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History 21:512: 406
Topics in U.S. Cultural History:
American Popular Cultures, 1890-1945
 Fall 2018
 Class Location: Conklin 446
 Class Meeting Time: Tuesday, 2:30-5:20

Summary:

This writing-intensive course investigates popular cultures in the United States from the late 1800s through World War II. By considering literature, film, music, photography, and radio, we will ask how popular culture mattered: 1. to debates about immigration, and to changing race and gender relations; and 2. to the federal government and policy-making. More specifically, we will ask how these forms of popular entertainment shaped debates about what it meant to be a “good American” in these decades, and what literature, films, radio, and music tell us about changing values and contested issues in different eras.

The format of the course will be a combination of lecture, discussion, and group activities. We will often read, watch, and discuss together primary sources from the period in question, including films. Class will be an opportunity for us to review sources that you will have already read/watched/listened to for homework, **and** will be a place where we bring in new materials for the first time. Because of the central role discussion will play, **it is essential that you complete the assigned required readings and/or the required viewings by the date indicated on the syllabus.** Because you will be evaluated on your understanding of sources that are assigned for homework and those you first encounter in class, **it is essential that you attend class regularly and engage actively.**

Required Texts:

BOOKS (for sale at the Rutgers University Bookstore. Books are also available on reserve at the Dana Library.)

Burroughs, Edgar Rice. *Tarzan of the Apes* (Penguin/Signet, 1990; 1914)

Inada, Lawson Fusado, ed., *Only What We Could Carry: The Japanese American Internment Experience* (Heyday Books, 2000) (**recommended**; this is a great collection, but I will include the required pages on bb).

ONLINE READINGS,

The online readings will either be available on blackboard (*), or through links listed here on the syllabus. You **MUST** print out and bring hard copy of these readings to class.

FILMS

The Great Train Robbery (1903)

The Sheik (1921)

Modern Times (1936)

“Bugs Bunny Nips the Nips” (1944)

Casablanca (1943)

Films are available here-

www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/eres/fal18/feldsteiner_21_512_406_Q1_template_fal18.html -

and through the course link on bb. While we will be watching sections of these films (and others) together in class, you will also need to see these sources in their entirety on your own. You **MUST** plan accordingly.

Grading, Requirements, and Expectations:

- Attendance and Class Participation (20%)
- Quizzes (15%)
- Midterm (20%)
- Paper and revision (25%)
- Final exam (20%)

1. Attendance and Class Participation (20%). This crucial component of the course includes:

• Showing up prepared (with required readings). Attendance *combined with* consistent and thoughtful participation in class discussions, note-taking during lectures, and completion of in-class assignments, is required. All of these elements will be counted toward your final grade. If you must miss a class for family/personal/health reasons, please let me know in advance if at all possible. If you miss more than one class for medical reasons, you must provide a doctor's note. I will usually take attendance twice each week—once at the outset of class and again after the break; you must be in class for the entire session to count as “present” for that day. More than **two unexcused** absences will affect a final grade. **Any student who misses four or more class sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences may not earn credit in this class.** Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.

• To facilitate this participation and to help you prepare for the essay-writing part of the class, you must come to class with a typed 1-2 page response paper/source analysis to the discussion question listed for that week on the syllabus at **four points** during the semester. I must receive these source analyses on bb by 9 am on Tuesday mornings, and they **must relate to the material we will be covering in class that day**. You will receive comments and a check/check +, or check – on these source analyses, and not a letter grade; but, they will count toward the numeric grade of class participation and are essential building blocks to other writing assignments. You must complete the first response paper based on *Tarzan* on **either September 4 or September 11**. On **November 10**, EVERYONE must submit a response paper. You may submit the other two response papers at any other point. On the weeks when you are not submitting a written response, please consider the question as you complete the homework and come to class prepared to discuss.

You may submit up to two additional responses as extra credit.

2. FOUR-FIVE unannounced quizzes (15%).

• During the first 10 minute of three-four classes, there will be a short quiz, based on the material required for that day of class. Please note that class will begin promptly at 2:35 each week. This type of quiz is designed to encourage you to keep up with the homework. If you arrive late, you may not take the quiz, and you will receive an F/60.

• At the end of one-two classes, there may be an open-note/open-book quiz, based on the material that we have covered in class that day. This type of quiz is designed to help you pay attention and take notes during class. If you leave early, you may not take the quiz, and you will receive an F/60. The lowest quiz grade may be dropped at the end of the semester.

3. Midterm exam, **October 23** (20%).

The midterm exam will consist of an in-class “blue book” exam, with a focus on ID’s and short answers. More TBA.

4. Essay. (5 pages, 12 pt font, double spaced), 25%

Everyone must write an essay draft of 3-4 pages, and then expand upon and revise that draft for a final 5-page essay that draws on additional materials. You will have a list of potential topics from which to choose, and you will have **two possible due dates** for submitting an essay **draft**. The final, revised essay will be due at the end of the semester.

Your grade will be based on how you engage with the process as a whole and not just your final essay. The draft and revision are mandatory; if you turn in one component and not the other, you will receive an “F” for this assignment—even if the one component itself is well-written.

Draft due dates (via bb)

- **Friday, October 5** (for the first set of topics)
- OR:
- **Tuesday, November 20** (for the second set of topics)

Final Essay due:

- **TBA**

6. Final exam. December 20, 11:45 am. 20%

NOTE: All assignments are due on the dates indicated. **Grades will be lowered on late papers**, unless you have talked with me in advance and received an official extension.

A few other important points—about citizenship, community and expectations.

--Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. In your papers, you must cite and provide a reference for all language **and/or** ideas that are not your own. The essays for this class are based **ONLY** on required readings on the syllabus. You need not—and indeed should not—be going to any sources beyond the syllabus as you write your papers. However, should you make the choice to look at other sources, you still **must** cite those sources. Violations of the university honor code will be prosecuted to the full extent that is permitted. We will review what is and is not allowed further in class, but please note that ignorance is not an excuse when it comes to plagiarism. All students will sign the Rutgers University Honor Code Pledge.

--In this course, we will be reading and discussing material on which we may not all agree; some of the themes and imagery we encounter in the sources may feel offensive or otherwise be controversial. In this context especially, it is crucial for us to combine the free expression of ideas with respect for each other. If anyone has any questions or concerns about the material, please be in touch with me.

--The Writing Center. While we will be talking a great deal about writing over the course of the semester, it is important to note that this is not a “writing” class per se, and we will focus more on how to write about historical sources than on issues of grammar/technique, etc. With that in mind, there may be times when I feel, and/or you may feel, that you need additional support to strengthen your writing. At the R-N Writing Center, students can take advantage of trained tutors whose job it is to help students succeed with writing and reading skills. This is a terrific resource; I encourage all of you – and at times I may strongly encourage or expect some of you-- to take advantage of the Writing Center. I have heard that it can be difficult to get an appointment, especially toward the end of the semester, so please plan accordingly and do not wait until the last minute to make an appointment. For more information, see:

<http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter>

--Please turn cell phones off and **PUT PHONES (etc.) AWAY** before class begins. If you want to take notes on a laptop, you must email me in advance to explain why you need that accommodation and receive written permission; remember that if you do receive permission to use a laptop, only that document (or related required sources) may be open. Texting or emailing or otherwise using technology in an inappropriate way at any time during class is **prohibited**. If your phone rings during class, I will ask you to leave the room to turn it off. If this happens more than once, a student will be counted as absent for that entire day. If any phones or other technology are visible during class, this will create an impression of texting, etc. That student will be counted as absent for that day.

--Food and drink are permissible as long as neither is disruptive. We will usually have a 5-10 minute break during the class, but not always. During class, only one student may leave the class at a time.

--Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If

the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. For more information please contact Kate Torres at (973) 353-5375 or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting odsnewark@rutgers.edu.

--Finally, please note that this syllabus is a work in progress. As we get to know each other and I learn more about your interests and learning styles, I may make modifications. I will use email through blackboard to communicate and will assume that you receive and read these emails. If you do not use your Rutgers email regularly, please have these emails forwarded to you so that you can keep up.

Class Schedule and Readings:

UNIT I:

Making a New Century:

Consumption and Modernity in Leisure, Literature, and Film, 1890-1920s

September 4:

Introductions and Setting the Scene: Work & Leisure in the Early 20th Century

September 11:

Looking Outward, I: Civilization, Modern Life, and the “Primitive”

• *Tarzan*, chapters 1-14. (This **may** be available on google books, but it will be important to have hard copy in class, so I encourage you to purchase vs printing from a long online format):

<https://books.google.com/books?id=ZbBOAAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=tarzan+of+the+apes+1914&hl=en&sa=X&ei=l0VvVfbxB4qFsAWep4EI&ved=0CB4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Option 1 for Response paper I: (1-2 pages).

Question: Early on in *Tarzan*, Burroughs compares the young boy to the apes with whom he has been raised (pp. 52-55). Read that section and then the passage below several times. Focusing on the passage, circle the words and phrases that stand out to you. Then *describe* some of the ways that Burroughs makes these comparisons. What kind of language and images does Burroughs use, and what is the significance of his language and imagery? (You will not have space to answer this in writing, but please also consider and be ready to discuss: what effects might it have had on readers in the early 1900s to see that Tarzan feels that the apes are superior-- and more attractive than he is?)

“He was nearly ten before he commenced to realize that a great difference existed between himself and his fellows. His little body, burned brown by exposure, suddenly caused him feelings of intense shame for he realized that it was entirely hairless, like some low snake, or other reptile....”

...“As they leaned over, both little faces were mirrored on the placid pool; the fierce and terrible features of the ape beside those of the aristocratic scion of an old English house.

“Tarzan was appalled. It had been bad enough to be hairless, but to own such a countenance! He wondered that the other apes could look at him at all.

That tiny slit of a mouth and those puny white teeth! How they looked beside the mighty lips and powerful fangs of his more fortunate brothers!

“And the little pinched nose of his; so this was it that it looked half starved. He turned red as he compared it with the beautiful broad nostrils of his companion. Such a generous nose! Why it spread half across his face! It certainly must be fine to be so handsome, thought poor little Tarzan.”

September 18:**Looking Outward, II: Race, Gender and Romance**

- Burroughs, *Tarzan of the Apes* (1914), finish.

Option 2 for Response paper I: (1-2 pages): More than halfway through *Tarzan*, Tarzan and Jane meet (pp. 186-89), as Tarzan rescues Jane from the ape, Terkoz. Read that section and then the passage below several times. Focusing on the passage, circle the words and phrases that stand out to you. Then *describe* some of the ways that Burroughs describes either Jane or Tarzan. What kind of language and images does Burroughs use, and what is the significance of his language and imagery? (You will not have space to answer this in writing, but please also consider and be ready to discuss: what effects might it have had on readers in the early 1900s to read about Jane’s behavior and Tarzan’s behavior here?)

“To Jane Porter, the strange apparition of this god-like man was as wine to her sick nerves...”

AND TWO PARAGRAPHS LATER:

“Jane Porter—her lithe, young form flattened against the trunk of a great tree, her hands tight pressed against her rising and falling bosom, and her eyes wide with mingled horror, fascinating, fear, and admiration—watched the primordial ape battle with the primeval man for possession of a woman—for her.

“As the great muscles of the man’s back and shoulders knotted beneath the tension of his efforts, and the huge biceps and forearm held at bay those mighty tusks, the veil of centuries of civilization and culture was swept from the blurred vision of the Baltimore girl.

“When the long knife drank deep a dozen times of Terkoz’s heart’s blood, and the great carcass rolled lifeless upon the ground, it was primeval woman who sprang forward with outstretched arms toward the primeval man who had fought for her and won her.

“And Tarzan?”

“He did what no red-blooded man needs lessons in doing. He took his woman in his arms and smothered her upturned, panting lips with kisses.

For a moment, Jane Porter lay there with half-closed eyes. For a moment—the first in her young life- she knew the meaning of love.

But as suddenly as the veil had been withdrawn it dropped again, and an outraged conscience suffused her face with its scarlet mantle, and a mortified woman thrust Tarzan of the Apes from her and buried her face in her hands.”

September 25:**Looking Outward, III: Modernity, Popular Culture, and Empire**

- Teddy Roosevelt, “The Strenuous Life” (1905). Please read and listen.

Read: <http://www.bartleby.com/58/1.html>

Listen (optional): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KIYms_VjYcE (start at 2:15 to match text).

- Mark Twain, “To the Person Sitting in the Darkness” (1901).

Read: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~DRBR/sitting.html>

Listen (optional): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bHRoKLWG-tI>
(start at 14 minutes to match the text)

Response Paper, Question 1: Read the passage below several times and circle the words and phrases that stand out to you. Draw on the passage below to consider why Teddy Roosevelt thinks the “strenuous life” is a good thing, who it will help and why it is necessary. What kinds of language and imagery does he use to make his points? What does this passage suggest about who and what is (and is not) important to him?

“We have a given problem to solve. If we undertake the solution, there is, of course, always danger that we may not solve it aright; but to refuse to undertake the solution simply renders it certain that we cannot possibly solve it aright. The timid man, the lazy man, the man who distrusts his country, the

over-civilized man, who has lost the great fighting, masterful virtues, the ignorant man, and the man of dull mind, whose soul is incapable of feeling the mighty lift that thrills ‘stern men with empires in their brains’—all these, of course, shrink from seeing the nation undertake its new duties; shrink from seeing us build a navy and an army adequate to our needs; shrink from seeing us do our share of the world's work, by bringing order out of chaos in the great, fair tropic islands from which the valor of our soldiers and sailors has driven the Spanish flag. These are the men who fear the strenuous life, who fear the only national life which is really worth leading.”

Response Paper, Question 2: Read the passage below several times and circle the words and phrases that stand out to you. What is the “argument” here that Twain says “we” should offer to the “Person Sitting in Darkness”? What kinds of language, imagery and TONE does he use?

“Having now laid all the historical facts before the Person Sitting in Darkness, we should bring him to again, and explain them to him. We should say to him:
 "They look doubtful, but in reality they are not. There have been lies; yes, but they were told in a good cause. We have been treacherous; but that was only in order that real good might come out of apparent evil. True, we have crushed a deceived and confiding people; we have turned against the weak and the friendless who trusted us; we have stamped out a just and intelligent and well-ordered republic; we have stabbed an ally in the back and slapped the face of a guest; we have bought a Shadow from an enemy that hadn't it to sell; we have robbed a trusting friend of his land and his liberty; we have invited our clean young men to shoulder a discredited musket and do bandit's work under a flag which bandits have been accustomed to fear, not to follow; we have debauched America's honor and blackened her face before the world; but each detail was for the best. We know this. The Head of every State and Sovereignty in Christendom and ninety per cent of every legislative body in Christendom, including our Congress and our fifty State Legislatures, are members not only of the church, but also of the Blessings-of-Civilization Trust. This world-girdling accumulation of trained morals, high principles, and justice, cannot do an unright thing, an unfair thing, an ungenerous thing, an unclean thing. It knows what it is about. Give yourself no uneasiness; it is all right.”

October 2:

Silent Films, I: The Allure of Spectacle

•**Read:** 1. “The Spanish-American War in Motion Pictures. ‘Remember Maine’: The Beginnings of War”: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/spanish-american-war-in-motion-pictures/articles-and-essays/the-motion-picture-camera-goes-to-war/remember-the-main-the-beginnings-of-war/>

2. “A Drama of the Spanish-American War”:
<https://www.loc.gov/collections/spanish-american-war-in-motion-pictures/articles-and-essays/the-motion-picture-camera-goes-to-war/a-drama-of-the-spanish-american-war/>

3. James Castonguay, “The Spanish American War in U.S. Media Culture,” (2006), <http://chnm.gmu.edu/aq/war/> (sections to focus on, TBA)

• **Watch:**

1. four silent films about the Spanish American War (you must watch these before class; they are short, and you will need to watch each one more than once to understand them).
 - “Burial of the ‘Maine’ Victims” (1898): <http://www.loc.gov/item/98500963/>
 - “Love and War”(1899): <http://www.loc.gov/item/98501279/>
 - “Aguinaldo’s Navy” (1902): <http://www.loc.gov/item/98500758/>
 - “Advance of Kansas Volunteers at Caloocan”(1899):
<http://www.loc.gov/item/98501192/>

2. **One other film from this list, that you may choose:**
http://www.loc.gov/collection/spanish-american-war-in-motion-pictures/?q=&sb=title_s

3. *The Great Train Robbery* (1903):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8oTdPkIBE0Y>

Response Paper, Question: *The Great Train Robbery* is known as a milestone in film history, and as the first narrative film. Pick one scene or moment that stood out to you in this film, and with that scene as your focus, explain why it would have been significant to audiences in 1903.

Essay Draft, Due Date I: Friday October 5, 5 pm.

In 3-4 pages, consider one of the following topics. Submit essays via blackboard. Please name your essays with: lastname.docx. **More details about this assignment and writing guidelines will be available on BB.**

1. In reading *Tarzan*, Americans had the opportunity to imagine Africa. How might they have used that imagined space EITHER to **reinforce**, OR to **challenge** ideas about either American race relations or gender relations? Draw on at least two examples from the novel to develop and explain your thesis.
2. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, many Americans were excited, but also anxious about the modern life, consumer culture around them, and the role of the US in the world. In what ways did either Edgar Rice Burroughs, Teddy Roosevelt or Mark Twain seek to relieve those anxieties? Draw on at least two examples from your primary source to develop and explain your thesis.
3. Choose one scene from *Tarzan*; with a focus on technique, content, character (choose at least two of those), consider its significance in historical context.
4. Choose one scene from *The Great Train Robbery* or focus on several of the short films; with a focus on technique, content, character (choose two of those), consider its significance in historical context.
5. How did Mark Twain build his argument against U.S. foreign policy? Consider both the content AND the style of his argument to answer this question. Draw on at least three examples from his essay to develop and explain your thesis.

October 9:**Silent Films, II: Film Culture, Race, and Nation**

•*Reviews and Commentaries on the film *Birth of a Nation* (1915) from the time of its release, collected in Robert Lang, ed., *The Birth of A Nation: D.W. Griffith, Director* (New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1994), pp. 159-189.

• **“Jane Addams Condemns Race Prejudice Film,”** *New York Evening Post*, March 13, 1915.
<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/4994/>

(NOTE: The above two are the **main readings** for this week.)

•“‘Art [and History] by Lightning Flash’: *The Birth of a Nation* and Black Protest,” and “An NAACP Official Calls for Censorship...”:
<https://rrchm.org/episodes/the-birth-of-a-nation-and-black-protest/>

Response Paper, Question: What kind of **language** and **logic** did D. W. Griffith and/or Thomas Dixon use to respond to the criticisms they received? Draw on at least two examples in your response.

October 16:**Silent Films, III: Film Culture, Immigration, and Ethnicity**

• **Read:** 1. *Hsu-Ming Teo, “Historicizing The Sheik: Comparisons of the British Novel and the American Film,” *Journal of Popular Romance Studies* 1 (2010), pages to focus on TBA.

2. * "Madison Grant, on the New Immigrants as Survival of the Unfit" (1918), in Leo Fink, ed., *Major Problems in the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era* (Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath and Co., 1993).

• **Watch:** *The Sheik* (1921)

Response Paper, Question 1: Madison Grant was not an ignorant racist; he was a highly educated and published university professor. Why did he see the "new" immigrants as "the survival of the unfit"? What did he think immigrants were doing to the U.S.?

Response Paper, Question 2: *The Sheik* is known as a milestone in film history, particularly because of the ways in which it helped to make Valentino a star. Pick one scene or moment that stood out to you in this film, and with that scene as your focus, consider what made the Sheik a significant character.

October 23:**MIDTERM****October 30:****The Great Migration, Popular Culture, and the “Roaring Twenties”**

• **Read:** 1. Alain Locke, “The New Negro” (1925)
http://xroads.virginia.edu/~drbr/locke_2.html

2. Langston Hughes, poems: “Harlem Nightclub”;
<http://www.jerryjazzmusician.com/2013/12/harlem-night-club-poem-langston-hughes/>
“The Weary Blues”: <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/176785>

3. TBA

• **Watch/Listen:**

1. Bessie Smith, “Young Women’s Blues”:
(Listen: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PvLnupgenCQ>)
Lyrics:
https://www.lyricsfreak.com/b/bessie+smith/young+womans+blues_21003267.html

2. Ma Rainey, “Prove it on Me Blues”
(Listen:
https://www.lyricsfreak.com/b/bessie+smith/young+womans+blues_21003267.html;
Lyrics: <http://www.songlyrics.com/ma-rainey/prove-it-on-me-blues-lyrics/>)

Response paper, Question: Pick one passage from the poem, essay, or one of the songs, and discuss how the author/performer represented blackness.

UNIT II:
Culture Industries, Consumption, and the State,
1930-1945

November 6:

The Depression, I: Class and the New Deal in Popular Culture

• Read and Listen:

1. Franklin Roosevelt, “Fireside Chat,”

Read: <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/march-12-1933-fireside-chat-1-banking-crisis> (click on “view transcript”)

Listen: same as above, or: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iipnhLTdh-0>

2. • Dorothea Lange, "Drawing Beauty Out of Desolation," NPR, April 2010. You may read or listen to the story, and read the excerpt up until paragraph that starts, "As I write at the end of 2008..."
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=126289455>

• Look and Read:

1. FSA Photographs: See “15 Staff Selections from the FSA-OWI Collection” (**Review ALL 15-enlarged**).

See: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/fsa/selections.html>

2. FSA Photographs: See "15 Popular Requests from the FSA/OWI Collection" (Review ALL 15-enlarged). <https://loc.gov/collections/fsa-owi-black-and-white-negatives/articles-and-essays/fsa-and-owi-popular-requests/>

3. “**Dorothea Lange's "Migrant Mother" Photographs in the Farm Security Administration Collection: An Overview**” (read and look): http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/128_migm.html

4. **Sean O'Hagan, "Dorothea Lange: A Life Beyond Limits, by Linda Gordon" (book review, essay, Dec. 2009). Focus on first half, up to paragraph that starts "Gordon's biography is meticulously researched..." See:**

<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2009/dec/06/dorothea-lange-biography-review>

Question: (**EVERYONE MUST SUBMIT A RESPONSE WEEK**). Which photo had the biggest impact on you? Why do you think it did so? What stood out about this photo?

November 13:

The Depression, II: The Left and Popular Culture

• Read: Clifford Odets: “Waiting for Lefty” : <http://www.unz.org/Pub/CerfBennett-1943n02-00521>

• Watch: *Modern Times* (1936)

• Listen:

1. "Strange Fruit," performed by Billie Holiday: Lyrics:
https://www.lyricsfreak.com/b/billie+holiday/strange+fruit_20017859.html
 Listen:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s9FZMHNhJ80>

2. "Radio Diaries":
<http://www.radiodiaries.org/strange-fruit-voices-of-a-lynching/>

Response Paper, Question 1: Who or what is Odets most critical of in his play? Pick one passage or scene to focus on in offering your answer.

Response Paper, Question 2: Who or what is Charlie Chaplin most critical of in the film *Modern Times*? Pick one passage or scene to focus on in offering your answer.

Response Paper, Question 3: What is the relationship between the words, the music, and the voice in Billie Holiday's classic song "Strange Fruit"?

November 20: No class

Due Date 2, Essay drafts.

1. The film *Birth of a Nation* made its controversial debut in 1915. Some voices in the conversation about *Birth* at the time argued that the film was a mark of progress and a step forward-- for the movie industry AND for race relations in the Progressive Era. Drawing on debates about the film from the time of its release AND a scene from the film itself, explain how and why this perspective took shape.
2. What is the significance of **romance** to either *The Sheik*, *Modern Times*, or *Waiting for Lefty*? Does romance have any relationship to the political dimensions of this film? Draw on at least three examples from your source to develop and explain your thesis.
3. In the 1920s and 30s, many Americans were excited about changes in American life, but also anxious about changes in society around them and the role of the US in the world. In what ways did one of the following seek to relieve those anxieties OR express that excitement? Consider that with a focus on either: Madison Grant, Alain Locke, Charlie Chaplin, blues singers, or Franklin Roosevelt. Draw on at least two examples from your primary source to develop and explain your thesis.
4. Many people would argue that the Great Depression was primarily a financial crisis. Given that, how and why did popular culture matter to those who were going through it? Consider that question with a focus on 1-2 primary sources.
5. Choose one scene from *The Sheik* or *Modern Times*; with a focus on technique, content, character (choose two of those), consider its significance in historical context.

November 27:

World War II, I: Producing Nationalism in the 1940s

• **Read:**

1. Executive order 9066: <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5154/>
2. Primary Sources from the Inada, ed., anthology (see blackboard):
 Preface

Editorials in the Wake of Pearl Harbor
 Eleanor Breed- War Comes to the Church Door
 Photo Essay- And uncertain future
 WRA Center Lexicon
 FDR Presidential Statement
 Appendix A

• **Watch:**

1. *Japanese Relocation*: (documentary made by the U.S. government): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=esVege1S0OE>;

2. *Bugs Bunny Nips the Nips* (1944):

• **Optional, Listen:**

“After Pearl Harbor: The Haunting WNYC Broadcasts,” (December 10, 2015), http://www.wnyc.org/story/haunting-wnyc-broadcasts-following-pearl-harbor/?utm_source=Newsletter%3A+WNYP+Daily+Newsletter&utm_campaign=386534be68-Daily_Brief_July_4_2014_26_2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_edd6b58c0d-386534be68-68813089&mc_cid=386534be68&mc_eid=7ff5d44d9f

Response Paper, Question: How did people in the 1940s discuss and make sense of the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II? Consider this question with a focus on 1-2 documents from the collection or with a focus on one section or scene from the film *Japanese Relocation*.

December 4:

World War II, II: Performing and Consuming Nationalism in the 1940s and after

Required:

Read:

1. “Bureau of Motion Pictures Report: *Casablanca*” (1942): http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/active_learning/explorations/casablanca/bmp_report_casablanca.cfm

2. Allen Berube, TBA

Watch: *Casablanca* (1942)

Response Paper, Question: How does the narrative in *Casablanca* either support or oppose U.S. intervention into World War II?

December 11: TBD.

Final Exam: December 20, 11:45-2:45. Location TBA

