HIST 4364
American Popular Culture

Fall 2023

DR. COURT CARNEY

This course examines the history of popular culture in the United States from its origins in the 19th century to the present. More than just a chronological look at popular culture, this class will also be centered on the theories of culture, mass society, and communications. Of particular attention will be the role of race in the construction and reception of American popular culture. Overall, this course combines the study of history with the analysis of music, films, and other cultural forms to provide a complex look at various aspects of American culture.

Contact
Dr. Court Carney // carneycp@sfasu.edu
Office Hours: T 1-6 and via Zoom by appointment
Required Books
Hanif Abdurraqib, *Little Devil in America*
David Hajdu, *Love For Sale*
Amanda Petrusich, *Do Not Sell at Any Price*
RJ Smith, *Chuck Berry*

Films
*Inside Llewyn Davis* (dir. Ethan and Joel Cohen, 2013)
*Reality Bites* (dir. Ben Stiller, 1994)
*White Noise* (dir. Noah Baumbach, 2022)

Assignments and Grades
The assignment breakdown for this semester is as follows (all assignments are due via D2L):
- Essay 1 [30%]
- Essay 2 [30%]
- Essay 3 [30%]
- Responses [10%]

Due Dates
All material must be submitted by 12/12. All specific due dates are listed on D2L

Exams:
- Essay One—see D2L
- Essay Two—see D2L
- Essay Three—see D2L

Responses
See D2L

Course Schedule
8/29 Definitions / Transformation of American Life
9/5 Locating the Past in Popular Culture
9/12 The Legacy of Vaudeville and Minstrel Shows
9/19 Ragtime and the Blues / Birth of Jazz
9/26 Culture of 1920s / (Anti)Modernism
10/3 The Origins and Significance of the Folk Tradition
10/10 World War II: Swing Era / Hollywood and the Making of America
10/17 Screening: *Citizen Kane*
10/24 Postwar America: Television / Consumerism
10/31 Conformity and Rock ‘n’ Roll / Counterculture and Commodification
11/7 Film Screening: *Reality Bites*
11/14 Youth Culture: Punk and Hip Hop
11/21 Thanksgiving Break
11/28 Love and Theft: Piracy and Appropriation
12/5 Politics of Gender in Contemporary Culture
12/12 Final Essay Due
Program Learning Outcomes:
The SFA History Department has identified the following Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for all SFA students earning a B.A. degree in History:

- Interpret the past in context.
- Understand the complexity of the historical record.
- Engage in historical inquiry, research, and analysis.
- Craft historical narrative and argument.

This section of this course will focus on all four PLOs

Student Learning Outcomes:
Students in HIST 4364 will demonstrate the more general ability to:

- The student will develop an appreciation of the historical context of American popular culture and the role cities play in this development.
- The student will be able to explain the origins of the blues, jazz, rock 'n' roll, and hip-hop.
- The student will be able to discuss the importance of technology on the development and diffusion of American popular culture.
- The student will be able to discuss the historiography of American popular culture, with an emphasis on the role race plays in the creation and reception of cultural forms.
- The student will be able to explain the impact of social media on popular culture.

Explanation of credit hours awarded for course:
This is an upper-level history course. Upper-level lecture courses in history meet for 2,250 minutes (37.5 hours), including examination times, during the course of a semester. Students typically have weekly reading assignments from a combination of textbooks, monographs, scholarly articles, primary document collections, and supplemental materials (biographies, historical novels, memoirs, etc). The level of reading is more advanced than that required in lower-level surveys, and the number of pages students are required to read is generally higher. Typical upper-level courses require students to take 2-3 essay exams per semester, in addition to the final exam, which is also generally a written exam. In addition, out-of-class writing assignments (book reviews, biographical sketches, research papers, etc.) are typically required in upper-level courses. Course instructors are required to hold regular scheduled office hours to make themselves available to consult with students as needed. Combined, studying for exams, doing the required reading, completing writing assignments, and consulting with course instructors average two hours of work outside the classroom for every hour spent in the classroom. Online sections of upper-level courses contain extensive written content within modules, and instructors hold "electronic office hours" to consult with students as needed, generally responding to student inquiries within twenty-four hours. Online course content includes the same information students in a face-to-face lecture course receive, requiring students to engage the online modules for at least 2,250 minutes per term. Besides engaging the material in the modules, online students have outside reading assignments similar to those mentioned above for face-to-face students. Thus, for every hour an online student spends engaging the content in the modules, he/she spends at least two hours completing associated activities and assessments.

Academic Integrity (Student Academic Dishonesty, Policy 4.1)
The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy. Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of
materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

Please read the complete policy at https://www.sfasu.edu/docs/policies/10.4.pdf.

**Withheld Grades (Course Grades, Policy 5.5)**
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the coursework because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf.

**Students with Disabilities**
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

**Student Wellness and Well-Being**
SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.
If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.
On-campus Resources:
The Dean of Students Office (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)
www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic Human Services, Room 202
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
936.468.1041

The Health and Wellness Hub “The Hub”
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.
www.sfasu.edu/thehub
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:

- Health Services
- Counseling Services
- Student Outreach and Support
- Food Pantry
- Wellness Coaching
- Alcohol and Other Drug Education

Crisis Resources:
- Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
- National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
- Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741