

# Syllabus

## **HIS 373H "From the Gilded Age to the Jazz Age: The Formation of Modern American Culture, 1877-1929"**

University of Toronto at Mississauga, Fall 2002  
Mondays, 3 - 5 p.m., NB room 144  
Prof. Elspeth Brown

### Office Hours:

office: North Building, rm. 249  
office hours: M, 12:00 - 3:00 and by appt.  
phone: 905-828-3749  
email: <mailto:elspeth.brown@utoronto.ca>

This course examines the major social, political, and cultural developments of American society from the end of Reconstruction to the stock market crash of 1929. Specific topics to be covered include: the rise of mass culture; the growth of the corporation; labor politics; the rise of Jim Crow; Progressive Era reforms; WWI; woman suffrage; the Harlem Renaissance; and the "roaring" 1920s. We will explore the relationship between society and culture, with a view towards understanding how language and representation both mediate and construct social and political transformations. Along the way, we will see how specific groups of Americans, such as black middle class reformers, the white middle class, African-American workers, Mexican and Lithuanian immigrants, and feminists worked with available social and political tools to transform American society and culture.

**Course Format:** The course is a combination of lecture and discussion. In the first hour, I will lecture on a topic related to the reading. In the second hour, we will have a discussion of the assigned readings, which may sometimes result in me delivering small mini-lectures. On the whole, though, during this second hour I will be asking you for your analysis and interpretation of the material; your intellect and hard work will carry the class. As a result, you must come to class having read the material for the entire week. You will be expected to participate in discussion in an informed manner. As a means of encouraging such informed participation, there will be short, 5 question quizzes on the reading for many of the weeks, as indicated below.

**Course Texts:** available for purchase in the bookstore.

- Ida B. Wells, *Southern Horrors and Other Writings: The Anti-Lynching Campaign of Ida B. Wells, 1892-1900* (Bedford 1997).
- Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (1906)

- Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Columbia UP, 1999).
- E. Brown and S. Trevithick, *A Guide to Writing in History and American Studies* (2002), a pamphlet available through the instructor, required for the course.
- Course Packet: article marked with "o" will be available to students in xerox form, through the Duplicating Center.

### **Course Requirements:**

1. *Attendance.* Required. You must come to class having done all the required reading.

2. *Participation:* I expect you to participate actively in class discussion. Be prepared for me to ask you directly your viewpoint about the reading, or material we are analyzing together. This is how I assess the participation grade: A--present nearly all the time; familiar with the reading being discussed; student has something to say in nearly all discussions; B--present most of the time; familiar with the reading being discussed; speaks more often than not; C--Student present but quiet, or student frequently absent from class, though talkative; D--Student frequently absent, speaks seldom, not familiar with the reading; F--Student has missed more than half of the class meetings.

3. *Papers:* Paper #1: 5 page analysis of a primary source (details in class), requiring no additional research, that has a recognizable argument about the material and Paper #2: 10-page essay, with an argument, that uses at least one of the assigned sources from class, as well as six additional secondary sources (at least three journal articles and at least three books) to analyze primary sources that I will either provide for you or direct you towards. You will be required to narrow your interests to a researchable topic, conduct library research, formulate a defensible interpretation of the material, and present a 10 page, fully documented research paper. Further details on both assignments in class.

4. *Quizzes:* there will be six short, in-class quizzes, on the reading, administered at the start of the second hour. These are short, easy quizzes; if you read the material, you'll do fine. I'm not expecting any brilliant analysis; just that you have done the reading.

5. *Test:* there will be a 1hr. in-class test on the assigned readings, scheduled at the end of the semester. This test will ask you to pull the course materials together to make some broader argument about the period.

**Assignment weights:** Participation 10%; Paper #1, 20%; Paper #2, 35%; quizzes 10%, test, 25%..

## **Other Details:**

1. Late work will be marked down 3 points per day late, or 1/3 letter grade, not including Sat. and Sun. Work turned in more than seven days (not including Sat. and Sun.) after the due date will not be accepted. Deadline extensions will be made only when students present the instructor with compelling reasons for their inability to meet the deadline, with satisfactory documentation.

2. Test make-ups: there will be none unless the student can provide evidence of a true emergency, with satisfactory documentation. Under no circumstances will I schedule a make-up for a student who fails to contact me within 24 hours of a missed test.

3. All written work is due at the start of the class.

4. Citing sources: follow guidelines spelled out in course web-site or in E. Brown and S. Trevithick, *A Guide to Writing in History and American Studies* (2002).

5. Papers: writing is important. I pay close attention to grammar, punctuation, style, and citation formats. If you need help with your writing, I am more than happy to work with you, and I also urge you to take advantage of the Academic Skills Center's resources. I WILL mark off for errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar, and citation formats at the rate of 1 point per mistake. So, if you have five comma splices in your paper, you'll have five points off. If you don't know what a comma splice is, it's time to find out. Also, all students must retain drafts and other working notes for their papers, in case I need to ask for them.

6. Plagiarism is, basically, the act of using the ideas or words of another person as one's own original work, and is therefore a gross form of cheating. The way to avoid plagiarism is, in part, to learn how and when to cite your sources. To learn more about plagiarism (what it is, how to avoid it, and what the penalties are if caught), click here, or consult the booklet, required for this course, entitled *A Guide to Writing in History and American Studies* (2002). There are other rules of academic conduct all students must familiarize themselves with, such as not handing in a paper for a class when you've already submitted the same paper to another class for credit. All students must be familiar with these academic regulations, available at <http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/rules.htm#behaviour>.

## **Week 1: The "Gilded" Age**

Mon. Sept. 9: introduction to course and lecture: Cultural History and the "Gilded" Age

## **Week 2: Racial Violence and the Jim Crow South**

Mon. Sept. 16: lecture: Gender, Race and Power in the post-Reconstruction South;

discussion of assigned reading.

In-class quiz this week on the reading

### the week's reading

Ida B. Wells, *Southern Horrors and Other Writings: The Anti-Lynching Campaign of*

Ida B. Wells, 1892-1900 (Bedford 1997), pp. 47-158; pp, 209-215.

To Do: go to the Jim Crow Museum (racist imagery) website at <https://ferris.edu/HTMLS/News/jimcrow/>. Click on and read the supporting material for the following links: "who was Jim Crow"; "the Brute caricature" and "The Mammy caricature," and be prepared to discuss in class. Explore other links as you wish. Download examples to discuss in class as relevant (the classroom is not wired, unfortunately).

Suggested web-sites:

1. Documenting the American South- <http://docsouth.unc.edu/dasmain.html>
2. Jim Crow Museum (racist imagery)- <https://ferris.edu/HTMLS/News/jimcrow/>

## **Week 3: American Nervousness**

Mon. Sept. 23: Lecture: American Nervousness; discussion on assigned reading

In-class quiz this week on the reading

### the week's reading

George M. Beard, "Causes of American Nervousness," from *American Nervousness* (1881): 96-132; also read the 1 page bio blurb.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892) (and bio blurb).

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "Why I Wrote the Yellow Wallpaper" (1913), on line at <http://www.kino-eye.com/yp/whyiwrote.html>.

Gail Bederman, "Teaching Our Sons to Do What We Have Been Teaching the Savages to Avoid"; G. Stanley Hall, "Racial Recapitulation, and the Neurasthenic Paradox," from *Manliness and Civilization* (Chicago 1995), 77-120.

Suggested web-site:

The Yellow Wallpaper Site, from UTexas Austin:

<http://www.cwrl.utexas.edu/~daniel/amlit/wallpaper/wallpaper.html>

## **Week 4: Owners, Managers, and Corporate Capitalism**

Mon. Sept. 30: lecture: Scientific Management and Ways of Seeing; discussion on assigned reading

In-class quiz this week on the reading

the week's reading

Frederick Taylor, *The Principles of Scientific Management* (1911), 30-48 .

Daniel Nelson, *Managers and Workers: Origins of the 20th Century Factory System in the United States, 1880-1920* (1995, 2nd ed), 3-79.

**Week 5: Immigrants in Industrial America**

Mon. Oct. 7: first hour: LIBRARY CLASS: how to do secondary source research in American History (meet at library); second hour lecture/discussion on Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906).

the week's reading :

Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (1906).

Suggested web-sites:

1. The Great Chicago Fire and the Web of Memory (Chicago Historical Society)  
<http://www.chicagohs.org/fire/index.html>

*Assignment Due:* Paper #1, 5 pp., due on Monday Oct. 7. at the start of class, on Sinclair's *The Jungle*.

*Topics and Instructions for Paper #2 handed out*

**Week 6: No class due to Thanksgiving; work on your essays, and get a start on Enstad.**

**Week 7: Labor Politics and Popular Culture**

Mon. Oct. 21 lecture: The Birth of Mass Culture; lecture/discussion.

In-class quiz this week on the reading

the week's reading

Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Columbia UP, 1999), 1-83.

Suggested web-sites:

1. Early cinema- <http://www.earlycinema.com/>

To Do: come see me in office hours if you want help on your research papers!

### **Week 8: Progressive Reform**

Mon. Oct. 28: lecture: Progressivism; discussion on assigned reading

#### the week's reading

Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Columbia UP, 1999), 83-209.

*Assignment Due* on Monday, Oct. 28: topic and bibliography for your paper. The bibliography must include at least one of the assigned sources from class, as well as six additional secondary sources--at least three journal articles and at least three books. Your discussion of your topic should be 1-2 paragraphs and should include which topic you have chosen, as well as what research questions you are posing, and why. This portion of your assignment is required, and those students who do not submit the bibliography and topic will have 10 points deducted from their paper grade. To get a start on sources, see the bibliographical essay to Lynn Dumenil's *A Modern Temper*; it is photocopied at the end of your course packet.

### **Week 9: The New Woman**

Mon. Nov. 4: lecture on The New Woman; discussion of readings. Think of Enstad's women workers as you read the selections below. Are they "new women"? Why or why not? In what ways can we understand popular representations of the "new woman" as a "racial project" (Omi+ Winant)?  
In-class quiz this week on the reading

#### the week's reading

John H. Adams, Jr. "Rough Sketches: A Study of the Features of the New Negro Woman," from *The Voice of the Negro* (August 1904) 324-326.

Michael Omi + Howard Winant, "Racial Formation," *Racial Formation in the US* (1994), 53-63.

Inez Hayes Irwin, "The Making of a Militant" (1926) and Phyllis Blanchard, "The Long Journey" (1926) all reprinted in Showalter, ed. *These Modern Women*.

Christine Stansell, "Sexual Modernism," from *American Moderns: Bohemian New York and the Creation of a New Century* (2001): 225-272.

Sara Evans, "Flappers, Freudians, and All that Jazz," from *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America* (1989): 145-196.

Suggested web-sites:

1. Votes for Women: selections from the National Woman Suffrage Association, 1848-1921 (Library of Congress American Memory Project):

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/naw/nawshome.html>

2. Women and Social Movements in the U.S. 1775-1940 (Tom Dublin and Kathryn Sklar, SUNY Binghamton): <http://womhist.binghamton.edu/>

### **Week 10: The Great War and Modern Subjectivity**

Mon. Nov. 11: lecture: Time, Space, and Modernity; discussion of readings.

the week's reading

Steven J. Diner, "The Great War and the Competition for Control," from *A Very Different Age: Americans of the Progressive Era* (1998): 233-264.

President Woodrow Wilson's War Message (1917)

Senator Robert M. La Follette's Antiwar Dissent (1917)

George Creel Looks Back on Selling the War (1920)

A Wobbly Testifies to Vigilante Attack (1917)

The US Gov't Punishes War Protesters: The Espionage Act (1918)

Two Treatments of the Color Question During Wartime (1918)

Suggested web-sites:

1. PBS: The Great War and the Shaping of the Twentieth Century:

<http://www.pbs.org/greatwar/>

2. Metropolitan Lives: The Ashcan Artists and Their New York (NMAA exhibition) <http://nmaa-ryder.si.edu/collections/exhibits/metlives/index.html>

### **Week 11: Writing Workshops**

Mon Nov. 18: For this week, the class will be split into two groups, one half to meet at the first hour, and the other half to meet at the second hour. We will be meeting in a computer lab on campus, location TBA. Each student must bring to class the following: the first two paragraphs of your essay, including your thesis statement; an outline of your essay; and the topic sentence of six of your paragraphs. This material must be in three forms: a hard copy, which I will sign off on; on a computer disk; and (just in case), on your email account. Students who fail to meet this deadline will have 10 points deducted from their final grade. You will spend the hour in class on writing your essay, so bring notes and material for writing if you like, enough to get you through an hour. I will go around and meet with students and discuss writing mechanics, as you work. Your

paper is due next week. The more you have done by this week, the more helpful I can be.

## **Week 12: Migrations**

Mon. Nov. 25: African-American and Mexican Migrations; lecture/discussion  
In-class quiz this week on the reading

### the week's reading

Kimberly Phillips, "1/2 North: The Routes of African-American Migration to Cleveland," from *Alabama North: African-American Migrants, Community, and Working Class Activism in Cleveland, 1915-45* (Illinois, 1999): 15-56.

George Sanchez, "Farewell Homeland" and "Across the Dividing Line," from *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (Oxford 1993), 17-63.

Chad Berry, "Footloose and Dependent: The Pioneers," from *Southern Migrants, Northern Exiles* (Illinois 2000): 11-30

### Suggested web-sites:

1. The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture: Harlem 1900-1940: An African American Community: <http://www.si.umich.edu/CHICO/Harlem/>

*Assignment Due:* 10 page research paper, due on Monday Nov. 25. Please follow all directions for this paper, listed on the final paper assignment sheet!

*Screening:* Wednesday Nov. 27, 3 pm: *The Jazz Singer* (1927), room NE134. This is a required screening, and I will only be having one of them. If this time conflicts with another class, make arrangements to see the film on your own by renting it through an independent video store (the big chains probably won't have it). If all else fails, contact Barb Thornhill of Instructional Media Services at x5242. Try and avoid this option, though, since it would not be nice to have her show the film separately to each of the students in the course. Thanks!

## **Week 13: Racial Masquerade in Sight and Sound**

Mon. Dec. 2: lecture/discussion on readings and film; in-class test second hour.  
In-class test this week for the entire course

### the week's reading :

Lynn Dumenil, "Conformity and Community" in *The Modern Temper: American Culture and Society in the 1920s* (1995): 201-249.

Michael Rogin, "Blackface, White Noise: The Jewish Jazz Singer Finds his Voice," *Critical Inquiry* 18 (Spring 1992): 41-70.



Michael Omi + Howard Winant, "Racial Formation," (1994), 53-63. [re-read]



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