AMERICAN STUDIES

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FACULTY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM OF AMERICAN STUDIES

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Associate Professors Jafari Allen (Anthropology, African American Studies), Crystal Feimster (African American Studies), Zareena Grewal (Ethnicity, Race, & Migration), Paul Sabin (History, Environmental Studies), Tisa Wenger (Divinity School)

Assistant Professors Laura Barraclough (Ethnicity, Race, & Migration), Greta LaFleur, Albert Laguna (Ethnicity, Race, & Migration), Dixa Ramirez (Ethnicity, Race, & Migration), Birgit Brander Rasmussen (Ethnicity, Race, & Migration), Elihu Rubin (Architecture), Jennifer Van Vleck (History)

Senior Lecturers James Berger (English), Ron Gregg (Film & Media Studies)

Lecturers Ryan Brasseaux, Christine Muller, Joel Silverman, Joseph Spooner

The American Studies program encourages the interdisciplinary study of the cultures and politics of the United States, the changing representations of national identity, and the construction of borderland and diasporic cultures over time. Each student in the major combines courses in American Studies with courses from other relevant disciplines (literature, history, the arts, and the social sciences) to explore these broad topics from local, national, and global perspectives. Through the selection of an area of concentration, each student develops a focus for course work in the major. The program encourages scholarly work in nontraditional combinations of disciplines; at the same time, however, it assumes and requires a substantial foundation of knowledge in the history and culture of the United States. Students interested in the major are encouraged to consult with the director of undergraduate studies as early as possible.

Requirements of the major All students majoring in American Studies must take fourteen term courses approved by the program’s faculty. Although a good deal of freedom in course selection is permitted, it is expected that all students will acquaint themselves with the materials, skills, and perspectives of cultural studies. Accordingly, the major requires completion—preferably by the end of the sophomore year, but no later than the end of the junior year—of at least four gateway courses (AMST 111–299), including two in cultural history/cultural studies, one broad survey course in American literature, and one course preparatory for work in the student’s area of concentration, to be selected in consultation with the director of undergraduate studies. One of these four courses must address material produced before the Civil War. An additional five concentration courses from diverse disciplines must be taken for a letter grade, one of which must incorporate a comparable topic from a non-U.S. perspective. Two electives chosen from the American Studies course offerings are also required.

Students must take two junior seminars (AMST 300–399) during their junior year. At least one of the seminars must fall within the student’s area of concentration, described below. In each of the seminars, students are expected to demonstrate proficiency in interdisciplinary research and analysis through the production of critical essays on primary source materials or a paper of fifteen to twenty pages. Sophomores contemplating a junior term abroad are urged to take one of the junior seminars in the spring term of their sophomore year.

Area of concentration Each American Studies major selects an area of concentration, normally in the fall of the junior year, from five possible choices: (1) national formations, (2) the international United States, (3) material cultures and built environments, (4) politics and American communities, and (5) visual, audio, literary, and performance cultures. The concentration in national formations explores historic migrations, settlements, and encounters among peoples who have formed the American nation, with an emphasis on Native American history and the construction of America’s frontiers and borderlands. The international United States concentration focuses on historic and contemporary diasporas, the role of the United States outside its national borders, and the flows of American peoples, ideas, and goods throughout the globe. Students in the material cultures and built environments concentration examine the formation of the American landscape from the natural to the human-made, including the development of American architecture, and the visual and decorative arts. The concentration in politics and American communities investigates the emergence of social groups and their political struggles at the local and national levels, emphasizing the themes of power, inequality, and social justice. Majors with a concentration in
visual, audio, literary, and performance cultures study American consumer culture, popular culture, representations, and media in relation to U.S. literatures. Students may also petition the director of undergraduate studies to develop an independent concentration.

**Senior requirement** During the senior year, each student in the major completes work in the area of concentration in one of three ways. First, the student may enroll in a senior seminar within the area of concentration (AMST 400–490). Students should apply interdisciplinary methods and undertake original research to produce a final paper of twenty to twenty-five pages. Students must complete all course requirements to fulfill the senior requirement.

Second, the student may complete a one-term senior project or essay (AMST 491). The product should be a thirty-page essay or its equivalent in another medium. All students writing a one-term senior essay participate in a proseminar on theory and method. To apply for admission to AMST 491, a student should submit a prospectus, signed by the faculty adviser, to the director of undergraduate studies.

Third, the student may enroll in the intensive major (AMST 493 and 494) and work independently for two terms. The intensive major offers an opportunity for significant original research leading to a substantial senior project. AMST 493, 494 carries two terms of credit; its final product should be a sixty-page essay or its equivalent in another medium. All students in the intensive major participate in a yearlong proseminar on theory and method. One term of the two-term project may count as a course in the area of concentration. To apply for admission to AMST 493 and 494, a student should submit a prospectus, signed by the faculty adviser, to the director of undergraduate studies.

As a multidisciplinary program, American Studies draws on the resources of other departments and programs in the University. The following list of courses is meant to be suggestive only: apart from those courses required for the major, it is neither restrictive nor exhaustive. Students are encouraged to examine the offerings of other departments in both the humanities and the social sciences, as well as residential college seminars, for additional relevant courses. The stated area of concentration of each student determines the relevance and acceptability of other courses.

**REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR**

**Prerequisites** None

**Number of courses** 14 term courses (incl senior req)

**Distribution of courses** 4 gateway courses, as specified; 2 junior sems, 1 in area of concentration; 5 courses in area of concentration for letter grades, 1 on a related non-U.S. topic, (1 may be one term of two-term senior project); 2 electives

**Substitution permitted** 1 freshman sem for 1 gateway course; others with DUS permission

**Senior requirement** Senior sem (AMST 400–490) or one-term senior project (AMST 491) related to area of concentration

**Intensive major** Same, except a two-term senior project (AMST 493 and 494) replaces AMST 491

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**Freshman Seminars**

* AMST 010b / ER&M 010b, *Islam in the United States*  Zareena Grewal

Introduction to ethnic studies and ethnographic film and writing through the study of Islam in the United States. The wide variety of Muslim ethnic and racial and immigrant groups in the United States and the new forms of religious life that develop from their interaction. Global and universal elements of Islam; elements that are specific to place and community, including what is American about Islam in America. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program.  WR, HU

* AMST 012b / HIST 012b, *Politics and Society in the United States after World War II*  Jennifer Klein

Introduction to American political and social issues from the 1940s to the present, including political economy, civil rights, class politics, and gender roles. Legacies of the New Deal as they played out after World War II; the origins, agenda, and ramifications of the Cold War; postwar suburbanization and its racial dimensions; migration and immigration; cultural changes; social movements of the Right and Left; Reaganism and its legacies; the United States and the global economy. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program.  HU

* AMST 016b / ENGL 012b, *Literary Cities: New York, Chicago, San Francisco*  Wai Chee Dimock

An introduction to American literature, told through the vibrant lives, ethnic diversities, and innovative genres revolving around three urban centers. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program.  HU

* AMST 060b / AFAM 060b / HIST 016b, *Significance of American Slavery*  Edward Rugemer

The history of American slavery, its destruction during the nineteenth century, and its significance today. Topics include the origins of slavery, the development of racism, the transatlantic slave trade, the experience of enslavement, resistance to slavery, the abolitionist movement, the process of emancipation, and the perpetuation of slavery and other forms of unfree labor in the twenty-first century. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program.  WR, HU

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**Gateway Courses**

**AMST 111b / RLST 111b / WGSS 111b, Sexuality and Religion**  Kathryn Lofton

The relationship between ideas about sex and ideas about religion; the interrelations of sexual and religious practices. Case studies from religious cultures in the United States. Examination of presumptive norms about sexuality, religion, and American culture.  HU
Gender and sex as constituted in modern nation-states through the divisions between domestic and foreign spheres. Ways in which the interactions between international and national issues shape gender and sexuality in everyday life. Topics include science, race, and empire; nation and identity formation; media, representation, and art practices; and migration, displacement, and globalization. 

Survey of American Indian history, beginning with creation traditions and migration theories and continuing to the present day. Focus on American Indian nations whose homelands are located within the contemporary United States. Complexity and change within American Indian societies, with emphasis on creative adaptations to changing historical circumstances.

Introduction to the social, cultural, and political history of lesbians, gay men, and other socially constituted sexual minorities. Focus on understanding categories of sexuality in relation to shifting normative regimes, primarily in the twentieth century. The emergence of homosexuality and heterosexuality as categories of experience and identity; the changing relationship between homosexuality and transgenderism; the development of diverse lesbian and gay subcultures and their representation in popular culture; religion and sexual science; generational change and everyday life; AIDS; and gay, antigay, feminist, and queer movements.

The history of the American West as both frontier and region, real and imagined, from the first contacts between Indians and Europeans in the fifteenth century to the multicultural encounters of the contemporary Sunbelt. Students work with historical texts and images from Yale's Western Americana Collection.

The history of peoples of African descent throughout the Americas, from the first African American societies of the sixteenth century through the century-long process of emancipation.

Introduction to major themes and topics in African American experiences; basic methods of interdisciplinary analysis and interpretation in African American studies. Topics include black economic, political, and social institutions; self-identity and social status; literature, visual art, film, and music; and political and social issues and their relationship to changing social structures. None.

An examination of the African American experience since 1861. Meanings of freedom and citizenship are distilled through appraisal of race and class formations, the processes and effects of cultural consumption, and the grand narrative of the civil rights movement.

Ways in which people have shaped and been shaped by the changing environments of North America from precolonial times to the present. Migration of species and trade in commodities; the impact of technology, agriculture, and industry; the development of resources in the American West and overseas; the rise of modern conservation and environmental movements; the role of planning and impact of public policies.

An introduction to the cultural history of the United States from Reconstruction through the First World War, with special attention to the persistence of popular culture, the transformation of bourgeois culture, and the birth of mass culture during a period of rapid industrialization.

Policies, strategies, and ideas that enabled the United States to become a world power. Manifest Destiny, expansion, and empire; American exceptionalism; nationalism and internationalism; capitalism and consumer culture; technological innovation; the relation between domestic politics and U.S. foreign policy, particularly with regard to race and gender; challenges and resistance to U.S. global power. Focus on the twentieth century, with introduction to critical moments in U.S. and international history during the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries.

The role of literature in constructing representations of America as an idea, a nation, a colonial settlement, and a participant in world affairs. What kind of place America is and who belongs there; the consequences of America's history for its national literature. Emphasis on the ways texts represent and contest social concepts of race and gender difference.

A study of the great American film comedians and an investigation into the psychology of laughter. Comedians from Chaplin and Keaton to the Marx brothers and Fields examined against a background of European comedy. Comic form and technique and their relevance to the American scene. Not a history of American film comedy. Priority to juniors and seniors majoring in American Studies or in Film & Media Studies.

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 258a / EVST 258a, Wilderness in the North American Imagination  Michelle Morgan

The idea of wilderness in American history, art, film, public policy, and literature, from the Puritans to the present. Authors include Thoreau, Faulkner, Jack London, Mary Rowlandson, Aldo Leopold, and Rachel Carson. A weekend field trip is held early in the term. **HU**

* AMST 261b / ENGL 291b, The American Novel since 1945  Amy Hungerford

American fiction; works by Richard Wright, Flannery O'Connor, Patricia Highsmith, Vladimir Nabokov, Jack Kerouac, Philip Roth, Marilynne Robinson, Toni Morrison, Cormac McCarthy, Alison Bechdel, and Junot Díaz. **HU**

* AMST 272a / ER&M 282a / HIST 182a / WGSS 272a, Asian American History, 1800 to the Present  Mary Lui

An introduction to the history of East, South, and Southeast Asian migrations and settlement to the United States from the late eighteenth century to the present. Major themes include labor migration, community formation, U.S. imperialism, legal exclusion, racial segregation, gender and sexuality, cultural representations, and political resistance. **HU**

* AMST 274a / ER&M 260a, American Captivity Narratives  Birgit Rasmussen

Introduction to captivity narratives from colonial and nineteenth-century America. Settler narratives placed in dialogue with slave narratives and Native American pictographic sketchbooks produced in military forts. Contemporary captivity narratives from the U.S. war in Iraq and other conflicts compared with narrative forms and themes from the colonial period. **HU**

* AMST 282a / ENGL 282a, American Literature from the Civil War to World War I  Caleb Smith

A survey of American literature from the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth. Social protest, literary experimentation, and avant-garde aesthetics. Readings may include works by Twain, DuBois, James, Stein, Williams, and Faulkner. **HU**

* AMST 284b / ER&M 217b, Introduction to Latino/a Studies  Albert Laguna

Themes and issues that have shaped the experiences of Latino/a populations in the United States explored within an interdisciplinary and hemispheric framework. Relations between the United States and Latin America; the history of ethnic labels; the formation of transnational communities and identities; the politics of language and bilingualism; race, class, and ethnicity; and gender and sexuality. **HU**

* AMST 285b / ER&M 260b, Exploration of the issues surrounding art created by Native people of North America. The ways in which Native art, unlike other “ethnic” arts of the United States, is tied to sovereignty and relations with federal and state entities. Discussion of the “Indianness” of Native art and how certain issues have dominated the field for decades. None. This is an introductory class. Basic concept, terms, and issues will be introduced and discussed in class and through the readings. **HU**

* AMST 286b, History of Housing in America  Chloe Taft

Introduction to political, economic, and cultural trends that have shaped housing in American cities and suburbs since the nineteenth century. Focus on housing reform, housing policy, and the physical spaces in which class, race, and gender identities are constructed and contested. Topics include tenement reform, suburbanization, urban renewal, public housing, homelessness, and New Urbanism. **HU**

Junior Seminars

* AMST 306a / FILM 469a, The Films of Martin Scorsese  Michael Kerbel

Close analysis of Scorsese’s films, with attention to his themes and styles and to ways in which his works have assimilated literary and cinematic influences, reflected his eras, and influenced other directors. Scorsese’s work examined in the context of film history, and of U.S. culture and history, from the 1960s to the present. **HU RP**

* AMST 307b, Sports, Civil Rights, and American Leadership  Joseph Spooner

Relations among sports, civil rights movements, and the evolution of American leadership values in the twentieth century. The American sports hero and the struggle for equality of race, gender, and sexual orientation; the cultural effects of major sports phenomena on ideas of leadership and social change. Attention to intellectual and cultural history, literature, and film. Case studies based on key sporting figures and events. **HU**

* AMST 335a, Introduction to Native American and Indigenous Literatures  Birgit Rasmussen

Historical survey of literature in the Americas from the pre-Columbian era to the present, with a focus on the past few centuries of literary production in North America. Ways in which texts relate to each other across time and space, as well as to American literature and critical theory more generally. Genres include the novel, poetry, the graphic manuscript, literary criticism, and performance literature such as music, spoken word, and film. **HU**

* AMST 340b / WGSS 326b, Women and American Comedic Tradition  Staff

American women humorists from the mid-twentieth-century through the present, including Moms Mabley, Maxine Hong Kingston, Alison Bechdel, and Mindy Kaling. Conjoining works across genres by select humorists of various ethnicities, and questions concerning the artificial logic of normative humor and satellite categories of women’s humor and ethnic humor. **WR**
* AMST 341a / AFAM 399a / ER&M 407a, Race and Capitalism  Aaron Carico
This interdisciplinary seminar explores, both theoretically and historically, how racial formations are bound to the formations of capitalism. Focus on the American scene, with sustained inquiry on slavery, its commodity logics, and their residues. Consideration of the effects of immigration and globalization.  SO

* AMST 344b / ENGL 433b, The Nonhuman in Literature since 1800  Wai Chee Dimock
Nonhuman life forms in fiction and poetry from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first, including plants and animals, monsters and viruses, intelligent machines, and extraterrestrial aliens. The complexity and variety of nonhuman ecology.  WR, HU

* AMST 347a / ENGL 307a / FILM 476a, Hollywood Novel and Film  Charles Musser
The history of novels and films about Hollywood. Ways in which the closely related forms of novel and film portray "the dream factory" — its past, present, and future — as well as the way the forms interact. Books include Merton at the Movies (1922), I Should Have Stayed Home (1938), Loves of the Last Tycoon (1940), and The Player (1988). Films include What Price Hollywood? (1932), A Star is Born (1937), Sunset Boulevard (1950), In a Lonely Place (1950), and The Player (1992). May not be taken after AMST S321/FILM S180.  HU

AMST 351b / FILM 321b, Hollywood in the Twenty-First Century  Ronald Gregg
Examination of how globalization and the global success of American films have affected Hollywood film production, stardom, distribution, and exhibition, as well as the aesthetics of film image, sound, and narration. Topics also include the effects of new digital technologies on film aesthetics, spectacle, spectatorship, and exhibition, and the responses of independent and other national cinemas to Hollywood’s hegemony.  HU

* AMST 358b / ENGL 281b, Animals in Modern American Fiction  James Berger
Literary portraits of animals are used to examine the relationships 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 359a / AFAM 377a / FILM 424a, Urban Narratives of Injustice in The Wire  Hazel Carby
Narratives of injustice, crime, and the policing of citizens as represented in The Wire, critically acclaimed as the finest television drama ever made, plus additional readings.  HU

* AMST 363b / WGSS 367b, Indigenous Feminisms  Tyler Rogers
Exploration of a wide array of indigenous feminisms — drawn from various thematic and transnational contexts across the Americas and Native Pacific — so as to analyze the scope and significance of such knowledges, particularly as they relate to broader theories and practices of decolonization.  HU

* AMST 370a / THST 380a, The History of Dance  Jessica Berson
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.  WR, HU

* AMST 381a / ARCH 351a, Poets’ Landscapes  Dolores Hayden
Introduction to techniques poets have used to ground their work in the landscapes and buildings of American towns and cities including Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles. Attention to poems from a national automotive landscape as well as narrative poems about cities. Writing exercises in different poetic forms; readings from the works of Dickinson, Frost, Bishop, Lowell, Wilbur, Dickey, Pinsky, Cervantes, and Merrill.  WR, HU

* AMST 384b / AFAM 423b / ENGL 306b, American Artists and the African American Book  Robert Stepto
Visual art in African American books since 1900. Artists include Winold Reiss, Aaron Douglas, E. S. Campbell, Tom Feelings, and the FSA photographers of the 1930s and 1940s. Topics include Harlem Renaissance book art, photography and literature, and children’s books. Research in collections of the Beinecke Library and the Yale Art Gallery is encouraged.  HU

* AMST 385b, Trauma in American Film and Television  Christine Muller
Origins, multiple meanings, and influence of the notion of trauma in contemporary American culture. Relations between theories of popular culture and of trauma, particularly in discussions of war, social upheaval, and September 11, 2001. The conditions and implications of engaging trauma through everyday entertainment such as film and television; the ethics of representation.  HU

* AMST 387a / FILM 377a / WGSS 454a, Postwar Queer Avant-Garde Film  Ronald Gregg
Production, exhibition, and aesthetic practices in postwar queer underground cinema in the United States as it developed from the 1930s to the early 1970s. The films of gay or bisexual filmmakers such as Willard Maas, Andy Warhol, Jack Smith, Kenneth Anger, and José Rodríguez-Soltero; the work of antiheteronormative female filmmakers such as Barbara Rubin and Marie Menken; the links between avant-garde cinema, theater, and other arts, as well as the political context.  HU

* 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 399b / ER&M 359b, Race and Material Culture  Michelle Morgan
Examination of how certain materials and material objects bear on racial formations and how those formations have changed over time; use of material culture in the construction of the racialized human. Themes include people and things, objects and the performance of race, materiality, posthumanism, media and immateriality, and more.  HU

Senior Seminars

* AMST 402a / ANTH 302a / FILM 324a / WGSS 380a, Gender and Sexuality in Media and Popular Culture  Laura Wexler and Vanessa Agard-Jones
Investigation of visual media and popular culture in the United States and transnationally. Gender, race, class, and sexuality in relation to the production, circulation, consumption, and reception of media culture. Focus on theories of media and the visual. Significant lab component in which students use media technologies to make and illustrate theoretical arguments.  HU

* AMST 403a, Introduction to Public Humanities  Ryan Brasseaux
Introduction to the various media, topics, debates, and issues framing public humanities. The relationship between knowledge produced in the university and the circulation of ideas among a broader public, including modes of inquiry, interpretation, and presentation. Public history, museum studies, oral and community history, public art, documentary film and photography, public writing and educational outreach, and the socially conscious performing arts.  HU

* AMST 406b / ENGL 326b, The Spectacle of Disability  James Berger
Examination of how people with disabilities are represented in U.S. literature and culture. Ways in which these representations, along with the material realities of disabled people, frame society’s understanding of disability; the consequences of such formulations. Various media, including fiction, nonfiction, film, television, and memoirs, viewed through a wide range of analytical lenses.  WR, HU, RP

* AMST 411a / FILM 453, Introduction to Documentary Studies  Matthew Jacobson
An introduction to documentary film, photography, and radio for students interested in doing documentary work, as well as for those who simply wish to study the history of the documentary as a cultural form.  HU, RP

* AMST 412a, Planning Chicago  Chloe Taft
Chicago as central to the American economy and geography, national policymaking and demographic shifts, and our cultural imagination. Contemporary and historical urban plans and policies, from nineteenth-century efforts to reverse the flow of the Chicago River to recent proposals for the Obama Presidential Library. Topics include City Beautiful, public housing, urban renewal, immigration, creative placemaking, postindustrial redevelopment, and policing.  SO

* AMST 414a / ENGL 440a, Poetry and Debates on the Value of Arts and Humanities  James 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 415a / ITAL 308a, The Worlds of Antonio Gramsci  Michael Denning and Luca Peretti
Study of Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937), the Italian intellectual and Marxist thinker. Engagement with his thought and works, particularly the Prison Notebooks. Introduction to his world and his century, including modernism and Fordism, the worldwide diaspora of Italian migrants, the revolutionary upheavals of 1917–1919, the rise of fascism and communism, and the "new lefts" of the second half of the twentieth century.  HU

* AMST 420b / AFAM 437b / ENGL 445b, Ralph Ellison in Context  Robert Stepto
The complete works of Ralph Ellison and related works (in various art forms) of his contemporaries, including Wright, Baldwin, Bearden, and Louis Armstrong.  WR, HU

* AMST 422a / ER&M 435a / HIST 151Ja, Writing Tribal Histories  Ned Blackhawk
Historical overview of American Indian tribal communities, particularly since the creation of the United States. Challenges of working with oral histories, government documents, and missionary records.  WR, HU

* AMST 425b / ENGL 430b, American Culture and the Rise of the Environment  Michael Warner
U.S. literature from the late eighteenth century to the Civil War explored in the context of climate change. Development of the modern concept of the environment; the formation and legacy of key ideas in environmentalism; effects of industrialization and national expansion; utopian and dystopian visions of the future.  WR, HU

* AMST 427a, Ritual and American Culture  Kyle Skinner and Christine Mulder
Ritual—from daily activities to rites of passage to sacred acts—as active participation in specifically structured kinds of ways and as a unique mode by which culture is both articulated and critiqued. Interdisciplinary theory and case studies from American culture used to concretize and complicate conceptions of ritual while demystifying the operations of cultural power. Thinkers such as Freud, Durkheim, and Catherine Bell; case studies include funeral traditions, prison tattoos, and Thanksgiving Day parades.  SO

* AMST 432b / AFAM 356b / WGSS 356b, Representing Black Women through Image and Text  Hazel Carby
Modes and methods of describing, imaging, illuminating, and filming black women’s bodies. Emphasis on ways that the bodies have acquired particular cultural meanings. Works by a wide variety of creative artists from multiple sites in the Black Atlantic. Images viewed in the Yale Art Gallery, the Yale Center for British Art, and the Beinecke Library.  HU
* AMST 433b, American Wastelands and Political Ecology  Chloe Taft
Plans for the rehabilitation and reuse of natural and built environments in contemporary America placed in cultural, historical, ecological, and political contexts. Readings from anthropology, environmental studies, history, political ecology, cultural geography, and urban planning. Topics include brownfield redevelopment, environmental justice, heritage tourism, “ruin porn,” fracking, meth labs, and casinos.

* AMST 435b / ANTH 366b, Anthropology of Inequality in America  Staff
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

* AMST 441b / ER&M 370b / HIST 130jb, Indians and the Spanish Borderlands  Ned Blackhawk
The experiences of Native Americans during centuries of relations with North America’s first imperial power, Spain. The history and long-term legacies of Spanish colonialism from Florida to California.  WR, HU

* AMST 445b / AFAM 210b / HIST 148jb, Politics and Culture of the U.S. Color Line  Matthew Jacobson
The significance of race in U.S. political culture, from the “separate but equal” doctrine of Plessy v. Ferguson to the election of an African American president. Race as a central organizer of American political and social life.  HU, RP

* AMST 448b / AFAM 413b / THST 420b / WGSS 415b, Race, Sex, and Gender in Downtown New York City 1945–1984  Tavia Nyong’o
Archivally-driven exploration of the post-war downtown scene in New York City. Particular attention to the intersections of jazz, nightlife, avant-garde performance, literature, and visual art, within the context of social movements for black and brown power and women’s and gay liberation.  HU

* AMST 449b / HSAR 467b / WGSS 451b, Photography, History, and Memory  Laura Wexler
The role of photographic representation in archives of public and private memory. The social and expressive functions of photography under the aegis of museums, libraries, art galleries, government, police, and personal albums. Critical theory on gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, and nation as they help construct remembering.  HU

* AMST 463a and AMST 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

Special Projects and Senior Project

* AMST 471a and AMST 472b, Individual Reading and Research for Juniors and Seniors  Michael Denning
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 491a or b, Senior Project  Michael Denning
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  Najwa Mayer
Independent research and proseminar on a two-term senior project. For requirements see under “Senior requirement” in the American Studies program description.