

American Studies 201  
Introduction to American Studies:  
“Revolutions and Rebellions”

Dr. Erica L. Ball  
Office: UH-411  
Phone: 657-278-8273  
email: [eball@fullerton.edu](mailto:eball@fullerton.edu)  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 11:00am-2:00pm; and by app't  
TA: Steven Estrada

AMST 201 sec 12  
Fall 2010  
T/R 11:30-12:45  
UH 252

Course Overview:

This course introduces students to the discipline of American Studies by exploring the transformations set in motion by some of the extraordinary revolutions in American culture. We will focus on four key moments: Nathaniel Bacon and the protest culture of early America; the cultural and political significance of the early nineteenth-century rebels Sam Patch and John Brown; the gender and consumer revolutions of the 1920s; and the social revolutions and cultural rebellions spearheaded by the youth of the post WWII era – from the Beat subculture of the 1950s to the student movements of the 1960s. And we will conclude with the twenty-first century rebel Christopher McCandless. We will ask, in what ways did these rebellious individuals or revolutionary moments reflect their era? How did their activities and actions transcend their era – that is, what made them unique? What impact did individual participants have on the time periods in which they lived? And how do we continue to remember and build upon these revolutions today?

General Education Learning Goals:

American Studies 201 meets the General Education “American History, Institutions and Values” requirement (II.B.1). In fulfilling this university’s “Goals of General Education,” this course will prepare students to: understand critically the historical development of American institutions and values and their impact on the individual and collective lives of Americans; assess critically how the Constitution of the United States and government under the Constitution have shaped American democracy and contemporary American society; understand critically the political culture of citizen participation, including political parties, pressure groups, public opinion, and the electoral process; recognize the significance of important cultural, intellectual, moral, and political struggles that have shaped contemporary American society; and recognize the significance of the contributions of various ethnic and gender groups to American history, political institutions, and values within contexts of cultural accommodation and resistance.

Assigned Texts:

The following books are required for this course. They can be purchased at Little Professor Text Books – 725 North Placentia Avenue, Fullerton.

Paul E. Johnson, *Sam Patch, The Famous Jumper*  
Joshua Zeitz, *Flapper: A Madcap Story of Sex, Style, Celebrity, and the Women Who Made America Modern*  
Jack Kerouac, *On the Road*

Other readings are marked with an asterisk (\*) on the syllabus, and available on Blackboard.

Course Policies:

This is a challenging class, not a performance, and you will be expected to be an active student, not a member of an audience. Most of the sessions in this course will be lectures; but some will revolve around in-class writing exercises and discussion of the assigned readings. These discussions are designed to prepare you for the exams. Therefore, your active and informed participation (in other words, completing the assigned reading, attending class regularly, arriving on time, participating in class discussions and exercises) is essential for the successful completion of this course. Be warned: I reserve the right to give pop quizzes, and to call on students at random.

In accordance with GE policies, this course has a significant writing component. You will be required to complete one formal 2-3 page essay as part of the final exam. You will have the opportunity to rewrite this essay if you choose to do so. Instructions for the essay will be handed out in class.

*Late essays will be reduced 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are late. Requests for extensions or make-up exams will not be granted except under extraordinary circumstances. If extraordinary circumstances do arise, you must speak with me before the day of the exam. Missed quizzes cannot be made up.*

Assignments and Grading:

Midterm Exam #1	25%
Midterm Exam #2	25%
Final Exam	40%
Essay	10%

Plus/minus grading will not be used in this course.

Breakdown of percentages: A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F = 0-59

Breakdown of grade points: A = 4.0; B = 3.0; C = 2.0; D = 1.0; F = 0

\*Please note: I reserve the right to modify this syllabus at any time.

By enrolling in this class, you agree to abide by the following code of conduct:

- 1) Students are expected to attend class regularly.
- 2) Students must complete the assigned reading for the class session before the start of class, bring the assigned texts to class, arrive for class on time, and contribute to class discussions.
- 3) Students should keep up with the material covered in class lectures. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain the notes from a classmate.
- 4) Obviously, I expect that all written work will be your own. Instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Judicial Affairs, and may result in a failing grade for the course. For more information on academic dishonesty, consult the University Catalog.
- 5) Students are expected to maintain basic standards of civility during class time. (No texting, cell phone conversations, web surfing, wandering in and out, etc.)
- 6) Students are encouraged to discuss any questions about the coursework, or concerns about their performance with me. My office hours are on Wednesdays from 11:00am-2:00pm and by appointment.

#### Students with Special Needs

If you have a disability or special need for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, please inform the instructor and contact the Disabled Student Services Office, located in University Hall 101, as early as possible in the term. For more information, the Disabled Student Services Office can be reached by calling (657) 278-3117 or visit their website at <http://www.fullerton.edu/disabledservices/>.

## Course Outline

### Unit I: Rebellion in Early America

- Tues 8/24 Introduction
- Thu 8/26 Culture and Conflict in Early Virginia  
Readings: \*"Brief History of Jamestown"  
[http://www.preservationvirginia.org/rediscovery/page.php?page\\_id=6](http://www.preservationvirginia.org/rediscovery/page.php?page_id=6)
- Tues 8/31 Degrees of Unfreedom  
Readings: \*"The Experiences of an Indentured Servant: Richard Frethorne"  
<http://www.virtualjamestown.org/frethorne.html>  
\*Africans in the Virginia Courts  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1p270.html>
- Thu 9/2 Early American Rebel: The Case of Nathaniel Bacon  
Readings: \*"Bacon's Rebellion: The Declaration"  
<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5800>
- Tues 9/7 American Slavery American Freedom  
\*"Colonial Laws"  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1h315t.html>
- Thu 9/9 Midterm Exam #1

### Unit II: Contested Revolutions in Nineteenth Century America

- Tues 9/14 The Market Revolution  
Readings: Paul E. Johnson, *Sam Patch, the Famous Jumper*, chapter 1
- Thu 9/16 The Rise of the Middle Class  
Readings: Paul E. Johnson, *Sam Patch, the Famous Jumper*, chapter 2
- Tues 9/21 The Workingman's Sublime  
Readings: Paul E. Johnson, *Sam Patch, the Famous Jumper*, chapters 3 and 4
- Thu 9/23 The Peculiar Institution  
Readings: \*"George Fitzhugh Advocates Slavery"  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h3141t.html>

Tues 9/28 Abolitionist Culture  
Readings: \*Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?"  
<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=162>  
\*William Lloyd Garrison, "Declaration of Sentiments of the American Antislavery Society"  
<http://www.iath.virginia.edu/utc/abolitn/abeswlgct.html>

Thu 9/30 The Life and Times of John Brown  
Readings: \*John Brown's "Address to the Court"  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h2943t.html>

Tues 10/5 Review for midterm

Thu 10/7 **Midterm Exam #2**

### Unit III: Flapper Culture and the First Sexual Revolution

Tues 10/12 The Rise of the City  
Readings: Begin reading *Flapper*

Thu 10/14 The Emergence of Youth Culture  
Readings: Joshua Zeitz, *Flapper*, 1-38; 51-70; 79-103; 115-123

Tues 10/19 Advertising and Consumer Revolutions  
Readings: Joshua Zeitz, *Flapper*, 161-208

Thu 10/21 Hollywood and the "It" Girl  
Readings: Joshua Zeitz, *Flapper*, 231-265

Tues 10/26 Backlash  
Readings: Joshua Zeitz, *Flapper*, 71-78; 105-113; 277-291

### Unit IV: The Postwar Youth Revolutions

Thu 10/28 Consumption, Cold War and Conformity in 1950s America  
Readings: \*William Whyte, *The Organization Man* (selections)  
Begin Reading *On the Road*

Tues 11/2 Student Life in the late 50s, early 60s  
Readings: \*Governor Adlai Stevenson "A Purpose for Modern Woman"  
<http://coursesa.matrix.msu.edu/~hst203/documents/stevenson.html>  
Continue Reading *On the Road*

Thu 11/4 The Beat Generation  
Readings: \*John Clellon, Holmes, "This is the Beat Generation," *New York Times*,  
November 16, 1952  
<http://www.litkicks.com/Texts/ThisIsBeatGen.html>  
Continue Reading *On the Road*

Tues 11/9 From Beat to "Beatnik"  
Readings: *On the Road*, 1-79; 80-155; 179-206; 239-243; 268-274; 292-307

Thu 11/11 Veterans Day - CAMPUS CLOSED

Tues 11/16 The Sixties Revolution  
Readings: TBA

Unit V: Conclusion: The Interesting Case of Christopher McCandless

Thu 11/18 Modern American Rebels: Grunge, Hip Hop and the Nineties  
Readings: TBA

Tues 11/23 Thanksgiving Recess

Thurs 11/25 Thanksgiving Recess

Tues 11/30 Jon Krakauer, "Death of an Innocent," *Outside Magazine*, January 1993  
Readings: [http://outside.away.com/outside/features/1993/1993 into the wild 1.html](http://outside.away.com/outside/features/1993/1993%20into%20the%20wild%201.html)  
Film: *Into the Wild*

Thurs 12/2 Film: *Into the Wild*

Tues 12/7 Film: *Into the Wild*  
**2-3 page Formal Essay Due**

Thu 12/9 Wrapping Up

Thursday, December 16, 12:00 - 1:50 p.m. -- Final Exam