HRS/HIST 168: Images of America
Fall 2011

J. R. Donath
Office: MND 2030
Office Hours: Mondays 4-5pm, Wednesdays 9-11 and by appointment
Office Phone: 278-5895
e-mail: donathjr@csus.edu

Catalog Description: Interdisciplinary survey of the major events, trends and figures in American history viewed through the lenses of American literature, visual arts, architecture and music. The arts in America are studied in relation to major ideas, significant personalities, and important events from the period of the early republic to the present.

Section Description: Using literature (both fiction and non-fiction), elite, folk, and popular visual arts and artifacts, this course is meant to introduce students to American expressive culture. Students are expected to read, write, and think about what it means to be an American, what values and assumptions Americans may hold in common, and whether American experiences reflect the existence of a distinct national character.

Learning Goals:
Successful students in HRS/HIST 168 will demonstrate:

- the ability to recognize, explain and analyze American values, beliefs and behaviors
- an understanding and appreciation of the diversity of American experiences
- the ability to compare and contrast various artistic expressions
- the ability to think creatively and critically about the relationships of artistic expressions to their historical and cultural contexts
- the ability to use information from multiple disciplines analytically
- the ability to write clear, correct and informed prose
TEXTS:
Pearson Custom Library of American Literature (PCL)

Pohl. *Framing America* 2nd edition (FA)
**Available through the Hornet Bookstore rental program as well as for sale**

Student’s choice of one work from HRS/HIST 168 reading list (see attached)

EVALUATION:
• 2 tests/100 points apiece = 200 points

• writing assignments (totaling AT LEAST 5000 words):
  - paper 1 (4-6 pages): 100 points
  - paper 2 (4-6 pages): 100 points
  - paper 3 (4-6 pages): 100 points
See writing rubric (attached)

**You may revise any of the first three papers for an improved grade. Revisions are due no later than one week after the papers are returned. The first version of the paper (with my comments) must be attached to the revision

• participation: 100 points---positive contributions to class discussion, homework assignments, etc.
  See participation rubric (attached)

600-540 points/A
539-465 points/B
464-405 points/C
404-345 points/D
Below 345 points/F

PROFESSORIAL QUIRKS:
• The classroom door will be closed 5 minutes after the class period begins and NO ONE WILL BE ADMITTED ONCE THE DOOR IS “CLOSED.”

• It is departmental policy that a maximum of one week of absences is allowable without penalty. You can not be successful in this class if you are unable to attend regularly.

• ALL assignments are due at the start of the class meeting. Any work offered after the first 5 minutes will be considered “late” and the penalty for late work is 10 points/day (even if turned in late on the due date).

• TESTS: the tests will have take-home essay sections due at the start of the in-class test period. No make-up tests will be offered without a verified excuse. All make-ups are administered by the Testing Center for a fee.
CALENDAR

WEEK 1/August 29 and August 31: Opening remarks: art and culture

WEEK 2/September 5 (NO CLASS: Labor Day holiday)
September 7: FIRST ENCOUNTERS
Read: FA: pp. 18-20, 27-40
PCL: pp 1-2

WEEK 3/September 12 and 14: FEELING COLONIAL
Read: FA: pp. 58-60, 62-69, 74-78
PCL: pp. 3-45

WEEK 4/September 19 and 21: THE EARLY REPUBLIC
READ: FA: pp. 82-86, 91-95, 101-109, 116-125
PCL: pp.54-64
**Paper 1 due at start of the class meeting on September 21**

WEEK 5/September 26 and 28: 19TH CENTURY LANDSCAPES
READ: FA: pp. 144-176
READING LIST book

WEEK 6/October 3: DEFINING OURSELVES: IMAGES OF DEMOCRACY
READ: FA: 176-188, 198-203
PCL: pp. 46-53, 66-90
READING LIST book
**Test 1 take-home essay handed out in class on October 3**
October 5: NO CLASS MEETING: Donath at WASC

WEEK 7/October 10 and 12: catch up, review and test 1
**Test 1: October 13: Take-home essay due at start of test period**

WEEK 8/October 17 and 19: THE IDEA OF THE “REALLY” REAL and THE “DARK SIDE”
READING LIST book
**Paper 2 due at the start of class meeting on October 19**

WEEK 9/October 24 and 26: THE GILDED AGE
READ: FA: pp. 274-294, 302-314
PCL: pp. 220-233
READING LIST book

WEEK 10/October 31: Turning the Century
READ: READING LIST book
November 2: NO CLASS MEETING: Donath at WASC
WEEK 11/November 7 and 9: THE RISE OF MODERNISM IN AMERICA
PCL: 156, 234-235,
READING LIST book

WEEK 12/November 14 and 16: MODERN AMERICA
READ:  FA: pp. 370-379
PCL: 236-243
**Paper 3 due at the start of the class meeting on November 16**

WEEK 13/November 21 and 23: THE ’30S AND WWII
READ:  FA: pp. 388-40, 429-433

WEEK 14/November 28 and November 30: THE POST-WAR WORLD
READ:  FA: pp. 456-471, 498-510
PCL: 244-260
**take-take home essay for test 2 handed out in class on November 30**

WEEK 15/December 5 and 7: FROM POST WAR TO POST-MODERN
READ:  FA: pp. 515-520, 523-546, 555-559
PCL: pp. 261-27
**Test 2: December 7/essay due at beginning of exam period**
HRS/HIST 168
Images of America
Reading List
Students must choose one work from this list as an additional required text for the course. Begin reading your choice as soon as possible. PAPER 3 WILL DEFINITELY BE THE BOOK YOU CHOSE. You may also want to use the book you choose in paper 4 and as part of your final exam essay. YOU MAY CHOOSE A BOOK THAT IS NOT ON EITHER OF THE LISTS—JUST CHECK WITH ME FIRST.

Books published before 1918
ADAMS. The Education of Henry Adams
ALCOTT. Little Women
BROWN. Wieland
CHOPIN. The Awakening
COOPER. Last of the Mohicans
CRANE. The Red Badge of Courage
DOUGLASS. The Autobiography of Frederick Douglass
DREISER. Sister Carrie
FRANKLIN. Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin
GILMAN. Herland
HAWTHORNE. The House of Seven Gables or Scarlet Letter
JACOBS. Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl
JACKSON. Ramona
JEWETT. The Country of Pointed Firs
MELVILLE. Moby Dick
STOWE. Uncle Tom’s Cabin
THOREAU. Walden
TWAIN. The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn OR Roughing It OR The Innocents Abroad
WHARTON. House of Mirth

Books published after WWI
ALEXIE. The Lone Ranger and Tonto
ANAYA. Bless Me, Ultima
ANDERSON. Winesberg, Ohio
BALDWIN. Tell Me how Long the Train's Been Gone
BARTHELME. Snow White
BELOW. Herzog
BULOSAN. America is in the Heart (non fiction)
CATHTER. Death Comes for the Archbishop
CHANDLER. Farewell My Lovely
CLEAVER. Soul on Ice (non fiction)
DIDION. Run River
DOCTOROW. Ragtime OR The Book of Daniel
DUBOIS. The Souls of Black Folks (non-fiction)
ELLISON. Invisible Man
FITZGERALD. The Great Gatsby
HELLER. Catch 22
HEMINGWAY. For Whom . .
HESS. Dispatches
KEROUAC. On the Road
KINGSTON. Woman Warrior
LESEUR. The Girl
MAILER. The Executioner’s Song
O’CONNOR. Wise Blood
OKADA. NoNo Boy
RODRIGUEZ. Hunger of Memory
STEGNER. Angle of Repose
MORRISON. The Bluest Eye
STEINBECK. Grapes of Wrath
TAN. Joy Luck Club
UPDIKE. Couples
YEZIERSKA. The Bread Givers
Write this essay on any work of visual art you find in Francis Pohl’s *Framing America* (you don’t have to choose a work we’ve discussed in class.)

Begin your essay with a section titled “OBSERVATION.” An observation is a statement that can be verified by consideration of specific evidence in the work of art under consideration. In this portion of your essay begin by asking yourself, “what do I see?”

What details attract your attention? You should begin this section with sentences that begin, “I notice that. . . .” Include information about:

- Your first impression of the work. What is memorable or convincing about the work?
- Additional details you notice—in particular, you might describe the textures, colors, shapes that stand out the most to you. Why did you notice them, why/how did they capture your attention? Where does your eye linger as you view the image?
- What is the work’s subject or function?
- Is there an organizing motif or theme in the work? What has been included/what has been left out?

The second section of your essay should be titled “REFLECTIONS,” “INFERENCES,” or “INTERPRETATIONS”. In this part of your essay, ask yourself, “what can I reasonably infer from what I noticed about the work of art?”

Remember to restrict your inferences/reflective ideas to what you observe. Write about:

- What response do you have to the work, and what elements cause that response?
- What do you think the maker/artist intended?
- What messages about class, gender, society, race, history, etc. does the work seem to send? Choose one as your focus.
- For whom was this work of art intended (who made up the potential/intended audience?)
- Anything else you think of that helps you explain the “power” and meaningfulness of the work of art you chose.

The final section of your essay should be entitled “CONCLUSIONS.” In the conclusion of your essay, explain why you think the work of art you chose is important to understanding (something about) American history and culture.

**HOUSEKEEPING:**

- Use the name and maker of your work of art as the title of your essay
- Write 4-6 pages, double space your text with sufficient margins to allow me to write comments
- Highlight or underline your paper’s thesis sentence
- End your paper with a word count
- Staple the pages of your paper—no spines or covers, please
- Bring two copies of your essay to class on the 21st
You become so upset that you decide to join a lawsuit to stop the bonfire and file a "friend of the court" brief defending the READING LIST book you chose for this class. Your brief should be a 4-6 page essay that builds an organized, focused and logical argument for your book's value to understanding something (—you decide what) about American arts, ideas or cultural behaviors.

Why should your book be preserved for 21st century readers?

**BE SURE YOU WRITE ABOUT:**

*Place and Time:* Discuss the physical setting and historical time period of the action in your book. There probably should be some important relationships between time, place, theme, plot and characters that will be relevant to your "save-the book" argument.

*Plot:* What happens in your narrative (don't just list events, search for a pattern of selected, causally related events that contain some sort of identifiable conflict). For example, what is the major conflict in the story; what values/qualities does the author associate with each side of the conflict; how is the conflict organized? How is it resolved?

*Characters:* Who are the main and subsidiary characters in your narrative? What are they like? Do they represent any American stereotypes or ideals?

*Theme:* be sure you understand the difference between subject (topic) and theme. Subject is what the work of art is about--it can be stated in a phrase or word. Theme is what your book "says" about the subject--the theme should apply to the world of people's lives outside of the book. Usually the theme deals with one of four areas of human experience: what human beings are like; the nature of society and social life; the nature of our ethical responsibilities; what humankind's relationship is/should be to the world. NB: As you work on this, you need to keep in mind that there may be more than one theme in your book—just focus on the one you think are most important to your "American" argument and remember that there is NO single "right" way to do this part of the assignment (and that, of course, drives the THOUGHT POLICE crazy.)

You can add additional topics that you think might strengthen your argument.

If you like, you can consult 2-3 "outside experts" and quote them in your piece as long as you acknowledge them correctly.

**THE USUAL HOUSEKEEPING DETAILS:**
Underline or highlight your thesis sentence
End your paper with a word count
Staple the pages of your essay
Bring two copies of your essay to class on October 19
Do you think that things made in the same time period will "look" the same or reveal the same American concerns, assumptions or values?

Write an essay in which you support your position by comparing two American works of different kinds (NOT two paintings or two buildings or two works of literature) and discussing their similarities or differences in terms of the relationship of how they look to a single specific American value or behavior.

Begin the assignment by choosing a time period (the two works you choose should have been created within 25 years of each other) OR a specific American value and then find your two works of art.

What matters in this essay is the “argument” you make—three possible framing arguments occur to me (although you may come up with a unique and different position:)

Easiest Response/Yes: these two works of art made in the same time period (created within 25 years of one another) look the same and reveal the same values or concerns

Easy Response/ No: these two works of art (created within 25 years of one another) look nothing alike OR reveal very different values or concerns

Most Challenging Response/No: these two works of art (made in different centuries) reveal an American value or assumption that transcends a specific historical time

THE USUAL HOUSEKEEPING DETAILS:
- Underline or highlight your topic sentence
- End your paper with a word count that includes the previous 2 papers as well
- Staple the pages of your essay
- For this assignment, you need only bring one copy of your essay to class
HRS/HIST 168: Images of America
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 assignments)
- 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 of 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.
- 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.