Los Angeles has always had an underbelly that belies this hope of inclusive opportunity and shared prosperity: the chance of reinvention has always been accompanied by sharp residential segregation, significant economic deprivation, and an uneasy relationship with the natural setting that attracted so many in the first place. Contradictions seem to abound: celebrated for its cultural openness and its multiethnic fusion of identities, it is also known as a place that both perfected a modernized form of residential segregation and experienced two major waves of civil unrest (the Watts riots of 1965 and Los Angeles uprising of 1992). Considered the capital of working poverty in the United States, it is also host to a revitalized labor movement. And while L.A. has been the epicenter of immigration to the United States – in the 1980s, it was receiving one quarter of the nation’s immigrants – it has also been a focal point for anti-immigrant sentiment and action.

11 - 11:50 am MWF
class no. 10310R
4 units
THH 202

Taught by
Professor Juan De Lara

*Course fulfills General education requirement and the university's diversity requirement.
This course offers an introduction to the people and cultures of the Americas; the social, historical, economic, and cultural formations that together make up the Latino/a American imaginary. This course starts with the U.S. Latino experience then works its way back to understand the origins of contemporary Latin America. Recent statistics show Latinos have become the largest minority group in the nation. We take a closer look into the societies of countries in the Americas and how their economic and historical past has shaped the course of the people of the Americas.
This course offers an interdisciplinary introduction to American and Ethnic Studies. A principal goal is to help students understand how people in the United States live in and think about their country as well as how the world views them. The central themes and topics addressed will include identity formation, immigration, imprisonment, militarism, cultural production, religion, sexuality, and political change. This course will encourage students to formulate connections between these issues by placing them in their broad historical and cultural contexts. We will consider a variety of types of evidence such as novels, photographs, films, the built environment, and material culture to show that we can and need to analyze everything in the world around us.
As laborers, creators, culture bearers, political activists, dreamers, and renegades, African Americans were the fulcrum upon which the country’s material and cultural wealth was built. Throughout the last two centuries, black social movements occasionally pricked America’s moral conscience and compelled the nation to re-think the meaning of democracy. The core of much of “American” culture and politics has been shaped immeasurably by black social movements, which in turn have opened a path for the demands of other aggrieved populations.

In this course, we examine historical and contemporary black movements for freedom, justice, equality, autonomy and self-determination. Beginning with the struggles of Africans to destroy or escape from the system of slavery, we consider a wide range of movements, including labor, civil rights, radical feminism, socialism and communism, reparations, Black Nationalism, and hip hop as a political movement. We will explore, among other things, how movements were formed and sustained; the social and historical contexts for their emergence and demise; the impact they might have had on power, on par-

*Course fulfills these requirements:

- Diversity Requirement
- ASAF Social and Political Issues
- Elective: ASE, ASCL, ASAS Majors
- ASE Minor Elective
This course explores the complexities of race/ethnicity in America through analyses of films. We shall ask such questions as: What is ethnicity? How is ethnicity shaped, or how does one “become” ethnic?, What is at stake in claims and visual representations about ethnicity; what politics surround ethnic representations and performances?, How is ethnicity actualized and/or performed?, Can there be an “authentic” ethnicity?, and, finally, How are such complexities reflected and/or constructed in film? Towards these ends, the initial weeks of the semester will be devoted to developing a critical vocabulary for speaking about race/ethnicity. We will also (continuously) hone our visual literacy by looking at the ways notions of ethnicity are privileged, constructed, and contested in film via such techniques as editing, sound, lighting, narration, etc. This middle of the course will focus on case studies in film that illuminate the complexities of ethnicity in relation to specific American ethnic groups. The latter weeks of the course will explore broader complexities of ethnicity, such as ethnic hybridity and inter-ethnic relations encompassing political conflict, interracial love and identity, and residential strife.
This course employs a wide variety of different popular culture genres produced by and about African-Americans, including but not limited to theatre, music, sports, film, dance and literature. This course critically examines Black popular culture in the United States and its surrounding politics. Beginning with blackface minstrelsy, the Harlem Renaissance and Swing, and ending with Hip-Hop, Chappelle's Show and Bossip.com, we will chart chronological and topic driven paths, so as to answer key questions about the genealogies of Black forms and the ways in which they have been and are popularized. Recognizing how gender, sexuality, class, region, and other identity markers inform race, we will challenge assumptions about the parameters of African-American popular culture, as well as its political stakes, aims, and functions.
AMST 301gp: America, the Frontier, and the New West

Taught by Professor Alicia Chavez

We will study what historians term “the New West,” by which they mean how the West has been shaped by many different historical forces and peoples. Reading “New West” scholars like Richard Slotkin, Reginald Horsman, Patricia Nelson Limerick, we will also read and view novels, plays, films, and visual art works that give us a solid understanding of how Native Americans, African Americans, Euroamericans, Asian Americans, Mexican Americans, women, and LGBTs have contributed to our lived realities in the West.

Monday/Wednesday 3:30-4:50 pm
Class #10408R
Location: SGM 101

AMST 301g fulfills the Category 1: Western Cultures and Traditions requirement in General Education at USC & GE-G (Traditions and Historical foundations).
This course is designed to introduce students to a diverse range of theories and methodologies relevant to the study of American culture. We will draw from a number of interpretive and analytical models including 3 case studies: the memoirs of women of color, the history of AIDS in the US, and contemporary US politics. While committed to the introduction of critical methods, the course will also be content-driven. We will focus on two immediate case studies: AIDS and the upcoming national elections. These two events will form the content of the class and provide us the occasion to think in interdisciplinary ways.

This course is a core requirement for all ASE Majors and Minors.
Asian people have been living in what is now called the United States since before the founding of the nation, and have been forming permanent, sizeable communities distinguished by race since the mid-19th century, with the rise of transpacific labor migration on a large scale upon the closing of the transatlantic slave trade. Yet the term “Asian American” is relatively recent, invented by radical students in the late 1960s to name a multiethnic political identification against racism and US imperialism. In little more than a decade, it was transformed into a widely accepted, state-recognized, politically neutral category of racial classification, gathering under its jurisdiction significant and diverse populations of new immigrants who have not always recognized substantive connections to their predecessors. Writers who’d be classified as “Asian American,” under this more neutral definition, have been achieving fleeting or lasting acclaim in US for well over a hundred years. Somewhat separately, the history of something called “Asian American literature” begins with Third Worldist revolutionary movements of the late 1960s, but it has been reimagined in dramatically different ways over the subsequent decades. In this course, we’ll learn about what it means, and has meant, to call something “Asian American literature,” by reading some of the major texts on which various conceptions of that term have been grounded, as well as newer and older texts that complicate it in useful ways.
American Studies & Ethnicity
Senior Honors Option 2016-17

ASE MAJORS:
- American Studies (ASE)
- African American Studies (ASAF)
- Asian American Studies (ASAS)
- Chicana/o and Latina/o American Studies ~CALAS (ASCL)

For more information contact ASE AcademicAdvisor Cynthia Mata-Flores at cmflores@usc.edu or 213.740.2534

Fall 2016: AMST 492 (10442) Research Methods in American Studies & Ethnicity, 4 Units Mondays 2pm-4:50pm KAP 445 Taught by Juan De Lara

Spring 2016: AMST 493 (10443) Senior Honors Thesis in American Studies & Ethnicity, 4 Units Mondays 2pm-4:50pm KAP 445 Taught by Juan De Lara

The American Studies and Ethnicity Department at the University of Southern California offers a two-semester honors program for qualified students, first identified in ASE 350 or by the program advisor. Students spend their first semester in the honors program in an honors senior seminar, ASE 492, focused on developing their research and methods for the honors thesis. During the second semester, all honors students are required to take ASE 493, in which each completes a thesis project on a topic of his or her own choosing under faculty direction. Contact the program advisor for further information.
This senior seminar will take a long detour through meditations on failure emerging from queer theory, Asian American studies, and black studies, drawing on fiction, comics, film, poetry, memoir, and theoretical texts. We'll ask what failure can reveal about higher education and related disciplinary institutions, such as prisons or the so-called “internment camps” for Japanese Americans during World War II. (Q: What’s the difference between a prisoner and a college student? A: The prisoner has a richer imagination of freedom.) We'll ask what it's like to fail when you have been selected for a model of success, and to succeed when your failure has already been scripted. Eventually, we'll shift our focus from the materials assigned by the instructor to questions and projects designed by students, to consider how contemporary social movements and cultural practices on and off campus are fracturing reigning ideologies of meritocracy.