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### The American Century: How Culture Influenced History

Matthew Ranaghan  
*Trinity College*

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**Trinity College**  
HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

AMERICAN STUDIES 899/499-01 FALL 2013 RANAGHAN, MATT  
DAY MWF 3:00PM-4:00PM TBA

### THE AMERICAN CENTURY: HOW CULTURE INFLUENCED HISTORY

This course will examine United States history in the 20<sup>th</sup> century through a non-traditional lens – culture. Whereas many courses touch upon the traditional historical narratives built into textbooks, we will investigate a variety of significant moments that surround those narratives and attempt to understand which parts of the culture helped create or catalyze these pivotal moments in American History. American Studies is an interdisciplinary field, which will allow our investigations to range from avant-garde art in 1913 to Rosie the Riveter to Barack Obama's second inauguration in 2013. This course is not, and cannot be, a comprehensive view of American history; rather, it will be an alternative view of 20<sup>th</sup> century American History, highlighted by some of the most significant cultural moments throughout the century.

The course will consist of a variety of learning platforms. The visual, audio and tactile media that will be utilized in the course will be used to analyze and understand ten historical moments, all of which are anniversaries of 2013. By using text, audio, YouTube, film, and other avenues, this course will help develop an understanding of not only the events that occurred in history, but also, the culture surrounding these events. In addition, we will examine the short and long term influence of the events themselves, and how they play a role in contemporary culture.

#### CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS, DECADE BY DECADE

1913: 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Armory Show Art Exhibit in New York

1923: 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Publication of the first issue of TIME Magazine

1933: 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary: 21<sup>st</sup> Amendment ends prohibition in America

1943: 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Rosie the Riveters appears on the cover of  
The Saturday Evening Post

1953: 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Julius and Ethel Rosenberg executed

1963: 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Betty Freidan's FEMININE MYSTIQUE PUBLISHED

1973: 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary: American Indian Movement – Wounded Knee

1983: 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Federal holiday for Martin Luther King

1993: 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary: First World Trade Center bombing

2003: 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Beginning of the Iraq war

2013: Barack Obama inaugurated to second term as president

#### Course Requirements and Due Dates:

In addition to participating in class discussions and debates, students will write a final paper on one major event of their choice from one of the decades discussed. There will be small weekly assignments, often requiring individual research and a series of discussion questions. Due dates are as follows:

- Paper topic: September 25, 2013
- Paper outline: November 6, 2013
- Paper Presentations: December 11, 13, 16
- Final Paper Due: December 19<sup>th</sup>

#### Readings and Assignments:

For readings not identified on the internet, students can access the articles by using the library management system. Movies, films and other multimedia that cannot be directly accessed through the internet can be watched in the library. Books and selected bindings can be located at the bookstore or within the library. If the hyperlinks do not work by holding the Ctrl button and clicking on the highlighted tab, please copy and paste the URL into the HTTP domain.

#### Grading Percentages:

Class Participation: 20%

Short Essays: 20%

Quizzes: 10%

Final Essay: 50%

**September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013**: First day of Class  
Syllabus review and class guidelines

## **1913: 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Armory Show Art Exhibit in New York**

*Assignment:*

Please read Brown's book and Tarbell's article, and then answer the discussion questions. Be ready to discuss your answers in class.

*Reading:*

Brown, Milton. *The Story of The Armory Show*. New York, Abbeville Press; 1988

*Reading:*

Tarbell, Roberta, K. *The Impact of the Armory Show on American Sculpture*  
Archives of American Art Journal, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1978), pp. 2-11

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) According to Tarbell and Brown, what was American sculpture like before the Armory Show? – Was there any avant-garde sculpture before 1913?
- 2.) What kind of sculpture did the Americans and the Europeans exhibit in the Armory Show?
- 3.) Who created modern Sculpture in America after the Armory Show and what caused the conversion from a conservative to a modern style – the Armory Show or other sources of influence?
- 4.) Why was this event so important to modernism? – How does the Armory Show reflect the culture of 1913? Please use an example from the readings to support your claims.

## **September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Reading:*

Zilczer, Judith. "The World's New Art Center": Modern Art Exhibitions in New York City, 1913-1918. *Archives of American Art Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (1974), pp. 2-7

*Multimedia:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fwjFj7jemk> (1913)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0K1yq7tWaQ> (2013)

*Assignment:*

Please discuss the similarities and differences between the above YouTube videos. I want you to focus on the art itself. Please use at least two examples in your discussion.

## **September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

### *Assignment:*

Please read the following articles in the New York Times. Be prepared to discuss their retrospective look at the 1913 Armory Show.

### *Reading:*

[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/28/arts/artsspecial/two-exhibitions-re-examine-the-1913-armory-show.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/28/arts/artsspecial/two-exhibitions-re-examine-the-1913-armory-show.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/09/arts/design/armory-show-modern-and-contemporary-at-piers-92-and-94.html?ref=armoryshowinternationalfairofnewart>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/04/arts/design/04armory.html?ref=armoryshowinternationalfairofnewart>

## **September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

### *Assignment:*

The Armory Show contains many cultural themes that will be discussed this semester. Your assignment will be to choose one item from the 2013 Armory Show and research the artist's cultural muse. I want you to think about how the image(s) and material(s) used help fortify the artist's perception of culture. Be sure to be creative, and use at least two outside sources to support your claims.

The following piece of multimedia might help. Please watch.

### *Multimedia:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yyRstK0H6A>

## **1923: 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Publication of the first issue of TIME Magazine**

### **The American Century**

## **September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

### *Reading:*

Brinkley, Alan, *The Publisher: Henry Luce and His American Century* (New York, 2010).

*Reading:*

Grainge, Paul, *Remembering the 'American century': Media memory and the Time 100 list*. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* March 2002 5: 201-219

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) According to Grainge, what is the American Century? Where did this term come from? – Who coined it? – Why might this term be important today?
- 2.) Why was it important for TIME magazine to create the “Time 100 list?” – How might this list improve the future magazine image? – Why might the future image be important?
- 3.) How do the images and time periods mentioned in Grainge’s article reflect culture? Do you think Luce intentionally wrote from a cultural lens instead of focusing on history? Why or why not? – Choose an example to support your claim.

## **September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Reading:*

Yates, Norris. *The Vocabulary of Time Magazine Revisited*. American Speech, Duke University. Vol. 56, No. 1 (Spring, 1981), pp. 53-63

*Short Answer Question:*

- 1.) According to Yates, why is the language used in TIME magazine critically important to its success? – Is it persuasive? – Does it evoke vivid images? What is this so important? Please use an example from the article to support your argument.

*Reading:*

Chambers, Clarke A., *The Belief in Progress in Twentieth-Century America*. Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Apr., 1958), pp. 197-224

*Multimedia:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtdDjpxs-E4>

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) What is this commercial trying to sell, other than magazine subscriptions? – Are they successful? – Please use examples.
- 2.) Why does this commercial epitomize what Luce has been doing for 60 years prior to its release?
- 3.) Who is TIME’s audience in the above commercial? – Why might they be targeting a specific class, gender, or profession?

## **September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

After reading and discussing the previous articles and books in class, you now understand the amount of influence that Henry Luce has had on the American culture, both through his words and images.

It is now your turn to determine his influence on American culture. Choose one issue from the 1920s (which can be found at Time.com or in the Trinity Library) and answer the following question: Why this issue, at this time, in this place? As we have discussed, Henry Luce was an intelligent man, both business minded and culturally competent. So why was 1923 the right “TIME” to introduce the magazine? – Why was the United States the best place to publish it? – And why was the content appropriate? Be sure to answer all parts of the question with evidence from the above sources, as well as outside sources. Finally, in your conclusion, please address why the magazine has become TIMEless.

## **1933: 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary: 21<sup>st</sup> Amendment ends prohibition in America**

### **The 147 Billion Dollar Industry**

### **September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

#### *Assignment:*

Watch the short documentary, read the 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Amendments and be prepared to discuss them in class.

#### *Reading/multimedia:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OiYqFXmVAFg>

[http://www.usconstitution.net/xconst\\_Am18.html](http://www.usconstitution.net/xconst_Am18.html)

[http://www.usconstitution.net/xconst\\_Am21.html](http://www.usconstitution.net/xconst_Am21.html)

#### *Assignment:*

Watch the following CNBC video and answer the discussion questions

#### *Multimedia:*

<http://video.cnb.com/gallery/?video=796852105&play=1#eyJ2aWQiOiIxMTU3MTMyMzM3IiwiaWZlbnVmlkIjoieEtjM3oxL2lNdmlCNU1JcmtQNUFydz09IiwidIRhYiI6ImluZm8iLCJ2UGFnZSI6IjEiImdOYXYiOiIiwqBMXYXRlc3QgVmlkZW8iXSwiZ1NlY3QiOiJBTewiLCJnUGFnZSI6IjEiLCJzeW0iOiIiLCJzZWZyY2giOiIifQ==>

#### *Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) According to the video, how did the mass production of Anheuser-Busch help propel them into the biggest brewery in the country? – What other American-born industry model did they mirror? – Why might this be important to their success in the United States?
- 2.) What helped make Budweiser the “King of Beers?” – How might their commercials and advertisements help them be successful? – Please use examples from the video in your response

- 3.) Since the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment ended the production of beer, how did the “King of Beers” become the king of non-alcoholic drinks? - How might have the 14 years of prohibition helped Anheuser-Busch? – What happened on midnight after the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment was repealed?
- 4.) Please explain the significance of the Clydesdales. Discuss their origin and the significance of them delivering a case of Budweiser to the White House after the repeal. Why are they still iconic today?

## **September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013**

*Reading:*

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14636>

*Discussion Question:*

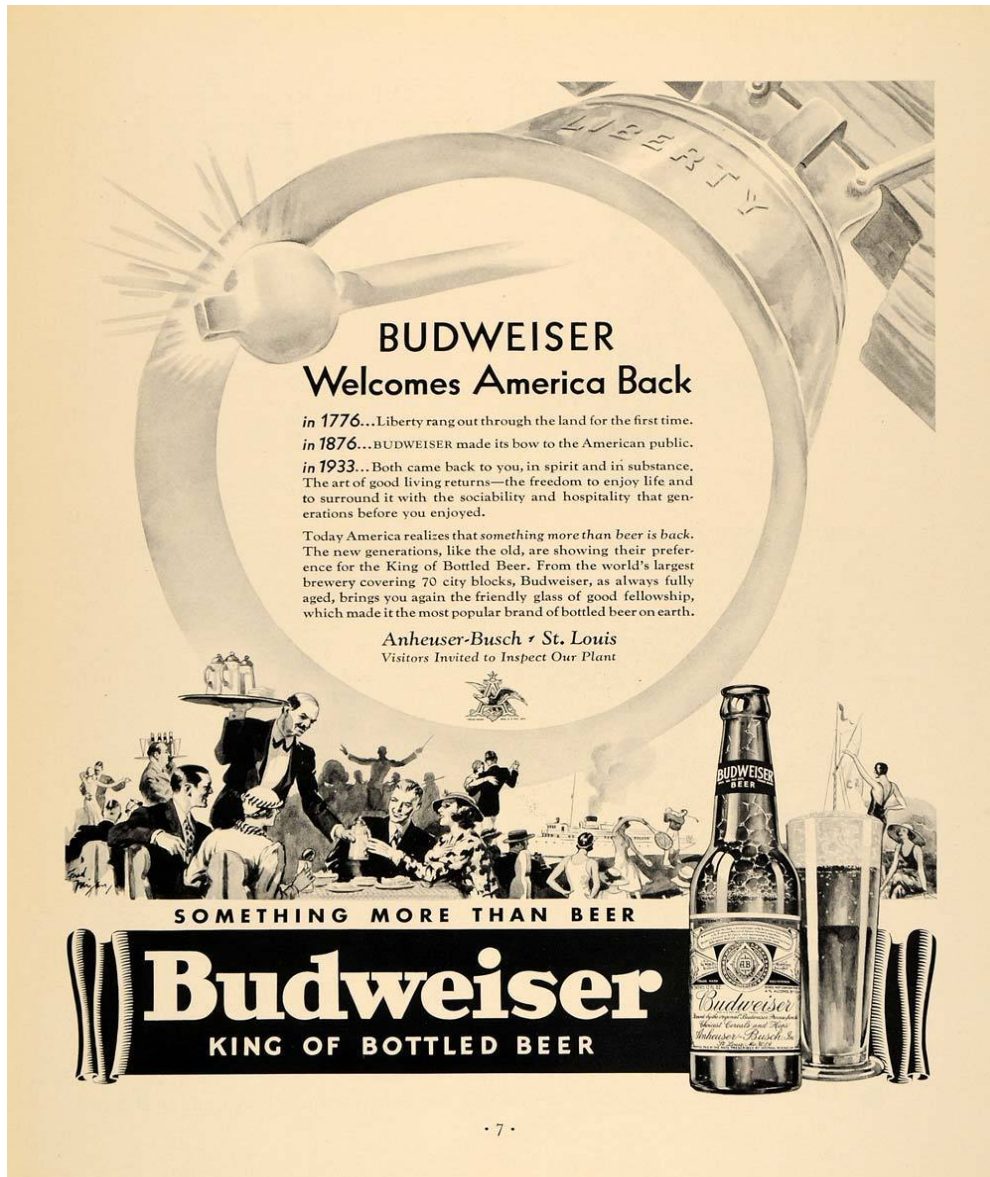
- 1.) In the above 1933 fireside chat, why might FDR only mention the redistribution of beer in a mere two lines, especially since he affirms its ability to create jobs and much needed tax revenue? – Why might his approach be cautious?
- 2.) What are two ways that FDR alluded to the popular culture in his fireside chats? – Why might this be a powerful tool in 1933?
- 3.) What is the cultural significance of the fireside chats? Why might they be appealing to the American public?

## **September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

Please analyze the following advertisement that was released on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1933. What are the images suggesting? – What type of images does the language evoke? – Why might Anheuser-Busch use the tag line, “something more than beer?” - Why is it important that Budweiser represents happiness? – How might this advertisement compliment FDR’s fireside chat? – Are there any political messages? – Who is there audience? – Why might they be targeting a particular class, gender, or race?





**1943: 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Rosie the Riveters appears on the cover of The Saturday Evening Post**

Images in American Culture

**September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013** (Paper topic Due)

Multimedia:

<http://library.artstor.org/library/iv2.html?parent=true>

*Assignment:*

Look at the Saturday Evening Post with Rosie the Riveter on the cover and choose three distinctive images within the painting that tell a story to you. From that story, try and explain why the Saturday Evening Post decided to publish Rockwell's painting in 1943? - Do you think the posting was controversial? – Why or why not? -- How does the painting make you feel? - What culturally was happening that caused the magazine to post such an image?

**September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Readings:*

Honey, Maureen. 1984. *Creating Rosie the Riveter: class, gender, and propaganda during World War II*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press

Anderson, Karen. *Teaching about Rosie the Riveter: The Role of Women during World War II*. OAH Magazine of History , Vol. 3, No. 3/4, Special Double Issue on Women's History and History of the 1970s (Summer - Fall, 1988), pp. 35-37

*Assignment:*

Read chapters 1-3 and 7-9 of Honey's book and Anderson's article and write a comparative essay. Be sure to discuss each author's view of the influence World War II had on women at home. Make sure to use evidence from each source to support your claims.

**September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

Choose 3 Saturday Evening Post covers (which can be found in Google Images). I want you to pretend you are the artist behind the covers and I want you to respond to the following questions from a newspaper reporter:

Why is it important to you that your drawings were published on the cover the Saturday Evening Post? - Some people say that you have an agenda or message when it comes to your art – is this true? – If so, what are you trying to say? And if you could tell your stories through words, how would you tell them?

Be sure to use specific examples from each image. And no, the images do not have to be from the same artists – just choose any three from 1943.

## 1953: 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Julius and Ethel Rosenberg executed

You're a communist!

### October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013

*Reading:*

*U.S. Political Culture and Hegemony.* Jorge Hernández Martínez and Mariana Ortega Breña *Latin American Perspectives* , Vol. 34, No. 1, The Crisis of U.S. Hegemony in the Twenty-First Century (Jan., 2007), pp. 46-52

*Reading:*

Garber, Marjorie B., and Rebecca L. Walkowitz. 1995. *Secret agents: the Rosenberg case, McCarthyism, and fifties America*. New York: Routledge

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) According to the Martinez, how is the Red Scare in the Cold War era related to post 9/11? – Do you agree or disagree with the author? Please be sure to be specific.
- 2.) What factors are similar in today's culture that were also existent in Rosenbergs?
- 3.) How is the Rosenberg's story similar to current terrorists? – Are they different in anyway? – How might the treatment of terrorists similar or different? Please use examples from Garber's book.
- 4.) What is hegemony? – And how does the author explain its influence on American culture? Please use an example from the reading to support your argument.

**Visual Propaganda:**

### October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013

*Assignment:*

Find two pieces of anti-communist propaganda on the internet, in a book, magazine, etc., and write a description of how the images and words make you feel (as a person who lives in 2013). The descriptions should be in great detail and honest. Be prepared in class to discuss the difference between your view of anti-communism propaganda now, and how the propaganda might have been perceived in the 1950s.

*Assignment:*

Read the following articles. One is communist propaganda and the other is anti-communist propaganda. Be prepared to discuss the differences and the purpose of propaganda.

*Reading:*

<http://www.designer-daily.com/10-amazing-cold-war-propaganda-posters-2901>  
<http://www.designer-daily.com/examples-of-american-cold-war-propaganda-2918>

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) What are some of the differences between the above American and Russian Cold War propaganda images? – Are there any similarities? Please use the above articles to support your claims.
- 2.) What might be the reason for such hatred toward communism in America after WWII? – Is it warranted? – Why or why not?
- 3.) Do you think propaganda was useful during the Cold War? If so, why or why not?

## **October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

Watch the “*Make Mind Freedom*” cartoon on YouTube (link below), and then answer the discussion questions. Be prepared to discuss in depth in class.

*Multimedia:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L5vAYLLS2cQ>

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) According to the cartoon, what are the most negative aspects of communism and government involvement? – Please cite specific images.
- 2.) Why do you think Harding College used a cartoon to express its message? – Do you think it was useful during this time period? – Why or why not?
- 3.) What types of tools were used in this video to help sway the audience? – Who was the intended audience? – How do you know that? – And what point in the cartoon swayed you away from communism and why?

## **October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

Find two examples of contemporary propaganda. You need to be prepared to speak about its effectiveness, where you found it, why you think it was used, and if it had any influence on the culture.

*Reading:*

Hixson, Walter L. “Red Storm Rising”: Tom Clancy Novels and the Cult of National Security Diplomatic History (1993)

*Assignment:*

Read the previous article by Hixson and answer the following questions.

*Short Answer Response:*

- 1.) Former Vice President, Dan Quayle, made a statement about Tom Clancy novels: “They’re not just novels. They are read as the real thing.” Please respond to this

- quotation in a couple paragraphs. Be sure to use the article for evidence and focus on the influence of the mass media and popular culture on postindustrial society.
- 2.) According to Hixson's article, how has the investigation into popular culture during the Cold War made significant contributions to our understanding of how Americans coped with atomic age anxieties and how they internalized the anti-Communist consensus? Please be sure to cite specific examples.

## **1963: 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Betty Freidan's FEMININE MYSTIQUE**

### **Popular Mass Culture and Reality**

### **October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

#### *Multimedia:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UsMolaBBAMI>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oe0IRGxqLSI>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jJ8ywL3EVC0>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3fgp3ijejezE>

#### *Reading:*

Friedan, Betty, *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: Dell, 1963

#### *Reading:*

Joanne Meyerowitz, "Beyond the Feminine Mystique. A reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture, 1946-1958," in NOT JUNE CLEAVER. WOMEN AND GENDER IN POSTWAR AMERICA, 1945-1960 (1994), pp 229-262

#### *Assignment:*

Read Freidan's book and Meyerowitz's article, and then answer the following short answer questions.

#### *Short Answer Questions:*

- 1.) In Freidan's book, she discusses the impact that mass culture had on women in the postwar era. Please choose one piece of postwar mass culture that contained the "damaging images" that hurt women and discuss Freidan's outlook on that specific piece of popular culture, and how and why it affected them so greatly. Be sure to use evidence from the book to support your claims.
- 2.) According to Meyerowitz, how might postwar mass culture change how history is viewed? – Why might investigating all aspects of popular culture (not just one or two magazines, TV shows, ect.) tell a different story? Use specific examples from Meyerowitz's article.

- 3.) How does Meyerowitz's argument conflict with Freidan's thesis? What is Meyerowitz's goal? – And how does she accomplish it? Please use specifics.

### **October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

Find one piece of popular culture in contemporary America and write a short essay explaining its influence on the perception of reality. Find at least one article that helps support your argument.

Ex: Video games and the glamorization of war.

### **October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

Please find 5 images that portray women in either a positive or negative light. They can be from magazines, newspapers or online sources. Be prepared to discuss and relate our findings to Meyerowitz and Freidan's scholarship.

*Reading:*

Stevenson, Adlai, "A Purpose for Modern Woman," excerpt from a Commencement Address, Smith College, 1955, in *Women's Home Companion* (September 1955).

### **October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

After reading the above commencement address by Governor Adlai Stevenson, in which he describes a woman's place, please search "1950s housewife advertisements" in Google images. Please bring 3 of those images and bring them to class for discussion. Be prepared to compare and contrast Governor Stevenson's speech with the popular images of the time.

## **1973: 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary: American Indian Movement – Wounded Knee**

### **Cowboys and Indians**

### **October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

Before reading the following piece by Reed, I want you to write two to three paragraphs (in journal format). One, describe your own, unadulterated view of Native Americans. Two, describe how you think that film, TV, and the silver screen have depicted Native

Americans. And lastly, write about how you first learned about Native American life (grade school, church, grandparents, etc.)

*Reading:*

Reed, T.V. *Old Cowboys, New Indians: Hollywood Frames the American Indian*. *Wicazo Sa Review*, Vol. 16, No. 2, Film and Video (Autumn, 2001), pp. 75-96

*Assignment:*

Once finished with the reading, please choose one movie, film, cartoon, etc., that you have previously viewed, and describe its depiction of Native Americans (If you have trouble finding a film, etc., I would be happy to assign one to you). I would like you to answer whether you thought it was an accurate or inaccurate description of Native Americans and why. Please use evidence from within the reading to support your argument. Further, try to find a clip of your film, movie, etc., on the internet and we can look at it in class.

## **October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

Read the following speech written by Marlon Brando, and watch his Academy Award acceptance speech for “The Godfather”, then answer the discussion questions.

*Reading:*

<http://www.nytimes.com/packages/html/movies/bestpictures/godfather-ar3.html>

*Multimedia:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QUacU0I4yU>

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) What was Marlon Brando’s objective at the Academy Awards? – Was he effective? – Why did he use this particular venue to get his point across?
- 2.) Why was using Sacheen Littlefeather a powerful statement? – What was the first impression you had of her? – How might Sacheen Littlefeather squash stereotypes depicted in Hollywood by just standing on stage and giving a 2 minute speech?
- 3.) How did Marlon Brando use the culture around him to reach a goal? – How do people do that today? – Is it always positive? Please explain.

**Do you believe everything you see and hear?**

## **October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Multimedia:*

<http://www.nsi-canada.ca/2012/03/im-not-the-indian-you-had-in-mind/>

*Video:*

Lucas, Phil, Robert Hagopian, and Will Sampson. 1979. *Images of Indians*. Seattle, Wash: KCTS-TV

*Assignment:*

Chief Strong Wind stated an old saying, “**A nation that does not know its own history, has no future.**” Please respond to this quotation in a with a 3 paragraph response. Be sure to reference the videos and multimedia for evidence. You need to have a stance one way or the other with supporting evidence (outside sources are welcome).

## **October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Multimedia:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&feature=fvwp&v=wh6eCALFohY>

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) What is it about comedy that allows people to laugh at difficult subjects?
- 2.) What specific part of Charlie Hill’s standup forced you to think differently about that given topic? – Be specific. Also, has your opinion or outlook changed on that topic, and why?
- 3.) How might comedy empower someone? – Why does a comedy club allow someone to say whatever they want? – What sort of independence does a comedy club give to the person on stage?
- 4.) According to Charlie Hill’s act, why might a Native American be a good target for jokes? – Why is he allowed to openly speak out about the poor treatment Native Americans have and continue to receive? – What techniques does he use to curve the trend of looking poorly upon Native Americans?

## **1983: 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Federal holiday for Martin Luther King**

### **It’s a Celebration!**

## **October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

Read Reagan’s remarks on making MLK Day a federal holiday, then answer the following discussion questions.

*Reading:*

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=40708>

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) After reading Reagan’s speech, do you feel as though he is wholeheartedly endorsing MLK as an American icon? Please use examples from the speech to support your argument.



- 2.) Do his remarks sound genuine? – Why might they be considered clichéd? – Do you agree or disagree with the sentiment that Reagan did not want to sign this bill? Why?
- 3.) How did MLK Day change history? – Or did it?
- 4.) Why was it important to put this day on the Federal calendar? – Why are decisions like MLK Day often decided? – What types of messages were sent to the American people and the rest of the world when Reagan signed this bill? – Try to find a primary source, or first-hand accounts of MLK Day in journals, books or the internet. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

*Multimedia:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHWzq6Op9F4>

## **November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

Please read the following article from the Washington Post, and then please answer the following discussion questions. Be sure to think about racism, communism, scare tactics, and prejudices within the culture of the 1980s.

*Reading:*

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/opinions/articles/helms\\_stalls\\_kings\\_day.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/opinions/articles/helms_stalls_kings_day.html)

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) According to Dewar's article, what is the biggest issue Senator Helms has with the new bill? – Why might he have such issues? – What is his motivation for speaking out against the bill?
- 2.) What is happening politically, socially and culturally in the United States in 1983? – What evidence can you draw from the article or news report to indicate a rift between the citizens of the US and its leaders? – Do you believe there actually is a rift? Why or why not?

*Assignment:*

In a **5 paragraph essay**, please respond to Bob Dole's quotation, "To those who would worry about cost, I would suggest they hurry back to their pocket calculators and estimate the cost of 300 years of slavery, followed by a century or more of economic, political and social exclusion and discrimination." Be sure to respond with evidence from at least two different outside sources.

**“It doesn't matter if you're black or white!”**

## **November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

Please watch the following video and read the following articles. Then, please answer the discussion questions. Be prepared to discuss Michael Jackson extensively in class.

*Reading:*

Brackett, David. Black or White? Michael Jackson and the Idea of Crossover Popular Music and Society. Vol. 35, Iss. 2, 2012

*Reading:*

Clay, Andreana. *Working Day and Night: Black Masculinity and the King of Pop*. Journal of Popular Music Studies, Blackwell Publishing Ltd: 2001

*Reading:*

Fischer, Dawn-Elissa. "Wannabe startin'somethin': Michael Jackson's critical race representation." *Journal of Popular Music Studies* 23.1 (2011): 96-107.

*Multimedia:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WEFCM1fOLUk>

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) Why was Michael Jackson so popular? – Why is he still popular? – Why do you think he gained the name, “King of Pop”?
- 2.) By being the “King of Pop,” what sort of power might he have? – Do you think he used his power for positive or negative change in the world? – Please be specific and find an outside source to support your claim.
- 3.) How has Jackson’s influence touched far beyond his own generation?
- 4.) As an influential African American, how did Michael Jackson use his status to push for the message of the civil rights movement?

## **1993: 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary First World Trade Center bombing**

### **Fear in American Culture**

### **November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013 (Paper Outline Due)**

*Reading and Multimedia:*

Glassner, Barry. 1999. *The culture of fear: why Americans are afraid of the wrong things*. New York, NY: Basic Books

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9O88BDVUus>

*Assignment:*

Read Glassner’s Book, *The Culture of fear*, and watch his interview. Also, please respond to the following questions.

*Short Answer Questions:*

- 1.) Do you think fear is a problem in American culture? – Choose an example that Glassner uses and expound on how it may or may not affect American culture in the future.
- 2.) What do you think are the biggest issues that coincide with living in a fearful culture? Please use examples from the book to support your argument.
- 3.) How might the WTC bombing in 1993 play into Glassner's argument? – Did the bombing have the grandiose effect that the Muslim Fundamentalist wanted? – What was it? Please find an article to support your argument.

**November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Assignment:*

Read the following article and focus on the outlook of those who lived through the tragedy. How are the bombings viewed by those interviewed in 1993? – And how are the bombings viewed now in 2013? Why might their views change? Also, be ready to discuss the following questions in class.

*Reading:*

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/world-trade-center-bombing-resonates-20-years/story?id=18561435>

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) How are our fears perpetuated through media? How does the media perpetuate our fears?
- 2.) How do Americans view the WTC bombings today (post 2001)?

*Reading:*

<http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/press-past/2013/02/26/the-1993-world-trade-center-bombing-a-new-threat-emerges>

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) What agenda is the NEWSWEEK trying to push in 1993?
- 2.) What types of fears are they trying to create?
- 3.) Why does NEWSWEEK paint the WTC bombings to be the 1<sup>st</sup> major attack on US soil? – Do they intentionally downplay Pearl Harbor? – Why do they disregard other historical attacks? – Is this a media tactic?
- 4.) What is the significance of the title, “A new threat emerges”? – Did we not know it existed?
- 5.) What might be the purpose of NEWSWEEK's publication of this article in 1993? – Do they have a political agenda? – How might cultural events influence particular articles?
- 6.) What is happening culturally now to republish the article?

## **November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

### *Reading:*

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/february/26/newsid\\_2516000/2516469.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/february/26/newsid_2516000/2516469.stm)

### *Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) How was American culture viewed by those around the world and in NYC? - Does the world view affect the public reaction?
- 2.) Is it possible to guesstimate the possible reaction to a major event or catastrophe? – What might be an indicator or how people will react? – Think of the YouTube video about Muhammad in 2012?

## **2003: 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY Beginning of the Iraq War**

### **The American's Mind**

## **November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

### *Reading:*

Lakoff, George. 2008. *The political mind: why you can't understand 21st-century politics with an 18th-century brain*. New York: Viking.

### *Assignment:*

Please read the introduction and the first 4 Chapters, and then answer the following questions. Be prepared to discuss your answers and to defend the opposing sides.

### *Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) Do you agree or disagree with Lakoff's statement that the main battlefield of the culture war is in the brain? – Find an example in either Lakoff's book or an outside source that supports or refutes this claim. Be sure your evidence strengthens your argument and that you don't simply restate Lakoff's theory.
- 2.) What do you think of Lakoff's metaphor for morality, Moral Accounting: "you are better off with the things you need than the things you don't have" (pg. 96)? – How do you feel this statement represents the American culture, and how might it affect the political agenda to enter Iraq?

### **Class Conflict**

## **November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

### *Reading and Multimedia:*

Frank, Thomas. *What's the Matter with Kansas?: How Conservatives Won the Heart of America*. New York: Metropolitan, 2004. Print

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=om\\_2ITUf8wM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=om_2ITUf8wM)

*Assignment:*

Please read Thomas Frank's book, and then watch his interview with Charlie Rose, and then answer the following questions.

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) How do political parties give you a different perspective on culture?
- 2.) According to Frank, how does a conservative culture perpetuate the Iraq War? – And how does this created culture affect voting lines and general views?
- 3.) According to Thomas Frank, how might “values” come into play in politics?
- 4.) By using examples from the interview or book, please explain how a “fake vision of social class” helped Bush portray himself and his party?
- 5.) Do you agree or disagree that populist conservative culture has invented a new way to look at class, by looking at it through a cultural perspective rather than an economic one? Please explain in detail.

**Political movement in disguise**

**November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Reading:*

Klein, Naomi. 2008. *The shock doctrine: the rise of disaster capitalism*. New York

*Assignment:*

Read Klein's introduction and answer the following questions.

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) According to Klein, when is the best time to push through “bad” policies?
- 2.) Do you agree with her statements that after a disaster people want the opposite of a blank slate; rather, they wish you to repair and salvage what remains? – Please defend your stance?
- 3.) In Klein's book, how do governments take advantage of “shocking” events? How might the Iraq War be a good example or the government taking advantage of vulnerability? – Do you believe they did? Please use specific examples of how they may or may not have taken advantage.
- 4.) Do you ever feel there is a time when the government should be able to invade our own private lives? Please explain either way.

## **November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

### *Assignment:*

We will watch Fahrenheit 9/11 in class. Prior to class, please come up with two questions that address the idea of the “Shock Doctrine.” Also, I want you to start thinking about propaganda and the media’s influence on how we view certain situations. Hint: This film is a good example of bias media.

### *Film:*

Moore, Michael, James Addison Baker, Albert Gore, Thomas Daschle, George W. Bush, Condoleezza Rice, Mike Desjarlais, and Jeff Gibbs. 2004. *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Culver City, Calif: Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment.

## **Comical Analogies**

## **November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

### *Multimedia:*

Daily Show clip: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=js-eguc18HU> (August 19, 2002)

### *Assignment:*

After watching the above clip, answer the following questions.

### *Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) Where does the Daily Show fit into American culture? – Why has satire become such a major part of American culture? – Find an article that discusses satire in American culture to support your argument.
- 2.) Is Fahrenheit 9/11 more or less useful than newspapers or The Daily Show in pushing a political agenda and influencing the masses? Why or why not?
- 3.) Where do you get your information from? – Please answer the following questions fully and completely.
  - a. What types of Newspapers do you read, if any? – How often?
  - b. What television shows do you watch? – Are they political, reality, sports, ect.?
  - c. Do you read magazines? – Which ones? How often?
  - d. What are your most commonly visited websites? – Do you use the internet for news purposes? – If so, what websites? (facebook does count)

# **2013: BARACK OBAMA INAUGURATED TO SECOND TERM AS PRESIDENT**

## **Inauguration speech 2009**

**December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013**

*Multimedia:*

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/inaugural-address>

*Assignment:*

Watch and listen to the speech, then briefly answer discussion questions. Be prepared to openly discuss your answers to the following questions in class.

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) In your own personal view, did President Obama successfully accomplish his goals in his first 4 years of presidency? – Why might The House and Senate play such a large role in Obama’s success? – Please explain in terms of “public opinion” and “public interest”.
- 2.) After listening and watching his speech, what do you personally think helped President Obama earn his seat in the Oval Office in 2009?

## **Inauguration speech 2013**

**December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Multimedia:*

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2013/01/21/second-inauguration-barack-obama>

*Assignment:*

Read, listen and watch the 2013 inauguration speech, then briefly answer the following discussion questions.

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) In connection with your previous remarks, how do you think these two inauguration speeches differ? – Be sure to use specific examples from each.
- 2.) Choose a specific piece of the President’s agenda and briefly explain why it will be a success or failure. Please be sure to include the factors that will help or hinder his agenda.
- 3.) Please discuss an example of how President Obama uses the American Dream in his speech to excite the American people. In your response, evaluate the President’s example of the American Dream and the idea that everyone has an equal chance of success because they are “Americans.”

## **Trust in Government**

**December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Multimedia:*

<http://www.pewresearch.org/2013/03/26/views-of-government-key-data-points/>

*Assignment:*

Read the above article, analyze the data points and answer the following questions.

*Discussion Questions:*

- 1.) What does the PEW research data conclude? – Find a recent article/poll that supports your understanding of the PEW research data. Be prepared to discuss and share your findings.
- 2.) Why do you think trust in the government has diminished so greatly since the Kennedy administration? -- What do you believe has occurred in our culture that might have influenced the American people's trust (or lack thereof) in government? Please specifically reference the data to help you answer the question.
- 3.) Briefly discuss how Media might play a role in the distrust of government officials.

## **American Racial Politics**

**December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Multimedia/Reading:*

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayFulltext?type=1&fid=5884416&jid=DBR&volumeId=6&issueId=01&aid=5884408>

*Assignment:*

Please read the previous article and be prepared to discuss in class.

*Assignment:*

CNN vs FOX search (ex. Gun Control).

- Please choose a topic of your choice and go to CNN.com and FOXnews.com. Once at the website, type into the search box, "Obama and YOUR TOPIC." I want you to choose one of the first three articles that pop up and be prepared to discuss the importance of media in an election, what role the media might play, the tone of your articles, how specific media outlets portray Obama, and how media bias polarizes our nation.

**December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013:** Presentations

**December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013:** Presentations

**December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013:** Presentations