**HRS 161: Multicultural America**  
(GE categories: Area C3/race and ethnicity)  
Fall 2011

J. R. Donath  
Office: MND 2030  
Office Hours: Monday 9-10 am, 4-5 pm, Wednesday 9-10 am and by appointment  
Office Phone: 278-5895  
e-mail: donathjr@csus.edu

This course is an upper-level, interdisciplinary exploration of the arts and the ways we define ourselves, both as individuals and within various socio-cultural groups, as human beings. There is a strong connection between art and society, between aesthetic values and social action, between culture and context. Works of art are powerful channels of communication about American identities: our concern with who we are and how we feel about ourselves and the nation. Our efforts at self-definition have often been shaped by the multi-cultural nature of American history and experience. The ways in which various art forms reveal American self-consciousness, introspection, and attempts at self-definition within this multicultural framework are the central concerns of this class.

**LEARNING GOALS**/upon completion of this class, successful students will be able to:
- identify, explain and analyze American ideologies as presented in course materials;
- compare and contrast the basic values and behaviors of a number of cultures in the U S;
- demonstrate visual literacy;
- apply the techniques of formal analysis to works of literary and visual art;
- demonstrate a deepened appreciation of the diversity of American culture;
- recognize and value the contributions of various individuals and groups, past and present, to the richness of the American experience;
- communicate effectively in both oral and written formats

**TEXTS:**
- Baldwin. *The American Revelation*. (AR)  
- Donath. *HRS 161 Packet* (R) Available from University Copy & Print: 446 Howe Ave (Behind Tokyo Fro’s on Fair Oaks Blvd) 929.6147  
- Douglass. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
- Okubo. *Citizen 13660*  
- An American novel or autobiography for the paper assignment (see the reading list, attached)

***Please purchase THREE 886-E scantrons from the Hornet Bookstore for the tests***
EVALUATION:
PAPER: 100 points  
500-450: A
3 TESTS: 100 points each  
499--445: B
PARTICIPATION: 100 points  
444-390: C
389-335: D

Participation points are calculated on a daily basis and depend on positive contributions to class meetings and preparation of written participation assignments.

No "extra credit" is offered in this course

CLASS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:
- ATTENDANCE: Particularly given the abbreviated nature of this course, I believe attendance is crucial to your success. However, I do not take role and class attendance does not figure directly into your grade.

- LATE WORK: Papers (and any “homework” assignments) are due during the first five minutes of class. After that, a paper is considered late and there is a 5 point penalty per day, including weekends (---even if the paper comes in later on the day it was due.)

- Tests are scheduled as indicated on the class calendar. Make-ups are not permitted unless a verifiable emergency interferes. Make-ups are administered by the Testing Center and require a fee.

PROFESSORIAL QUIRK: No one will be admitted to the class after the door is “closed” (five minutes into the class hour).

CELL PHONES: Unless you are a physician or emergency medical technician please turn your cell phone “off” or to “silent” mode during our class meetings. Disruptions of this sort are not strategic for students who want to succeed in this course.
CALENDAR

TOPIC I: Tools and Terms—the territory before us (American culture(s))
WEEK 1/August 29 and 31: Introductory meeting and some definitions
Read: “Identities and Social Locations: Who am I? Who are my people” (R)

WEEK 2/September 5: NO CLASS MEETING
September 7: The issue of hegemony
Read: Mann: “Report of the Massachusetts Board of Education” (R)
      Gatto: “The Seven Lesson School Teacher” (R)
      Clark: “In Search of the American Dream” (R)

WEEK 3/September 12 and 14: The issue of identity
Read: “E Pluribus Unum” (AR)
      Kotkin: “Ready Set Grow” (R)
      DuBois: Excerpt from The Souls of Black Folks (R)

TOPIC II: Foundations of American Culture
WEEK 4/September 19 and 21: the hegemony’s historical roots
Read: “City on a Hill” (AR)
      Winthrop: “Model of Christian Charity” (R)

WEEK 5/September 26 and 28: creating a national culture
Read: “Common Sense” (AR)
      Paine: “Common Sense” and “The American Crisis” (R)
**TEST 1: September 28**

WEEK 6/October 3: hegemonic mottos
Read: “Self-Reliance” (AR)
      Emerson: “Self –Reliance” (R)

October 5: NO CLASS MEETING: Donath at WASC

WEEK 7/October 10 and 12: Migration and the Myth of the West
Read: “Manifest Destiny” (AR)
      Worster: “Freedom and Want: the Western Paradox” (R)

WEEK 8/October 17 and 19: Media Mythologies and the Rise of Technoculture
Read: Mantiosis: “Media Magic: Making Class Invisible” (R)
      Mander: “Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television” (R)
      Gitlin: “Under the Sign of Mickey Mouse” (R)
      Katz: “Advertising and the Construction of Violent White Masculinity” (R)
      Kelly: “From Print to Pixel”
TOPIC III: Who Belongs: ethnicity and immigration
WEEK 9/October 24 and 26: not the hegemony
Read: Davis: “God and Country”
      Trask: “Notes from a Native Daughter” (R)
      Gunn: “Where I Come From Is Like This” (R)

WEEK 10/October 31
**TEST 2: October 31**
November 2: NO CLASS MEETING: Donath at WASC

WEEK 11/November 7 and 9: Immigration
Read: Takaki: “A Different Mirror”
      Citizen 13660

WEEK 12/November 14 and 16: Ethnicity and Identity
Read: Chang: Streets of Gold: The Model Minority” (R)
      Rich: “Split at the Root” (R)
      Citizen 13660
**Paper Due** November 16

TOPIC IV: Race and Color
WEEK 13/November 21 and 23: slavery
Read: Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass
      Dunbar: “We Wear the Mask”

WEEK 14/November 28 and 30: stereotypes
Read: DeMott: “Put on a Happy Face” (R)
      Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

TOPIC V: Being America and American
WEEK 15/December 5 and 7: Multicultural America
Read: Hughes: “Let America Be America Again” (R)
      “The Negro in Our History” (AR)
**December 7: Test 3**
# HRS 161/Multicultural America
## Supplemental Reading List

Students must choose one autobiography or one work of literature as an additional required text for the course. **Begin reading as soon as possible.** Your paper and at least one question on Test 2 will draw on your reading. You may choose a book that is not on these lists---just check with me first. **The book you read must be written by a person UNLIKE you in some way.**

### WORKS OF FICTION
- ALEXIE. *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*
- ALLISON. *Bastard Out of Carolina*
- ANAYA. *Bless Me Ultima*
- ANDERSON. *Winesburg, Ohio*
- CATHHER. *My Antonia*
- CISNEROS. *The House on Mango Street*
- DUNBAR. *The Sport of the Gods*
- LARSEN. *Quicksand OR Passing*
- LEE. *Yellow OR China Boy*
- MALAMUD. *The Tenant OR The Natural*
- MOMADAY. *House Made of Dawn*
- MORRISON. *Bluest Eye*
- OKADA. *NoNo Boy*
- OZEKI. *My Year of Meats*
- ROTH. *Portnoy's Complaint*
- STOCKERT. *The Help*
- STOWE. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
- TAN. *The Joy Luck Club*
- VIRAMONTES. *Under the Feet of Jesus*
- WALKER. *The Color Purple*
- WRIGHT. *Native Son*
- YEZIERKSA. *The Bread Givers*

### AUTOBIOGRAPHIES/MEMOIRS
- ACOSTA. *The Autobiography of a Brown Buffalo*
- ADAMS. *The Education of Henry Adams*
- AHMED. *A Border Passage*
- ANGELOU. *Song Flung Up to Heaven OR Now I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*
- ARMSTRONG. *It's Not About the Bike: My Journey Back to Life*
- BAYOUMI. *How Does It Feel to Be a Problem?*
- BULOSAN. *America is in the Heart*
- FEINBERG. *Stone Butch Blues*
- FRANKLIN. *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*
- HALEY. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*
- IACOCCA. *Iacocca: An Autobiography*
- JACOBS. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
- JOHNSON. *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*
- KINGSTON. *The Woman Warrior*
- MEANS. *Where White Men Fear to Tread: The Autobiography of Russell Means*
- OBAMA. *Dreams From My Father*
- PERRY. *Population 485*
- POWELL. *My American Journey*
- REAGAN. *An American Life: The Autobiography*
- RODRIGUEZ. *Hunger of Memory OR Arguments with My Father*
- SHAKUR. *Monster: The Autobiography of an L.A. Gang Member*
- SOTO. *A Summer Life*
- SWAFFORD. *Jarhead.*
- WASHINGTON. *Up From Slavery*
- WYETH. *Andrew Wyeth: An Autobiography*
HRS 161/Multicultural America
Paper Assignment: worth 100 points

I> ASSIGNMENT: Using your choice of a work from the HRS 161 reading list and AT LEAST ONE class “text,” write an essay that answers the following question:
What characteristic or behavior is the most important component of being an American?

II> DOING THE TASK: You should do this by examining how what you choose to read:
 Reveals behaviors or values that seems to fit into American culture OR don’t seem to belong in America (and why)
 Suggests when and how one becomes American
 Shows how the search for an American identity has changed (or not changed) over time
 Reflects on how an issue, like immigration, war, class, ethnicity, gender, race, etc, has affected national and individual identity.
 Demonstrates how works of art are rooted in place and time --how cultural context shapes these works and our understandings of them

One way to accomplish the task of writing the paper may be to compare OR contrast the readings you chose by focusing on some cultural experience like race, ethnicity, immigration, gender, cultural mythology, OR a cultural element or value (like success, beauty, wealth, etc) and how it “plays out” in the works you choose. REMEMBER the ultimate question you’re trying to answer-----From your educated perspective, what (if anything) defines what being American is like in the book and course materials you chose as your readings.

III>HOUSEKEEPING:
 Write a 4-6 page paper (double spaced.)
 Give your paper this title: “___________________in American Culture.” Fill in the _____________ with the value, behavior, quality or concept which will be the focus of your essay.
 Include at least 2 quotations in your paper—one from your literary work and one from a reading assigned for class. Be sure to cite them correctly (in the text or footnotes)
 Underline or highlight your essay’s topic sentence.
 Please just staple your paper together---no spines or folders.
 Put your name on the last page of the paper.

IV>EVALUATION: A “B” paper (or better) will:
 have a title
 have a single, understandable underlined topic sentence
 analyze the two works’ depiction of a value, behavior, experience or idea
 use, integrate and connect course terms, concepts, lecture materials
 include quotations from a course reading and the literary work of the student’s choice
 avoid stupid (high school) errors in writing---use complete sentences, correct punctuation and spelling, write in paragraphs, and present an essay with a clear beginning, middle and end.

**DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CLASS MEETING ON NOVEMBER 16**
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CLASS PARTICIPATION RUBRIC

Unlike some other forms of learning in this class, participation is not just an individual activity. How and what you learn from lecture, reading, research, writing and studying is quite different than what you can gain from playing an active role in the classroom. Being an active participant means asking questions, listening to answers and volunteering your ideas. To do this effectively, you must have read all the assigned materials carefully. Candidly, if you haven’t, it will become clear quite quickly. The following are the criteria by which your participation will be evaluated:

A (90-100 points)/
- Arrives at each class meeting fully prepared (including completed homework as assigned)
- Plays an active role in class discussions
- Comments consistently advance the level and depth of dialogue and discussion
- The group’s dynamic and level of discussion are consistently better because of the student’s presence

B (89-80 points)/
- Arrives mostly, if not fully, prepared
- Participates constructively in class discussion
- Makes relevant comments based on the assigned material
- The group’s dynamic and level of discussion are occasionally better (and never worse) because of student’s presence

C (79-70 points)/
- Preparation (and as a result, participation) is inconsistent
- When prepared, participates constructively and makes relevant comments based on the assigned material
- Group dynamic and level of discussion appear unaffected by student’s presence

D (69-60 points)/
- Rarely prepared
- Rarely participates
- Comments are generally vague or drawn from outside assigned material
- Demonstrates a notable lack of interest (on occasion)

F (59-0 points)/
- Never prepared
- Never participates
- Demonstrates ongoing, notable lack of interest in the class materials
- Group dynamic and level of discussion are harmed by student’s presence in the class

Beyond the rubric/
- If you show improvement as the term progresses, you will be rewarded. Becoming more active and/or making more effective comments not only raises the level of discourse in the classroom, it sets an example for other students. By trying, you encourage others to do the same.
- If you are shy, or have a day when you are not yourself, you may e-mail me relevant thoughts, comments and questions within an hour of the end the class meeting. While this is not an ideal method of participation, it does demonstrate that you have been preparing for class, listening carefully and responding to your peers.
- If you miss a class meeting completely, you may submit a one-page typed (single-spaced) argumentative summary of the assigned material by the next class meeting. This means you must analyze and critique—not just summarize. Again, while not ideal, doing the critique will confirm that you have engaged with, and responded to, the class assignments.
- Not attending class can have a major impact on your final grade, regardless of the quality of your contributions when you are present.
- Dominating class discussions is not helpful as it denies other students the opportunity to participate and restricts the number of ideas to consider. Dominating also prevents you from listening and learning.
- Negative, offensive and disrespectful comments and actions can do serious damage to the learning atmosphere. Such behavior will absolutely result in a substantially lower grade.