Welcome to

AM ST 105: POPULAR CULTURE AND FOLKLIFE

SPRING 2007

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Required Electronic Texts Available on ANGEL

Grading

Evaluation of Discussion Forum Postings & Writing Assignments

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   Academic Integrity
   Attendance
   Confidentiality
   Disability Services

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Lesson Summaries (also available within each Lesson folder in the Lessons tab)

Instructor: Simon J. Bronner, Ph.D.,
CONTACT INFORMATION

Mailing Address:
American Studies Program
Penn State Harrisburg
W356 Olmsted
777 West Harrisburg Pike
Middletown, PA 17057-4898

Phone and Email Contact Information:
717-948-6039 (office)
717-948-6201 (staff)
717-948-6724 (fax)
ANGEL mail - checked daily Monday-Friday, and responses made within 24 hours

On-Line Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 1-3 p.m. on AIM (AOL Instant Messenger), ID is "amstdsjb"

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course qualifies for General Education and US cultures requirements.
**Content and Structure:** Folklife is often associated with social traditions in a community or small group, while popular culture is frequently connected to commercial entertainment and products distributed and consumed on a mass scale. One way to understand their relationship in American experience is to look at the way shopping changed as an index of culture—the social implications, that is, of moving from a producer to consumer society. This inquiry involves questions of how a mass consumer culture built on the foundation of the localized American market system in folk culture and why tradition and community developed into what we think of as popular culture. Central to this query is the framing of shopping as an experience rather than a chore, and indeed a distinctively American cultural behavior. To answer these questions, we look at primary texts and interpretations about the rise of a "consumer culture" from folk cultures in the nineteenth century and ask probing questions of how and why it has evolved into the cybershopping world of the twenty first century. Besides talking about shopping as experience to be analyzed, we will critically examine department stores, malls, holidays, and toys as part of popular culture that emerges from the rise of consumerism.

The questions of popular culture and folklife form the dialogue in the course structured as a distinctively American drama. Assignments applying key concepts and methods in each section are scheduled at the conclusion of the three “Acts.”

**Prologue:** *American cultural texts and contexts:* looking at American traditions critically with the visual examples of hunting and fraternity rituals in Central Pennsylvania.

**Act I:** *Folk culture meets up with the industrial giant in America—the rocky rise of mass and consumer culture* (characters include writer Henry D. Thoreau calling for a simple life and art patron Abby Aldrich Rockefeller responding to industrialization and social change from the nineteenth century to the twentieth century)

**Act II:** *Consumerism and popular culture—how shopping changed American culture* (characters include department store moguls Richard Sears, John Wanamaker, Aaron Montgomery Ward, and Sam Walton serving customers and changing the cultural landscape)
Act III: American celebration becomes transformed—holidays and consumer culture (characters include President Abraham Lincoln, illustrator Thomas Nast, and sports executive Pete Rozelle—who shaped holiday customs of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and the Super Bowl, respectively)

Epilogue: The iPod and other technological metaphors for the future of culture which has increasingly become global (cameo appearances by computer moguls Bill Gates, Tony Fadell and Michael Dhuey [inventors of iPod], and Lawrence Roberts [developer of the Internet]) as well considerations of how new technologies have bred new forms of folklife and cybercommunities.

Objectives: By the end of the class, students will have

(1) gained tools of analyzing folklife and popular culture (e.g., ethnography of cultural behavior, rhetorical analysis of a media text);

(2) comprehended major American issues in the relation of folklife and popular culture (e.g., effect of modernization on the rise of individualism and the loss of community, effect of standardization associated with popular culture on diversity and creativity associated with folklife, family and social relations in enactments of folklife and popular culture);

(3) articulated major concepts, sources, and scholarship on folklife and popular culture as a topic of inquiry in American Studies (e.g., cultural hegemony, historical periodization and modernization theory, and praxis theory), and;

(4) expressed in writing techniques of ethnography of a cultural narrative or custom and rhetorical criticism of a media text.
**Instructional Technology:** The course utilizes ANGEL, Penn State’s course management system, available at [http://cms.psu.edu](http://cms.psu.edu) for access to classroom resources, communication tools, and submission by students of their required work. If you’re accessing ANGEL from home, a broadband connection is highly recommended.

**COURSE COMMUNICATION**

Communication is an important part of an online course. Since our class is not meeting face-to-face, students can sometimes feel isolated from the rest of the class and the instructor. To minimize this, there will be several different ways to communicate with each other during this course. You should log into the course daily to check for updates, participate in discussions, access lectures and readings, and complete homework.

**Course Mail:** ANGEL has a built in mail system which is separate from other Penn State email. ANGEL mail should be used for private communications between students or between student and instructor. If you need to contact me by email, please use the ANGEL mail system. I will check my ANGEL mail daily Monday-Friday, and you can expect responses within 24 hours. Do not send questions about the course to my regular Penn State email account. To access mail in ANGEL, click on the **In Touch** tab, then select the link to **Send Course Mail** or **Read Course Mail**.

**Instant Messenger:** I will be available for online office hours through the use of AOL Instant Messenger (AIM), available free from this website [http://www.aol.com/](http://www.aol.com/), on Mondays and Wednesdays from 1-3 p.m. My AIM ID is "amstdsjb".

**Discussion Forums:** ANGEL has discussion forums which will be used for class discussions. Think of posting to a discussion forum as the equivalent to raising your hand in class. If you have a question or comment that could benefit the whole class, post it on one of the course discussion forums instead of using ANGEL mail. There will be at least two discussion forums available all semester in this class for you to utilize on an as needed basis:

- The **Technical Support** discussion forum should be used for questions about how to do something in ANGEL. Technical problems that can’t be handled easily will be referred to the ANGEL Help Desk, and solutions will be shared.
• The **I don't understand** discussion forum should be used for questions about something covered in the text, lecture materials, or assignments. Students are encouraged to answer these questions too!

Other discussion forums have been added for limited periods associated with, and located within, specific lesson folders. **Be sure to post these discussion forum responses by the due dates posted on them.** If you haven't posted your responses by the due date, you will not receive credit for that discussion assignment. All discussion forums can be accessed from the **Lessons** tab in our course in ANGEL.

**Netiquette:** One of the first rules you learn when you communicate online is: Don’t write EVERYTHING IN UPPERCASE! Mixed-case text is easier to read, and uppercase text may indicate SHOUTING. When typing in a message, break it up into short paragraphs to avoid enormous blocks of text. Don’t make it up as you go along. Plan ahead by composing offline and then copying and pasting into an email, discussion forum, drop box, survey, or quiz/exam. (Remember that ANGEL will log you off after 90 minutes of inactivity – typing in a text box is considered inactivity.) Avoid using acronyms since you cannot be sure that all of your readers will know what they mean. Read what you have written before you send/submit it. This will help you spot errors in spelling, phrasing, and grammar, and also help you notice that you don’t sound as friendly as you would like. Make sure your message is worded professionally. Following these few guidelines will help you to be properly understood and get your points across effectively.

**TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND SKILLS**

To access the full range of ANGEL features, the Web browser that you use should display frames, run Java 1.4.1 (or later) and JavaScript, and have cookies enabled. If you use a pop-up blocker, please make sure that it is configured to allow pop-up windows for ANGEL. To make sure these features are set up correctly or find out how to receive assistance with setup, go to ANGEL at [http://cms.psu.edu](http://cms.psu.edu), click on the Help link in the upper right corner of your screen, and navigate to the ANGEL Diagnosis Page.

Though you may have success with other Web browsers, system administrators have verified that the following browsers work best with ANGEL:

• **Windows**
  o Firefox 1.0.7 or 1.5.0.1
- Internet Explorer 6.0
- Mozilla 1.7.12
- Netscape 8
- **Mac OS X**
  - Firefox 1.0.7 or 1.5.0.1
  - Mozilla 1.7.12
- **America Online (AOL)**
  - Log on to AOL, then use a recommended browser to access ANGEL.

**Note:** To download the latest version of each browser, navigate to ANGEL's Help section and the "Technical Needs" subheading.

**Computer Configuration:** System administrators suggest that the computer you use to access ANGEL be configured with the following:

- **Minimum hardware and software** suggested:
  - **Windows:**
    - Pentium class II / III 400 Mhz processor; 128 MB of RAM (256 for Windows XP); 10 GB hard drive; CD-ROM drive; Windows ME, 2000, or XP; antivirus software
  - **Macintosh:**
    - PowerPC G3 or higher; 256 MB of RAM; 10 GB hard drive; CD-ROM drive; OS X (10.3.9 or higher); antivirus software
- **Screen resolution** of 800x600 pixels or higher
- **Internet access** through a high-speed connection (ISDN, DSL, cable, Penn State backbone), or by a modem no slower than 56.6 kbps.

**Note:** The majority of computers in Penn State Student Computing Labs meets or exceeds these requirements.

**Technical Skills:** A very basic familiarity with computers and the Internet will get you started in this course. It is recommended that you be able to use word processing software properly (for instance, edit, copy, paste, and save). You should also be able to handle email communications, including attachments, and be able to use a browser to access the Internet. If you encounter any technical challenges, you have several options: access ANGEL Help by clicking on the Help link available in the upper right of every ANGEL screen to “Submit a question” or “Report a problem”; post your question in the “Technical Support Discussion Forum” on the Lessons tab of our course; or communicate with me via email.

**REQUIRED PRINT TEXTS**


**REQUIRED ELECTRONIC TEXTS AVAILABLE ON ANGEL**


GRADING

1070 points total:

- This course requires two writing assignments, worth a total of 500 points, applying tools of analysis learned in the class. One is an ethnography of an oral narrative or social custom worth 250 points, and the other is a rhetorical/textual analysis of a media text worth 250 points. Students will follow a template for each type of analysis which is posted on ANGEL under the Lessons tab, “Writing Assignment Guides, Rubrics, & Drop Boxes” folder. Each writing assignment should have at minimum of 7 double-spaced pages of text, and demonstrate the use of library book and article sources. Students are required to confer with the instructor about the topics they choose. The topic choice for the Ethnography writing assignment is due 9/30/07, and the paper is due 10/28/07. The topic choice for the Rhetorical/textual analysis writing assignment is due 11/4/07, and the paper is due 12/9/07. These topic choices and papers will be submitted to drop boxes available on ANGEL, Lessons tab, “Writing Assignment Guides, Rubrics, & Drop Boxes” folder.
- There are three Discussion Forum posts and two Flickr posts worth 50 points each for a total of 250 points located within specific Lesson folders.
- Learning assessments will be posted within each Lesson folder to allow you to measure your progress in preparation for the final exam. The completion of these learning assessments will constitute a total of 70 points (13 learning assessments at 5 points each).
- The course contains one examination scheduled at the end of the course. It is designed to test comprehension of readings and course content. The examination, completed on-line, contains multiple-choice and short narrative questions. The examination is worth 250 points.
- There is an "About You" survey at the beginning of the course that you are required to complete. You will be credited with 5 points upon submission.
your postings to the discussion forums. A grading rubric, posted below, will be utilized to evaluate the quality, not the quantity, of your responses.

**Discussion Forum and Flickr Postings Grading Rubric (5@ 50 points each):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTRIBUTE</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Student followed guidelines and instructions of assignment (e.g., length, theme, timeliness)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Student contribution is thorough and properly documented</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Student contribution demonstrates knowledge and/or research of subject</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Student contribution demonstrates insight, creativity, and/or imagination</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Written or visual contributions are clear, well composed, and logical in sequence and content</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total possible points</td>
<td>50</td>
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**Learning Assessments Grading Rubric (13 @ 5 points each):**

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<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Student followed guidelines and instructions of assignment (e.g., length, theme, timeliness)</td>
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<td>2. Student contribution is thorough and properly documented</td>
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<td>.75</td>
<td>.50</td>
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<td>3. Student contribution demonstrates knowledge and/or research of subject</td>
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<td>.75</td>
<td>.50</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>4. Student contribution</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.25</td>
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</table>
demonstrates insight, creativity, and/or imagination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Written or visual contributions are clear, well composed, and logical in sequence and content</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>.75</th>
<th>.50</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total possible points</td>
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### Ethnography & Rhetorical Analysis Writing Assignments Grading Rubric (2 @ 250 points each):

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<th>ATTRIBUTE</th>
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<th>Average</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Student followed guidelines and instructions of assignment (e.g., length, theme, timeliness)</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>2. Student contribution is thorough and properly documented</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Student contribution demonstrates knowledge and/or research of subject</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Student contribution demonstrates insight, creativity, and/or imagination</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>5. Written or visual contributions are clear, well composed, and logical in sequence and content</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Total possible points</td>
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### Summary of Assignments, Dates Due, and Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Assignment</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
<th>Total Course Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Ethnography of Narrative or Custom Paper | Approved topic submission due 9/30/07  
Paper submission due 10/28/07 | 250 |
Rhetorical/Textual Analysis of Media and Popular Culture Paper

Approved topic submission due 11/4/07
Paper submission due 12/9/07

Discussion Forum and Flickr Posts (5 @ 50 points each)
As specified in course schedule

Learning Assessments (13 @ 5 points each)
Within Each Lesson

"About You" Survey
1/21/07, 11:00pm

Final Examination TOTAL
End of Semester

250

Points Conversion to Grades:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Quality of Performance</th>
<th>GPA Equivalent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>981-1070</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Exceptional Achievement</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>941-980</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Excellent Achievement</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>911-940</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Extensive Achievement</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>881-910</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good Achievement</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>851-880</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>Acceptable Achievement</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>821-850</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Minimal Achievement</td>
<td>2.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>771-820</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Inadequate Achievement</td>
<td>2.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>681-770</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Inadequate Achievement</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Below 680</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failure</td>
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<tr>
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<td>XF</td>
<td>Academic Dishonesty</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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POLICY STATEMENTS: Academic Freedom, Academic Integrity, Attendance, Confidentiality, Disability Services

Academic Freedom: According to Penn State policy HR64, “The faculty member is expected to train students to think for themselves, and to provide them access to those materials which they need if they are to think intelligently.”
Hence, in giving instruction upon controversial matters the faculty member is expected to be of a fair and judicial mind, and to set forth justly, without supersession or innuendo, the divergent opinions of other investigators.‖ See http://guru.psu.edu/policies/OHR/hr64.html.

**Academic Integrity:** According to Penn State policy 49-20, Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception and is an education objective of this institution. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. The instructor can fail a student for major infractions. For more information, see http://www.psu.edu/dept/ufs/policies/47-00.html#49-20. I may choose to use Turnitin as a plagiarism detection tool.

**Attendance:** Although an on-line course does not meet in a classroom at a set time, attendance policies stated in 42-27 apply. On-line students are expected to complete every lesson in the course and are held responsible for all work covered in the course. A student whose irregular attendance causes him or her, in the judgment of the instructor, to become deficient scholastically, may run the risk of receiving a failing grade or receiving a lower grade than the student might have secured had the student been in regular attendance. Participation by students in the course should not be disruptive or offensive to other class members. See http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies/42-00.html#42-27.

**Confidentiality:** The right of students to confidentiality is of concern to your instructor and to the University. According to Penn State policy AD-11, "The Pennsylvania State University collects and retains data and information about students for designated periods of time for the expressed purpose of facilitating the student's educational development. The University recognizes the privacy rights of individuals in exerting control over what information about themselves may be disclosed and, at the same time, attempts to balance that right with the institution's need for information relevant to the fulfillment of its educational missions. Student educational records are defined as records, files, documents, and other materials that contain information directly related to a student and are maintained by The Pennsylvania State University or by a person acting for the University pursuant to University, college, campus, or departmental policy. Exclusions include: Notes of a professor concerning a student and intended for
the professor's own use are not subject to inspection, disclosure, and challenge." For more information, see http://guru.psu.edu/policies/Ad11.html.

**Disability Services and Accessibility:** Any student who cannot complete requirements of the class because of physical disabilities should make circumstances known to the instructor. In cases where documentation of disability is available, alternative ways to fulfill requirements will be made. For more information, see Penn State's disability services handbook at http://www.hbg.psu.edu/studaf/disability/dshandbook.htm.

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**THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

As with any course, you will get out of this course what you put into it. Learning in an online course is clearly different from taking classes in a traditional face-to-face classroom. They are not easier if only because you cannot sit in the back of the classroom and pretend that you have completed the week’s assignments. Be prepared to commit the time needed to complete all assignments by their due dates.

On the other hand, enjoy the flexibility this online course provides you to organize your learning experience around your schedule. You choose when you want to work since our classroom virtually never closes, except for 5:00 to 7:00 a.m. U.S. Eastern Time daily, during which time ANGEL maintenance is conducted.

Below are some tips to help you to be as successful as possible in this course:

- Log into our course at least three times each week. Assume that the first time you log on in a given week it will be to access the next lesson folder to determine your learning tasks for the week. Additional log-on time will be used to complete the required learning activities.

- Make sure that you keep up-to-date on your postings.

- Take responsibility for your own learning and plan to be a self-directed learner.

- Stay on top of your reading assignments and become good at research and analysis. Assume that taking initiative on your part will be positively received and will maximize your learning.

- If you feel lost or confused, ASK!!
- Be prepared for the amount of time that online learning takes and make time for it in your week.

- Work on being flexible and patient. Life has a way of intruding into the online classroom that can sometimes be uncomfortable and trying. Technical issues and difficulties are also a part of that life. Don’t wait until the last minute to complete your weekly requirements to minimize these potential difficulties.

I am looking forward to enjoying an enriching learning experience with you!

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**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Title (Summaries Below)</th>
<th>Student Tasks</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Getting Started</td>
<td>Read syllabus</td>
<td>9/2/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Review course schedule</td>
<td>@ 11:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>View “About your Professor”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete the “About You” survey</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Post any course questions to appropriate discussion forum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Week of 9/3/07</td>
<td>View PowerPoint presentation</td>
<td>9/9/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Cultural</td>
<td>View “Buck Season at Bear Meadow Sunset”</td>
<td>@ 11:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Texts and Contexts</td>
<td>View “Salamanders: A Night at the Phi Delt House”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete Learning Assessment 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Week of 9/10/07</td>
<td>View PowerPoint presentation</td>
<td>9/16/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dwelling in America:</td>
<td>Read <em>Grasping Things</em>, pp. 1-86</td>
<td>@ 11:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From Log Cabin in the</td>
<td>Complete Learning Assessment 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wilderness to Ranch</td>
<td>Post to Discussion Forum 1 by Thursday, 9/13, 11:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>House in the Suburbs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Made in America: Craft</td>
<td>View PowerPoint presentation</td>
<td>9/23/07</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and Authenticity</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Week of 9/17/07 | Read *Grasping Things*, pp. 87-159  
Complete Learning Assessment 3 on Reading  
View *Sea Bright Skiff* [http://www.folkstreams.net/film,41](http://www.folkstreams.net/film,41)  
View “*Quilts in Women’s Lives*”  
View “*Our Lives in Our Hands*”  
http://www.folkstreams.net/film,94  
Complete Learning Assessment 4 on Videos  
Flickr Post 1 by Thursday, 9/20, 11:00pm | @ 11:00pm |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **4**  
**Week of 9/24/07** | View PowerPoint presentation  
Read *Grasping Things*, pp. 160-216  
Complete Learning Assessment 5  
Submit approved topic choice for Ethnography writing assignment  
Flickr Post 2 by Thursday, 2/15, 11:00pm | 9/30/07 @ 11:00pm |
| **5**  
**Weeks of 10/1/07 & 10/8/07** | View PowerPoint presentation  
View “*The Gay Shoe Clerk*” film (enter title in Search field to view this film) play with MPEG-4 for best result  
View: Buster Brown Series, Parts 3 and 4 (enter title in Search field to view this film) play with MPEG-4 for best result  
Complete Learning Assessment 6 on film - **due 10/7/07 @ 11:00pm**  
Read *Reading Consumer Culture* by Bronner  
Read “*A Catalogue Culture*”  
Read *Point of Purchase* by Zukin, pp. 1-62  
Complete Learning Assessment 7 on readings **due 10/14/07 @ 11:00pm** | See 2 separate due dates for each Learning Assessment |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10/15/07</td>
<td>Consumer Palaces: World's Fairs, Department Stores, and Sports Stadiums in the 19th Century</td>
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<td>10/22/07</td>
<td>Ethnographic Papers Due 10/28/07 at 11 p.m.</td>
<td>View PowerPoint presentation</td>
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<td>Read “Evolution of the Department Store”</td>
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<td>Read “Tour the Fair”</td>
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<td>Read “Doing the Pan. . . ”</td>
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<td>Read Middle-Class Paradise</td>
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<td>Complete Learning Assessment 8 on readings by 10/21/07</td>
<td>Complete Learning Assessment 8 on readings by 10/21/07</td>
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<td>Submit approved topic choice for Rhetorical/textual analysis writing assignment by 10/28/07</td>
<td>Submit approved topic choice for Rhetorical/textual analysis writing assignment by 10/28/07</td>
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<td>Complete Course Mid-Semester Evaluation</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10/29/07</td>
<td>Shopping Cities: Malls, Superstores, and Boutiques</td>
<td>View PowerPoint presentation</td>
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<td>Read Point of Purchase by Zukin, pp. 63-168</td>
<td>Read Point of Purchase by Zukin, pp. 63-168</td>
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<td>Complete Learning Assessment 9 for reading</td>
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<td>Post Team to Discussion Forum 2 by Thursday, 11/1/07</td>
<td>Post Team to Discussion Forum 2 by Thursday, 11/1/07</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>11/5/07</td>
<td>Digital Culture: Internet and Television Shopping</td>
<td>View PowerPoint presentation</td>
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<td>Read Point of Purchase by Zukin, pp. 169-268</td>
<td>Read Point of Purchase by Zukin, pp. 169-268</td>
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<td>Read Editorial about eBay's control</td>
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<td>Read eBay parable and song</td>
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<td>Post to Discussion Forum 3 by Thursday, 11/8/07 11:00pm</td>
<td>Post to Discussion Forum 3 by Thursday, 11/8/07 11:00pm</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>11/12/07</td>
<td>Holidays and Consumer Culture: Old World Festivals and New Celebrations</td>
<td>View PowerPoint presentation</td>
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<td>Read New Old Fashioned Ways by Santino, pp. 1-100</td>
<td>Read New Old Fashioned Ways by Santino, pp. 1-100</td>
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<td>Complete Learning Assessment 11</td>
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11/14/07 At 11 p.m.
11/11/07 @ 11:00pm
11/18/07 @ 11:00pm
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of 11/26/07</th>
<th><strong>Selling in the Seasons: Christmas, St. Patrick’s Day, Thanksgiving, Halloween, Columbus Day, and the Super Bowl</strong></th>
<th>View PowerPoint presentation</th>
<th>Read <em>New Old Fashioned Ways</em> by Santino, pp. 101-147</th>
<th>Complete Learning Assessment 12</th>
<th>12/2/07</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week of 12/3/07</td>
<td><strong>The iPod and Other Technological Metaphors for the Future of Popular Culture</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rhetorical/Textual Analysis Due 12/9/07 at 11 p.m.</strong></td>
<td>View PowerPoint presentation</td>
<td>Read “The Virgin and the Dynamo”</td>
<td>Read “Henry Adams and Our New Century”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week of 12/10/07</td>
<td>Final Exam Review</td>
<td>Complete Course Evaluation</td>
<td>Review for Final Exam</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Exam to be held Week of 12/17/07</td>
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**LESSON SUMMARIES**

**Lesson 1: American Cultural Texts and Contexts**

We begin with an examination of the meaning, and significance, of “culture.” Then students consider basic definitions of two interrelated terms—folk and popular—whose usage has changed over time and have distinctive applications in America compared to Europe. To provide some vivid examples of “culture” with concepts of folk and popular, we examine two scenes of contemporary life in Pennsylvannia—a hunting camp and a fraternity house—and discuss the ways that tradition can be both “old” and “new.”

**Objective**

The objective of Lesson 1 is to discern the distinctions and overlap of folk and popular culture and the ways that cultural texts can be “read.” This leads to an overview of the assignments giving practice in cultural research, involving the skills of ethnography and rhetorical criticism.
By the end of the lesson you should be able to explain definitions of folk and popular culture and their analytical purposes.

Lesson 2: Dwelling in America: From Log Cabin in the Wilderness to Ranch House in the Suburbs

In this lesson, you should discern the development of the icon of the modern suburban house out of the folk experiences in the nineteenth century. You'll see the suburban house as both a reaction to, and continuity with, these experiences. A pivotal text of the reaction is Henry David Thoreau's Walden including his experience building a New England house by himself in response to growing industrialism of the period. From there we move west to the Indiana frontier in the 1850s where we see the symbolism of brick replacing the log cabin in America, and how that experience influenced the rise of the suburban (ranch) house and sprawling green lawn. The general concept here that can be applied to other cultural forms is to see development of American icons in a historical and social context. In this contextualization, you should be able to appreciate the strands of folk and popular culture that suggest that popular does not displace the folk, but rather works within the expectations and norms established by folk tradition.

Objectives
By the end of Lesson 2, you should be able to:

- discern the development of the icon of the modern suburban house out of the folk experiences in the nineteenth century
- see development of American icons in a historical and social/intellectual context

Lesson 3: Made in America: Craft and Authenticity

The point of this lesson is to describe cultural patterns and implications apparent in the historic move from a craft-producer in the nineteenth century to an industrial-consumer economy in the twentieth. Craft is a good example because it provides many icons of American culture, such as the quilt and woodcarving. Craft signifies a national experience defined often by a frontier heritage (e.g., images of frontier cabins, quilts, and carvings). At the same time, craft is often used in contemporary America to show the aesthetics and skill that immigrant newcomers bring to the diversity of national culture. We will discuss the analysis of examples from Grasping Things—a gravestone carving family, Old Order Mennonite painter, African-American muralist—and then discuss examples posted by students of commercial objects that had formerly been hand-made.
**Objective**

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to explain social and psychological uses of folk craft in American mass society.

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**Lesson 4: American Food and Commodification, Art and Commerce**

Finishing Act I, the opening section of the course on the historical dynamics of folk and popular culture is “foodways.” The example of food provides an opportunity to show the way that commodification of folk culture has pervaded everyday life or popular culture. From the reading in Grasping Things, you will be able to see the analysis of turtle soup as a folk expression within a rural community in Indiana and its gentrification as a commodity. We will also turn to examples provided by students of a “virtual pot-luck supper” to consider applying the pattern of localism in folk culture and standardization suggested by commodification. This leads to a discussion of the construction of “folk art” as a commodity and whether there is a comparison possible between food and art as cultural forms meant to be consumed and symbolized.

**Objectives**

By the end of the lesson, you should be able to:

- explain the process of “commodification”
- give the production of turtle soup and the creation of a folk art market as examples.

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**Lesson 5: The Rise of Consumer Culture**

How did a consumer culture arise? We answer this question by first examining the economic and social basis of the transition—a move from agrarian to industrial economy, rural to urban living, native-born to foreign born population, and property to wage-based earnings. Then we discuss the cultural implications of this move: gendered nature of shopping (male to female orientation), orientation toward time rather than task, creation of brand names to replace local connections. We then consider the kinds of cultural expressions in which consumerism is represented: novels, magazines, mail order catalogues. Considering ways of “reading” them as texts, we discuss major guiding concepts such as “conspicuous consumption” (theory of the leisure class), “cultural hegemony,” and “democratization.”
Objective
By the end of the lesson, you should be able to identify the historic and social factors that prompted the rise of a consumer culture.

Lesson 6: Consumer Palaces: World’s Fairs, Department Stores, and Sports Stadiums in the Nineteenth Century

In this section, we examine the association of consumer and popular culture with urban cultural landscapes anchored in the department store and sports stadium. Not an American invention, the department store and sports stadium were organized and elaborated by American entrepreneurs into “consumer palaces” for the masses. What led to their popularization and symbolization as popular culture icons? They are part of a context of the commodification of leisure and an orientation toward bigness that are often traced to the heyday of the World’s Fairs at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. A related institution is professional sports and the opportunities they provided to share in a popular culture for immigrants and at the same time be separated by ethnicity and race. We look at these social implications as shaping the course of twentieth century popular culture.

Objective
By the end of the lesson, you should be able to explain the significance of the department store, world’s fair, and sports stadium in the development of American consumer culture.

Lesson 7: Shopping Cities: Malls, Superstores, and Boutiques

The shift from department stores to suburban malls, superstores, and outlets in the late twentieth century, epitomized by the title in the reading of “From Woolworth’s to Wal-Mart,” suggests cultural changes that go along with new economic strategies. One question is the impact of standardization in the superstores and the way this has become a trademark of popular culture. Another is the move from the urban to the suburban center of culture in America. Finally, we examine a counter-trend to the homogenized, democratized consumer culture—the boutique, represented by Brooks Brothers and Tiffany’s. We ask a central question: is it possible to find a common pattern in these apparently contradictory trends between the boutique and superstore/mall?

Objective
By the end of the lesson, you should be able to use the “theory of the leisure
class" to explain the social and cultural implications of the rise of the superstore/mall and boutique in America.

Lesson 8: Digital Culture: Internet and Television Shopping

What happened to popular culture with the spread of Internet and digital communication? Zukin examines the argument that it has globalized popular culture and made it more participatory. We examine this argument, with special reference to the cultural implications of Ebay and Amazon. Using the concept of community applied to digital communication, we describe cultural implications for the new landscape of "cyberspace." Will this digital culture be more diverse or less?

Objective
By the end of the lesson, you should be able to explain different viewpoints on the impact of digital consumerism on social and cultural participation.

Lesson 9: Holidays and Consumer Culture: Old World Festivals and New Celebrations

Holidays are nationally recognized customs that blend folk and popular culture. In this opening to Act III, we examine those American holidays that owe to Old World roots and functions of adjusting to seasonal change: Easter, Christmas, Hannukah, and New Year—and the way they have been transformed by American experience. We examine Santino’s thesis that the general pattern in these holidays has been to commercialize them as a reflection of American capitalism while giving in the holiday experience a sense of community. The prime example in American culture is Christmas. We discuss different interpretations of Christmas, particularly the argument over its religious and secular meanings, and its role as America’s largest commercial as well as cultural holiday. This leads to discussions of its relation to diversity—representing ethnic traditions as markers of identity at Christmas and relations to other religious traditions of Hannukah and Ramadan (encapsulated under the American motto of “Season’s Greetings”).

Objectives
By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- explain the cultural, and commercial, functions of major American holidays, and
• give the example of the distinctive development of Christmas in America as a civic holiday.

Lesson 10: Selling in the Seasons: Christmas, St. Patrick’s Day, Thanksgiving, Halloween, Columbus Day, and the Super Bowl

How are holidays ritualized in contemporary America and can we read those rituals for meanings? In this lesson we particularly ask this question of holidays that started on American soil and yet adapted existing traditions—and raised controversies characteristic of American divisions as well as unity: Thanksgiving, 4th of July, Juneteenth, Columbus Day. This leads to consideration of distinctively American attempts, sometimes fraught with controversy, at creating civic unity in American popular culture, such as Thanksgiving, Halloween, Columbus Day, and the Super Bowl.

Objective
By the end of the lesson, you should be able to identify the reflection of American divisions as well as unity in the observance of major American holidays.

Lesson 11: The iPod and Other Technological Metaphors for the Future of Popular Culture

A theme that pervades the history of folk and popular culture is the connection of forms of energy, communication, and entertainment to “worldview,” defined as fundamental outlooks on the way life should be lived. Two examples that try to summarize the worldview of eras a hundred years apart are Henry Adams’s reflection on the symbolism of the electric dynamo at the 1893 World’s Fair and Sanford Pinsker’s contemplation, inspired by Adams, of the computer chip in the twenty-first century. To get students thinking about this connection, we examine from postings whether the “IPod” or “cellphone” carry implications for ways of thinking about the present and future culture. This also raises the question of how tradition and heritage inform American lives or are adapted for present needs, so that students see popular culture not as displacing folk culture, but working in a dynamic relationship to folklife. I summarize your own observations of the folk practices that are significant in your own lives and extend this by way of conclusion to what is American about American traditions.

Objective
By the end of this lesson, you should be able to identify the characterization of an era with a technological icon in America’s past and present.