

San José State University
American Studies Program (Humanities Department)
AMS1A: American Civilization I — Spring 2021
Sec. 07, 09, & 11 (Lecture) & Sec. 08, 10, & 12 (Seminar)

Instructors: Professors Rebecca Kling, Jorge Gonzalez, & J. Todd Ormsbee

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Professors will respond to email during regular business hours, 8:00-17:00, M-F; email sent after hours, on weekends, or during holidays will be responded to the next business day.

Office Hours: Kling, [Friday 12:00-13:00 and by appointment](#) (Follow Zoom hyperlink)
Gonzalez, Mondays 13:00-14:00, or by appointment (via Zoom)
Ormsbee, Wednesdays 12:00-13:00 or by appointment (via Zoom)

Class Days/Time: Lecture (Sec. 1-3), TTh 13:30-14:45
Seminar (Sec. 4-6), TTh 15:00-16:15

Classrooms: Online Hybrid Model via Zoom
(*See weekly Canvas Modules for meeting invitations.*)

GE/SJSU Studies Category: American Studies 1A/1B is a **two-semester package**. When a student completes **ALL 12 units**, the following requirements have been met:

- Core GE: Area C1 Arts, Area C2 Letters, Third Area C course, Area D2 Comparative Systems, Area D3 Social Issues. When these areas are satisfied by individual course at SJSU, 15 units are earned. Since these areas are covered in this two-course sequence with 12 units, an additional 3-unit GE course of a student's choosing needs to be taken to complete the required 39 units of GE in the lower division.

- American Institutions: U.S. History, U.S. Constitution, California Government graduation requirements are all also covered by completing this course sequence.

Online Resources

Students must acquire access to Canvas for assignments, occasional required and optional readings, collaboration, and communication with the Instructors. Please note that there are two Canvas shells, The Lecture section shell will have all documents related to the course, common assignments, and general announcements; the Seminar section shell will have seminar-related activities, assignments, and participation grades.

[Canvas](https://sjsu.instructure.com) (<https://sjsu.instructure.com>); [Spartan App Portal](https://one.sjsu.edu) (<https://one.sjsu.edu>) [username & password required]

Course Description

AMS 001A. American Civilization I: American culture examined through political, literary, artistic, economic and social development. American values, ideas and institutions from popular culture as well as traditional sources. 3 units. (*SJSU Course Catalogue 2012*)

American Civilization I & II (AMS 1A & 1B) provide a thematic and chronological look at the rich and diverse culture that has developed in what is now the United States, from the era of the First Americans (American Indians), through constant waves of immigration from around the world, to the present. American Studies is a particular way of looking at the United States that focuses on the cultural and symbolic lives of the people of the United States; as such, our focus will often be more on beliefs and practices rather than on “major figures” or big historical events. Our goal is to understand what “American culture” might be, or if such a thing even exists or is possible, given how diverse the people of the United States have been and are. American Studies is also interdisciplinary: That means that we will use the intellectual tools from a broad array of the social sciences, humanities, and even physical sciences to understand the people of the United States.

AMS 1A & 1B are divided into two interwoven components: a lecture period that rotates among the 3 professors, followed by separate seminar groups headed by each of the three professors in which we will discuss and analyze culturally significant works from the period in question. Seminar instructors will have the same reading schedule, but may have divergent classroom requirements. Attendance at all class meetings—both lectures and seminar—is required for maximum benefit from the course.

Course Format

Technology Intensive, Online Courses

This is an online course that will require intensive technology engagement. You will need a computer with video and audio capabilities, reliable internet connectivity, and access to the Canvas for a regular weekly interaction.

We will screen a number of films that will require you to stream from select streaming services, such as Kanopy and Amazon video rentals to watch on your own time or via professor scheduled watch parties. Additionally, I highly recommend that students adopt Overdrive, an app that makes available eBooks from San Jose’s and other local public libraries. Several of the selected readings can be borrowed in eBook format through this app service.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

GE/SJSU Studies Learning Outcomes (LO), for students who complete both AMS1A and AMS1B:

- Area C1

- Area C2 Letters
- Area D2 Comparative Systems and Area D3 Social Issues
- American Institutions: *U.S. History; U.S. Constitution and California Government*

*Please See Canvas, Lecture Shell, for specific SLOs for American Civilization I & II (AMS1A/1B)

Required Texts/ Readings

- Jill Lepore. *The Truths: A History of the United States*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2019. ISBN- 9780393357424 **[Required]**
- Octavia Butler. *Kindred* (Edition 1). Boston: Beacon Press, 2004. ISBN- 9780807083697 **[Required]**
- *The United State Constitution: A Graphic Adaptation*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2008. ISBN- 9780809094707 **[Required]**

Classroom Engagement Protocol

Civility:

- Respect of your fellow students is critical to creating a learning atmosphere. In our course we may be discussing controversial issues or even matters that are personally important to someone in the class. You are encouraged to disagree and argue with each other and the professor, but it is imperative that you do so respectfully and without personal attacks. Any form of hate speech will result in ejection from the course for the day.

Preparedness for Class:

- Read for retention, and Study to learn. To succeed in this course, students should arrive having read the assignment for the day with questions and comments ready. Maximize your learning by studying (read and review to draw connections and think critically and synthetically, NOT just to repeat rote information).

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures, as well as current deadlines and penalties, for adding and dropping classes. See the website for [Academic Advising and Retention Services](http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/>) for information, including the late drop policy.

Assignments & Grading Policy

Workload Notice: Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty- five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.” (Senate Policy Recommendation S12-3, May 2012)

AMS1A (lecture and seminar) is a 6-credit course: 6 hours class time + 12 hours preparation = 18 hours per week. Below is the approximate out-of-class time allocation for the **average student** per week:

- 2-3 hours for Lecture Reading
- 4-5 hours for Seminar Reading

4 hours for assignments & study
 TOTAL: 10-12 hours/week outside of class

Final Examination or Evaluation (Multimodal Final Project)

The multimodal final project will be an assignment that will cap your course participation at the end of the semester. The final project will be a multimodal learning based assignment that will allow students to show mastery of the class content through their own learning style. A more detailed assignment sheet will be distributed during the semester.

<i>Assignments</i>	<i>SLOS & GELOS</i>
25% Exams (non-cumulative):	
10% Exam 1	<i>Areas C1, C2, D2, D3, American Institutions</i>
12.5% Exam 2	<i>Areas C1, C2, D2, D3, American Institutions</i>
12.5% Exam 3	<i>Areas C1, C2, D2, D3, American Institutions</i>
45% Independent & Creative Thinking Assignments:	
12.5% Founding Documents & Contemporary Issues	<i>American Institutions</i>
12.5% Kindred Analysis	<i>Application of knowledge & skills; all Areas</i>
20% Issues in American Cultures Before the Civil War	<i>Application of knowledge & skills; all Areas</i>
15% 3 Periodic Lepore Quizzes	
	<i>Application of knowledge & skills; all Areas</i>
15% Seminar Participation (see below)	
	<i>Formative activities for all Areas</i>

Grading Standards & Evaluation of Student Work

Information for GE: “This course must be passed with a C- or better as a CSU graduation requirement.”

Each assignment/ activity will have specific requirements. Individual assignment sheets and instructions will be available as needed. See separate syllabus for specific Seminar participation instructions. Generally speaking, we apply the following rules of thumb when grading student work:

“A” work (90-100%) demonstrates mastery of the material, i.e., working knowledge of key information, the ability to apply and use knowledge gained in class critically. “C” work (70-79%) demonstrates an acceptable level of retention with a lower level of familiarity of key concepts and facts, and may struggle to apply or use their knowledge; there is room for improvement here, but the student is well enough along to advance to the next stage of their education. “B” (80-89%) work falls somewhere between, and can vary widely from student to student. Both “D” and “F” work have serious problems with accuracy, skills, retention, and application.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, **such as academic integrity, AEC accommodations, etc.** will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ Syllabus Information web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material:

University Policy S12-7, <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf> requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course. "Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material." If you wish to record the class, you must request permission in writing and indicate whether for the whole semester or on a class by class basis. In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well. "Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent."

AMS1A S21 (Gonzalez, Kling, & Ormsbee)

Week	Dates	Lectures	Seminars [due before class] PDFs & URLs available on Canvas [for seminar participation assignments, see Seminar Syllabus]	Weekly Readings & Assignments
1	Jan 28	Introduction: American Exceptionalism vs. American Cultures—Themes and Issues		begin reading Butler, <i>Kindred</i> begin reading Lepore, Intro through Ch. 2
2	Feb 2	Indigenoussness, Colonization, and the Founding (ca. 1490-1790)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Butler, <i>Kindred</i>, “Prologue” Lepore, Intro
		A New World View: From 1492 to the Darker Side of Modernity	Indigenous Accounts of Invasion <i>Broken Spears</i> , Ch. 2, 10, 11, 13, & 15 ; and Diaz, “The March to Cingapacinga and the Return to Cempoala” [16th century Mexico]	
	Feb 4	Native American Orature/Creation Stories	Iroquois [Haudenosaunee] Creation Story; Navajo [Diné] Creation Story”; The Winnebago [Ho-Chunk] Trickster Cycle; and selections of Native American Oral Poetry	
3	Feb 9	Chesapeake Colonies and the Invention of Race in North America	Equiano, Ch. 1 from <i>Narrative of the Life of Olaudo Equiano</i> [1789]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Butler, <i>Kindred</i>, “The River” Lepore, Ch. 1
	Feb 11	The Rowlandson Captivity Narrative	Mary Rowlandson, <i>The Sovereignty and Goodness of God</i> [1682]	
4	Feb 16	Colonial Bodies: Desire and Sex in the “New World”	Bradstreet, selected poetry (URL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Butler, <i>Kindred</i>, “The Fire” Lepore Ch. 2
	Feb 18	The American Enlightenment	Thomas Paine “Common Sense” [1776]; Madison, Federalist No. 10; Franklin, “Way to Wealth” (PDF)	
5	Feb 23	Haiti and the Search for Liberty: From Santo Domingo to Baltimore (1500-1804)	Cuvier “The race from which we are descended” [1797] ; Jefferson [1787] “The Difference is fixed in nature,” from <i>Notes on the State of Virginia</i> [1781]; Hegel “Geographical Basis of World History” & “Colonialism in the Internal Logic of Capitalist Modernity” from <i>Lectures on Philosophy of World History</i> [1822]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> finish Lepore Intro through Ch. 2 Lepore Quiz #1 (Intro-Ch.2) due by Noon 2/25
	Feb 25	<i>These Truths</i> Panel (“Introduction” to Ch. 2)	Hennessey & McConnell, pp. 1-77	
6	Mar 2	Native American Prophecy	Hennessey & McConnell, pp. 78-149	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Butler, <i>Kindred</i>, “The Fall” begin reading Lepore, Ch. 3-5 Democracy & the U.S. Founding Assignment available
	Mar 4	The New Republic & the Creation of “American” Culture(s) (ca. 1787-1830)		
		Republican Motherhood, Women and Nationhood	Judith Sargent Murray, “On the Equality of the Sexes” [1790]; Lydia Maria Child “The Quadroons” [1842]	
7	Mar 9	“King Cotton”: Capitalism, Slavery and the Consummation of Race in the U.S. (1750-1865)	Thoreau, “Ch. 2: Where I Lived, and What I Lived For” and “Conclusion” from <i>Walden</i> [1854]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lepore, Ch. 3 work on Democracy & the U.S. Founding
	Mar 11	American Romanticism: The “Dark” Romantics”	Herman Melville, “Bartleby the Scrivener” [1853]	
8	Mar 16	Transcendentalism & Asian Philosophy	Emerson, “Self-Reliance” [1841]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Democracy & the U.S. Founding Assignment due 3/15 by 5 p.m. Butler, <i>Kindred</i>, “The Fight” Lepore, Ch. 4
	Mar 18	Exam 1 (covers all materials from Jan 28 through Mar 16)		

Week	Dates	Lectures	Seminars [due before class] PDFs & URLs available on Canvas [for seminar participation assignments, see Seminar Syllabus]	Weekly Readings & Assignments
9	Mar 23	The Second Age of Discovery: Natural Science, American Culture, and Manifest Destiny	Clark, Letter [1806]; selected American landscape paintings from 1810-1865 (Canvas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Butler, <i>Kindred</i>, "The Storm" Lepore, Ch. 5
	Mar 25	The Trail of Tears	Apress, <i>Son of the Forest</i> Ch. 1 & 2; and "The Women Who Tried to Prevent the Trail of Tears"	
Mar 29-Apr 2		Spring Break		
10	Apr 6	Love, Sex, and Gender in the Early Republic	Melville, Ch. IV "The Counterpane"; Ch. X "A Bosom Friend"; Ch. LXXII "The Monkey Rope"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> finish Lepore, Ch. 3-5 Lepore Quiz #3 (Ch. 3-5) due by Noon 4/8
	Apr 8	<i>These Truths</i> Panel (Ch. 3-5)	Seminar professor's discretion	
11	Apr 13	Freeing the Black Soul: From Righteous Violence to the Politics of Resisting Domination (1740-1850)	Turner, Confessions [1831]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Butler, <i>Kindred</i>, "The Rope" begin reading Lepore, Ch. 6-8
	Apr 15	Sectionalism, Race, Violence, & American Culture(s) (ca. 1820-1865)		
		Black Face Minstrelsy, Freak Shows, and Middle Class Respectability	Stowe, excerpts from <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> [1852]	
12	Apr 20	Women of Color on a New Nation: Slavery and Standards for a New Womanhood (Colonial Period-1860)	S. Truth, "Ain't I a Woman" [1851]; Jacobs, selections from <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> [1858]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Butler, <i>Kindred</i>, "Epilogue" Lepore, Ch. 6 Kindred Literary Analysis assignment available
	Apr 22	Gender in Slave Narratives and Abolition	Ellen and William Craft, excerpt from <i>Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom</i> [1860]	
13	Apr 27	Cultures of Enslaved Black Folks before the Civil War	Hurston, excerpt from <i>Mules and Men</i> [1935]; slave songs (see Canvas); Longfellow, "The Slave Singing at Midnight" [1842]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lepore, Ch. 7 work on Kindred Literary Analysis
	Apr 29	Alta California, War, and Shifting Borders (1840-1870)	selections from The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Articles I-XII, [1848] (PDF); Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government" [1849]	
14	May 4	From the Cult of Domesticity to the Occult: Women in the Nineteenth Century	Emily Dickinson selected poetry; Beecher, "The Strange Woman"; Poe "Ligeia"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lepore, Ch. 8 Kindred Literary Analysis due 5/7 by midnight Topics for Critical Essay available
	May 6	Between Freedom and Bondage: Slavery, American Culture, and Frederick Douglass on the 4th of July	Lincoln, "Address on Colonization" [1862]; and Douglass "What is the 4th of July to the Slave?" [1852]	
15	May 11	Walt Whitman, American Violence, and War	<i>Song of Myself</i> [1855] (excerpts); "When Lilacs in Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" & "A Sight in Camp in the Daybreak Gray and Dim" [1865]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> finish Lepore, Ch. 6-8 Lepore Quiz #3 (Ch. 6-8) due by Noon 5/13 Study Guide for Exam 2 available
	May 13	<i>These Truths</i> Panel (Ch. 6-8)	Seminar professor's discretion	
FINAL Part 1:		Exam 2 (covers all materials from Apr 7-May 13) due on or before Thursday, May 20 at 14:30 (per Final Exam schedule for Lecture)		
FINAL Part 2:		Critical Essay: American Cultures before the Civil War (cumulative; covers concepts from the entire semester) due on or before Monday, May 24 at 17:00 (per Final Exam schedule for Seminar)		