Note: Check the GW Schedule of Classes website for class locations and the most up-to-date information at http://my.gwu.edu/mod/pws/

**UNDERGRADUATE COURSES**

**AMST 1000.10 – Homemade American Religions**
Kip Kosek  
WF, 9:35-10:50  
This course examines four religious movements that began in the United States: the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons), Christian Science, the United House of Prayer for All People, and the Church of Scientology. These “homemade” American religions have attracted both dedicated adherents and diehard opponents. Their histories raise broad questions about liberal tolerance, scientific rationality, cultural authority, and religious freedom. Using a range of primary and secondary sources, we will examine the beliefs and practices of the four groups, as well as the broader controversies they have provoked. Our inquiry will be guided by frameworks from scholars of history, sociology, religious studies, and allied fields. **Registration restricted to CCAS freshman. Department approval required to register.**  
** This course requires occasional local field trips that will take place outside of class.

**AMST 1000.11 – American Popular Culture After 9/11**
Elisabeth Anker  
MW, 12:45-2:00  
This course will critically examine how films, literature, television, cultural theory, public discourse, news media, museums and graphic novels interpret the dramatic shifts in American public life after 9/11. Together we will question how important events are represented and refigured in American cultural material, and also analyze what this material can show us about the times in which we live. This seminar will be conducted in a discussion format, and in two parts. First, we will explore how varied cultural media have interpreted 9/11 and its aftermath. Second, we will engage material that grapples with war and foreign policy. Throughout the course we will examine how various cultural products have investigated, and perhaps contributed to, a national climate of fear, uncertainty, and violence. Given the themes of this course, we will also pay close attention to current events, and in particular to how cultural tropes are employed to make sense of them. **Registration restricted to CCAS freshman. Department approval required to register.**

**AMST 1050.12 – Medicine in American Culture**
Kathleen Brian  
TR, 9:35-10:50  
This course is an introduction to the history of medicine in the United States that pays particular attention to the interconnectedness of cultural formations, medical knowledge, and healing practices. We will place medical developments such as the standardization of the profession and the emergence of the hospital alongside cultural developments such as the rise of the penny press and the invention of motion picture film. As we move thematically and chronologically through this history, we will ask questions such as: how has medical knowledge been formed in, through, and against cultural products? How have these knowledge formations
interacted with alternative ways of understandings bodies and illness? How have cultural products shaped what patients and medical professionals think they know of one another? How do these various interactions inform the clinical encounter? To explore these issues, we will read secondary scholarly articles together with primary historical documents such as case files, radio broadcasts, medical journals, and popular films.

AMST 1200.10 – America in the Sixties
Suleiman Osman
MW, 12:45–1:35
This course will examine American society, culture, and politics during the dynamic and contentious decade of the 1960s. Students will examine topics such as the civil rights movement, the student movement, the Vietnam War and anti-war movement, black power, the counterculture, feminism, the environmental movement, and the rise of the New Right. Students will also examine how the memory of the 1960s continues to shape debates about political activism, foreign policy, and cultural consumption today. Students must also register for a discussion section to satisfy the course requirement.

AMST 1100.10 – Politics and Film
Elisabeth Anker
M, 11:10-12:25 & M, 7:10pm-9:40pm
This class addresses the relationship between politics and film by examining how American films interpret and challenge political power in America. We pair film analysis with readings in political theory to interrogate the operations of power in political life. Exploring films thematically, first we examine those that shape conventional interpretations of political power in America, including concepts of limited government, popular sovereignty, and liberal individualism. Next, we consider films that challenge these ideas by offering alternate conceptions of how power functions, while addressing questions of ideology, surveillance, domination, and biopolitics. The last section investigates particular genres—melodrama, the western, and film noir—that reshape and rearticulate these themes within American political culture. Throughout, we will focus on how to read the visual language of film and the written texts of political theory. Students must also register for a discussion section to satisfy the course requirement.

AMST 2010.80 – Early American Cultural History
Teresa Murphy
TR, 3:55-4:45
This course starts with the argument that understanding culture is key to understanding American history. Culture can refer to art and literature—some of which we will explore in class. However, culture can also refer to popular forms of expression, including the way people act. With this broader perspective, we will study some of the major scholarship addressing the evolution of American culture—from the Colonial period through Reconstruction. For example, we will look at what scholars have to say about why minstrel shows were popular and about how Indian captivity narratives were used to justify the conquest of the West. To shape our analyses, we will examine old newspapers, read popular literature, and explore the museums here in Washington, DC—then develop our own opinions and arguments as we engage in small group discussions and complete class assignments. This is an upper division course, but it is geared toward freshman and sophomores who are looking for a challenge. Students must also register for a discussion section to satisfy the course requirement.

AMST 2071.80 – The Arts in America
David Bjelajac
TR, 3:45-5:00
This is a lecture survey of American art from the colonial period to the postmodern present. Primarily focused upon painting, the course also covers sculpture, architecture, printmaking and photography within the broader visual and material culture of United States history. Art works are analyzed in relation to issues of religion, nationalism, ethnicity, race, class and gender. Students will acquire a basic knowledge of major developments in the history of American art and its relationship to other aspects of American visual and material culture. Students will read scholarly texts, art criticism and primary source documents to develop fundamental art historical techniques for visually analyzing artworks and for interpreting their compositional, narrative, formal, expressive properties in relation to political, cultural and socio-economic history. Students will develop writing skills for communicating critical ideas and the ways in which the visual arts historically have produced varied critical/interpretive responses and meanings from the colonial past to the present day.

**AMST 2520.80 – American Architecture 1600-1860**

Richard Longstreth  
MW, 9:35–10:50

This course examines selected aspects of the built environment in the United States from the first period of European settlement to the eve of the Civil War. Stylistic properties, functions, common patterns of design, technological developments, and urbanistic patterns are introduced as vehicles for interpreting the historical significance of this legacy of both exceptional and representative examples. Buildings are analyzed both as artifacts and as signifiers of broader social, cultural, and economic tendencies. Other topics introduced include the persistence and mixing of cultural traditions, the role of the designer, the influence of region, and architecture as a component of landscape. Among the facets of the built environment that are examined are the multi-faceted nature of colonial building and settlement patterns; the emergence of national expression; the rise of city building and of a commercial core; the growing specificity of building types for commercial, governmental, institutional, and religious functions; the enduring importance of the single-family house; the multi-faceted nature of eclecticism; evolving views of nature and landscape design; and the impact of technology. Detailed examination is made of the contribution made by many celebrated figures in design, including Alexander Jackson Davis, Andrew Jackson Downing, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Robert Mills, Frederick Law Olmsted, William Strickland, and Richard Upjohn. At the same time, attention is given to broad tendencies in design and their effect upon rural and urban landscapes. The impact of peoples from Africa and the Caribbean, the British Isles, France, German states, the Netherlands, and Spain is examined during both the colonial and post-colonial periods. Lectures are profusely illustrated.

**AMST 2730W.80 – World War II in History and Memory**

Tom Guglielmo  
TR, 11:10-12:00

This course will examine the history of Americans' World War II experiences and how those experiences have been studied, understood, and "remembered"—officially, culturally, and personally. It focuses on six overlapping topics—soldiers, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Holocaust, women, Japanese American internment, and race relations. **This course will satisfy a WID requirement. Students must also register for a discussion section to satisfy the course requirement.**

**AMST 3151.80 – American Art in the Age of Revolution**

David Bjelajac  
MW, 3:45-5:00

This course explores American art during the 18th century "consumer revolution," the American
War for Independence, and the early republic. Lectures and readings emphasize the socio-economic and political purposes of art with a focus on the visual culture of the Enlightenment and Second Great Awakening. Issues of national identity, republican ideology, capitalist enterprise and institutional slavery will be discussed in relation to paintings, sculptures, prints and architectural spaces. A civil war, the American Revolution sowed the seeds for the Civil War of 1861-65. Students will acquire knowledge of historical developments in American painting, sculpture and printmaking and their relationship to other aspects of American visual and material culture during the period 1750-1825. Students will read scholarly texts, art criticism and primary source documents to develop art historical techniques for visually analyzing artworks and for interpreting their compositional, narrative, formal, expressive properties in relation to political, cultural and socio-economic history and issues of race, class, gender, nationality and religion. Students will develop writing skills for communicating critical ideas and the ways in which the visual arts historically have produced varied critical/interpretive responses in America during the eighteenth century and revolutionary era of the early republic.

AMST 3352W.80 – Women in the United States
Teresa Murphy
TR, 12:45-1:35
This course will examine the history of women in the United States from pre-Columbian settlement until Reconstruction. We will pay particular attention to the ways in which gender has been an important component in the construction of power relationships; the ways in which issues of race and class have affected the relationships among women; and the ways in which ideas about gender have evolved during the past several centuries. This course will satisfy a WID requirement. Students must also register for a discussion section to satisfy the course requirements.

AMST 3361.80 – African American History since 1865
Erin Chapman
TR, 2:20-3:35
This course will investigate the major events and themes of African American history since the slaves achieved emancipation and began the long struggle toward full freedom in the United States. We will thus study late 19th century and 20th century U.S. history from the perspectives of African American men and women, focusing on the themes of gender, culture, class, racial identity, intra-racial conflicts and solidarity, and the evolving ideologies of the movement for racial advancement. We will cover the major eras of African American politics and cultural production, including education, religion, anti-lynching, the Great Migration, Garveyism, the New Negro Renaissance, the long history of Civil Rights, the Black Arts Movement, Black Power, and Black Feminism.

AMST 3900.10 – Critiquing Culture
Staff
TR, 2:20-3:35
This seminar introduces students to major methods for understanding and interpreting cultural materials. We will explore how and why culture—particularly mass culture such as film, television, photography, music, fashion, and advertising—plays such a significant role in our lives. At various point in the semester, we will examine 1) the ways that we experience culture and ground our identities in it; 2) the ideological messages and stereotypes that circulate in cultural products; 3) the institutional, corporate and individual production of cultural products and spaces; and 4) the ways that different audiences interpret the culture they consume. This course is reading intensive and discussion-oriented. Registration restricted to American Studies majors; minors admitted with permission of instructor.
AMST 3901.10 – Examining America
Suleiman Osman
MW, 3:45–5:00
This course offers students an introduction to the history, debates, and methodologies that are central to the field of American Studies. Students will analyze key texts in American Studies scholarship from the foundational “Myth and Symbol” school to contemporary transnational works. Students will also be introduced to different approaches to interdisciplinary research. Registration restricted to American Studies majors; minors admitted with permission of instructor.

AMST 3950.12 – Urban Life and Visual Culture
Katie Schank
MW, 4:45-6:00
This seminar explores the visual culture of the American city from the late nineteenth through the twentieth century. The time period covered saw parallel growth and change in both cities and visual technologies. Visual analysis of the city opens up new possibilities for historical investigation and offers the potential to revise, revisit, and expand standard accounts and accepted histories. Students will use visual materials such as photographs, advertisements, television, and film in order to analyze the city and will apply these skills to answer questions such as: How have visual materials shaped the way that people have understood the city? How have social and cultural context shaped the creation and reception of these materials? How have visual materials impacted the realities of life in the urban environment? How have different audiences interpreted these materials? The course will focus on readings in visual theory and urban history, as well as original research in a visual archive of the student’s choosing. Topics to be covered include housing, race and class, urban renewal, and gentrification.

AMST 3950.80 – Writers, Radicals, And Rugelach: Yiddish Culture In America
Lauren Strauss
TR, 9:35–10:50
This course journeys into the world of East European Jewish culture as it was carried across the ocean and recreated in America. We take an interdisciplinary approach to the study of Yiddish-speaking Jews, employing historical sources, literature, maps, and photos to build a foundation for understanding their language and culture. Much more than just a language, Yiddish reflects both the outsider status and sense of communal cohesion that characterizes Jewish life in the Diaspora. The course begins in the Russian Empire of the late-19th century and then follows this group of Jews on their dramatic immigration to America. Once they arrived on American shores, we experience the challenges – and triumphs – East European Jews faced in keeping their culture alive through movies, newspapers, short stories and poetry, recipes, radio shows, and klezmer music. Our focus will mostly be on the first half of the 20th century, but we also explore the influence of Yiddish culture on present day America.

AMST 3950.81 – New York and the Jews
Lauren Strauss
TR, 12:45–2:00
Of all the urban centers that the Jews have inhabited, New York is the one most inextricably linked with Jewish life in the modern world. “The City” – in the terminology of New Yorkers – is also the epicenter of American cultural pluralism. This course draws on history, cultural studies, urban studies, and other fields to explore the many facets of the Jewish relationship with New
York. We will encounter Jews on Broadway and in the Mayor’s office, as peddlers on the street and as titans of business. Food, music, architecture, ethnic relations, religious expression, and national politics all play a role in the New York Jewish mosaic. Along the way, this course also poses challenging questions about cultural identity and the ways in which it intersects with the larger narrative of minority groups in America. Special guests and perhaps even a field trip to New York await.

**AMST 4500W.10 – Lines of Work**

Dara Orenstein  
W, 12:45-3:15

What is the difference between labor and leisure? Between art and commerce? Between the home and the office? Between a career and a job? And at different moments and in different places in the history of the United States, how do answers to these questions vary between men and women? Between children and parents? Between immigrants and prisoners? Between mechanics and slaves? This research seminar is about the cultural and social parameters of work—not only how work is experienced from day to day, but also how it is defined and valued. First students will read a small assortment of case studies and theoretical articles. Then they will embark on original research in primary sources, whether via local archives and museums, at the movies and in novels, or online and on the corner. Throughout, students will learn how to produce a proposal, a bibliographic essay, and a research paper, as well as how to comment on each other’s thinking and writing. Projects might explore topics as various as the 8-hour day; temp work; housework; the concepts of self-employment and unemployment; informal economies; the infrastructure of labor geographies; diseases ranging from neurasthenia and obesity to hysteria and depression; debt and other modes of coercion; hippies, hobos, slackers, and anti-work politics; and the idea of the student. *This course will satisfy a WID requirement.*  
*Registration restricted to American Studies majors only.*

**AMST 4500W.11 – Cold-War America**

Jamie Cohen-Cole  
R, 12:45–3:15

This is an advanced seminar for American Studies majors in which students will write original research papers on Cold War America. Students will undertake independent research on this topic using historical research to examine the culture, society, and politics of the period. Students might write papers that examine the ways in which geopolitics intersected with aspects of American life. Questions that might be considered include: what forms did anti-communism take and how did they affect American society? How did American society, culture, and politics develop because of technical developments related to the cold war including nuclear arms, the computer, airplanes, survey research, and even new conceptions of race, gender, sexuality, rationality, and modernity? Students may rely on sources ranging from archival to print or visual media and material culture. We will begin with reading exemplary articles. Students will then engage in individual research projects of their own choosing that are based in primary sources and address important scholarly issues related to Cold War American culture. *This course will satisfy a WID requirement. Registration restricted to American Studies majors only.*
AMST 6100.10 – Scope and Methods: American Studies
Dara Orenstein
T, 9:00-11:00
This course is an intensive introduction to the history, debates, and methodologies that are central to the field of American Studies. Students will analyze key texts, explore ways to redefine the canon of American Studies scholarship, and begin to formulate ideas for future research. This course is restricted to graduate students in American Studies.

AMST 6190.11 – Popular Culture and the American Imaginary
Calvin Warren
W, 6:10-8:00
This course will examine the ‘psychic life’ of popular culture—the way popular culture uses objects to express unconscious desire, aggression, fantasy, repression, and trauma. Is cultural production a form of analysis? Does popular culture provide American society with catharsis, or does it traumatize? Through a close examination of these questions, we will also consider the role of the unconscious in structuring our desire for popular culture—for example, why are we obsessed with reality television shows, facebook, and smartphones? This course will privilege psychoanalytic approaches that intersect with feminism, critical race studies, and queer theory. Readings will include theoretical texts by Slavoj Zizek, Kaja Silverman, Mary Anne Doane, Judith Butler, Lee Edelman, Diane Rubenstein, among others. Registration restricted to graduate students.

AMST 6190.80 – The US State: History and Theory
Thomas Guglielmo
T, 1:30-3:30
This graduate seminar offers a high-level introduction to scholarship on the American state. Through a mix of readings from across the humanities and social sciences, the course will explore the history and nature of American state power and its relationship to capitalism; empire; knowledge production; culture; race, gender, and sexuality; and more. Registration restricted to graduate students.

AMST 6190.81 – Popular Music Cultures
Gayle Wald
This course provides an overview of the field of U.S. popular music studies for graduate students interested in cultural theory, cultural studies, and media studies. It grounds its inquiry in influential texts of popular music studies—from the 19th century writings of Frederick Douglass on the slave songs to Zora Neal Hurston’s anthropological studies of the “sonic archive” of the Negro folk to Theodor Adorno’s definitive Frankfurt-School takedown of the music industry to Dick Hebdige’s seminal study of British punk (the book Subculture: The Meaning of Style) to musicologist Christopher Small’s theory of “musicking.” We will supplement such canonical, field-defining work with case studies drawn from the range of excellent literature on music cultures.

Our inquiry will focus on questions of identity (how are identities articulated in musical expression? what struggles over identity are staged in—or sounded through—popular music?); audience (what is the relationship between musical texts and listeners?); and affect (how does music communicate and mediate affect, including “political” emotions?). We will also be interested in the mediation of popular musical expression (through recordings, radio, television, music videos, digital files, and the like) and in the discourses of musical genre.

Although our focus will be on the United States, we will be interested in the ongoing transnational and/or African diasporic circulation of sound, and in popular culture’s refusal to be bound by national borders. Depending on the interest of students, we may also investigate the relationship between popular music studies and the burgeoning field of sound studies. Students will do annotated bibliographies, try their hand at experimental music writing (the “Critical Karaoke”), and pursue research into a question of their choice. The goal will be the production of either a conference paper or draft of an article to be submitted for publication.

AMST 6420.80 – Religion and American Culture
Kip Kosek
F, 12:10-2:00
This graduate seminar focuses on religious people, communities, and cultures in historical and contemporary America, as well as the shifting categories of “religious” and “secular” themselves. We will consider the ways that serious attention to religion might change our perspective on other subjects, including: race and ethnicity; gender, sexuality, and the family; capitalism and consumer society; scientific knowledge; mass media; social and political movements; material and visual culture; nationalism and transnationalism. The course will also explore how scholars in different fields, such as anthropology, sociology, history, and law, have brought different disciplinary lenses to bear on the study of religion. Registration restricted to graduate students.

AMST 6495.80 – Historic Preservation: Principles and Methods
Richard Longstreth
MW, 4:10–6:00
This course addresses the scope and purpose of the preservation movement in the U.S., focusing on developments since the 1960s. Topics investigated include the development of ideas and approaches to preservation at home and abroad since the late 18th century; the legal framework developed at the national, state, and local levels to foster preservation; the nature of an dynamics between public- and private-sector preservation organizations; and key facets of the research process essential to determine significance and set priorities to protecting historic properties. Throughout the course, both pragmatic and conceptual aspects are explored, as are the implications of preservation practice on broader realms, ranging from our attitudes toward the past to the tangible benefits for a community or business. Preservation must be a practical line of work imbued with political, technical, and economic expertise, but its ultimate worth is as a form of cultural expression. Classroom lectures and discussions are supplemented by visits from a number of prominent figures in the field—both nationally and locally—who afford behind-
the-scenes insight current initiatives and challenges. Registration restricted to graduate students.

AMST 6530.10 – Field Methods: Architectural Documentation
Thomas Reinhart
R, 4:10–6:00
In-depth thematic study of the cultural landscape, focusing on the basic field techniques and skills necessary to analyze and interpret accurately the fabric of historic buildings and their settings. Additional attention given to major thematic issues of both rural and urban landscapes. Topics considered include housing, agriculture, industry, and the architectural legacy of African American culture. A variety of building types and complexes are examined firsthand, with emphasis on the broader issue of interplay between natural and cultural landscapes. Intensive study is conducted on a single site, with members of the class divided into recording teams. Research methods based on building fabric and the physical landscape are the primary focus; work in the field constitutes a major component of the course. Registration restricted to graduate students.

AMST 6563.10 – Topics in American Folklife
Stephan Winick
T, 6:10–8:00
American Folklife encompasses an astonishing array of cultural groups and artistic forms: African-American folktales and Chinese-American ghost beliefs, Irish-American songs and Cajun food, Clackamas myths and Mayan weavings, ancient old-country recipes and the latest and most bizarre Urban Legend. In this introductory graduate course, we will examine some of the expressive traditions that we call “folklife,” especially as they are manifested in the United States. We will discuss how these traditions originate, how they develop over time, and how they become part of—or remain separate from—mainstream popular culture. We will also look into some of the prominent methodologies used to study folklife, ranging from literary and philological approaches to ethnographic and anthropological ones. We’ll talk about preserving and presenting folklife, in the library and the archive, on the festival stage, and in the museum. Along the way, we will raise important questions about the meanings that folklife holds for cultural groups and for individuals. Readings will include articles from leading scholars in the field. Registration restricted to graduate students.

AMST 6709.80 – Interpretation in the Historic House Museum
Carol Stapp
T, 11:10–1:00
Enjoy first-hand encounters with an astounding array of museums through five class trips (including Frank Lloyd Wright’s Pope-Leighey House and Woodlawn Plantation; the Woodrow Wilson House; George Washington’s Mount Vernon; Hillwood Estate, Museum and Gardens; and President Lincoln’s Cottage). You’ll meet knowledgeable practitioners, who’ll give you a behind-the-scenes perspective on the challenges of interpretation—from living history to virtual visits—in America’s home-grown museum type. A short report focused on a National Park Service site (Arlington House or the Clara Barton National Historic Site) provides the groundwork for a field project in conjunction with the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site. The field projects are presented to FDNHS staff members, who join us for a poster session at the end of the course. Registration restricted to graduate students. This class meets off-campus for at least six sessions. Please plan for sufficient travel time before and after class.

AMST 6710.10 – American Material Culture
Katherine Ott
This class is an introduction to the major theories, issues, and diverse viewpoints and practices in the field of material culture. Material culture refers to the objects and artifacts that populate the tactile and visual environment. Material culture is a form of evidence poorly understood and often dismissed, yet it is the primary component of the sensory world – it is through objects and images that people learn about and integrate themselves into the human community. Material culture carries and creates meaning. Some artifacts, such as the refrigerator, the spinning wheel, and the contraceptive pill, initiate new systems and support cultural transitions. Other objects, such as a wedding ring or a judge’s gavel, convey complex symbolic meanings. Still others, such as photographs and clothing, create personal identity. We will study the range of these relationships with material things. \textit{Registration restricted to graduate students. The class is taught by a Smithsonian history curator and meets off-campus; contact Professor Ott at ottk@si.edu for location details.}