CAST 235: Debating Citizenships  
Spring 2016  
T&Th 1:30-2:45  
King 343

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*** This course counts for the GSFS major ***

This interdisciplinary course examines how Americans have historically negotiated the inclusions and exclusions of citizenship through a study of expressive cultures. We will examine how cultural forms like photography, film, literature and social media along with the law address changing notions of citizenship through contested ideals about gender, sexuality, race, ability and social class. Courses on citizenship frequently use empirical approaches to assess social conditions, political struggles and legal developments. Complementing such approaches, this course uses a cultural studies approach that relies on two interrelated frameworks. First, we will comparatively explore how marginalized people, both those navigating borders and those with longer historical roots within national boundaries, mobilize concepts of citizenship to foster community formation within the United States and across transnational sites of identification and belonging. This framework addresses the tensions between dominant ideals and marginalized communities who struggle to reconfigure notions of national identity. Secondly, we will examine how expressive cultures function as formative sites for contesting ideals of citizenship. Americans have long hailed innovations in media technologies as democratic spaces even as commentators criticize popular culture for sustaining normative ideals of citizenship. We will address these competing possibilities by studying how different media represent issues of belonging, visibility, and marginalization. Themes that we will work with throughout the semester include self/other, alien/citizen, nationalism/transnationalism, and the varied impacts of legal principles and the political economy.

Course Objectives:
• To utilize intersectional and interdisciplinary approaches to the study of American cultures;
• To develop a historical perspective on the significant of expressive cultures in shaping concepts of citizenship;
• To understand the varied meanings and practices of citizenship in relation to and often-times at odds with the goals of the nation-state;
• To understand and utilize key terms in the field of Comparative American Studies, including: intersectionality, agency and structure, and nation, nationalism, and transnationalism;
• To improve critical thinking through discussion and writing assignments;
• To pursue a particular interest, improve information literacy, and develop writing skill.

Required Readings:


All required books are on reserve at Mudd Library, and are available for purchase at the college bookstore. Readings marked with an (BB) on the syllabus are available on our Blackboard site under the “Course Readings” heading. I highly recommend that you print out the online readings and bring them with you to class.

*This course uses Blackboard for announcements, handouts, articles, and assignments. I do not use Facebook, Twitter or other social media so please check your email regularly.*

I - GENERAL PRINCIPLES

**Learning Community**

The academic study of privilege and inequality often raises controversial issues that can evoke strong personal feelings. There are few right answers to the questions we are exploring. Therefore, I ask that everyone in this course commit to making this classroom a learning community -- a space for people to explore new ideas, take intellectual risks, and engage in open and honest debate. Certainly, people will have different opinions and everyone begins the course with a different skill set and knowledge base. Our objective is decidedly *not* consensus but rather to consider a range of perspectives and to develop our own positions with greater insight. In order for this to occur, we need learn communally from each other.

Content Alert: please be aware that some issues discussed in this course may provoke difficult reactions for some. I cannot always anticipate those reactions, but will always respect any student’s need to take care of themselves in response to them. For an excellent discussion, see Andrea Smith, “Beyond the Pros and Cons of Trigger Warnings: Collectivizing Healing,” July 13, 2014. http://andrea366.wordpress.com/2014/07/13/beyond-the-pros-and-cons-of-trigger-warnings-collectivizing-healing/

**Reading**

This course requires significant reading. Do not try to read every word; instead, focus on key arguments, methods, and sources. If you find you are having trouble finishing the reading, please see me so we can identify effective strategies for completing the assignments.

II - COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- **PARTICIPATION (10%)**
  
  Students are expected to participate in classroom discussions. It is thus crucial that you come to class prepared to discuss the readings listed for each class session. Since an important component of the course is class discussions, **regular attendance is required** (see attendance policy below). Attendance in class, however, does not in itself constitute participation. If you are uncomfortable speaking in class, please see me to discuss strategies for your participation.

- **LEARNING GROUPS (5%)**
  
  In order to extend our discussions beyond the classroom, students will be required to participate in a learning group. (These groups will be assigned during the second week of class). Groups of
4-5 students will meet outside of class three times per half term. The purpose of these groups is to enable you to conduct in-depth discussions of the readings and class discussions.

Suggestion: A couple of times during the term, consider as an option that your group view a relevant film, or attend a college-sponsored lecture or event as the basis for enhancing your discussion of a particular set of course materials.

Two reports are required for each group over the course of the semester.
Each group must prepare and submit to BB a 3-4 page report about your discussions of the course material by March 19 for the first module and May 7 for second module. Each report should include the names of group members, and specify the topics you discussed at each session. The rest of the report should entail a report on your engagement with those issues.

• PRIMARY SOURCE PROJECT (5%)
In groups of three, students will coordinate and run a supplemental activity or presentation related to that session’s readings (see ** for designated classes in the schedule below). These presentations/activities should take up no more than thirty minutes of class time. Students will sign up for groups based upon their interests early in the semester. Although you are free to design the discussion however you choose, you are required to bring to the class one or two primary sources through which we can address the readings assigned for that day. Options include but are not limited to photographs, a segment of a film, or a news report. Your example(s) should be used to help the class engage critically with the argument(s) of the readings. You are required to meet with me at least 2 days in advance to discuss your plans for the class meeting.

III - WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS
Guidelines for all writing assignments are available at the Assignment section of our BB site.
This W-Int course introduces students to some of the central analytical concepts used in American cultural studies. The writing assignments are designed to foster critical thinking and analytical writing through engagement with these concepts.

• Paper # 1: Writing Citizenships, 3-4 pages. Due February 19 by the start of class (15%)
Write an essay that locates your own citizenship status. Be sure to engage with the readings in order to theoretically situate your understanding of citizenship.

• Paper # 2: Visual Analysis, 4-5 pages. Due March 16 by noon (20%)
Pick a work of art on display at the Allen Art Museum to analyze. Use historical and theoretical materials from the class to contextualize and provide an analytical framework for your essay.

• Paper #3: Critical Analysis, 4-5 pages. Due April 21 by the start of class (20%)
This critical analysis asks you to take one book we have read so far and put it in conversation with other material from the class.

• Final Paper: Due Saturday, May 16, no later than 11am (25%)
Research and analyze a site of contested citizenship from 2001 to the present. You may decide to study protest songs related to a particular event; performance art on the border, or a genre such as zines to consider how this genre navigates citizenship.

  Topic Proposal Due May 1 by 5pm (P/NP)
Submit a brief statement (1-2 paragraphs plus preliminary bibliography) about your project that includes the topic, primary sources, and preliminary research question(s).

  Final Paper, 6-8 pages
ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS
All essays must be double spaced and paginated. Please proofread carefully and comply with the page limits. All references should be properly cited, using either footnotes or endnotes based on the MLA citation style (citation guidelines are available on Blackboard).

All papers must be posted on Blackboard by the start of class unless otherwise noted.

All work will be graded on a 100-point scale. Assignments will be marked down 5 points for every day they are overdue, unless I have given my approval for the assignment to be handed in late before the due date. As a general rule, I will approve extensions in the case of illness or emergencies, but not because you have other work due at the same time. Assignments will not be accepted more than 5 days past the original due date.

Grading
Class participation 10%
Learning Groups 5%
Primary Source Project 5%
Paper #1 15%
Paper #2 20%
Paper #3 20%
Final Project 25%

COURSE POLICIES
Classroom Etiquette
Please arrive a few minutes early so that we may start class on time. Turn off all cell phones. No texting. Laptops are great for consulting readings and note taking, but I take exception to people who use class time to check email, surf the web, or engage in social networking. If you abuse this privilege, I will no longer allow you to use electronic devices in class.

Absences and Late Policy
Tardiness: It is your commitment to this class and your classmates that you will be present and ready to begin work at the start of class. Repeated lateness (after three late arrivals) may result in significant deductions to your final grade in this course.

Attendance will be considered in determining your final grade. Students will be allowed two unexcused absences over the course of the semester without affecting the final grade for the course. The third absence will result in a loss of two points from the participation grade. Students missing four or more classes can receive no higher than a B+ for the course. Students who miss five or more classes may not receive credit for the course. Under special circumstances (prolonged illness, death in the family, etc.), exceptions can be arranged through consultation with the instructor and the Dean of Students’ office.

Late Papers and Extension Requests:
All work will be graded on a 100-point scale. Assignments will be marked down 5 points for every day they are overdue, unless I have given my approval for the assignment to be handed in late before the due date. As a general rule, I will approve extensions in the case of illness or emergencies, but not because you have other work due at the same time, so please plan accordingly. Assignments submitted later than 1 week past the original deadline without a written extension will be given credit only at the instructor’s discretion and will generally earn no greater than a minimum-passing grade. Late papers will receive no written comments.

P/NP
If you are taking this course P/NP, you must fulfill all course obligations and complete all assignments in order to receive credit for the course.
Academic Incompletes at the end of the semester
Extensions on final projects require an approved incomplete from the Dean of Studies. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Honor Code
This course adheres to the policies of the Oberlin College Honor Code and Honor System, which applies to all work submitted for academic credit, whether it is a creative project, a quiz, an exam or a paper. All work must include the statement: “I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment.”

All written work for this class must cite all the sources that you use, whether you quote directly or paraphrase. This is true whether you are using electronic, print, or other published materials.

Incomplete or improper citations are a form of plagiarism. If you are unfamiliar with proper citation formats, or have questions please consult me, a reference librarian, a writing tutor and/or a style manual. Lack of familiarity with proper procedures is not a defense. See Oberlin Honor Code for more information:
http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code2.html

Students with Disabilities
If you need disability-related accommodations for your work in this class, please let me know. Please contact the Office of Disability Services for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs. Support is also available through Student Academic Services.

Accommodations for student athletes
If you are a member of an Oberlin college sports team and your athletic schedule will cause you to miss class during the semester, please inform me immediately.

Extra Help
Please come see me if you ever feel you need extra help, or if you would like to discuss the reading or other topics of interest to you. Besides my regularly scheduled office hours, I am available by appointment. The best way to reach me is email. I am also happy to provide feedback on drafts, whether complete drafts of papers or just a topic sentence. If you want me to review draft writings, please get them to me at least four days before the paper is due so I will have time to read it and get it back to you for revision.

CLASS SCHEDULE

I - Defining Citizenship
Feb. 3: Defining Citizenship
1790 Naturalization Act; 13th, 14th, 15th Amendments, and Arizona SB1070 (BB)

Feb. 5: Foundational Concepts
Reading: Bosniak, Ch. 1 (BB); Somerville, “Notes Towards a Queer History of Naturalization” (BB)

II – Picturing Citizenship
Feb. 10: Picturing Citizenship
Reading: Phu, 1-25; Hua, “Homing Desire” (BB)

Feb. 12: “Photojournalism and the Body Politic”
Guest Speaker: Prof. John Lucaites, Indiana University
Reading: Hariman and Lucaites, “Hands and Feet” (BB)
Feb. 17: Civility and the Ideal of Citizenship **
Reading: Phu, 26-83

Feb. 19: Model Minority – Ideals and Contestations
Reading: Phu, 84-120
**Paper 1 Due**

Feb. 24: Civility as Subversion **
Reading: Phu, 121-157

Feb. 26: Challenging the Myth of Civic Progress
Reading: Tillet, 1-50

Mar. 3: Visuality and the Politics of Intersectionality
Reading: Tillet, 51-132

Mar. 5: Trip to the Allen Art Museum
Meet promptly at 1:20 at the main entrance

Mar. 10: The Politics of Recognition **
Reading: Tillet, 133-178

Mar. 12: Representing Resistance **
Reading: Apel, “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot” (BB); Markell, “Call Us By Our Names” (BB); Smith, “Affect and Respectability Politics” (BB)

Mar. 16: **Paper Due by noon**

Mar. 17: Dis/ability as a marker of Citizenship **
Reading: Bérubé, “Citizenship and Disability” (BB); Carey, “Beyond the Medical Model” (BB); Schweik, “Disability and the Normal Body,” (BB)

Mar. 19: Crip Nationalism
Readings: Markotić and McRuer, “Leading with Your Head” (BB)

Learning Group Reports Due

Mar. 24 & 26: *****SPRING BREAK *****

Mar. 31: Performing Citizenships
Reading: West, 1-60

Apr. 2: Performing Citizenship **
Reading: West, 61-128

Apr. 7: Is Queer Citizenship an Oxymoron?
Reading: West, 129-194

Apr. 9: Differential Belonging **
Reading: Chávez, “Border (In)Securities” (BB)
Apr. 14: Transborder Identifications: Troubling the Category of Citizenship **
Reading: Camacho, 1-61

Apr. 16  Writing Workshop
Reading: Schaeffer, 1-53

Apr. 21: Transnational Care Chains

Paper #3 Due

Apr. 23: Intimacy across Borders
Reading: Schaeffer, 154-107

Apr. 28: Intimacy across Borders **
Schaeffer, 108-162

Apr. 30: Familial Ties and Criminalization
Reading: Das Gupta, “Don’t Deport Our Daddies” (BB); Cacho, Social Death (BB)

May 1  Paper Topic Proposal Due by 5pm

May 5: Limitations of the Citizenship Model **
Reading: Das Gupta, “Rights in a Transnational Era” (BB)

May 7: Writing Workshop and Conclusions
Learning Group Reports Due

Final Paper Due to BB Saturday, May 16, no later than 11am.
ARTICLES ON BLACKBOARD

• Apel, Dora. “‘Hands Up, Don’t Shoot’: Surrendering to Liberal Illusions.” Theory & Event 17, 3 Supplement (2014), n.p.
• Markell, Patchen. “‘Call Us By Our Names.” Theory & Event 17, 3 Supplement (2014), n.p.

BOOKS ON MAIN RESERVE