**SYLLABUS--HISTORY 175A**

**FALL QUARTER 2018**

**HISTORY OF POPULAR CULTURE AND LEISURE, 1830-1920**

Instructor: Lisa Jacobson

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Time and Room: T-Th, 9:30-10:45pm, 387 1015

Office Hours: W, 1:00-3:00pm, and by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course, the first half of a two-quarter sequence, explores the history of popular culture and leisure in the United States. Focusing on the period between 1830 and 1920, we will examine a variety of popular amusements, popular art forms, and cultural artifacts to illuminate several key transformations in American culture: the formation of distinct middle-class and working-class cultures, the emergence of a consumer society, and the rise and fall of Victorianism. Throughout the course, we will seek to answer several recurring questions:

* How does popular culture both shape and reflect conceptions of race, class, gender, and American national identity?
* What does popular culture tell us about the aspirations, yearnings, and anxieties of the people who consume it, produce it, and oppose it?
* How have Americans used popular culture to make sense of dramatic social, economic, and political changes?
* How do conceptions and experiences of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and age factor into the production and reception of popular culture?

**REQUIRED READINGS**

The books can be purchased at the campus bookstore or online. The books and course reader will also be available on two-hour reserve in the library.

Course reader (available for purchase at SBPrinter.com, UCen)

Ken Emerson, *Doo-Dah!: Stephen Foster and the Rise of American Popular Culture*

Lawrence Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom*

Patricia Cline Cohen, et al., *The Flash Press: Sporting Male Weeklies in 1840s New York*

Joy Kasson, *Buffalo Bill’s Wild West: Celebrity, Memory and Popular History*

Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York*

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Midterm (25%):** Take-home exam, 6-7-page typed essay. **Due Thursday, October 18 by 4pm.** Please put your paper in the faculty box located in HSSB 4001 AND upload a copy to GauchoSpace. Late papers will not be accepted after Tuesday, October 23 without a formal extension from the professor.

**Discussion (15%):** Your grade for this portion of the course will be based on your contributions to class discussions, your class attendance, and an informal, one-page, single-spaced, bullet-pointed response to George Aiken’s play, based on Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin.* We will set aside about half of class on **Tuesday, October 11** to discuss Aiken’s play. Your one-page response, **due at the beginning of class**, should reflect on *some of the following questions*, but come prepared to discuss all of them. Present your response in the form of bullet points (with one-two sentences per bullet point).

* How does Stowe rebut proslavery ideology and how effectively does she do it?
* How does Stowe try to arouse the sympathy and outrage of northern readers who have not yet embraced abolitionism?
* In your opinion, which scenes most/least effectively advanced the abolitionist cause?

**Short Primary Source Analysis Papers (20%):** A 2-page (500-750-word) typed essay analyzing **either** a) the World’s Fair documents **OR** b) selections from *The Flash Press.*  I will dedicate a portion of class discussion on November 1 to the World’s Fair documents and on November 6 to selected *The Flash Press* documents. Papers are due at the beginning of class the day we discuss the documents.Prompts will be posted on GauchoSpace.

**Final (40%):** A 7-9-page typed essay addressing material covered in Parts II and III of the course. Questions will be handed out a week in advance. This will be a take-home final, due **Tuesday, December 11 by no later than 4pm**. Please put your paper in the faculty box located in HSSB 4001 AND upload a copy to GauchoSpace. Late papers will not be accepted after Friday, December 14 without a formal extension from the professor.

**IMPORTANT CLASS POLICIES**

1. **How to submit papers/take-home exams:** Please submit a hard copy to the professor and upload a copy using the links on GauchoSpace.
2. **Penalties for plagiarism and uncompleted assignments:** Students who submit plagiarized papers will receive an F on the assignment and an F in the course. Students who fail to complete all of the assignments will also fail the course.
3. **Late Paper policy:** Late papers will be marked down 1/3 of a grade for each day late (an A- would become a B+). If you turn in a paper late, please submit a hard copy and upload a copy to GauchoSpace to time stamp your paper. Neither the History Department nor I will print out papers, so please always submit a hard copy.

**SCHEDULE OF LECTURES**

1. **RACE, CLASS, GENDER, AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN**

**ANTEBELLUM POPULAR CULTURE**

SEPT 27: Introduction

OCT 2: Middle-Class Culture and the Spread of Gentility

**Readings:**

* Emerson, *Doo-Dah!*, pp. 9-109, esp. chapters 4, 6, 9, 10

OCT 4: Minstrelsy and Blackface Music

**Readings:**

* Emerson, *Doo-Dah!,* pp. 110-190, esp. chapters 12-14, 18

OCT 9: Slave Culture

**Readings:**

* Levine, *Black Culture*, pp. 3-133

OCT 11: Abolitionism in Popular Culture **(Class Discussion of Aiken’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*)**

**Informal, one-page response to Aiken’s play due at beginning of class. Page 2 of the syllabus lists questions that your bullet-pointed response should address.**

**Readings:**

* George Aiken, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, play based on Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel (in reader)

OCT 16: Abolitionism and Cultural Backlash

**Readings:**

* Emerson, *Doo-Dah!*, pp. 191-200

OCT 18: **NO CLASS--MIDTERM ESSAY DUE BY 4PM**

**II. REIMAGINING RACE AND NATIONAL IDENTITY, 1860-1920**

OCT 23: The Civil War in Popular Culture and Popular Memory

**Readings:**

* Fahs, “Kingdom Coming: The Emancipation of Popular Literature” (in reader)
* Blight, “Race and Reunion: Soldiers and the ... Civil War in American Memory” (in reader)

OCT 25: The American West in Popular Culture

**Readings:**

* Kasson, *Buffalo Bill’s Wild West* (start)

OCT 30: World’s Fairs, Circuses, and Consumer Spectacles

**Readings:**

* Kasson, *Buffalo Bill’s Wild West* (continue)
* Documents on World’s Fair in course reader

NOV 1: Imperial Fantasies (Class Discussion of documents on World’s Fair in course reader)

**Short papers analyzing World’s Fair documents due at beginning of class. Come prepared to discuss documents. See GauchoSpace for the prompt. (You have the option of submitting a paper on World’s Fairs or one on the flash press, due Nov. 6.)**

**Readings:**

* Kasson, *Buffalo Bill’s Wild West*  (finish)

**III. URBAN PLEASURES, MASS COMMERCIAL AMUSEMENTS AND THE SHIFTING BOUNDARIES OF VICTORIAN RESPECTABILITY, 1840s-1910s**

NOV 6: The Flash Press, Saloons, and Masculine Sites of Leisure (Class Discussion of documents in *The Flash Press*)

**Short papers analyzing documents from *The Flash Press* due at beginning of class. Come prepared to discuss documents. See GauchoSpace for the prompt. (If you did not write a paper on the World’s Fairs, you must submit a paper on the flash press.)**

**Readings:**

* Cohen, et al., *The Flash Press*, pp. 1-125, plus documents on pp. 136-140, 147-150, 157-158, 160, 165-167, 195-197.
* Elaine Frantz Parsons, “Risky Business … in the Midwestern Saloon” (in reader)

NOV 8: Consumer Culture

**Readings:**

* Abelson, “Shoplifting Ladies” (in reader)
* Leach, “Child-World in the Promised Land” (in reader)
* Howard, “The Evil of Elaborate and Showy Weddings” (in reader)

NOV 13: Amusement Parks

**Readings:**

* Peiss, *Cheap Amusements* (start, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5)

NOV. 15: Racial Crossings in Sports and Vaudeville

**Readings:**

* Kibler, “Corking Girls: White Women’s Racial Masquerades in Vaudeville” (in reader)
* Roberts, “The 1910 Jeffries-Johnson Fight” (in reader)

NOV. 20: The Myth of the Lost Cause and *The Birth of a Nation*

**Readings:**

* Revisit Blight, “Race and Reunion”
* Peiss, *Cheap Amusements* (continue reading)

**NOV 22: NO CLASS. HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!**

NOV 27: The Cinema in Black and Working-Class Lives

**Readings:**

* Peiss, *Cheap Amusements*, Chapter 6

NOV 29: The New Woman

**Readings:**

* Enstad, “Dressed for Adventure: Working Women and Silent Movie Serials” (in reader)

DEC 4: Movie Reform

**Readings:**

* Friedman, “Regulating Motion Pictures” (in reader)
* Peiss, *Cheap Amusements*, Chapter 7

DEC 6: Movie Reform and Course Summary

**DEC 11: Upload final paper to GauchoSpace by 4pm and place copy in faculty mailbox in HSSB 4001.**