

**CAST 235: Cultural Citizenships**  
**Fall 2010**  
**MWF 9:00-9:50**  
**King 341**

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**\*\*\* This course fulfills a GSFS major requirement \*\*\***

This interdisciplinary course examines how Americans have historically negotiated the inclusions and exclusions of citizenship through a study of national media and popular cultures. We will examine how cultural forms like film, literature, music, and fashion represent contested ideals about gender, sexuality, race, and class to address changing notions of citizenship from WWII to the present. Courses on citizenship frequently use empirical approaches to consider social conditions, political struggles and legal developments. Complementing such approaches, this course will work with two interrelated concepts of “cultural citizenship.” First, we will comparatively explore how different communities within the United States utilize concepts of citizenship that encompass belonging, identity, and nation. This framework addresses the tensions between dominant ideals and marginalized communities that struggle to reconfigure notions of identity and belonging. Secondly, we will examine how popular media function as formative sites for contested ideals of citizenship, with particular attention to changing notions of gender, sexuality, race, ability, and class. Americans have long hailed innovations in media technologies as democratic spaces even as commentators criticize popular culture for sustaining normative ideals of citizenship. We will address these competing possibilities within popular culture by addressing how different media represent issues of belonging, visibility, and marginalization. Themes that we will work with throughout the semester include self/other, alien/citizen, nationalism, and the ways in which militarism and neoliberalism have, since WWII, shaped the contexts in which citizenships are produced and contested.

**Course Objectives:**

- To utilize intersectional and interdisciplinary approaches to the study of American popular cultures
- To develop a historical perspective on the role of cultural production in shaping dominant and contested ideals about citizenship
- To understand the varied meanings and practices of citizenship in relation to and often-times at odds with the goals of the nation-state
- To build a critical vocabulary of key terms in American cultural studies
- To become conversant in the range of methods used in American cultural studies
- To improve critical thinking through discussion and writing assignments
- To pursue a particular interest, improve information literacy, and develop writing skills through an independent research project

**Required Readings:**

Alvarez, Luis. *The Power of the Zoot: Youth Culture and Resistance during World War II*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008.

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Third Edition. New York: Aunt Lute, 2007.  
Maira, Sunaina. *Missing: Youth, Citizenship, and Empire After 9/11*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2009.  
Okada, John. *No No Boy*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978.  
Reed, T.V. *The Art of Protest: Culture and Activism from the Civil Rights Movement to the Streets of Seattle*. University of Minnesota Press, 2005.

\*\*Articles can be located on Blackboard (BB).

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **I - PREPARATION, ATTENDANCE, & PARTICIPATION (10%)**

An important component of the course will be class discussions; therefore regular attendance is required. Attendance in class, however, does not constitute participation. You must come to class having carefully read all material and be prepared to discuss, question, argue, and perhaps rethink issues raised in the readings. By the way, asking questions about things you do not understand does constitute class participation.

Some of the topics we discuss in class are controversial or provoke strong personal feelings. It is therefore crucial that we maintain a climate of open and honest debate in the classroom. We all have much to learn from perspectives different from our own and therefore I ask class members to carefully think through your ideas and to listen and ask questions with respect. The goal in this class is not consensus but rather to consider a range of perspectives and to develop your own positions with greater insight and knowledge.

*Classroom absences and tardiness:* More than three unexcused absences will result in a lower grade by 1/3. A note from a dean or a doctor is required for an excused absence. Since late arrivals are disruptive, I expect you to arrive on time and be prepared for the work of the day. If you are not present when I call attendance, you will be considered absent that day. Repeated lateness may result in significant deductions to your final grade for this class.

### **II - WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

This course is designed to introduce students to some of the central methodological tools used in American cultural studies. Each of the first three assignments addresses a different methodology while all ask you to work with theoretical concepts discussed in class. The final project will combine these approaches in a research paper. See handouts on BB for more information.

#### **Paper # 1: Writing Citzenships, 3 pages. Due September 22 by the start of class(10%)**

Write an essay that locates your own citizenship status within a historical context. You may either use a key moment in your life as the site of exploring this identity or you can choose a cultural form, like a song, film or novel, that has been formative in shaping that identity.

#### **Paper # 2: Cold War Film Analysis, 4-5 pages. Due October 11 by the start of class (15%)**

Analyze a film from the Cold War that addresses the conditions, challenges, and/or promises, of citizenship. Use historical and theoretical materials from the class to contextualize and provide an analytical framework for your essay. I will provide a list of possible films but you may also select something outside of that list.

#### **Paper #3: Culture as Activism, 5-7 pages. Due November 19 by the start of class (25%)**

Write a paper responding to T.V. Reed's argument in chapter 10 that culture and politics need to remain distinct even as we need to engage with the ways in which activists use cultural forms to further their political goals. For this assignment, you will need to identify and work with one activist site that will provide historical evidence to support your claims. Theoretical arguments from class materials should serve to form the analytical framework for your argument.

### **Final Research Project**

For the last section of the course, students will be divided into research groups who will identify a site of cultural citizenship from 2001 to the present. You may choose to research different aspects of one film, for instance, or your group may decide to work on an activist movement, in which case, each of you could look at various aspects of that movement. Or, the group can decide to examine a genre such as graphic narratives to consider how this genre negotiates cultural citizenship. Each group will present their findings to the class.

#### **Topic Proposal Due 11/15 by 5pm (P/NP)**

Each group will submit a brief statement (1-2 paragraphs plus preliminary bibliography) about your project. Please include the topic, primary sources, and your preliminary research question(s).

#### **Presentations: last week of classes (15%)**

Each group will have 20 minutes to present their research.

#### **Final Paper, 7-9 pages. Due December 18 no later than 4pm. (25%)**

Each member of the research group will write an individual paper analyzing the cultural site. Depending on the site, you may all write on the same text or you may select different aspects of this site to analyze. You are encouraged to explore different methodologies for this assignment.

**See handouts for more details about all of the assignments.**

### **ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS**

All essays must be double spaced and paginated. Please proofread carefully and comply with the page limits. All references must be properly cited using MLA citation style. **All papers must be posted on Blackboard by the start of class unless otherwise noted.**

### **DUE DATES ARE FIRM DEADLINES!**

#### **Grading**

|                     |     |
|---------------------|-----|
| Class participation | 10% |
| Paper #1            | 10% |
| Paper #2            | 15% |
| Paper #3            | 25% |
| Group Presentation  | 15% |
| Final Project       | 25% |

### **COURSE POLICIES**

**Late Work:** All assignments must be completed on time. Papers not turned in on that date will be penalized in grading (your grade will drop by 1/3 each day) and will not receive written comments.

**P/NP:** If you opt for this grading system, you must complete all assignments to receive credit.

**Academic Incompletes at the end of the semester:** you must get approval from me at least 48 hours before the deadline.

**Honor Code:** This course adheres to the policies of the Oberlin College Honor Code which applies to all work submitted for academic credit, whether it is a creative project, a quiz, an

exam or a paper. For quizzes and exams, this means you must complete the assignment independently of other students. For papers, you must cite all written sources that you consulted, whether you quote directly or paraphrase. This is true whether you are using electronic or printed materials. Incomplete or improper citations are a form of plagiarism. If you are unfamiliar with proper citation formats, or have questions please consult me, a reference librarian, a writing tutor and/or a style manual. Lack of familiarity with proper procedures is not a defense.

At the end of each academic exercise, students shall write in full and sign the Honor Pledge: "I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment." See Oberlin Honor Code, <http://new.oberlin.edu/students/policies/>, for more information.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you need disability-related accommodations for your work in this class, please let me know. Support is available through Disability Services. Contact Jane Boomer, Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities, for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs. See also: <http://new.oberlin.edu/office/disability-services/>

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### Cultural Citizenship/Cultural Studies

- 9/8: Introduction
- 9/10: Defining Citizenship  
Reading: Bosniak, "Citizenship Denaturalized" (BB); Rojeck, *Culture Studies*, 1-28 (BB)
- 9/13: Legal Rhetorics and Citizenship Structures  
Reading: Volpp, "Asian Americans and Constitutional Citizenship" (BB); Carey, "Beyond the Medical Model" (BB)
- 9/15: Cultural Citizenships  
Reading: Berube, "Citizenship and Disability" (BB); Somerville, "Notes Towards a Queer History of Naturalization" (BB); Mohanty, "Towards and Anti-Imperialist Politics" (BB);
- 9/17: Cultural Studies and Cultural Citizenships  
Seidman, "From Identity to Queer Politics" (BB); Rojek, *Cultural Studies*, 69-100 (BB)

### Section One: 1940-1960

#### Citizenship and civil rights during WWII and the Cold War

- 9/20: War, Patriotism, and Citizenship  
Reading: Alvarez, 1-73
- 9/22: Claiming Space/Claiming Identity  
Reading: Alvarez, 77-152  
**Paper #1 Due**
- 9/24: Violence and the Limits of Democracy Rhetoric  
Reading: Alvarez, 155-244
- 9/27: Internment and the Double-V Campaign

- Reading: Chinn, *Technology* (BB)
- 9/29: Belonging in Cold War America  
Reading: Okada, iii-116
- 10/1: Belonging in Cold War America  
Reading: Okada, 117-260
- 10/4: Civil Rights and Cold War America  
Reading: Patton, *Cinematic Identity* (BB)
- 10/6: Civil Rights and Cold War America

**Section Two: 1960-1990s**  
**Social Activism as a Framework for Citizenship**

- 10/8: Contesting Consensus  
Reading: Reed, 286-315
- 10/11: Immigration, War, and the Rise of Neoliberalism  
**Paper #2 Due**
- 10/13: Activism, Citizenship, and Cultural Politics  
Reading: Reed, xiii-xxiii, 1-74
- 10/15: Conscious Raising and Citizenship  
Reading: Reed, 75-102
- 10/18: Conscious Raising and Citizenship  
Reading: Reed, 103-128
- 10/20: Both Sides of the Border – Re-Angling Citizenship  
Reading: Anzaldua, 1-123
- 10/22: Both Sides of the Border – Re-Angling Citizenship  
Reading: Anzaldua, 124-246
- 10/25-10/29: \*\*\*\* **Fall Break** \*\*\*\*
- 11/1: Musical and Global Citizenships  
Reading: Reed, 156-178
- 11/3: Sovereignty Claims  
Reading: Reed, 129-155; Kozol, “Miss Indian America” (BB)
- 11/5: Interdisciplinary Research Strategies and Challenges
- 11/8: Citizenship, Community and Disease  
Reading: Reed, 179-217; Cohen, “Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens” (BB)
- 11/10: Environment, Community, and EJ Movements

Reading: Reed, 218-239

**Section Three:  
Post-9/11: Trauma, Grief and Contested Citizenships**

- 11/12: Witnessing Trauma  
Reading: Sturken, chap. 1(BB)
- 11/15: Witnessing as an Act of Citizenship  
Reading: Rentschler, "Witnessing" (BB)  
**Topic Proposal Due By 5pm**
- 11/17: Cultural Citizenship in the Shadow of Terror  
Reading: Maira, 1-94
- 11/19: Cultural Citizenship in the Shadow of Terror  
Reading: Maira, 95-189  
**Paper #3 Due**
- 11/22: Cultural Citizenship in the Shadow of Terror  
Reading: Maira, 190-289
- 11/24: Is Queer Citizenship an Oxymoron?  
Reading: Brandzel, "Queering Citizenship" (BB); Kandaswamy, "State Austerity" (BB); and Belkin, "Spam Filter" (BB)
- 11/26: **No Class – Thanksgiving Break**
- 11/29: Globalization and Citizenship Struggles  
Reading: Reed, 240-285; Nguyen, "The Model Postwar Immigrant" (BB)
- 12/1: The Promises and Problematics of Citizenship Claims  
Reading: Kauanui, "Colonialism in Equality" (BB); Cacho, "The Rights of Respectability" (BB)
- 12/3: Limits of Civil Rights as a Model for Equity/Equality  
Reading: Das Gupta, "Rights in a Transnational Era" (BB)
- 12/6: Group Presentations
- 12/8: Group Presentations
- 12/10: Group Presentations
- 12/13: Conclusions

**FINAL PAPER DUE DECEMBER 18 NO LATER THAN 4 PM.**

## ARTICLES ON BLACKBOARD

Belkin, Aaron. *Radical History Review*, 100 (Winter 2008): 180-185.

Bérubé, Michael. Citizenship and Disability. *Dissent*, Spring 2003, 52-57.

Linda Bosniak, "Citizenship Denationalized," *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 7 (Spring 2000): 447-509.

Brandzel, Amy L. "Queering Citizenship?." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian & Gay Studies* 11, 2 (2005): 171-204.

Cacho, Lisa Marie. "The Rights of Respectability: Ambivalent Allies, Reluctant Rivals, and Disavowed Deviants." In *Immigrant Rights in the Shadow of Citizenship*, ed. R. Buff, 190-206. New York: NYU Press, 2008.

Carey, Allison C. "Beyond the Medical Model: A Reconsideration Of 'Feeblemindedness', Citizenship, And Eugenic Restrictions." *Disability & Society* 18, 4 (2003): 411-430.

Chinn, Sarah. *Technology and the Logic of American Racism: A Cultural History of the Body as Evidence*. London: Continuum, 2000. 93-140

Cohen, Cathy J. "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?" *GLQ: Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 3.4 (1997): 437-465.

Das Gupta, Monisha. "Rights in a Transnational Era." In *Immigrant Rights in the Shadow of Citizenship*, ed. R. Buff, 402-424. New York: NYU Press, 2008.

Kandaswamy, Priya. "State Austerity and the Racial Politics of Same-sex Marriage in the US." *Sexualities* 11, 6 (2008): 706-725.

Kauanui, J. Kēhaulani. "Colonialism in Equality: Hawaiian Sovereignty and the Question of U.S. Civil Rights." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 107,4 (Fall 2008): 635-650.

Kozol, Wendy. "Miss Indian America: Regulatory Gazes and the Politics of Affiliation." *Feminist Studies* 31, 1 (Spring 2005): 64-94.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. Towards an Anti-Imperialist Politics: Reflections of a desi feminist. *South Asian Popular Culture* 2, 1 (April 2004): pp. 69-73.

Nguyen, Kim. "Without the Luxury of Historical Amnesia": The Model Postwar Immigrant Remembering the Vietnam War Through Anticommunist Protests." *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 34, 2 (2010): 134-150.

Patton, Cindy. *Cinematic Identity: Anatomy of a Problem Film*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. 21-80.

Rentschler, Carrie. "Witnessing: US Citizenship and the Vicarious Experience of Suffering." *Media, Culture & Society* 26, 2 (March 2004): 296-304.

- Rojeck, Chris. *Cultural Studies*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2007. Chaps. 1-3, and 6.
- Seidman, Steven. "From Identity to Queer Politics: Shifts in Normative Heterosexuality and the Meaning of Citizenship." *Citizenship Studies* 5, 3 (2001): 321-328.
- Somerville, Siobhan B. "Notes toward a Queer History of Naturalization." *American Quarterly* 57, 3 (2005): 659-675.
- Sturken, Marita. *Tourists of History: Memory, Kitsch, and Consumerism from Oklahoma City to Ground Zero*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007. Chapter 1.
- Volpp, Leti. "Obnoxious To Their Very Nature": Asian Americans and Constitutional Citizenship. *Citizenship Studies* 5, 1 (2001): 57-71.

### **BOOKS ON MAIN RESERVE**

- Alvarez, Luis. *The Power of the Zoot: Youth Culture and Resistance during World War II*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008. **E169 .A45 2008**
- Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Third Edition. New York: Aunt Lute, 2007. **PS3551.N95 B6 1999**
- Buff, Rachel, ed. *Immigrant Rights in the Shadow of Citizenship*. New York: NYU Press, 2008. **Please order one copy.**
- Chinn, Sarah. *Technology and the Logic of American Racism: A Cultural History of the Body as Evidence*. London: Continuum, 2000. 93-140. **E185.61 .C56 2000**
- Grossberg, Lawrence, Cary Nelson and Paula Treichler, eds. *Cultural Studies*. New York: Routledge, 1992. **GN357.C844 1992**
- Okada, John. *No No Boy*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978. **PS3565.K33 N6 1981**
- Patton, Cindy. *Cinematic Identity: Anatomy of a Problem Film*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. **PN1995.9.S62 P38 2007**
- Reed, T.V. *The Art of Protest: Culture and Activism from the Civil Rights Movement to the Streets of Seattle*. University of Minnesota Press, 2005. **HN90.R3 R395 2005**
- Rojeck, Chris. *Cultural Studies*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2007. **HM623 .R65 2007**
- Sturken, Marita. *Tourists of History: Memory, Kitsch, and Consumerism from Oklahoma City to Ground Zero*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007. **E169.12 .S8495 2007**