AMERICAN STUDIES (AMST)

* AMST 030b, Cultures of Travel  Talya Zemach-Bersin
From where does the desire to leave the familiar and experience the unknown emerge? What is the relationship between travel and the production of knowledge? What are the cultural politics of constructing, selling, and consuming “experiences” of alterity? In what ways is tourism today linked to historically constituted systems of power and inequality? This interdisciplinary course draws on anthropology, history, literary criticism, and feminist, postcolonial, and critical theory to examine the social construction of travelers and the making of knowledge and power through travel. We examine the processes through which displacement and travel yield normalized claims to knowledge, enhanced selfhood, and professional expertise. Through engagement with theoretical texts, case studies, and primary documents, we think critically about privileged discourses of travel. Major course themes include the politics of authenticity, the mythic figure of the traveler, the valorization of displacement as aesthetic gain, the fantasy of “going native,” patterns of consumption, and the pervasive links between travel, authority, power, and knowledge. Students are encouraged to engage their own research interests and to theorize themselves as both travelers and knowledge-producers. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  HU

* AMST 032a, Gender, Sexuality, and U.S. Empire  Talya Zemach-Bersin
This course explores the cultural history of America’s relationship to the world across the long twentieth century with particular attention to the significance of gender, sexuality, and race. We locate U.S. culture and politics within an international dynamic, exposing the interrelatedness of domestic and foreign affairs. While exploring specific geopolitical events like the Spanish-American War, World War I and II, and the Cold War, this course emphasizes the political importance of culture and ideology rather than offering a formal overview of U.S. foreign policy. How have Americans across the twentieth century drawn from ideas about gender to understand their country’s relationship to the wider world? In what ways have gendered ideologies and gendered approaches to politics shaped America’s performance on the world’s stage? How have geopolitical events impacted the construction of race and gender on the home front? In the most general sense, this course is designed to encourage students to understand American cultural and gender history as the product of America’s engagement with the world. In so doing, we explore the rise of U.S. global power as an enterprise deeply related to conceptions of race, sexuality, and gender. We also examine films, political speeches, visual culture, music, and popular culture. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  HU

* AMST 034b, Country Music in America  Staff
Country music is a distinctly American music. The genre blossomed from its vernacular Southern roots during the twentieth century and grew in scope and popularity with the rise the recording industry in the United States. Populated by guitars and fiddles, heroes and outlaws, country music gave the world Jimmie Rodgers, Hank Williams, Elvis Presley, Patsy Cline, Johnny Cash, Dolly Parton, and Willie Nelson. Why have these artists achieved iconic status in America? What meaning can we cull about life in the United States from their musical legacies? This interdisciplinary course considers the major trends, influential artists, and varied influences affecting country music through time. More broadly, the genre is used as a vehicle for understanding shifting socio-cultural, political, and economic phenomena in the United States from 1927 to the present. The readings cover a broad range of issues and perspectives that have come to define country music historiography. Race, culture, commercialization, notions of authenticity, and the assertion proposed by country music’s senior authority, Bill C. Malone, “that the music emerged from southern working-class culture” are all used as frames for understanding the genre. This First-Year Seminar meets twice a week. The first meeting will include a discussion of that week’s readings which represent important texts in Country Music scholarship. The second meeting will emphasize sound recordings as primary sources and cultural texts. The class begins with an examination of the 1927 “Bristol Sessions,” which effectively created a country music market and launched the careers of the Carter Family and Jimmie Rodgers—country music’s first stars. These early recordings, however, raise a number of questions about the very definition of “country” music. The course also delves into subgenres and regional difference as heard in styles such as bluegrass, Cajun music, and western swing. These regional variants raise questions about a “mainstream” repertoire and an identifiable country sound. The rise of nationally syndicated radio emissions, particularly Nashville’s “The Grand Ole Opry,” are prompts for a broader conversation about commercialization, marketing, and mass media’s role in shaping the genre’s aesthetic and popularity. Later meetings examine the shifting socio-cultural mores in the U.S. and their relationship to the rise of honky tonk, rockabilly, the Nashville Sound and Outlaw movement. The last half of the course explicitly considers the salient themes influencing the genre, from race and gender, to media. The sound recordings selected for this course are equally as important as the readings. Regular listening exercises will introduce students to the sounds and voices that defined country music at various moments in time. By the end of the term, students should be able to identify the fidelity of both historic and contemporary recordings while distinguishing various artists and instrumentation. The recordings will be made available through the Yale Music Library. Students should listen to the assigned recordings in preparation for each class. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  HU

* AMST 060a / AFAM 060a / HIST 016a, Significance of American Slavery  Edward Rugemer
This first-year seminar explores the significance of racial slavery in the history of the Americas during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. We read the work of historians and we explore archival approaches to the study of history. Taught in the Beinecke Library with the assistance of curators and librarians, each week is organized around an archival collection that sheds light on the history of slavery. The course also includes visits to the Department of Manuscripts and Archives in the Sterling Library, the British Art Center, and the Yale University Art Gallery. Each student writes a research paper grounded in archival research in one of the Yale Libraries. Topics include
slavery and slaveholding, the transatlantic slave trade, resistance to slavery, the abolitionist movement, the coming of the American Civil War, the process of emancipation, and post-emancipation experiences. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU

AMST 116b / RLST 115b, How to Build an American Religion  Kathryn Lofton
How communities can be organized through code, charisma, ritual, and cosmology. Topics include strategies for concretizing utopia and establishing communal principles, expanding audiences, and specifying creed. This course serves as an introduction to religion through theoretical readings and specific examples drawn from the transnational American scene, past and present. Discussion of particular leaders, sects, practices, and media will offer insights into how ideas organize societies and individuals establish themselves as icons. Students adapt strategies taught in the course in order to practice their own capacity to foster social movements, develop and critique brands, and consider the relationship between religion, politics, and economy. HU

AMST 125a / AFAM 125a / EDST 130a / HIST 136a, The Long Civil Rights Movement  Crystal Feinster
Political, social, and artistic aspects of the U.S. civil rights movement from the 1920s through the 1980s explored in the context of other organized efforts for social change. Focus on relations between the African American freedom movement and debates about gender, labor, sexuality, and foreign policy. Changing representations of social movements in twentieth-century American culture; the politics of historical analysis. HU

AMST 160a / AFAM 160a / AFST 184a / HIST 184a, The Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery  Edward Rugemer
The history of peoples of African descent from the American colonies through the sixteenth century through the century-long process of emancipation. WR, HU

AMST 175b / ARCH 280b / HSAR 210b / URBN 280b, American Architecture and Urbanism  Elihu Rubin
Introduction to the study of buildings, architects, architectural styles, and urban landscapes, viewed in their economic, political, social, and cultural contexts, from precolonial times to the present. Topics include: public and private investment in the built environment; the history of housing in America; the organization of architectural practice; race, gender, ethnicity and the right to the city; the social and political nature of city building; and the transnational nature of American architecture. HU

AMST 190b / HIST 165b, The American Century  Beverly Gage
United States politics, political thought, and social movements in the 20th century. Pivotal elections and political figures (Wilson, Roosevelt, Nixon, Reagan) as well as politics from below (civil rights, labor, women’s activism). Emphasis on political ideas such as liberalism, conservatism, and radicalism, and on the intersection between domestic and foreign affairs. Primary research in Yale archival collections. Students who have already completed HIST 136J must have the instructor’s permission to enroll in this course, and will perform alternate readings during some weeks. HU

AMST 204a / AFAM 190a, Protest Music & the Black Radical Tradition  Daphne Brooks
This interdisciplinary lecture course charts the evolution of protest music in America as it was originally designed and bravely imagined and deployed by captive peoples of African descent through our present day. The course will emphasize an examination of black radical aesthetics in sound alongside key literary and performance texts that dialectically resonate with the resistant musical innovations of a range of black culture workers from the antebellum era through our current 2020 moment of peril and possibility. The course explores the history, politics, and cultures of U.S. protest music across three centuries as it was radically shaped by dispossessed peoples who invented their own world-making sonic lexicon in a bid to transform the nation as well as their own very conditions of being. Throughout the semester, we’ll explore, among other things, uniquely subversive vocal strategies, lyrical tropes, and instrumental disturbances that generate social justice critical commentary, philosophies and racial, gender, class, sexual identity, and human rights politics. The course will likewise examine key works of African American literature that explore the radical dimensions of black music in the context of captivity (slave narratives, oratory, sacred radical music), the post-Reconstruction era (classic essays, political tracts and fiction), the Jim Crow era (Harlem Renaissance poetry and theater, the experimental novel), the long Civil Rights and Black Power movements (spoken word, drama, oratory) as well as the landmark protest movements emerging across the 20th and 21st centuries led by black feminist, anti-war, and queer liberation agitators. We’ll round out the term by turning our attention in full to the music, literature, and performances of the Black Lives Matter movement. This course will draw on secondary scholarship in black radical tradition theory, history, sound studies, performance studies, women, gender and sexuality studies, queer theory, critical theory, visual culture studies, and American Studies. HU

AMST 209b / ER&M 223b / PLSC 262b, Race, Politics, and the Law  Daniel HoSang
Examination of how race—as a mode of domination and resistance—has developed and transformed in the United States since the early-twentieth-century. How political actors and social movements engage the law to shape visions of freedom, democracy, and political life. Consideration of critical race theory, political discourse analysis, intersectionality and women of color feminism, and American political development. SO

* AMST 227a / AFAM 227a / ER&M 349a / HIST 137Ja, From the Voting Rights Act to #blacklivesmatter  Ferentz Lafargue
This course explores the period beginning from 1964 through the emergence of the #blacklivesmatter movement in 2013. Key concepts covered in this course include the Black Panther Party and rise of the Black Power movement; political campaigns of Shirley Chisholm, Jesse Jackson, and Barack Obama. The seminar concludes with an examination of the #blacklivesmatter movement and broader efforts addressing mass incarceration, poverty, and opportunity gaps in education. HU
AMST 228b / GLBL 201b / HIST 128b, Origins of U.S. Global Power  David Engerman
This course examines the causes and the consequences of American global power in the “long 20th century,” peaking back briefly into the 19th century as well as forward into the present one. The focus is on foreign relations, which includes but is not limited to foreign policy; indeed, America’s global role was rooted as much in its economic and cultural power as it was in diplomacy and military strength. We study events like wars, crises, treaties, and summits—but also trade shows and movie openings. Our principal subjects include plenty of State Department officials, but also missionaries, business people, and journalists. We pay close attention also to conceptions of American power; how did observers in and beyond the United States understand the nature, origins, and operations of American power?

* AMST 235b / ENGL 354b, Language, Disability, Fiction  Jim Berger
Portrayals of cognitive and linguistic impairment in modern fiction. Characters with limited capacities for language as figures of ‘otherness.’ Contemporaneous discourses of science, sociology, ethics, politics, and aesthetics. The ethics of speaking about or for subjects at the margins of discourse. HU

AMST 236b / EVST 318b / HIST 199b / HSHM 207b, American Energy History  Paul Sabin
The history of energy in the United States from early hydropower and coal to present-day hydraulic fracturing, deepwater oil, wind, and solar. Topics include energy transitions and technological change; energy and democracy; environmental justice and public health; corporate power and monopoly control; electricity and popular culture; labor struggles; the global quest for oil; changing national energy policies; the climate crisis. WR, HU

AMST 299a / ENGL 187a, Love and Hate in the American South  Caleb Smith
An introduction to the literature and culture of the American South, a region of the mind identified with the former Confederate States of America and fabricated from a mix of beautiful dreams and violent nightmares, including: histories of slavery and settler colonialism, gothic fiction, the Delta blues, Hollywood movies, evangelical sermons, The Confessions of Nat Turner, love poems, protest poems, prison songs, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, country music, photographs, “Strange Fruit,” folk tales, memoirs, cookbook recipes, and other fantasies. Close reading, cultural analysis, and historical context. Literary works by Capote, Faulkner, Hurston, Jacobs, O’Connor, Poe, Twain, Toomer, Walker, Welty, Wright. Music, film, and other media. HU

* AMST 257b / ENGL 258b, Modern Apocalyptic Narratives  Jim Berger
The persistent impulse in Western culture to imagine the end of the world and what might follow. Social and psychological factors that motivate apocalyptic representations. Differences and constant features in apocalyptic representations from the Hebrew Bible to contemporary science fiction. Attitudes toward history, politics, sexuality, social class, and the process of representation in apocalyptic texts. HU

* AMST 309a / AFAM 259a / EDST 255a, Education and Empire  Talya Zemach-Bersin
This course offers an introduction to the transnational history of education in relation to the historical development of the U.S. empire both at home and abroad. By bringing together topics often approached separately—immigration, education, race, colonialism, and the history of U.S. empire—we interrogate the ways that education has been mobilized to deploy power: controlling knowledge, categorizing and policing differences, administering unequal paths to citizenship/belonging, forcing assimilation, promoting socio-economic divides, and asserting discipline and control. EDST 110 recommended. HU

* AMST 312a / AFAM 326a / ER&M 310a / WGSS 298a, Postcolonial Cities of the West  Fadila Habchi
Examination of various texts and films pertaining to the representation of postcolonial cities in the global north and a range of social, political, and cultural issues that concern those who inhabit these spaces. HU

* AMST 314b / ER&M 314b / WGSS 306b, Gender and Transgender  Greta LaFleur
Introduction to transgender studies, an emergent field that draws on gender studies, queer theory, sociology, feminist science studies, literary studies, and history. Representations of gender nonconformity in a cultural context dominated by a two-sex model of human gender differentiation. Sources include novels, autobiographies, films, and philosophy and criticism. RP

* AMST 317a / ER&M 333a / HIST 333Ja, Race, Radicalism, and Migration in Latinx History  Stephen Pitti
Histories of Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Central American, Dominican, and Cuban American communities in the United States, with a focus on transnational and local labor politics, cultural expression, print culture, and social movements. Readings and films locate Latinx experiences alongside African American and Asian American histories, and within broader patterns of U.S. and Latin American history. HU

* AMST 318a / HIST 415Ja, The Problem of Global Poverty  Joanne Meyerowitz
Study of the programs and policies that aimed to end global poverty from 1960 to the present, from modernization to microcredit to universal basic income. Topics include the green revolution, population control, the ‘women in development’ movement, and the New International Economic Order. Extensive work with primary sources. May count toward geographical distributional credit within the History major for any region studied, upon application to the director of undergraduate studies. WR, HU

* AMST 321a / ENGL 285a / FILM 334a / RLST 333a, Mormonism  Kathryn Lofson and John Peters
For some observers, Mormonism is an epithet, a poison, a problem; for others, Mormonism is a practice, a purpose, the bread of life. It’s both wave and particle. It’s radical and conservative. It’s insane and mundane. It’s deeply weird and definitionally conventional. This is not a course that decides where one ought to sit on these oppositional terms. We ask instead what makes a subject so inspiring to opposition. We do not consider Mormonism a subject of study as much as a prompt to ask what it is to study anything. This course, the
first of its kind at Yale, does not reflect the recent efflorescence of Mormon Studies as an academic subfield as much as it reacts to that intellectual excitement. We consider Mormonism as an indicative problem in the history of interpretation.  

* AMST 324a / AFAM 396a / ER&M 363a, Ethnic Studies and the Social Imagination  Maryam Parhizkar  
Centering the social function of the imagination and its relation to power and culture, this seminar traces poetic creativity as a mode of engaging the political and intellectual labors of ethnic studies. Students are introduced to the creative strategies that scholars, poets, performers, filmmakers, artists, and activists have used to interrogate histories of race, diaspora and dispossession, build collective, and re-envision the future. Emphasis on writing, media and performance from the U.S. in the last decade, with transhistorical and transnational links to writings and histories from the twentieth century including: Third World/women of color feminisms, the Black Radical Tradition and abolitionist thought, Caribbean thought, documentary poetics, and queer of color critique. Students study, practice, and apply methods to their own research projects through in-class discussion and writing exercises, reading responses, and assignments that build toward a final project or paper. Prerequisite: ER&M 200, prior course in AFAM, or permission from the instructor.  

HU  

* AMST 330a / ENGL 236a, Dystopic and Utopian Fictions  Jim Berger  
Attempts since the late nineteenth century to imagine, in literature, cinema, and social theory, a world different from the existing world. The merging of political critique with desire and anxiety; the nature and effects of social power; forms of authority, submission, and resistance.  

HU  

* AMST 348a / ER&M 381a / EVST 304a, Space, Place, and Landscape  Laura Barraclough  
Survey of core concepts in cultural geography and spatial theory. Ways in which the organization, use, and representation of physical spaces produce power dynamics related to colonialism, race, gender, class, and migrant status. Multiple meanings of home; the politics of place names; effects of tourism; the aesthetics and politics of map making; spatial strategies of conquest. Includes field projects in New Haven.  

* AMST 349a / THST 427a, Technologies of Movement Research  Emily Coates  
An interdisciplinary survey of creative and critical methods for researching human movement. Humans move to communicate, to express emotions, to commune, to protest, to reflect and embody the natural world. Drawing on an array of artistic projects and scholarship (in dance and performance studies, art, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, psychology, cognitive science, and the history of science), we consider case studies that take up movement as both the object and method of inquiry. Class time and assignments include moving, reading, and watching. Movement exercises are adaptable to the remote environment. All physical capabilities are welcome; no prior experience in dance required. Limited enrollment. See Syllabus page on Canvas for application.  

* AMST 353b / HIST 196Jb, 21st-Century US History: The First Decade  Joanne Meyerowitz  
Students conduct collaborative primary source research on the first ten years of the 21st century. Topics include September 11th, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Hurricane Katrina, the financial crisis of 2008, the election of Barack Obama, and battles over domestic surveillance, immigration, policing, gun control, same-sex marriage, and reproductive rights.  

HU  

* AMST 358b / ENGL 281b, Animals in Modern American Fiction  Jim Berger  
Literary portrayals of animals are used to examine the relations between literature, science, and social and political thought since the late nineteenth century. Topics include Darwinist thought, socialism, fascism, gender and race relations, new thinking about ecology, and issues in neuroscience.  

HU RP  

* AMST 370a or b / THST 380a or b, The History of Dance  Brian Seibert  
An examination of major movements in the history of concert and social dance from the late nineteenth century to the present, including ballet, tap, jazz, modern, musical theater, and different cultural forms. Topics include tradition versus innovation, the influence of the African diaspora, and interculturalism. Exercises are used to illuminate analysis of the body in motion. Limited enrollment. See Canvas for details.  

WR, HU  

* AMST 375a / ER&M 302Ja / HIST 102Ja, Asian Americans and the Law in 20th C. U.S. History  Mary Lui  
This junior history seminar explores 20th century Asian American history through the themes of law and justice. Specifically, we examine the ways in which U.S. laws and legal institutions have defined race and belonging for Asian Americans by focusing on three topics: education, housing, and criminal justice. These broad themes allow us to understand historic changes in Asian migration, family and community formation, political organizing, and social justice activism as well as situate Asian American history in the broader context of Civil Rights struggles throughout the 20th century. The course also explores a wide array of primary sources and historical methods used to develop a research project based on Asian American encounters with the U.S. legal system.  

WR, HU  

* AMST 377b / HSAR 377b, Ahab, Ishmael and the Visual World of Moby Dick  Bryan Wolf  
This class reads Herman Melville’s Moby Dick over the course of a semester, pairing weekly readings of Moby Dick with discussions of the social, cultural, and visual histories that the readings engage. Focusing on painting, sculpture and vernacular art, we recreate the visual environment that undergirds Melville’s epic, from tavern signs and scrimshaw to images of slavery, the landscape, and everyday life in America. In addition to Moby Dick and several short stories by Melville, we study: nineteenth-century landscape and genre painting; slavery and race in antebellum society; commerce, industry and early ‘globalism’; and gender and class. We conclude with another voyage into the mysteries of art, language and history: Art Spiegelman’s Maus.  

HU
* AMST 382b / WGSS 372b, Theory and Politics of Sexual Consent  Joseph Fischel
  Political, legal, and feminist theory and critiques of the concept of sexual consent. Topics such as sex work, nonnormative sex, and sex across age differences explored through film, autobiography, literature, queer commentary, and legal theory. U.S. and Connecticut legal cases regarding sexual violence and assault.  SO

* AMST 385a / AFAM 228a / ENGL 265a / HUMS 241a, James Baldwin’s American Scene  Jacqueline Goldsby
  In-depth examination of James Baldwin’s canon, tracking his work as an American artist, citizen, and witness to United States society, politics, and culture during the Cold War, the Civil Rights era, and the Black Arts Movement.  HU

* AMST 388a / AFAM 348a / ER&M 339a / WGSS 332a, James Baldwin 1964-1987: Transnationalism, Exile & Intimacy  Leah Mirakhhor
  The course explores Baldwin’s oeuvre since 1964 until his death in 1987. As critics have noted, there has been a renaissance regarding the work of James Baldwin since 1999, with scholarly publications devoted to his work, public tributes, films, and publications of previously uncollected or out of print works. Critics have hailed Baldwin’s earlier works—Go Tell It on the Mountain, Giovanni’s Room, Notes of a Native Son—as his greatest literary accomplishments. After Baldwin’s most celebrated work—The Fire Next Time—Baldwin appeared on the cover of Time magazine in 1963, under the heading “Birmingham and Beyond: The Negro’s Push for Equality.” In this moment, Baldwin became a celebrated public figure in the U.S. and beyond. Our class investigates the period after this height of celebrity, when critics lambasted him for being too political, too angry, too bitter, and losing narrative control and rigor. This two-decade span is significant because Baldwin was witness to the deaths and incarceration of Civil Rights leaders (whom he mourned as friends), the increased surveillance and incarceration of black activists, the Vietnam war, the emergence of Black Power, feminist movements, and gay and queer liberations. During this time, Baldwin lived primarily in Turkey and France, and continued to travel globally. Baldwin’s essays, novels, speeches, and poetry wrestled with how to formally capture and witness the violences of imperialism, homophobia, and racism. Since his death, Baldwin’s work has continued to influence and inform theoretical insights in American studies, literary studies, Black studies, and queer studies. Our class engages with Baldwin’s formal practices, political contexts, and critical interpretations across these fields. Preference given to students with a background in African American Studies, WGGS, ER&M, and American Studies. Previous readings of James Baldwin’s works recommended but not required.  HU

* AMST 390a / ENGL 280a / HUMS 319a, Poetry, Film, Music and Art: John Ashbery’s Work  Karin Roffman
  A study of the poetry of John Ashbery (1927–2017) through examining the films, music, and art that provoked his imagination and structured and inhabited his poems. In the course, we study his original paintings and collages, read from his published art criticism, film and music reviews, and explore his off-the-cuff reactions to contemporary work in correspondence with friends. In short, we consider how he practiced and extended the art of American poetry through a vivid, lively, and continuous conversation with other arts. We also discuss critiques of the interdisciplinarity of Ashbery’s poetics in work by second generation New York School poets.  WR, HU

* AMST 395b / FILM 327b, Studies in Documentary Film  Charles Musser
  This course examines key works, crucial texts, and fundamental concepts in the critical study of non-fiction cinema, exploring the participant-observer dialectic, the performative, and changing ideas of truth in documentary forms.  HU RP

* AMST 398b / ER&M 308b / HIST 158jb, American Indian Law and Policy  Ned Blackhawk
  Survey of the origins, history, and legacies of federal Indian law and policy during two hundred years of United States history. The evolution of U.S. constitutional law and political achievements of American Indian communities over the past four decades.  WR, HU

* AMST 408a / AFAM 412a / ER&M 408a, Race and Comedy  Albert Laguna
  Introduction to theories of the ludic and to critical race theory. Ways in which comic modes have been utilized by racialized subjects to represent and issue critiques of the dominant culture. Analysis of stand-up comedy, film, television, and novels.  HU

* AMST 414a / ENGL 440a, Poetry and Debates on the Value of Arts and Humanities  Jim Berger
  Attacks on and defenses of poetry in the broadest sense (as culture, the aesthetic, the humanities) from Plato to contemporary debates over the proper focus of education. The value of poetry in terms of knowledge claims, moral impact, economic utility, and other categories particular to artistic production and reception.  WR, HU

* AMST 421b, Transformations in Hawaiian Studies  Gary Okihiro
  Over the past decade, there has been a transformation in the field of Hawaiian studies led mainly by Hawaiian (kanaka maoli) scholars. In addition to their subject-positions unlike the extant scholarship produced by non-Hawaiian scholars, those kanaka maoli intellectuals have benefited from archives in the Hawaiian language. The purpose of this seminar is to explore that dramatic change, described by some as a process of decolonization, from the standard ideas of Hawaii`i as represented by historians, anthropologists, and sociologists to the new works in Hawaiian history, anthropology, and cultural studies.  HU

* AMST 428b / ENGL 383b / EVST 284b, Food in Literature, Culture, and Science  Wai Chee Dimock
  From the global histories of sugar and salt to the latest research on chicken and antibiotics, this course explores some key texts—by Gabriel García Marquez, Sinclair Lewis, Ruth Ozeki, Monique Truong, Jonathan Safran Foer, Octavia Butler, and Margaret Atwood—both as works of luminous imagination and as entry points to deeper scientific knowledge, encouraging cross-pollination among disciplines. Formerly ENGL 283.  WR, HU
Sociocultural dimensions of social inequality in the contemporary United States. Ways in which the socioeconomic processes that produce inequality are inextricably embedded in worlds of cultural meaning; how those meanings are constructed and embodied in everyday practice. Perspectives from anthropology, sociology, economics, history, and popular media. SO

Examination of competing conceptualizations of anti-racism and racial justice within a range of historical, theoretical, and practical sites. Consideration of how the resurgence of collective and popular mobilizations against racial and colonial domination in the last ten years, witnessed in the struggles against the police and prison violence, immigrant detention and deportation, and indigenous-led campaigns against fossil fuel extraction, raise profound questions about the meaning, politics, and vision of racial justice. HU

An examination of contemporary literature written by Caribbean writers who have migrated to, or who journey between, different countries around the Atlantic rim. Focus on literature written in English in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, both fiction and nonfiction. Writers include Caryl Phillips, Nalo Hopkinson, and Jamaica Kincaid. HU

Readings, discussions, and research on imperialism and ‘green gold’ and their consequences for the imperial powers and their colonies and neo-colonies. Spatially conceived as a world-system that enmeshes the planet and as earth’s latitudes that divide the temperate from the tropical zones, imperialism as discourse and material relations is this seminar’s focus together with its implantations—an empire of plants. Vast plantations of sugar, cotton, tea, coffee, bananas, and pineapples occupy land cultivated by native and migrant workers, and their fruits move from the tropical to the temperate zones, impoverishing the periphery while profiting the core. Fruits of Empire, thus, implicates power and the social formation of race, gender, sexuality, class, and nation. HU, SO

The relationship between religion and war in American history from colonial beginnings through Vietnam. The religious meanings of Americans at war; the mutually reinforcing influences of nationalism and religion; war as the norm of American national life; the concept of civil religion; biblical and messianic contexts of key U.S. conflicts. HU

This research seminar examines and theorizes the significance of movement and mobility in the production and contestation of settler colonial nation-states. To do so, it brings together the fields of settler colonial studies, critical indigenous studies, ethnic studies, public history, and mobility studies. After acquainting ourselves with the foundations and some of the key debates within each of these fields, we examine four case studies: The Freedom Trail and the Black Heritage Trail in Boston; the Lewis and Clark expedition and its recuperation as a site of healing and education for tribal nations in the Upper Midwest and Northwest; the Trail of Tears and the contest over southern memory; and the relationships between settlement, labor migration, and regional racial formation in California. Students then conduct their own research projects that integrate primary source research on a particular organized movement (of people, non-human animals, ideas, practices) with two or more expressions of memory about that movement (in the form of public history installations, popular culture, literature, music, digital memes, etc.). This course is best suited to students who have initial ideas about a potential research topic and are exploring related ideas for their senior essay. HU

This undergraduate seminar is organized around developing a deep historical understanding of one of our most important documents, the United States Constitution, as it emerged in the late 1780s. In addition to close reading and analysis of this fundamental text, we read a series of other primary sources relevant to the evolution of constitutional thought and practice in the Anglo-American tradition of the early modern period. And we engage relevant secondary scholarship produced by professional historians over the past century or more, in an effort to grapple with the evolution of changing approaches to the Constitution and its meaning over time. This course carries PI credit in History. WR, HU

What kind of access and exposure do transgender people have to healthcare services, policing, mental health, education, and public spaces and what kind of access should trans people have? How do we work to close the gap between what is available, and what should be? This course considers the diverse range of healthcare and another basic needs of transgender and nonbinary people in a number of different institutional settings and medical contexts—prisons to K-12 public schools, gender-affirming surgeries to fertility support—with a twinned focus on how institutions render trans people and their bodies illegible or even illegal, on the one hand, and what kind of knowledge, best practices, and interventions might be implemented to remove obstacles for trans and nonbinary people seeking the care that they need, on the other. At the heart of the course is the role of racial and economic justice—in healthcare, and in the world more broadly—in mitigating the health and healthcare disparities between transgender and non-transgender patients. This course is co-taught by Greta LaFleur (American Studies) and Ronica Mukerjee (School of Nursing). Course will be capped at 25. HU

This seminar explores the relational and material worlds that humans create in concert with other-than-human species. Through an interdisciplinary analysis of the problematic subject of anthropology—Anthropos—we seek to pose new questions about the fate of life worlds in the present epoch of anthropogenic climate change. Our readings track circuits of knowledge from anthropology and philosophy to geological history, literary criticism, and environmental studies as we come to terms with the loss of biodiversity, impending wildlife extinctions, and political-economic havoc wrought by global warming associated with the Anthropocene. A persistent
provocation guides our inquiry: What multispecies worldings become possible to recognize and cultivate when we dare to decenter the human in our politics, passions, and aspirations for life on a shared planet? So

* AMST 460b / AFAM 408b / ENGL 343b, African American Poets of the Modern Era Robert Stepto
The African American practice of poetry between 1900 and 1960, especially of sonnets, ballads, sermonic, and blues poems. Poets include Paul Laurence Dunbar, Langston Hughes, Sterling Brown, Gwendolyn Brooks, Margaret Walker, and Robert Hayden. Class sessions at the Beinecke Library for inspection and discussion of original editions, manuscripts, letters, and other archival material. HU

* AMST 461a / AFAM 239a / EDST 209a / ER&M 292a / WGSS 202a, Identity, Diversity, and Policy in U.S. Education Andrew Dowe and Craig Canfield
Introduction to critical theory (feminism, queer theory, critical race theory, disability studies, trans studies, indigenous studies) as a fundamental tool for understanding and critiquing identity, diversity, and policy in U.S. education. Exploration of identity politics and theory, as they figure in education policy. Methods for applying theory and interventions to interrogate issues in education. Application of theory and interventions to policy creation and reform. WR, HU, RP

* AMST 463a and AMST 464b / EVST 463a and EVST 464b / FILM 455a and FILM 456b, Documentary Film Workshop Charles Musser
A yearlong workshop designed primarily for majors in Film and Media Studies or American Studies who are making documentaries as senior projects. Seniors in other majors admitted as space permits. RP

* AMST 465b / AFAM 287b / AFST 412b / FREN 412b / LITR 250b, Postcolonial Theory and Literature Fadila Habchi
A survey of the principal modes of thought that have animated decolonization and life after colonialism, as seen in both theoretical and literary texts. Concentration on the British and French imperial and postcolonial contexts. Readings in negritude, orientalism, psychoanalysis, poststructuralism, and novels. Lectures in English; readings available both in French and in English translation. HU RP

* AMST 468b / PLSC 261b, American Political Development Stephen Skowronek
This course examines patterns of political change and institutional development in the United States. It looks to the past for leverage on thinking about the problems of government and politics today. Students examine issues of political culture like racism and liberalism, as well as standard developmental themes like party building, state building, social movement effects, and constitutional change. SO

* AMST 469a / EP&E 396a / PLSC 251a, American Progressivism and Its Critics Stephen Skowronek
The progressive reform tradition in American politics. The tradition’s conceptual underpinnings, social supports, practical manifestations in policy and in new governmental arrangements, and conservative critique. Emphasis on the origins of progressivism in the early decades of the twentieth century, with attention to latter-day manifestations and to changes in the progressive impulse over time. SO

* AMST 471a and AMST 472b, Individual Reading and Research for Juniors and Seniors Staff
Special projects intended to enable the student to cover material not otherwise offered by the program. The course may be used for research or for directed reading, but in either case a term paper or its equivalent is required as evidence of work done. It is expected that the student will meet regularly with the faculty adviser. To apply for admission, a student should submit a prospectus signed by the faculty adviser to the director of undergraduate studies.

* AMST 475b / ENGL 277b, Performing American Literature Wai Chee Dimock
A broad selection of short stories, poems, and novels, accompanied by class performances, and culminating in a term project with a significant writing component. “Performance” includes a wide range of activities including: staging; making digital films and videos; building websites; book illustration; game design; and creative use of social media. Readings include poetry by Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson; plays by Susan-lori Parks; and fiction by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ray Bradbury, Walter Mosley, Jhumpa Lahiri, and Junot Diaz. Formerly ENGL 438. WR, HU

* AMST 477b / MUSI 492b, The Beach Boys in American Culture and Counterculture Daniel Harrison
The sixty-year career of the Beach Boys is an armature to study a variety of topics of interest to musicologists, American cultural historians, and students of media. The group’s musical production is notably large and stylistically varied, its complex history (and mythology) is well documented in print and on film, and recent scholarship about the group is sophisticated and suggestive. Starting with close listening of a large set of songs, readings from both academic and popular sources, and discussions with expert guests in cultural studies, rock journalism, biography, and music analysis, students identify and work on an original research project related to the group, broadly conceived. HU

* AMST 479b / ER&M 402b, The Displaced: Migrant and Refugee Narratives of the 20th and 21st Centuries Leah Mirakhor
This course examines a series of transnational literary texts and films that illuminate how the displaced – migrants, exiles, and refugees – remake home away from their native countries. The twentieth and twenty-first centuries have produced massive displacements due to wars, genocides, racial, ethnic and religious conflicts, economic and climate change, among other factors. Our course focuses on several texts that explore questions of home, nation, and self in the context of specific historical events such as the Holocaust, civil rights movements in the U.S., internment, the Indian partition, African decolonization, and Middle Eastern/Arab ethno-religious conflicts and wars. We examine these events alongside the shifting legal and political policies and categories related to asylum, humanitarian parole, refugee, and illegal alien status. Exploring themes such as nostalgia, longing, trauma, and memory, we look at the possibilities and limitations of creating, contesting, and imagining home in the diaspora. Our objective is to debate and develop the ethical, political, geographic, and imaginative articulations of home in an era of mass displacements and geo-political crises. We examine how notions of home are imagined alongside and against categories of race, gender, and sexuality. HU
* AMST 486b / ER&M 425b, Asian American Studies of Race, Colonialism, and Empire  Lisa Lowe  
This interdisciplinary course examines three periods of Asian American history that are paradigmatic within Asian American Studies of race, colonialism, and empire: 19th century Chinese immigrant labor, the internment of Japanese and Japanese Americans during World War II, and Korean Americans in 1992 Los Angeles. Studying these three examples in their national and global contexts, we consider Chinese immigrant railroad workers in relation to both conditions for emigration from China, and to Native American responses to U.S. settlement and expansion into the western frontier; the dispossession and incarceration of Japanese Americans in relation to wartime racialization of Mexican Americans, Blacks, and the longer history of U.S. war in Asia; and finally, we seek to understand the positioning of Korean Americans as 'middlemen' in post-Civil Rights multiracial Los Angeles in relation to Korean War, and U.S. development and investment in the industrialization of South Korea. We explore how Asian American histories of racialized labor and citizenship in the U.S. are better understood in comparative relation to the histories of other groups, and with consideration of the longer histories of U.S. interventions in Asian countries of origin.  HU  

* AMST 491a or b, Senior Project  Staff  
Independent research and proseminar on a one-term senior project. For requirements see under "Senior requirement" in the American Studies program description.  

* AMST 493a and AMST 494b, Senior Project for the Intensive Major  Jacinda Tran and Maile Speakman  
Independent research and proseminar on a two-term senior project. For requirements see under 'Senior requirement' in the American Studies program description.