



Northwestern
AMERICAN
STUDIES

American Graffiti

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

Volume 25 — 2024-2025



SPECIAL EDITION 1974-2024





Founder Carl Smith with an early gathering circa 1978 and below Dean Randolph talks with American Studies alumni at the 50th Anniversary party.

2024 AMERICAN STUDIES DIRECTOR

DEAR FRIENDS OF AMERICAN STUDIES,

We're glad to share our annual newsletter with you! You can see that we've been busy, we're learning lots, and are having fun at the same time.

The highlight of the year has been our 50th anniversary celebrations. We've been hosting an "eras tour" of American Studies through the decades, with alumni from the 70s, 80s, and 20s sharing their memories with us. (We went a little out of order, and we still have to get to the 90s, 00s, and 10s.) Our senior symposium, where all of our graduating thesis writers presented the fruits of their labor, was another anniversary-tied event. Friends, family, and alum zoomed in from all over the place. And finally, we had a big bash, with more than a hundred alum, current students, faculty, and administrators in attendance. Our founder Carl Smith spoke. So did WCAS Dean Adrian Randolph. And faculty member Kathleen Belew gave a lecture about the conspiracy theory that the Megalodon Shark is not in fact extinct (false!).

So many thanks to our Program Administrator extraordinaire, Julie Lavin, for pulling it all together. And to our Business Administration team, including Tom Burke who passed the baton to Carlos Ballinas mid-race, for their support.

In addition to these extra special events, our community has excelled at most everything else as well. Seniors graduated and started grad school and jobs, a new group of seniors is hard at work on their theses, new students are in the middle of their American Studies seminar sequence, a handful of students is studying abroad, in France, Spain, and Italy, and we bonded last winter in Milwaukee, where we saw beautiful Haitian art at the Milwaukee Art Museum, solved the mysteries of escape rooms, and had a fancy dinner at Odd Duck. We would highly recommend!

Finally, we received an extraordinarily generous gift from Jim Levenson ('85), which will allow us to change up our curriculum, develop new courses for our students, and bring new faculty into the program. *Thanks so much, Jim!*

Until we next meet!

Sincerely,

Geraldo Cadava
Director



GERALDO L. CADAVA (Ph.D., Yale University) is an historian of the United States. He focuses on the history of Latinos in the United States and the U.S.-Mexico borderlands. Originally from Tucson, Arizona, he came to Northwestern after finishing his Ph.D. at Yale University.

He is the author of *The Hispanic Republican: The Shaping of an American Political Identity, from Nixon to Trump* (New York: Ecco, 2020); and also *Standing on Common Ground: The Making of a Sunbelt Borderland* (Harvard University Press, 2013), about the Arizona-Sonora borderland since World War II. He is now working on a book about Latino history over the past 500 years,

tentatively titled *A Thousand Bridges*, to be published by Crown in 2026.

Cadava is also a Contributing Writer at *The New Yorker*; co-Editor-in-Chief of the online magazine *Public Books*; host of the podcast *Writing Latinos*; and Principal Investigator for Northwestern's Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program.

At Northwestern, he teaches courses on Latino History, the American West, the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, migration to and from Latin America, and other topics in U.S. history, including Watergate, the 2016 election, and the musical *Hamilton*.

...all of these things, big challenges, big questions, that we face as a society have to be approached from multiple, different, directions.



SHANA BERNSTEIN (Ph.D., Stanford University) is an historian of the twentieth-century United States, with a particular interest in social reform movements, including civil rights and environmental health and justice. Originally from Northern California, where she completed degrees at UC Berkeley and Stanford, she initially joined Northwestern as a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Latino Studies before accepting a tenure-track position in History at Southwestern University in 2004. She rejoined the Northwestern faculty in 2014 as a Clinical Associate Professor of Legal Studies.

Her first book, *Bridges of Reform: Interracial Civil Rights Activism in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Oxford, 2011), reinterprets U.S. civil rights activism by revealing its roots in the interracial efforts of Mexican, Jewish, African, and Japanese Americans in mid-century Los Angeles. It also

argues that the early Cold War facilitated, rather than derailed, some forms of activism. Bernstein has also written academic articles on the history of environmental health and civil rights, and has written essays for CNN, *The Forward*, *Talking Points Memo*, *The Hill*, *Pacific Standard*, *American Prospect*, and the *Austin American Statesman*. She has received fellowships including from the Huntington Library and the Mellon Foundation, and is a distinguished lecturer for the Organization of American Historians.

Bernstein is currently working on a project that uses the history of strawberries as a lens for exploring the intersection of worker health, consumer health, and environmental health. She teaches undergraduate courses on comparative race and ethnicity, immigration, and health and inequality.



NICOLETTE BRUNER (Ph.D. in English Language and Literature, University of Michigan; JD, University of Michigan Law School) is Assistant Professor of Instruction at the Center for Legal Studies and the Program in American Studies. Prior to joining Northwestern's faculty, she was a postdoctoral fellow with the Stevanovich Institute on the Formation of Knowledge at the University of Chicago and taught in the Department of English at Western Kentucky University.

Bruner's research explores how the law shapes the way humans understand and interact with the nonhuman entities and systems around them. Her current book project, *Thing People: Living with Corporations and Other Nonhumans*, examines how the legal doctrine of corporate personhood offers a framework for articulating the rights and responsibilities of other nonhuman entities, including animals, plants, rivers, and robots. She also teaches and works in American literature, corporate law and policy, jurisprudence, and the environmental humanities.



ROBERT ORSI (Ph.D. Philosophy, Yale University) is the first holder of the Grace Craddock Nagle Chair in Catholic Studies. Professor Orsi studies American religious history and contemporary practice; American Catholicism in both historical and ethnographic perspective; and he is widely recognized also for his work on theory and method for the study of religion. In 2002-2003, he was president of the American Academy of Religion. Professor Orsi has held

fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Fulbright Foundation. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2010 he received the E. Leroy Hall Award for Teaching Excellence, Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, Northwestern University, the highest recognition for teaching offered by WCAS.

Right from the start there was student interest in the Program.



IVY WILSON (Ph.D., Yale University) teaches courses on the comparative literatures of the black diaspora and U.S. literary studies with a particular emphasis on African American culture. His book, *Specters of Democracy: Blackness and the Aesthetics of Nationalism* (Oxford University Press, 2011), interrogates how the figurations and tropes of blackness were used to produce the social equations that regulated the cultural meanings of U.S. citizenship and traces how African American intellectuals manipulated the field of aesthetics as a means to enter into political discourse about the forms of subjectivity



CARLOS BALLINAS Senior Program Administrator in American Studies Carlos Ballinas received a B.A. from the University of Illinois at Chicago and a Ph.D. in Higher Education from Loyola University Chicago. He has worked at Northwestern University for 11 years and currently provides administrative support to the Council for Race and Ethnic Studies, the Asian American Studies Program, and the Latina and Latino Studies Program. Before that, he worked at the City Colleges of Chicago and El Valor.



JULIE LAVIN Program Assistant. Julie received a BA from University of Kansas in Journalism and has worked in a variety of nonprofits in the Chicagoland area including the Evanston Community Foundation and the Chicago Botanic Garden.

and national belonging. Along with recent articles in *ESQ*, *Arizona Quarterly*, and *PMLA*, his other work in U.S. literary studies includes two forthcoming edited books on the nineteenth-century poets James Monroe Whitfield and Albery Allson Whitman. His current research interests focus on the solubility of nationalism in relationship to theories of the diaspora, global economies of culture, and circuits of the super-national and sub-national.



To watch the students apply themselves to create something original, thoughtful, important, to see that glow of knowledge and accomplishment of the outcome of curiosity is the highlight of the Program.



ARMAAN AJANI

Advisor James Hornsten

Live Nation Entertainment's Implications for Antitrust Reform

Exploring next opportunities.



JANE CLARKE

Advisor Daniel Immerwahr

Playgrounds or Classrooms: Visions of Global Engagement in US Children's Literature, 1898-1941

Jane is a Legal Assistant at Proskauer Rose LLP, based out of Boston, MA.



OLIVIA ALEXANDER

Advisor Robert Orsi and Phil Davis

"Raising Men and Women of Faith": Uncovering Religion's Role in Generation Joshua

Olivia is teaching high school special education in *Chicago through Teach for America!* This program is two years, and is working toward her master's degree in education from National Louis University while teaching.



JORDAN MUHAMMAD

Advisor Abigail Barefoot

Community Need and Involvement: Fuel for Mutual Aid Organizing

Exploring next opportunities.



Senior Symposium with Gerry Cadava and Shana Bernstein



ISABEL PODOLSKY

Advisor Doug Kiel

The More Things Change the More They Stay the Same: Navigating Nostalgia and Reinvention in Upper Midwestern "Main Streets"

Isabel is a Community Development Banking Analyst at JPMorgan Chase in NYC.



Director Gerry Cadava with graduating seniors



I earned my 'license to be curious'.



Jane Clarke proudly displays the American Studies Banner at her recent graduation.



LAUREN WALCOTT

Advisor Cynthia Coburn

How School High and Low-Poverty School Districts Support Low-Income Students Through Mental Health and Attendance Policy

Lauren is a fellow at the NYC Mayor's Office of Food Policy for her field placement as a Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow.



EMILY ZOU

Advisor Aaron Shaw

"Did Bro Just Grief the US Government?" How Online Community Identities Create New Genres of Political Communication"

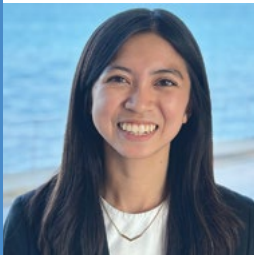
Emily is in her first year at Stanford's Communication Ph.D. program.



MARIAM ADESIJI is a fourth-year American Studies major with minors in Sociology and Dance. Her primary research interests surround the role of gender and labor relations within systems of U.S. mass incarceration and U.S. immigration. Outside of class, Mariam is the Co-Artistic Director of the NU dance, drum, and rhythm ensemble Booms-haka; a humanities tutor with the Northwestern Prison Education Program; and enjoys watching movies, hammocking on the lakefill, and treating Northwestern like a beach school until the cold becomes truly unbearable. Mariam also serves as one of the Weinberg College Student Advisory Board representatives for American Studies.



AUDREY BANNISTER is an American Studies major with hopes to study History and French as well. Originally from Dublin, Ohio. On campus, she is involved in the comedy student group, the *Blackout*, in addition to being an athlete on the varsity cross country team.



VIVIAN BUI is an American Studies and English Literature double major with a minor in Legal Studies. She is interested in studying U.S. immigration and wants to understand how colonization has contributed to mass migration. She is involved in Mock Trial and with Arch Scholars programs. She also volunteers in Chicago teaching ESL and helping immigrants prepare for the Naturalization Interview and Test.



GARRISON GUZZEAU is from Massachusetts. His interests include the intersections of American history, politics, and art of the 20th and 21st centuries. He competes as a member of Northwestern's Sailing Team. In his free time, he also enjoys being outdoors and watching the Red Sox.



MARY CHILDS HALL is double majoring in American Studies and Journalism with a Business Institutions minor. She is interested in exploring the relationship between the American political system and the media, the interaction between the U.S. and global market economies and the role religion plays in America.



LILIANA JURADO is an American Studies and Religious Studies double major from NJ. Her research interests are American civil religion and counter-cultural movements, feelings of American-ness in culturally distinct US territories, and artistic narratives about American life and the American Dream. She works for *AccessibleNU*.

MARIAM ADESIJI AND VIVIAN BUI ARE STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD (SAB) REPRESENTATIVES FOR 2024-2025



JESSICA MA is an American Studies and Journalism double major with a Political Science minor from Belmont, California. She is interested in exploring the role of media in social movements, the interactions between communities of color, and the aesthetics of the American Dream from the perspective of marginalized voices. She competes for the NU Mock Trial team, writes for *The Daily Northwestern*, and is involved with *Supplies For Dreams*.



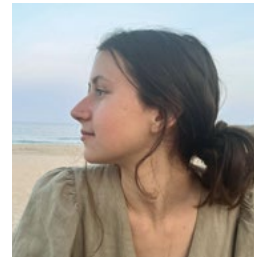
BEN MEYER is a political science and American Studies double major. His research interests focus on the emergence of America as a unique political phenomenon and southern ethnolinguistic studies. In addition to his academic pursuits, Ben serves as the recruitment chair for Northwestern Rugby.



ELLIOT OPPENHEIM is a fourth-year American Studies major with minors in Musicology and History. His research interests include formations of community within social movements, cross-movement organizing, music as a political tool, and anything related to Yiddish in America. Outside of the classroom, Elliot enjoys organizing, hiking, and choral music.



KARA PEELER is an American Studies and Journalism double major from Maryland. She hopes to study the ways that religion and religious institutions affect marginalized communities. Outside of the classroom, she writes for *The Daily Northwestern*, works as a copy editor, and is a volunteer for the NU Thrift Store.



CAMILLA PELLICCIA is interested in African American History, Labor History, Gender Studies, and Political & Social Movements. Her focus is systems of economic and racial oppression and inequality in America—the ways in which these systems have come to exist, historical moments of defiance against them, and theories/strategies for overhauling them.



GRACIE SCHECTER is from LA and an American Studies and Social Policy double major with a minor in Global Health Studies. She is a research assistant for the School of Education and Social Policy helping the lead researchers investigate math instruction across elementary grades. She is interested in examining educational policy specifically in her hometown.

...a small group of students can develop intellectual relationships with one another and sustain them over their time at NU and tackle the biggest questions we have.



ELLIE SOLOMON is an American Studies major with business institutions and legal studies minors. Ellie is interested in American evangelical influence on foreign policy during the latter half of the 20th century. Outside of class, Ellie is the president of the Women's Club Lacrosse team. In her free time, she loves reading and binging TV shows. Ellie is passionate about New York Times crosswords and Boston sports teams.



MIA XIA is a Social Policy and American Studies double major with a minor in Data Science and a certificate in Civic Engagement. She's studying political participation and civic engagement within BIPOC communities. Mia is involved with the Institute for Policy Research, Associated Student Government, the Northwestern Undergraduate Law Journal, and *Supplies for Dreams*.



TÉA BARTLETT is an American Studies major with minors in Legal Studies and Gender and Sexuality Studies from California. Her focus is centered on how the law allows for the policing of gender and sexuality. Téa is a member of the Mock Trial team, a competitive archer with Chicago's North Side Archery Club, teaches young girls STEM with Full STEAM Forward, and is an intern for *FREEST*, a non-profit promoting anti-human trafficking education.



SIMON CARR is journalism, political science, and American studies triple major from Portland, OR and Providence, RI. He's interested in trust-based interstate economic systems and, in general, theorizing a world without nations or borders. He works on campus with the Northwestern Undergraduate Law Journal and Jewish Voices for Peace. He also enjoys reading, designing sound, playing tennis, and doing the New York Times crossword.



PSIPPI HAENDEL is an American Studies major hoping to minor in Environmental Policy and Culture. Originally from LA, Psippi is interested in the history of the American West, historic preservation and restoration, and how historic structures are able to further certain narratives in museum settings. She works part-time at a local elementary school.



JORDYN HOWARD is from Columbus, GA, majoring in American Studies and Psychology with a minor in Legal Studies. She is a member of the Black Pre-Law Association and the Black Mentorship Program and Mock Trial team. She is interested in exploring the development of social activism throughout history alongside the development of social media, with a focus on the ways in which marginalized communities have fought for rights and freedoms.



AYESHA MOHAMMED is an American Studies and anthropology double major and data science minor from Gurnee, Illinois. Her research interests include looking at the impacts of foreign policy on diasporic American communities and discourses regarding gender in contemporary Muslim American communities. She is also interested in the unique ways incarceration affects those racialized as Muslim. On campus, she is involved in NU Community for Human Rights, The Jasmine Collective, Hobart House, and is a fellow in the Mellon Mays program.



MELANIE TAPIA is an Evans Scholar from Chicago pursuing a double major in American Studies and Environmental Policy & Culture along with a minor in Business Institutions. She is the Deputy of Northwestern's Sustainability Committee through ASG and also serves as the Co-chair of Resource Management. She is also an active member in Kesem and a Peer Advisor.



TALIA WINIARSKY is majoring in American Studies with a Spanish minor. She is a lifelong New Yorker and loves learning about her city. Outside of class, she writes for the *Daily Northwestern*, is involved in Hillel, and is an incoming Leopold Fellow. She enjoys running, Greek salads, and reading Sally Rooney and James Baldwin novels.

American Studies students get around



Ice cream outing in May



October performance



June picnic



Wrigley Field in September



Milwaukee's Art Museum in January



SIMON OLSHAN-CANTIN is a first year American Studies and History double major from Westport, Connecticut. He cares about music, movies, and his friends, and is interested in studying how solidarity is created around and across nationality, ethnicity, and class. He wants to understand why things are the way they are, and how they could be better.



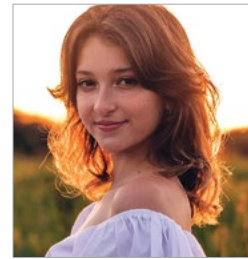
DARBY MARTINEZ-STAPELTON is a History and American Studies double major from Seattle, WA and Denver, Co. Her research interests include the Civil Rights Movement, Satanic Panic, and contemporary gun violence in the United States. On campus, Darby is involved in the Library Student Advisory Committee and is currently employed at Deering Library as a Collections Processing Aide. In her free time you can find her taking the “L” to Chicago, going to movies, or spending time in the gym.



MEDINA “DINA” MIRANDA is an American Studies major from Long Beach, California, and is hoping to also study Linguistics and Japanese. Her research interests include the urban history of America as well as the impact of gentrification, including linguistic gentrification, on marginalized communities. Dina also plays the horn in Concert Band and is a member of Northwestern’s Kaibigan. In her free time, Dina loves watching movies and knitting, and wants to become able to do both simultaneously.



ASHLEY WONG is a American Studies and Journalism double major from Singapore. She is most interested in American urbanism, counterculture movements, and visual cultures. As a curious non-citizen in the American Studies department, Wong looks forward to utilizing that tension to explore matters of cultural assimilation and an increasingly international Americana. Prior to attending Northwestern, she was a creative professional in Singapore, working in advertising agencies and the music business.



CLARA WOOD is an American Studies major with a minor in Dance. Her interests lie in history through pop culture, media, and the environment as a social construct. Wood plans to explore the relationship between historical events and social change through mainstream media, with a concentration on gender dynamics. Outside of academics, Wood is the music director of Northwestern’s “X-factors”, an a cappella group on campus, as well as a dancer in Northwestern’s Latin American dance group, *Dale Duro*. In her free time, Wood loves spending time with her dog, playing piano, and watching the sitcom “Friends.”

...the need for this type of program will still exist 50 years from now as a kind of special educational experience for our students.



What is the one thing you believe that you cannot prove or disprove with fact?

AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM AWARDS

Carl Smith Prize for Outstanding Student Essay in American Studies

JANE CLARKE

Playgrounds or Classrooms: Visions of Global Engagement in US Children's Literature, 1898-1941

ISABEL PODOLSKY

The More Things Change the More They Stay the Same: Navigating Nostalgia and Reinvention in Upper Midwestern "Main Streets"

Jay Rosen American Studies Scholarship

GARRISON GUZZEAU

MORE NOTEWORTHY WORK

MARIAM ADESIJI won a President's Volunteer Service Award this summer for service as an intern at the Chicago refugee-aid nonprofit Forging Opportunities for Refugees in America (FORA).

SIMON CARR recently accepted a fellowship through the Buffet Institute. He will be helping Professor Zayd Dohrn produce follow up content for the podcast "Mother Country Radicals" by using international news databases and domestic sources (i.e. FBI files) to compile historical material on the international footprint of the Weather Underground, the Black Liberation Army, the Young Lords, and associated revolutionary militant groups.

DORI-TAYLOR CARTER is Northwestern's first Victory Congressional Intern recipient.

JANE CLARKE worked with Professor Deborah Cohen on "Men on Trial" as a Leopold Fellow with the History Department. Jane was the recipient of the University-wide award for the best Undergraduate Research Grant for her work related to her American Studies Thesis in 2024.

PSIPPI HAENDEL received a SIGP grant from Northwestern and worked at the Grosse Point Lighthouse.

ELLIOT OPPENHEIM studied the differing experiences with federal law enforcement at two integrated organizations in the American South, Koinonia Farm and the Highlander Folk School. This project aims to compare the FBI files for both.

Phi Beta Kappa

JANE CLARKE

ISABEL PODOLSKY

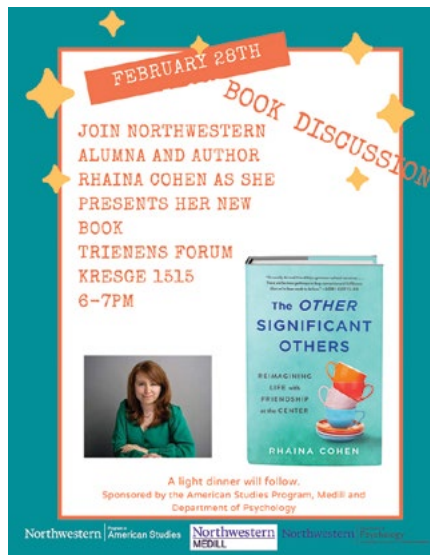
ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

In honor of our anniversary we were fortunate to hold three “Eras” panels from the 1970s, 1980s and 2020s with wonderful alumni who shared their stories from being an American Studies major and talked about their paths taken since leaving Northwestern. We will finish out the remaining three eras in the spring with more illustrious alumni joining us. In addition to the panels we were honored to host Rhaina Cohen (class of 2014) and Barbara Messing (class of 1993) in person as they shared their recent work. We are so grateful for the continued engagement from all of our alumni as it provides such unique and inspirational motivation for our current majors.



FIVE DECADES OF ERAS CONNECTIONS

Rhaina Cohen Class 2014



Author Rhaina Cohen is flanked by American Studies students Jane Clarke, Mariam Adesiji and Jordan Muhammad

Barbara Messing live interview Class 1993



PANEL DISCUSSIONS

1970s

AMERICAN STUDIES 1970S PANEL
DISCUSSION - APRIL 23RD 5PM

Hosted by American Studies Program Director Gerry Cadava

1980s

AMST 1980S ERAS PANEL
MAY 29TH 3PM

Hosted by American Studies Director, Professor Gerry Cadava

2020s

AMERICAN STUDIES
2020S "ERA" ALUMNI
PANEL EVENT
THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 5:00 PM

Hosted by American Studies Program Director Gerry Cadava

Alumni engagement showcases the continuity that exists from one generation to the next when it comes to the awesomeness of our students.

CURRICULUM 2024-2025

SEMINARS FOR MAJORS

FALL

Comparative Race and Ethnicity

Shana Bernstein (Legal Studies and American Studies)

WINTER

Work, Labor and Social Formation

Ivy Wilson (English and American Studies)

SPRING

Now What?

Robert Orsi (Religion)

FALL/WINTER

Senior Seminar

Gerry Cadava (Legal Studies and American Studies)

Other Courses Include:

Fear of Robots

Professor Nicolette Bruner (Legal Studies and American Studies)

Museums Seminar

Professor Rebecca Zorach (Art History)

U.S. Health: Illness, Environment, Gender, Race and Inequality

Professor Shana Bernstein (Legal Studies and American Studies)

Reality TV and Legal Theory

Professor Nicolette Bruner (Legal Studies and American Studies)

Northwestern ²⁰²⁴ American Studies
FALL 2024
FEAR OF ROBOTS

AMER_ST 319-0-10
LEGAL_ST 376-0-21
PLW 314F-CR0001

PROFESSOR NICOLETTE BRUNER

We tend to fear the autonomous tools we employ in the real world labor, even as we continue creating more of them. In this class, we will investigate U.S. popular culture's spectrum of fears from early cinema's "mechanical men" to the problems of AI in our generation. Along the way, we will survey U.S. labor's history in the context of technology, with particular attention to the gendered history of doing "blue collar" and "white collar" work and to generational workers we and read history by Jane Aronson, Philip K. Dick, and Karen Orlan; analyze films like The Iron Lady and The Inventor; and engage with the work of scholars like Donna Haraway, Derrida, N. Katherine Hayles, and others. By the end of the course, students will develop a more nuanced understanding of what it means to fear robots and what their fear tells us about our world.

1801 DUNBAR OVER 10-11, 1801 DUNBAR, 601 JAY JAY BLDG

Winter 2025
U.S. Health: Illness, Environment, Gender, Race and Inequality
Professor Shana Bernstein
AMER_ST 319-010
T,TH 11am-12:20pm

In this course students will examine themes in the history of health in the United States, particularly in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Readings will focus on the intersections between health and environment, gender, race, law, and region. We will consider questions such as what's the impact of environmental change in transforming medical, scientific, and lay understandings and experience of health and illness? What's the role of illness in shaping changing perceptions of the environment? How has race been central to the construction and treatment of disease? How has gender shaped conceptions of and approaches to health? What historical roles have issues of gender, race, and class played in the inequitable distribution of palliatives and in activist involvement in combating environmental hazards? How has changing food production and culture shaped health? This course assumes no previous coursework in the field, and students with a wide variety of backgrounds and disciplines are encouraged to participate.

Northwestern ²⁰²⁵ American Studies
Winter 2025
Reality TV and Legal Theory
Professor Nicolette Bruner
AMER_ST 319-0-20
LEGAL_ST 376-0-21
T,TH 2-3:20pm

Over the past thirty years, reality television – a genre of programming that aims to give us a view into the “unscripted” actions of our peers – has been a dominant force in U.S. entertainment. Many of us watch these shows to relax, to turn off our critical thinking, and to immerse ourselves wholly into some manufactured drama and schadenfreude. Considered as a cultural text, though, reality television can illuminate some profound truths about how we decide what is right and wrong, about the tension between written and unwritten rules, and whether anyone can simply be “here to make friends.” In this course, we ask what reality TV can teach us about the nature of law. We’ll read and discuss key works in the philosophy of law from M.L.A. Hart, Lon Fuller, Ronald Dworkin, Scott Shapiro, and others, and then see how their ideas stand up to the best of shows like Survivor, The Circle, and Bachelor in Paradise. By the end of the quarter, students will be able to explain the main currents of thought in legal philosophy with reference to elimination ceremonies, confessions, alliances, and other fundamentals of reality TV gameplay.

AMSTP@northwestern.edu
American Studies Program co-listed courses are open to all undergrads not just American Studies Majors



A LOOK AT 50 YEARS OF AMERICAN STUDIES

The triumph of the Program is its persistence, lasting 50 years which comes from both the dedicated faculty and the students who trusted the Program and gave so much to it and went on to live these extraordinarily rich lives.

- Carl Smith

LEARNING,
EXPLORING,
ENGAGING...
FOR ANOTHER 50

STUDENT INTERACTIONS & EVENTS

teach and study things
that transcended individual
departments that were
interdisciplinary...



Exchanging ideas then and now





Taking a break from studies



Visiting the Chicago Historical Museum over the years



Students take it outside

Carl's comment on my second draft of my thesis "It's like you put it in a blender".



Captain Nemo's
the megalodon
of submarine
sandwiches.

My first seminar: "The West
in the American Imagination"
I was hooked.





There's no bad writing, only bad thinking.
Tim Breen



Northwestern | American Studies

American Graffiti

Volume 25 — 2024-2025

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
PROGRAM IN AMERICAN STUDIES

1880 Campus Drive
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Evanston, IL 60208-2245

amstp.northwestern.edu



LOOK INSIDE TO SEE
WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING
THE PAST 50 YEARS

Truth was our defense
Class of 1993

