

- Russ Castronovo and Susan Gillman, eds. *States of Emergency: The Object of American Studies*. U of North Carolina P (2009). ISBN: 978080785985
- Philip J. Deloria and Alexander I. Olsen, eds. *American Studies: A User's Guide*. U of California P (2017). ISBN: 9780520287730
- Thomas Mann. *The Oxford Guide to Library Research*. Oxford UP, 4th edition (2015) ISBN: 9780195189988 (older edition on reserve in Bjork Library).

Blackboard and Computer Access

The online content of this course is delivered through Blackboard, Stockton's Learning Management System. You will use Blackboard to receive assignment guidelines and course resources, submit assignments, and receive grades. To access this course on Blackboard, you will need Internet access and a supported browser. You can log into Blackboard via the [goStockton Portal](#), or you may access the system directly at blackboard.stockton.edu using your goStockton portal username and password. To ensure that you are using a supported browser and have required plug-ins please run the Browser Check from Stockton's E- Learning page: <https://elearning.stockton.edu/>.

If you have trouble accessing or using Blackboard at any time during the term, please contact the computer helpdesk by calling (609) 652-4309 or emailing helpdesk@stockton.edu. Please note that it is your responsibility to ensure that you have regular and reliable Internet access throughout the term.

I encourage you to back up all of your academic work for this and other American Studies courses using cloud-based storage such as Dropbox <https://db.tt/WG1vfhY> or GoogleDrive <https://www.google.com/drive/>, both free services.

University Policies

Academic Honesty

Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and risk failing the course. Other sanctions may also apply and all cases will be reported to Academic Affairs. You are responsible for knowing this university policy:

<http://intra.web.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=209&pageID=17>

Please contact me if you have questions.

Accessibility

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, students with a documented disability and who need accommodations are encouraged to register with the Learning Access Program (LAP). Registration for support services is voluntary and confidential. Support services provided by the LAP aim to assist students with devising strategies for meeting the University's educational demands and with fostering independence, responsibility, and self-advocacy. The LAP is located in J-204 on campus, or online at www.stockton.edu/LAP. Please call 609-652-4988 or send an email to LAP@stockton.edu for more information. Once you have received an accommodation letter from LAP, please contact your

instructor to privately discuss your needs and to ensure that reasonable accommodations are implemented.

Course Expectations and Policies

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential to your success in this course. On rare occasions, circumstances may arise that may hinder your ability to attend class. Accordingly, I permit each student to miss two classes without penalty. Your final course grade will be subject to a 3-percentage point penalty per each additional absence. In other words, if your calculated course grade is 92%, but you missed three classes, your final grade would be 89%, a B+. Please note that I make no distinction between an excused absence and an unexcused absence, so make sure to save your two absences for true emergencies. If you miss two classes and then get the flu and miss another day, you will lose three points for the third absence. Any exception to this policy requires documentation for all absences from the Wellness Center. If you miss class, contact a classmate— not your instructor—to ask about missed material and assignments, and then visit office hours if you still have questions.

Lateness disrupts the learning experience of other students, so be sure to arrive on time. If you arrive to class after attendance has been taken, it is your responsibility to see your instructor after class to be sure that you are marked late and not absent. Two instances of lateness (or leaving before the end of class) will count as one absence.

Participation

I expect this seminar to be highly participatory, with everyone contributing comments, questions, and insights based on the assigned readings and interpreted through prior and emerging knowledge and experience. Prepare at least one discussion topic, passage to discuss, or question for each class period. Be sure to bring copies of the assigned readings to each class meeting. Expect to devote a minimum of ten hours per week to completing the reading, research, and writing. Unless otherwise indicated, there will be a reading and writing assignment for every class.

Classroom Etiquette

For obvious reasons, please silence cell phones and refrain from using mobile communication devices during class. This and other disruptive behavior (e.g., leaving class frequently, sleeping in class, inappropriate language) constitutes grounds for grade reduction and/or dismissal from class. Laptops are not permitted in class, with exceptions made for LAP accommodations.

Late Assignments

One of your responsibilities in this course is to complete your work by the specified deadlines. Deadlines for all assignments are listed on the syllabus, and you are expected to manage your time and priorities throughout the semester in order to successfully meet these deadlines. I allow a 2-hour grace period on reading response assignments and a 2-day grace period on the Zotero Annotation and Secondary Source Analysis. The Discussion Facilitation and Final Project are not accepted late, except under extraordinary circumstances and only with documentation,

Please note the following penalties for late assignments:

- - Weekly Reading Responses, penalized 1 point (out of 10) per day late

- - American Studies Zotero Annotation, penalized 5 points (out of 100) per day late
- - Secondary Source Analysis, penalized 5 points (out of 100) per day late
- - Discussion Facilitation and Final Project cannot be not accepted late

Office Hours and Email

Please email, rather than voice mail, for all course-related correspondence. I generally respond to email within 24 hours during the workweek, and 48 hours on the weekend. I encourage you to visit my office hours if you have questions about course material or your performance in the course.

Grades can only be discussed in person during office hours or other arranged meetings, not via email.

Writing Assistance

Graduate students seeking help with their writing can contact Eddie Horan, Tutoring Center Coordinator for Graduate and First-Year Student Support. Eddie tutors graduate students in writing. For more information or to set up a tutoring session, either in person or online, please email Eddie (Edward.Horan@stockton.edu) or call him (609 652 4313).

Preferred Pronouns/Names

To encourage a more open and inclusive campus environment, Stockton allows students to use a first name different than their legal first name on certain university records. If you wish to use a name or preferred pronoun other than what appears on the roster, please do not hesitate to let me know. Students who wish to have a preferred first and/or middle name appear on class rosters may request this by completing the form on www.stockton.edu/preferredname, or by clicking on the preferred name logo on the Go Portal.

Assignments:

Weekly Reading Responses (8 total, 800 words each): 20% (2.5% each)

Discussion Facilitation: 10%

Citation/American Studies Journals assignment: 20%

Secondary Source Analysis (3-4 pages): 10%

Final Project: 40%

Grading Scale:

100-93: A

92.9-90: A-

89.9-87: B+

86.9-83: B

82.9-80: B-

79.9-77: C+

76.9-70: C

69.9-67: D+

66.9-60: D-

59.9 & below: F

Description of Assignments and Projects

Weekly reading responses aka “How do I know what I think until I see what I say?” (8-800 word papers; 2.5% each 20% total)

There are nine reading response opportunities: select and complete eight. At a minimum, the responses should accomplish #1 and #2. Aim to also tackle #3 or #4. Reading responses are due by 8:00 a.m. via Blackboard on the dates indicated on the syllabus.

Required Content: Address this content first to synthesize and/or compare all assigned readings:

1. *Make sense of the readings*: make connections between the readings and place them in conversation. What is the main argument of each selection? Do the day's readings address similar questions or topics? Do they come to different or similar conclusions? What methods or kinds of evidence are used to develop and support the argument? What is the object of study? Discuss all assigned readings: focus on a key thread that runs through them all or note how each essay addresses a key topic/theme in different/similar ways.
2. Relate the theory/scholarship to objects of study: how does the reading help us to understand a particular object of study (a text, performance, idea, event, etc.)? (If it isn't useful, explain why.)

Optional Content:

1. Make broader connections: relate the assigned reading to issues in the course or in American studies. Do they relate to other readings we've discussed this term or that you've read in another class during this or a previous term?
2. Make connections to your final project: how would the research method(s) apply to your object of study? What kinds of objects of study related to your research question does this method/approach inspire? How could you use the readings to frame questions about or design your project?

Citation/American Studies journals assignment (5 pages, posted to Blackboard by 2/17): 20%

You will be assigned 10 American studies journals or archives to review. You will answer the following questions about each journal or archive you examine:

1. **What is the archive/journal's mission or focus?** In your description, note when the archive/journal was started and when the most recent issue was published or is forthcoming. Cite clearly in your response, whether you quote directly or paraphrase the archive/journal's mission/focus.
2. **Who is the sponsoring organization/publisher?** Note where you found or how you determined this answer.
3. **What kinds of articles/texts does the journal publish/archive collect? Who reads/publishes in the journal/archive?** Consider the full range of the archives/journal's publication history. Note how you determined this answer: in your description cite specific examples/titles to support your claims.
4. **What are some of the sources/objects of study represented in the journal/archive?** Be sure to consider the full range of the archive/journal's publication/collection history when responding to this question. Note how you determined this answer: in your description cite specific examples/titles to support your claims.
5. **What methods and disciplinary approaches are used?** Consider the full range of the archive/journal's publication/collection history. Note how you determined this answer: in your description cite specific examples/titles to support your claims.
6. **Journal: What is the citation style (MLA, Chicago, APA)? Why might the journal use that form?** In other words, does the citation style fit the mandate of the journal? How so? Why not?
Archive: How can you search the archive? Is the collection print/digital/combo? How did you find/determine this answer?

Your paper should include a substantive reflection (2-3 pages) on the information you collected in the form of an introduction and/or conclusion. The reflection should address your overall impressions or observations about the field garnered from looking closely at a wide range of scholarship, generated over a long period of time.

Secondary Source analysis (3-4 pages, posted to Bb by 4/4): 10% – This paper will demonstrate your skill in understanding and evaluating secondary sources in the field. Full assignment description and related materials will be available on Blackboard.

Facilitators/Notetakers (10%) -- Each student will facilitate the discussion of one reading that he or she has selected (guidelines for selection will be posted on Bb), and be responsible for taking and posting class notes on Blackboard for one class session.

Final project: Thought experiment/Research Portfolio (with annotated bibliography) 40%: Due May 1): The final project asks you to conceptualize and design an American Studies project, using Castronovo and Gillman's questions as a starting point:

Imagine that you have an object and that you want to study it. The object could be anything, an artifact drawn from popular culture, a text culled from the archive, even something that is more of a moving target because of its location across and between cultures. In the pluralist ethos that characterizes the field, your object could be lowbrow or highbrow, material or virtual, national or transnational . . . Now that you have your object, which methodologies will contextualize and explain your selection? . . . what goal do you have in studying, recovering, or critiquing your object? (Castronovo and Gillman, *States of Emergency*, 3-4)

While you will not actually complete the project, you will be using the readings and activities of the course to compare and contrast possible research methods, to consider the kinds of questions particular approaches might encourage, and the kinds of opportunities different approaches might allow. As you consider these issues, you will be developing a set of resources that could be used to bring such a project to fruition, including (but not limited to):

- an annotated list of journals and databases related to the topic;
- a description of primary sources, archives or collections related to the topic;
- a discussion of the scholarly conversation and bibliography of the major works of scholarship that already exist in relation to the topic; and
- a reflection on how this topic might contribute to the field of American Studies.

You will provide two progress reports (due 3/8 and 3/28), as well as a final paper/research portfolio and presentation. Additional details on the progress reports and final paper/research portfolio will be available on Blackboard.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Notes: Read all assigned selections and view all films before coming to class. There are nine reading response opportunities: select and complete eight. The syllabus is subject to change. All changes will be posted to Blackboard.

Abbreviation Key:

AS- *American Studies: A User's Guide*

SOE - *States of Emergency: The Object of American Studies*

Bb - Available on Blackboard

Jan 16: Week 1-- Getting started: introductions and overviews.

Cowan, "[American Studies: An Overview](#)." (Bb)

Horowitz, "[American Studies: Approaches and Concepts](#)." (Bb)

Shank, "[Culture and Cultural Studies](#)."

Golub, "Teaching American Studies as a Habit of Mind" (Bb)

Notetaker assignments

Jan 23: Week 2 – (Re)Defining American Studies & Conducting Academic Research--Meet in E-221 in Upper Level of Library

Library Workshop led by Heather Perez, Special Collections Librarian & University Archivist

Discussion of readings.

Citation assignment overview.

Castronovo and Gillman, "The Study of American Problems" 1-16 (SoE)

Deloria and Olsen, Introduction: "The Object of American Studies," and Ch. 1, "History and Historiography," 1-41 (AS)

Mann, "Preface" *The Oxford Guide to Library Research* (xv-xxviii)

Reading Response due by 8:00 a.m.

Jan 30: Week 3 – Primary and Secondary Sources

Watch feature film: McQueen, Steve, et al. *12 Years a Slave*. 2014 (Bb)

Discussion of readings

Hendler handout, "Questions to Ask While Reading a Scholarly Article" (Bb)

Cobb, "Directed by Himself: Steve McQueen's *12 Years a Slave*" (Bb)

Ernest, "(Re)Mediated History: *12 Years a Slave*" (Bb)

Smith, "Black Life in the Balance" (Bb)

Tillet, "'I Got No Comfort in This Life': The Increasing Importance of Patsey in *12 Years a Slave*" (Bb)

Reading Response due by 8:00 a.m.

Recommended Reading:

Browse: Chs. 4-10 of the Oxford Guide.

Feb 6: Week 4 -- Doing American Cultural Studies

Williams, "Culture" (Bb)

Melching, "Some [New] Elementary Axioms for an American Cultur[al] Studies" (Bb)

Southern Poverty Law Center, "Whose Heritage? Public Symbols of the Confederacy" (Bb)

Savage, "Slavery's Memorial" (Bb)

Hale, "Granite Stopped Time: The Stone Mountain Memorial and the Representation of White Southern Identity" (Bb)

Reading Response due by 8:00 a.m.

Recommended Reading:

AHA Statement on Confederate Monuments (Bb)

Fisher, "Why Those Confederate Soldier Statues Look a Lot Like Their Union Counterparts" (Bb)
 Parks, "Confederate Statues Were Built to Further a 'White Supremacist Future'" (Bb)

Feb 13: Week 5 -- Textual Analysis

Discuss first progress report/final project assignment.

Deloria and Olsen, Ch. 4 "Methods and Methodology" (AS 115-127) and Ch. 5 "Texts: An Interpretive Toolkit" (AS 128-157)

McClintock, "Paranoid Empire: Specters from Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib" (SoE 88-115)

Selections from *Poems from Guantanamo: The Detainees Speak* (Bb)

Reading Response due by 8:00 a.m.

Recommended Reading:

Guantanamo Bay Detention Camp (Bb)

Sun. Feb. 17: Citation/American Studies journals assignment due via Bb by 11:59 p.m.

Feb 20: Snow day

Feb. 27: Week 7 – Archives

Deloria and Olsen, Ch. "Archives: A Curatorial Toolkit" 158-186 (AS)

Lazo, "Migrant Archives: New Routes in and Out of American Studies" (SoE, 36-54).

Carter, "Of Things Said and Unsaid: Power, Archival Silences, and Power in Silence." (Bb)

"Introduction to the Colored Conventions Movement" (Bb)

"Mobility, Migration, and the 1855 Philadelphia National Convention –Exhibit, Colored Conventions (Bb)

Reading Response due by 8:00 a.m.

Guest Speaker: Anna Lacy, Ph.D. candidate in the History of American Civilization Program in the Department of History at the University of Delaware, and member of the Colored Conventions Project, an interdisciplinary team committed to bringing buried African American history to digital life. More info: <https://aelacy.org/>

Recommended Reading

Jimerson, Randall C. "Archives for All: Professional Responsibility and Social Justice." *The American Archivist* 70.2 (2007): 252–281. (Bb)

March 6: Week 8 – Objects

Deloria and Olsen, Ch. 9, "A Few Thoughts on Ideas and Arguments" (AS, 253-267) and "Ch. 10, "Dispenser: A Case Study" (AS, 268-293)

Auslander, "Beyond Words" (Bb)

Sheratt, "It's All About the Stuff: Collections, Interfaces, Power, and People" (Bb)

Library of Congress, Document Analysis Worksheets (Bb)

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/>

Reading Response due by 8:00 a.m.

First Progress report for thought experiment due on Blackboard by Thursday 3/8 11:59 pm

MARCH 9 – 17 SPRING BREAK: CLASS DOES NOT MEET

THURS. March 21: Week 9 -- Power In lieu of our regular class, we will all be attending the Paul Lyons **Paul Lyons Memorial Lecture featuring Ruth Wilson Gilmore**, Professor of Geography in the doctoral program in earth and environmental sciences and associate director of the Center for Place, Culture and Politics at the CUNY. The talk will be held in the Campus Center Theater on **TH 3/21** at 4:30 p.m. Topic TBA.

Delora and Olson, Ch. 8 "Power: A Theoretical Toolkit" (AS, 215-249)

Gilmore, from *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (Bb)

Gilmore, "What is to Be Done?" (Bb)

Reading Response due by 8:00 a.m.

March 27: Week 10– Ethnography and Oral History

Bird, "Breaking the Silence: Writing as Witness" (Bb)

Maira, "Belly Dancing: Arab-Face, Orientalist Feminism, and U.S. Empire" (Bb)

Wyatt, "Knowing When to Step Forward, Back, or Out: An Autoethnography of a White Researcher in Two Post-Colonial Educational Contexts" (Bb)

Wellburn, "Life/Oral History Method: Three Nineteenth-Century Native American Prototypes" (Bb)

Reading Response due by 8:00 a.m.

Second Progress report for thought experiment due on Blackboard by Friday 3/28 11:59 pm

April 3: Week 11 -- Preceptorial Advising Day: No class (unless we lose one due to snow).

Secondary Source analysis due on Bb on Th 4/4 by 11:59 pm.

April 10: Week 12

Individual conferences with Professor Gussman re: final project

Reading Response due by 8:00 a.m.

April 17: Week 13

Thought experiment roundtable/presentations.

April 24: Week 14

Class will attend the Graduate Research Symposium in Campus Center MR5 at 6:00 pm.

Wed. 5/1: Final project due by 11:59 pm via Bb.

Thought Experiment: Detailed Instructions

Thought Experiment Progress Report 1: 3-4 pages, plus a preliminary annotated bibliography (info on annotated bibliography is posted on Bb).

By now you need to have selected the object you intend to study this semester. **Write an account of what draws you to this object of study, what about it attracts you.** Then, answer the following questions, in as much detail as you can at this point:

1) What do you *already* know about this object and the popular and/or scholarly conversation that surrounds it? (For some of you the answer to this question may be substantive, for others, more exploratory).

2) What questions do you have about the object of study? What do you want to know, explain, analyze? This is where you get to pose some research questions and tentative hypotheses. (A hypothesis is a tentative and provisional statement of what you believe you are going to find out as a result of your research. It can be seen as a potential answer to a research question. The aim of the research is to support or verify the hypotheses or show that they are not valid statements. It is not essential to have hypotheses when embarking on research, but it is helpful to understand what they are.)

3) Where will you look for more information? This will require some preliminary research to see what kinds of books, articles, websites, archives, databases, etc. are available to you. *The Oxford Guide To Library Research* has an excellent listing of reference works that are useful for general information (1-17), an overview of databases (72-89), a discussion of the value of literature review articles and published bibliographies (134-140, 141-152), and people sources (185-203) and "Hidden Treasures" (eg. microform sets, web collections, government docs, archives and public records, and special collections, 204-237.)

4) What form do you see a final project on this object of study taking? (ie. a traditional research paper or thesis, a digital work such as a hypertext or website, a curriculum proposal, a museum exhibit, etc.). You may want to review Ch. 9 in Deloria and Olsen for suggestions on project development.

Thought Experiment Progress Report 2

The focus of your second progress report will be to develop issues or answer questions I posed in your first report AND to consider which methods and techniques would be most (and perhaps least) useful for understanding or making an argument about your object of study (eg. textual analysis, ideological analysis, social analysis, ethnography, comparative analysis, oral history, etc.) It will be useful to return to Deloria and Olson for explanations of some of these terms, as well as to consider any of the readings we've done for class (or that you've done in your preliminary research or Proseminar) as models for your project. Be sure to explain both how you would use a particular method and why it would be a good choice for your project, and to cite sources (including Deloria and Olson) for any explanations or examples.

Thought Experiment Final Paper and Presentation

For **the final paper**, you will synthesize the research and thinking you have done in the two progress reports and your readings in American Studies topics and methods. To that end, you will write a 7-8 page proposal for a possible independent study or capstone project that you might undertake as part of your degree program. (While I realize that some of you may not pursue these projects, the process of writing a proposal should still be valuable practice for the projects you do choose to complete.) The proposal will bring together the work you have already completed, and whatever additional research and thinking is needed to sufficiently develop or clarify your ideas.

The purpose of writing a proposal is to demonstrate that the independent study, thesis, or capstone project addresses a significant issue in your field; that you have an original or important argument about it; and that you have an organized plan to develop and support that argument. So the first step is to write a proposal of approximately four -five pages, comprised of the points described below, which lays out the issues and the tentative argument you plan to make about your topic. [For the purposes of this assignment, the table of contents is *optional*. The table of contents at this stage of the game would be very preliminary, but might give an idea of how you would like to structure the project by dividing it into chapters or sections. A thesis on toxicity, for instance, might devoted 15-page chapters each to the definition of toxicity, the spread of toxicity, its relation to global capitalism and nationalism, and examination of a case study.]

1. A succinct working title that summarizes the project (i.e. indicates your topic)
2. A summary of the project's main issue, which should include one (or more) of the following: a. hypothesis; b. research question; or c. a project statement
3. A detailed discussion of your methodology. This section should specify three points: a. research methods to <i>collect</i> data; b. research methods to <i>analyze</i> data; and c. the types of materials that will be used (e.g. books, interviews, archives). Please be sure to use and cite Deloria and Olson in this section, and any other sources or models you might use. You need to explain why the method(s) you have chosen are best suited to the development of your project.
4. A discussion of the anticipated conceptual significance (i.e. relevance to American Studies): What new knowledge or argument will the proposed project produce that we do not already know? How does it impact American studies scholarship? You will need to discuss and cite secondary sources in this section.
5. [OPTIONAL] A table of contents, comprised of: a. The titles of each chapters; b. Two to three sentences describing the tentative focus of the chapter.
6. An annotated bibliography listing resources that you might draw upon. This bibliography should have about 20 articles, books, and websites, and is not included in the final page count.

Outlining these points in a proposal makes it far easier to complete. A secondary purpose of the proposal is training in the art of proposal writing – a skill required in just about any humanities or social-science related career, from industry to academia. Remember, project and proposal plans may change, and many excellent theses bear little resemblance to the original proposal. So the purpose of the proposal is not to form a sure-fire project with no risk of failure. Rather, the purpose is to demonstrate that you understand the process and structure of research. If you can present a clear and reasonable idea, relate it to other relevant literature, justify its significance, and describe the steps for investigating it, then the proposal is likely to be successful regardless of whether you modify or even scrap the initial idea.

For the **presentation** you will prepare a Powerpoint or Prezi show consisting of 5-8 slides (basically covering each of the numbered items listed above). You may include relevant images as well as text. Please **DO NOT** read off of your slides. Your slides should include only key points, quotes, or images. Use note cards, or the notes area of the presentation to delineate your ideas.

Nota bene:

The Stockton Student Senate has requested that all faculty include the following important information on our syllabi. If you find yourself a victim of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and/or stalking, the following resources are available to you at Stockton and in Atlantic County.

CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES:

WGSC Hotline: 609-849-8473

Counseling Center: 609-652-4722

Avanzar: 1-800-286-4184

Avanzar (www.avanzarnow.org) is the county domestic violence/sexual assault program.

NON-CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES:

Stockton Police: 609-652-4390

Student Rights and Responsibilities: 609-626-3585

Title IX Coordinator, Valerie Hayes: 609-652-4693