides, namely, the guides to learning, research, writing, discussing, speaking, and grading. On the same department web page, at the Learning By Doing link > Work to Learn/Learn to Work, or by going directly to <http://www.stetson.edu/artsci/american-studies/worktolearn.php>, see tips on ways to use your Stetson education in preparation for later life and career, and see the American Bar Association’s Guide to Legal Education with suggestions about use of an undergraduate education in getting ready for law school, with ideas that also apply to other post-graduate training and job settings.

Blackboard: This computerized bulletin board will be a place to post course information, including web references for class work and research, assignments and requirements, recent updates, and more. On Blackboard, “Information” has general information and “Content” has readings, including these:

newspaper and magazine articles on the 2000 election (or see paper copy, stapled with DeHaven-Smith)
DeHaven-Smith, *The Battle for Florida*, through ch 1 (or see paper copy, stapled with articles on the election)
John and Mary Lou Missall, *The Seminole Wars*, Foreword, Preface, chs. 2, 3, 5, and 6; and maps
Alice Walker, “In Search of Our Mother’s Gardens,” *Ms. Magazine*, 1975
David Headon, “Beginning to See Things Really: The Politics of Zora Neale Hurston,” in Glassman and Seidel, *Zora in Florida* (Orlando: University of Central Florida press, 1991).
Judith Pence Rooks, *Midwifery and Childbirth*, through ch 1 and pp. 17-33, 82-90, 111-116, and 364-92
Karen Kennedy Tyus’s midwifery information
Michael D’Orso, *Like Judgment Day*, Prologue and Part I
Malcolm X: The Last Speeches, pp. 83-89

Books for Purchase:

John and Mary Lou Missall, *The Seminole Wars*

Ulrich, *A Midwife’s Tale*

Dave Gustaveson, *The Lost Diary*

Recommended Purchase (some extra copies available, and for some, see digital versions on Blackboard or web):

John Ferling, *Adams and Jefferson, and the Tumultuous Election of 1800* (I can put the one library copy on reserve if need be; and one copy in American Studies office), chs. 2, 7, 10-12, 14

Judith Pence Rooks, *Midwifery and Childbirth*, Foreword, Preface, ch. 1, pp. 17-33, 82-90, 111-16, and 364-92

Charles Grandison Finney, *How to Experience Revival*

On the Web:

Zora Neale Hurston, *Mules and Men*, <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA01/Grand-Jean/Hurston/Chapters/index.html>, Preface, Introduction, and Chapters 1, 2, and 5 (also on Reserve)

Charles Grandison Finney, Revival Lectures: <http://www.whatsaiththescripture.com/Voice/Revival/Lectures.5.html> (which is fairly close to the text Finney available for purchase: *How to Experience Revival*)

Rosewood readings: 1. Rick Badie, “Remembering Rosewood...” Orlando Sentinel, January 5, 1997:

http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/1997-01-05/news/9701020492_1_rosewood-posse-black;

2. Michael D’Orso, “... and Reliving Rosewood,” Orlando Sentinel, January 5, 1997:

http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/1997-01-05/news/9701020493_1_james-taylor-rosewood-mill;

3. Gary Moore, “A Tragedy Retold As Myth,” Orlando Sentinel, March 16, 1997:

http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/1997-03-16/news/9703141658_1_rosewood-survivors-ruth-davis; and 4. Thomas Dye, “Rosewood: Destruction of an African American Community,” *The Historian* 58 (1996): 605-622,

[http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/davidson/arch%20of%20aa%20life%20and%20culture/Week%2011-14/Dye,%20Historian%20Vol%2058\(3\)%20Spring%201996.pdf](http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/davidson/arch%20of%20aa%20life%20and%20culture/Week%2011-14/Dye,%20Historian%20Vol%2058(3)%20Spring%201996.pdf)

Field Trips and Events:

Tour of Jackson Walker's paintings at the old Court House, west of Woodland Boulevard between Indiana and New York Avenues: <http://jacksonwalkerstudio.com/>

Karen Kennedy Tyus, midwife visiting class: gratefulmidwife@aol.com

Bible Baptist Church members preaching downtown, Fridays 3:30-5:30, at Woodland and New York Avenues: 872 Glenwood, Pastor John Knox, 736-9274: BibleBaptistChurch@gmail.com; jwknox@JamesKnox.com; www.jamesknox.com

Schedule of Topics and Readings

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics</u>	<u>Requirements</u> (note material on web or Blackboard)
Jan. 13	introductions	imagining the past/experiencing the present; Ferling, preface
I. Contested Elections		
Jan. 15	friendship and factions	Ferling, chs 1, 2, and 7
Jan. 22	testing the revolutionary experiment	Ferling, chs 10 and 12; film: Adams Step 1: <i>page on book</i>
Jan. 27	political polarization and hanging chads	newspaper and magazine articles on the 2000 election (Blackboard) film: Karl Rove
Jan. 29	the democratic republic 2.0	DeHaven-Smith (Blackboard), through ch 1
Feb. 3	elections and democracy	EXP 1: 1800, 2000, and dealing with large disagreements
II. Florida Stories: Public Memory and Museums		
Feb. 5	Florida invasions	Missall (Blackboard), Foreword, Preface, and chs. 2-3
Feb. 10	terrorism and total war	Missall, chs. 5-6
Feb. 12	African-American folk life	Hurston, <u>Mules and Men</u> (Web), preface, intro, chs 1, 2, 5
Feb. 17	Florida in Red, White, and Black	EXP 2: Missall and Florida Frontiers
Feb. 19:	old Court House: Jackson Walker's "Legendary Florida" paintings	
Feb. 24	African-American Folk Traditions	EXP 3: Hurston in Florida and beyond
III. Women and Childbirth: Folk Knowledge and Scientific Medicine		
Feb. 26	a republic of women	film: A Midwife's Tale; <i>midterm exam</i>
Mar. 3-7	Spring break	
Mar. 10	folk knowledge	Ulrich, through p. 71 (especially through 35)
Mar. 12	harsh life	Ulrich, pp. 235-261, 346-352 (recommended: 309-352)
Mar. 17	birth in a time of scientific medicine	Rooks (Blackboard), through ch 1 and pp. 17-33, 82-90
Mar. 19	evaluating midwifery	Rooks, 111-116 (recommended: 364-92), and MD views
Mar. 24	follow the baby	Karen Kennedy Tyus; her handouts (Blackboard) Step 2: <i>page on more sources</i>
Mar. 26	review history and childbirth	EXP 4 debate: home births or hospitals?
IV. The Evolution of Evangelical Religion		
Mar. 31	moved by the spirit	Finney, lectures 1-7 (1-11 on web)
Apr. 2	born-again psychology	Finney, lectures 8-15 (12-22 on web)
Apr. 7	an American spirit	Balmer film: <u>Mine Eyes have seen the Glory</u>
Apr. 9	light the world on fire	Gustaveson
**Apr. 11, 4:45-6pm,	Woodland and New York	EXP 5: evangelicals in person and materials (see Field Trips)
V. African Americans: Separate, Subordinated, and Searching for Justice		
Apr. 14	seething ...	film: <u>Rosewood</u> ; articles and artifacts (Web)
**Apr 15:	Showcase day: experiencing student presentations—and planning for your own	
Apr. 16	... erupts	film: <u>Rosewood</u> ; articles and artifacts
Apr. 21	reparation and reconciliation	Rosewood articles and artifacts
Apr. 23	righteous anger	Malcolm X (Blackboard), pp. 82-89; current examples
Apr. 28	history and community	EXP 6: African American legacies (Blackboard)
Apr. 30	identity and pride	film: <u>Malcolm X, Make It Plain</u> Step 5: <i>Paper due</i>
May __	a semester of inquiry	<i>final exam</i>