

# Creating the Multicultural Nation

## *Adventures in Post-Nationalist American Studies in the 1990s*

George J. Sánchez

*Mankind—that word should have more meaning for all of us today. We can't be consumed by our petty differences anymore. We will be united in our common interests. Perhaps it is fate that today is the Fourth of July and you will once again be fighting for our freedom—not from tyranny, oppression, or persecution, but from annihilation. We are fighting for our right to live, to exist. And should we win the day, the Fourth of July will no longer be known as an American holiday, but as the day when the world declared in one voice, "We will not go quietly into the night. We will not vanish without a fight." We are going to live on. We are going to survive. Today we celebrate our Independence Day!*

Actor Bill Pullman as President Thomas J. Whitmore  
in the 1996 movie, *Independence Day*

In the summer of 1996, the movie blockbuster *Independence Day* reflected many of the attractions, contradictions, and ironies of post-nationalism in the United States embodied in both popular culture and academic discourse.<sup>1</sup> On one level, the previews for that movie enticed us to the theaters by depicting the explosion of virtually every important architectural symbol of nationalism in the United States: the White House and Capitol in Washington, D.C., the Empire State Building in New York (and in the movie a fallen Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor), and even Capitol Records Tower in Los Angeles—that odd mixture of national pride, phallic symbolism, and international capitalism embedded in popular culture. Once in the theaters, audiences were treated to the vicarious pleasure of watching the outer space invaders defeated by a polyglot team of U.S. citizens, most conspicuously headed by an African-American fighter pilot (played by actor/rapper Will Smith) and a Jewish electronics/mathematical genius (played by actor Jeff Goldblum), while the rest of the world's fighting forces combine across all historical and socio-political divides to back up the American charge. It was in battle against alien invaders that, through the voice of the actor playing the President of the United States, July

Fourth became everyone's independence day. As audiences cheered, nationalism, it seemed, had given way to a global internationalism in the wake of invasion from extraterrestrial aliens.

In truth, however, this film reflected a new-fashioned nationalism, one now ripe in its confidence of a multicultural future for the United States and America's lone role as a military and cultural superpower that could export its diverse, yet unified, values across all national boundaries.<sup>2</sup> Multiculturalism seemed to have emerged as a quintessential American value, marking the United States as a unique society among nations, while giving it alone the status to lead all nations to a new future devoid of interethnic strife. This cinematic fantasy—ahistoric as it may be—is also a central vision of some leading Americanists in this country and, just as importantly, the rationale behind several new versions of American Studies on various campuses.

This essay intends to critically examine the relationship between the fields of Ethnic Studies, as it has developed in the United States since the 1960s, and a newly revamped American Studies, which hopes to cast aside older notions of American exceptionalism and contribute to a newfound examination of multicultural U.S. society. In an attempt to fully investigate the multiple meanings behind the movement toward a "post-national" American Studies, I will explore one particular ideological focus of much recent work in American Studies that purports to be "post-ethnic" in analysis and motivation.<sup>3</sup> I argue that current discussions regarding the place of the two fields of American Studies and Ethnic Studies in academia and on specific U.S. campuses reflect the deep ambivalence toward difference and unity in discussions of nationalism among liberal/left thinkers in the United States struggling with how to conceptualize a new, progressive multicultural agenda for the nation.

In a recent review of the institutional changes toward diversity in the national American Studies Association, 1997 President Mary Helen Washington reported,

None of these changes happened of its own accord, but at each critical moment in the history of the ASA, an individual has pushed for change, and the organization, with support from the presidents and executive boards, has responded. The pushing, protesting, and organizing of African American, Chicano/a, and Asian American scholars from 1985 to 1997 has resulted in a sea change in the involvement of scholars of color in ASA. . . . If ASA finds itself now on the threshold of change, it is because of the efforts of individuals with extraordinary singularity of purpose.<sup>4</sup>

Significant institutional collaboration on individual campuses, however, has been much more difficult than the changes in the American Studies Association described by Washington. She herself reminds us that a great deal



of common interdisciplinary ferment in the 1970s and beyond “should have made, but did not make, African American studies and American studies natural collaborators, fraternal, if not identical, twins.”<sup>5</sup>

The failure of cooperation between Ethnic Studies and American Studies faculty and programs was especially the case at smaller college campuses that did not have the resources to engage in widespread faculty hiring that would diversify the traditional curriculum while also building much-needed Ethnic Studies programs demanded by students. At colleges such as Pomona, Oberlin, and Williams, new faculty of color were hired to offer new courses in minority history, literature, and culture, but also had to be able to teach larger surveys in their respective disciplines. These obligations, coupled with the larger demands placed on them for advising and mentoring minority and other students, meant that few of these new hires had the time or energy to contribute to interdisciplinary programs such as American Studies, which continued to rely on volunteer activity. Moreover, many of these faculty banded together to create new Ethnic Studies programs which better met the increased demand for coherency and regularity in course offerings made by students and administrators alike. While American Studies faculties often worked hard at these institutions to implement multiculturalism, they were usually stymied in their attempts to actually involve minority faculty in the inner workings of the interdisciplinary enterprise of American Studies.

Such institutional developments can best be explored by looking at local histories of this intersection between Ethnic Studies and American Studies at specific colleges and universities, rather than less concrete, but more recognized, trends at the national level.<sup>6</sup> Over the past few years, the ground has continued to shift at several U.S. campuses struggling with the academic and institutional boundaries between American Studies and Ethnic Studies. At the University of Michigan, the Program in American Culture uncomfortably fits three Ethnic Studies programs inside a larger American Studies program, combining efforts toward a multicultural vision of U.S. society while uncomfortably competing for resources and often distinctly separate academic agendas under one national umbrella. At the University of Minnesota, an interdisciplinary program operates a tension-ridden alliance with three underfunded Ethnic Studies departments, while the larger administration is paralyzed to move forward for fear of bringing offense to one or more of the parties or having to respond with monies in this belt-tightening era. These umbrella-style programs, although at the forefront of local multiculturalism in American Studies nationwide, exist often in tension with campus efforts at promoting Ethnic Studies.

At these and other institutions, American Studies programs have tried to promote the hiring of faculty who concentrate on racial minorities in order

to lead campus efforts at diversification, as well as diversifying their own curricular offerings. Yet even the best attempts to create a “home” for Ethnic Studies within American Studies inevitably bring both successes and frustrations for programs. At the University of California at Santa Cruz, tenured white faculty combine with untenured minority faculty in trying to reshape an American Studies program and promote a new Ph.D. in the field, yet their efforts are often stymied by departing ethnic faculty, a growing anti-U.S. nationalist sentiment among other faculty, and the very power differentials in appointment and prestige that they hope to examine in American society. All these “ground-up” efforts at reform and diversity should be commended, but none has been an unqualified success at removing pressures and frustrations over the state of Ethnic Studies on its campus.

Indeed, attempts to jumpstart relatively new American Studies programs at institutions with longer histories of established Ethnic Studies departments and/or programs have often led directly to tension. At the University of Colorado, a fledgling American Studies program tries to assert itself with a decidedly pan-American vision stretching across both northern and southern boundaries of the United States, but is looked at suspiciously by an embattled Ethnic Studies faculty and moves forward with little contact with an established Latin American Studies program. Similar situations have erupted at both the University of California at Berkeley and the University of Washington, even though Ethnic Studies faculty at both institutions are heavily involved in the national American Studies movement. On the local campus level, particularly at institutions in the American West, it often appears (and sometimes is) as if cautious administrators are attempting to “pacify” Ethnic Studies by placing the study of race and ethnicity solely within the confines of a more nationalist, if still interdisciplinary, project.

These fears of containment have, in fact, been actualized when one looks at the state of student politics for academic diversity in the 1990s. At Columbia University, undergraduate students protesting for an Ethnic Studies department were, instead, offered an umbrella American Studies program with appointments in traditional departments as this administration talked of combating intellectual separatism among ethnic faculty when established departments were noticeably lacking in racially specific courses or scholars of color. As administrators at East Coast institutions struggled with calls for ethnic programs that went beyond traditional Black Studies efforts, they increasingly sought to minimize what they perceived as “duplication” of departments born of newly recognized American racial diversity that extends beyond a black-white paradigm.

The latest American Studies program to declare itself as guiding the way



to the future in the study of race and ethnicity is that of Princeton University, headed by historian Sean Wilentz. After students occupied the main administration building in 1993 demanding an increase of Latino Studies and Asian American Studies faculty, the university responded by placing these demands within the context of a newly diversified American Studies project. A university committee assigned to respond to these student demands advised the administration that “the intellectual leadership for bolstering its teaching and scholarship in Latino-American and Asian-American studies” should come from the American Studies program, which it deemed “particularly well-suited to encompass studies of the comparative experience of the peoples of America, broadly defined.”<sup>7</sup>

Wilentz, while carefully avoiding mention of the almost total lack of faculty in either of these teaching areas at Princeton and of the student protests which led to this report, did take the time to assail the field of Ethnic Studies for its supposed parochialism:

Studying one ethnic group, or even a collection of ethnic groups, in isolation can easily obscure . . . and rob the study of ethnicity (as well as of the United States more generally) of some of its most profound complexities. The simplification of American culture can become especially dangerous when assessing a particular work of art, literature, or music. Is it not fallacious to believe that any cultural artifact, from a symphony to a folk painting, is representative of an entire social category, let alone one as diverse as an ethnic group? Is it not equally fallacious to believe that individual artists or writers are beholden only to their specific ethnic or racial backgrounds?<sup>8</sup>

While refusing to confront the lack of diversity among Princeton’s faculty and academic programs, Wilentz pretends that the American Studies program at Princeton will be among the first academic units in the nation to do comparative studies and cross-cultural analysis. Princeton’s solution is to require students “to study other aspects of American life” besides their own ethnicity, while requiring those with “more-traditional interests” to “rigorously study the many varieties of American culture”—a practice long-established in Ethnic Studies programs around the country. While it is easy to dismiss this elitist perspective, it is important to analyze more carefully the total mischaracterization of Ethnic Studies by the director of an American Studies program at one of the most prestigious institutions in the country. Indeed, how can “integration now”—a call Wilentz uses to begin and end his article—proceed in American Studies, if Ethnic Studies is so belittled? More importantly, why do some in American Studies seem to feel the need to diminish Ethnic Studies in order to incorporate the study of race and ethnicity?

Indeed, white scholars of American labor history like Wilentz have been among the most prominent supporters of this new attempt to corral the “excesses” of Ethnic Studies—often equated with a turn to “identity poli-

tics” since the 1960s—within American Studies because of their overdetermined need to understand the way that race has, in their interpretation, circumvented a full discussion of class in American society. Largely emerging from the shadow of mentor Herbert Gutman, these new labor historians have been particularly concerned about the ways in which culture and community promote or forestall alliances around labor and class issues in the United States. Moving beyond Gutman’s classic work on the European radical tradition and its intersection with American labor movements, historians have shown how, while immigrants contributed to various radical movements, it was in their assimilation to a common left tradition in the United States that social activism came to fruition, particularly under the New Deal.<sup>9</sup>

In this historiographical tradition, race continues to be seen as a legacy from Old World traditions, and, in the case of African Americans—usually the only non-white racial group of significance in this highly East Coast-centric history—as an intractable problem unlikely to go away without major alliances with the left and a diminution of nationalist claims by Afrocentrists. What has yet to enter in full dialogue in this labor history tradition is the important work of scholars such as David Roediger, Robin D. G. Kelley, Michael Honey, and George Lipsitz—all labor historians who stress the centrality of African American history in American labor—of how the identity of white American laborers has been decidedly shaped by a white racial identity formed in opposition to black Americans. In short, rather than taking a development on race in their own field seriously, these scholars have instead continued to marginalize the study of race in their version of American labor history.<sup>10</sup>

There are fundamental reasons why this development marks a central crisis in American Studies today, not only in American labor history. What I am arguing is that much of this generation of white New Left scholars who have now assumed positions of power in the academy and who are at the forefront of shaping much of the new reconfiguration of American Studies today continue to struggle with their own racial identity and the history of racial discourse since the 1960s. In their attempt to understand why the New Left fell apart after 1968, they have often placed the blame squarely on the so-called “identity politics” of the 1970s and 1980s and what they perceive to be overzealous advocates for race-based power in the academy and in society. Rather than come to terms with the appeal of the New Right to the white, working-class population of the United States, they have framed a scenario which sees “white flight” as a result of unjust appeals for benefits to nonwhites. In the 1990s, this generation has increasingly made a call for a new American community that “goes beyond race,” imagining a national community that can overlook its differences and return to the “real issues” of class equity. In short, this generation now calls



for a new “liberal nationalism” which can reassert itself into national prominence by controlling those issues that split the nation—like race and gender—while calling for equality for all.

What is most interesting to me about this intellectual development is how closely it mirrors a previous intellectual tradition that gave rise to American Studies in the 1950s—that of a stress on a consensual society drawn together by a set of core American values, and differentiated from other national societies by cohesion amidst diversity. An eloquent spokesperson for this tradition is Gary Nash, prominent early American historian, whose academic work has focused on diverse societies of the revolutionary period, labor agitation, and the social history of Philadelphia. Attempting to insure that the new social history made its way into the teaching of history in elementary and secondary education, Nash was thrown into national prominence when his National Center at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), was awarded a grant by the Reagan administration to develop national standards for the teaching of history in the schools. Clearly a left historian trying to do his craft in conservative times, Nash increasingly had to adjust his own perspective toward that of national unity stressed by the Reagan administration, particularly by Lynne Cheney, who attacked the National Standards when originally presented for being left-leaning and U.S.-bashing.

At the same time, Nash’s own attempt to put forward a history series for the state of California came under attack by black nationalists, some ethnic scholars, and the Oakland public school board for trivializing and sometimes stereotyping racial and ethnic contributions to world history and ignoring other groups, despite a claim of presenting a comprehensive history. Despite the fact that these textbooks were clearly more inclusive than anything else on the market, Nash’s work was often viciously and unfairly attacked on racial grounds. Nash himself recounted his hurt:

As the history author of a multicultural series of books for children from kindergarten to eighth grade now in use throughout California’s public schools, I have been told on many occasions in recent months by self-professed Afrocentrists that I cannot write African American history because only someone who is African American can understand it and is entitled to speak or write on the subject. However, none of those who have told me this has been prepared to tell me what they find wrong or insensitive about the last three scholarly books I have published.<sup>11</sup>

Not surprisingly, Nash defended himself. Interestingly, however, he often makes that defense on particularly nationalist grounds, stressing the need for “core American values” in any attempt to intellectually move forward with a study of diversity:

If multiculturalism is to get beyond a promiscuous pluralism that gives everything equal weight and adopts complete moral relativism, it must reach some agreement on what is at the core of American culture. The practical goal of multiculturalism is to foster mutual respect among students by teaching them about the distinct cultures from which those who have come to the United States derive and the distinctive historical experiences of different racial, ethnic, religious, and gender groups in American history. . . . But nurturing this mutual respect and an appreciation of cultural diversity can only be maintained if parents, teachers, and children reach some basic agreement on some core set of values, ways of airing disputes, conducting dialogue—in short, some agreement on how to operate as members of a civic community, a democratic polity. . . . The *pluribus* in *e pluribus unum* can be upheld in all manner of cultural, religious, and aesthetic forms—from the clothes an individual or group chooses to wear, to their cuisine, their artistic preferences and styles, the dialect and linguistic constructions of their internal social life, their religious beliefs and practices, and so forth. But *pluribus* can flourish in these ways only if *unum* is preserved at the heart of the polity—in a common commitment to core political and moral values.<sup>12</sup>

At UCLA, efforts to develop Ethnic Studies departments were stymied for over thirty years, despite numerous student protests, faculty initiatives, and overwhelming needs in the city of Los Angeles. By combating what was perceived as academic separatism, traditional academic departments could move forward with “all deliberate speed” to hire (or not hire) minority faculty, but the power and prestige of traditional disciplines could never be confronted with viable interdisciplinary alternatives in Ethnic Studies. As an Ethnic Studies scholar and a historian, I know full well that the history of the last thirty years indicates that without the political pushing and intellectual reconceptualization forced upon the academy by Ethnic Studies, none of the developments in the *pluribus* would have occurred. Indeed, I am not as convinced as Nash that these “gains” could not be turned back, and recent California history—especially as embodied in Propositions 187, 209, and 227—seems to back up my concerns.

This new version of American exceptionalism has also found its way into academic and journalistic writings which purport to reject the old divisiveness of racial positioning on political questions in the call for a new recognition of what binds us together as a nation. In the 1990s, a veritable cottage industry has been created by publishers producing social commentary which purports to contain the newest answer on how to move past our supposedly current morass on issues of race and nationhood.<sup>13</sup> I will concentrate on a new triad of works on this subject—Michael Lind’s *The Next American Nation*, Todd Gitlin’s *The Twilight of Common Dreams*, and David Hollinger’s *Postethnic America*—which come closest to representing some of the central issues confronting American Studies scholars as they



attempt to deal with diversity while asserting a need for a new vision for the future. Unlike previous attempts to call into question our multicultural America, such as Arthur Schlesinger's *The Disuniting of America* and the racist *Alien Nation* by Peter Brimelow, the works which concern me all come from the liberal/left side of the political spectrum. As such, they all try to understand the ascendancy of the political and religious right in the country and, in different ways, lay the blame for the failure of the vision of the 1960s squarely on the divisiveness of battles over race and equality in the last thirty years.

But each of these books also reflects a new preoccupation with nationalism on the left, and a hope that America's supposed unflinching commitment to multiculturalism may lead the way toward a new reconceptualization of American society. While our research group discussed and debated the future of an American Studies which moved beyond nationalism, these works indicate that nationalism is undergoing a resurgence in some circles of American Studies, often hidden behind notions of an "American community" moving beyond race. In short, these writers collectively reflect the intellectual position in which American Studies finds itself in the mid-1990s, attempting to acknowledge the strength and veracity of multiculturalism while continuing a commitment to understand the American nation as a whole. This essay will explore these and similar dilemmas of race and nation in American society.

Michael Lind's work, whose subtitle is *The New Nationalism and the Fourth American Revolution*, tries to place our current contemporary moment in a broader historical context. Lind, a staff writer at the *New Yorker* and former senior editor at the *New Republic* and *Harper's*, argues that the United States has had three cultural "republics" since the War for Independence: (1) Anglo America (1789–1861), which celebrated an exclusively Anglo-Saxon national community; (2) Euro America (1875–1957), which accommodated European immigrants into this national community; and (3) our current Multicultural America (beginning in 1972), born of the revolutionary turbulence of the civil rights movement, but mostly characterized by what he describes as "the triumph of group-consciousness and racial preference programs."<sup>14</sup>

For Lind, this "third republic" of the United States, product of racial preferences and a "fivefold, race-culture-political bloc scheme," has failed to gain legitimacy in the eyes of most Americans. One central problem with this era of American democracy, according to Lind, is that "there is no generally agreed upon account of what the American community is, or how its place in the world or history should be conceived."<sup>15</sup> Critical to this confusion is the inclusion of the "pseudo-race of Hispanics" into the racial preference spoils system, as well as the favoring of "white overclass feminists" over "working class and middle-class white ethnics," a civil rights

strategy that, according to Lind, destroyed the New Deal coalition and doomed any possibility of a biracial black-white coalition to defeat white conservative Republicanism.<sup>16</sup> Lind ties the growing inequality of the American class structure and the Republican ascendancy to a racial/gender system that he argues consistently favors tokenism over substantial economic transformation.

Not surprisingly, Lind argues that it is critical for the United States to emerge quickly out of this new “third republic” into a fourth, crafted by what he calls a “liberal nationalism” built around a “trans-American melting pot.” After rejecting notions that the United States could be reconstructed on the basis of democratic universalism, cultural pluralism, or a new nativism, Lind argues that our already transracial America needs simply to recognize the cultural commonality which already binds us as a people.

Unlike most of the scholarly work on race by scholars of color, Lind’s work has garnered attention across a broad range of popular journals and newspapers, including basically positive reviews from several scholars intimately associated with American Studies. Michael Kammen, in a review in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, positioned the book as particularly appealing to “liberals and moderate centrists,” claiming particularly that “those who feel that insufficient progress has been made in human relations since the civil rights legislation of 1964 and 1965 . . . may welcome *The Next American Nation* as a well-informed, passionate attempt to think anew about our changing composition as a society.”<sup>17</sup> Gary Gerstle goes further in his review of Lind’s work in *Tikkun*, calling the book an “erudite and engrossing work” that “offers a sweeping reinterpretation of American history and a bold, imaginative program to revive the promise of American life.”<sup>18</sup> While admitting that Lind romanticizes New Deal liberalism and underemphasizes its reliance on white supremacy, Gerstle agrees that the presence of affirmative action has had the effect of undermining class politics. For evidence, Gerstle turns to his “own profession of history, where a preoccupation with race and gender has driven questions of class from the main field of study.” For Gerstle, “Lind’s bold analysis of class privilege,” despite its faulty historical reasoning on issues of race and class, makes this seminal work an important call to draw working-class Americans “out of their cultural bunkers” and toward a much-needed “vigorous common culture.”<sup>19</sup>

Clearly part of Lind’s appeal to liberal academics is his own intellectual journey from a neoconservative Wunderkind—he is a former editor of *The National Interest* and a protégé of William F. Buckley—to a “centrist extremist” willing to directly attack the white overclass. But at least one reviewer, Ellen Willis in *The Nation*, points out that Lind is simply a “warmed-over Daniel Bell,” one whose intellectual position is similar to that of pre-1968 Cold War liberals who called for a strong central state but were decidedly



authoritarian in culture.<sup>20</sup> While other neoconservatives jumped on the Reagan bandwagon, Lind's appeal is the same one that had practitioners of the 1950s version of American Studies interpreting "the end of ideology" and the extreme consensus of the American population under a "culture of plenty."<sup>21</sup> It is harder to understand why much of Lind's analysis mirrors the recent work of New Left academic poster child Todd Gitlin, whose beginnings as an SDS radical seem far removed from those Johnson Cold War liberals whom SDS so forcefully challenged in the 1960s. But Gitlin's work on the contemporary cultural scene, *The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America Is Wracked by Culture Wars*, is full of much the same racial and class analysis which marks Lind's post- (or pre-?) neocon tract.<sup>22</sup>

Gitlin, not surprisingly, does provide quite a different emphasis in explaining developments in the 1960s which created an America full of cultural tension. Unlike Lind, whose white overclass thoroughly manipulated nationalists and those on the Left to insure the hegemony of a concentrated elite, Gitlin searches for the moment in which the New Left itself, of whom he was intimately part, abandoned a politics of commonality and therefore played a critical role in the unraveling of America. In short, Gitlin gives agency to segments of the New Left in his narrative while continuing to play out the disagreements that he was clearly in the middle of during that decade.<sup>23</sup> For Gitlin, central to this transformation was the distinction between the early and later New Left:

Growing numbers in the civil rights and antiwar movements began by rejecting American practices, went on to reject American ideals, and soon, since America was its ideals, rejected the conventional versions of American identity altogether. The early New Left rejected the American political consensus as hypocritical: the country was in default on its promise to recognize equal rights. The later New Left and the black liberation movement rejected the promise as well: the American political consensus was cursed by original sin, it was and had ever been racist and imperial, it had long been making its way to napalm in the defense of freedom; the very idea of a common America came to feel like a pernicious defense of unwarranted and injurious privilege. . . . With an eerie suddenness, virtually before anyone noticed how drastically their terms had changed, American identity was at stake.<sup>24</sup>

As members of the antiwar movement abandoned rhetoric that emphasized that their opposition to the war was the height of patriotism from 1965 to 1968, "the anti-American outrage of Malcolm X and the Black Panthers became far more appealing."<sup>25</sup> For Gitlin, the abandonment of a desire to speak to a common American identity led directly to the failure of the New Left movement.

Compared to his emphasis on solidarity with the oppressed and partici-

patory democracy, which characterized the best of the early New Left, Gitlin's analysis of the later years of the Left in the 1960s focuses on a futile search for useful theory that finally gave way to calls for separatism in which "one grouping after another insisted on the recognition of difference and the protection of their separate and distinct spheres."<sup>26</sup> Though having some sympathy for the potential universality of environmentalism, feminism, and gay rights, Gitlin characterizes most of the leftist politics which has emerged from this time as separatism, "a politics built on identity taken for granted."<sup>27</sup> For Gitlin, it is the "politics of race" that has taken central stage and robbed the Left of its capacity to appeal to the wider American community. Claims based on race have led directly to "the break-up of ideas of a whole Left [which] throws the contest to the Right."<sup>28</sup>

While many historians of the New Left, especially in the new revisionist wave of writing on the 1960s, might disagree with the stark dividing line Gitlin proposes between the early 1960s and the late 1960s, others would take issue with the notion that the New Left would have appealed to a broader, class-based coalition of Americans had not the Left splintered into various separatist factions.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, new scholarship on racial developments in the post-World War II era indicates strongly that white supremacy was solidly entrenched within the northern labor movement, as well as throughout suburban America.<sup>30</sup> In other words, the white backlash toward racial politics had begun well before the late 1960s, already finding expression in George Wallace's 1964 campaign for the presidency and the ascendancy of Goldwater to the Republican nomination.<sup>31</sup> Yet Gitlin's narrative, despite its inattentiveness to actual political developments in the 1970s and 1980s, is one that serves as the underpinning for most descriptions of racial politics since the 1960s in this new wave of scholarship which seeks to move "beyond race."

Gitlin's contemporary analysis is no less problematic, for he concentrates on focusing disparagingly on the attention that multiculturalists have paid to transforming the curriculum ("Marching on the English Department While the Right Took the White House"), while ignoring the appeal that the Right has made to the white working-class constituency he believes would have moved politically left, had it not been for this "disintegration" into racial separatism. His answer for the end of the twentieth century is a call to reembrace the Enlightenment and its universal principles, whatever history (and politics) has taught us about the fiction of Enlightenment universality. To Gitlin, "the Enlightenment is self-correcting."<sup>32</sup> For someone who so attentively calls on lessons to be learned from the ideological missteps in the New Left, his call for a reinvigoration of Enlightenment philosophy among the Left in the 1990s is both intellectually limited and politically unsatisfying. As Robin D. G. Kelly has pointed out, Gitlin ignores labor



movements of the past thirty years which have organized workers across racial boundaries, while disregarding scholarship which shows “that the tragedy of most progressive movements in the United States has been white racism.”<sup>33</sup>

Indeed, Gitlin’s narrative of the New Left’s demise as a result of an ideology of racial separation and his opening section framing “the problem” of contemporary politics through the lens of the travails faced by the previously mentioned historian Gary Nash as he confronted the parochial Oakland School Board over his multicultural textbooks indicate to me that part of Gitlin’s analysis rests on a much-underdiscussed form of “identity politics”: the personal victimization felt by many white male academics when forced to confront their own privilege. Gitlin captures this form of identity politics when he observes that, “if not an oppressor, the white male is a blank, made to feel he lacks roots, culture, substance.”<sup>34</sup> But he does not follow that insight up with any sustained analysis. Instead, while spending some time recounting his own disgust with minority student activists at Berkeley, Gitlin joins a host of other tenured academics who have framed their political outlook from personal confrontations with those without much power on their campuses.<sup>35</sup> Unlike others, however, Gitlin is willing to denounce any focus on the campus as a “true” site for political empowerment, all the while using campus politics to define the trajectory of the left in the last two decades.

In the end, Gitlin proposes a politics of commonality which seeks to construct a democratic majority that will face “the necessary discussion,” one he hints at as concerning control of multinational corporations by national states, especially the United States. For him, it is only “the obsession with difference [which] stands in the way of asking the right questions.”<sup>36</sup> Unlike Lind, who unabashedly calls for a “liberal nationalism” to shape this democratic majority, Gitlin calls for an American “community”—a weak politics of “common moral obligations” in which class itself is elided through populist rhetoric of the “common man.” I would argue that Gitlin indeed calls for an American nationalism, grounded around support for “majoritarian” values, that falls short of confronting both the U.S. population’s tortured history with race and difference and its contradictory future in leading an international revolt against the very multinational corporate structure it has cultivated.<sup>37</sup> Just as in the movie *Independence Day*, in Gitlin’s position America’s role as world leader goes unquestioned, even though how international leadership can be developed from such an unabashedly nationalist project remains unexplored.

While both Lind and Gitlin call for a reduction of claims for affirmative action and are adamant about the need to reduce immigration to the United States in order to insure that multiculturalism remains palatable for American citizens, David Hollinger’s approach to these questions in *Post-ethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism* is quite different and, in many ways,

more challenging to those involved with the project of American Studies.<sup>38</sup> Hollinger, as a former director of the Program in American Culture at the University of Michigan, introduces us to several ideological and political currents quite central to the American Studies enterprise today. In particular, his important concept of “cosmopolitanism” helps us understand the motivation of many American Studies practitioners to move beyond national parochialism and toward a more inclusive sense of belonging. Yet, it also contains a problematic relationship with American nationalism, particularly because of what it ignores: power, shaped between American groups and between the U.S. citizenry and other citizens of the world.

Among the many strengths of *Postethnic America* is its attention to the wider spectrum of ideas, what Hollinger refers to as “a larger transition from species to ethnos,” that marks the intellectual terrain in which multiculturalism in the United States is but one trend.<sup>39</sup> Unlike Gitlin’s self-correcting Enlightenment, Hollinger does not minimize the extent to which previous claims of universalism, particularly in the 1950s, were grounded in a specific American generation’s tendency “to conflate the local with the universal.”<sup>40</sup> He also recognizes the intellectual advance in acknowledging the “historicity” of our beliefs and values, that allow us to “shy away from essentialist constructions of human nature, from transcendentalist arguments about it, and from timeless rules for justifying claims about it.”<sup>41</sup> While the key issue for Hollinger is the future of the American civic community, as it is for Gitlin and Lind, Hollinger problematizes the relationship of the individual to the nation by asking a fundamental question: “How wide is/should be the circle of we” to truly have an American community of racial and ethnic equality? Hollinger goes further than others in answering this question by introducing the concept of “cosmopolitanism” as a goal.

Hollinger begins by demonstrating how similar cosmopolitanism is to other varieties of universalism, especially pluralism. Like other universalisms, Hollinger’s cosmopolitanism has “a profound suspicion of enclosures,” but unlike others is defined by the “recognition, acceptance, and eager exploration of diversity.” In his definition, “cosmopolitanism urges each individual and collective unit to absorb as much varied experience as it can, while retaining its capacity to advance its aims effectively.”<sup>42</sup> So far, virtually every member of the American Studies community nationwide at the moment would qualify as “cosmopolitan.” Moreover, given the unequal nature of intellectual exchange in American higher education, any faculty members or students of color at a predominantly white university would by definition be a “cosmopolitan,” since they have placed themselves in an institutional setting in which they are a minority “absorbing” a higher degree of “varied experience” than almost all of their white counterparts.

Where we disagree revolves around issues of power and history in play



with questions of diversity, which are more clearly drawn by Hollinger in his distinction of cosmopolitanism from pluralism. To Hollinger,

Pluralism differs from cosmopolitanism in the degree to which it endows with privilege particular groups, especially the communities that are well established at whatever time the ideal of pluralism is invoked. While cosmopolitanism is willing to put the future of every culture at risk through the sympathetic but critical scrutiny of other cultures, pluralism is more concerned to protect and perpetuate particular, existing cultures . . . . If cosmopolitanism can be casual about community building and community maintenance and tends to seek voluntary affiliations of wide compass, pluralism promotes affiliations on the narrower grounds of shared history and is more quick to see reasons for drawing boundaries between communities.<sup>43</sup>

Hollinger's concept of cosmopolitanism, in my reading, therefore needs to ignore differences in power, both in the present and in the past, in order to achieve cultural interaction. While this might be fine for those who need not fear putting the very presence of their culture at risk, it would be a ridiculous posture for anyone who believes that power is distributed unequally to various cultural groups, thereby making some affiliations more "voluntary" than others.<sup>44</sup> If one believes, as I do, that collective action has been critical to the survival of certain racial and ethnic groups in U.S. society, and is, indeed, the only way that individuals in those groups have had choice, then cosmopolitanism is not a viable option for most with a commitment to Ethnic Studies.

In short, I remain skeptical that anyone but those with racial and economic power in American society can truly be "postethnic." When Hollinger notes that "a truly postethnic America would be one in which an ethno-racial component in identity would loom less large than it now does in politics as well as culture, and in which affiliation by shared descent would be more voluntary than prescribed in every context," and then goes on to say that "many middle-class Americans of European descent can now be said to be postethnic in this sense," I wonder mightily about its applicability for a society that continues to be riveted and committed to racial and class hierarchies.<sup>45</sup> It is, indeed, the power to affiliate as white, as much as the desire to "move beyond multiculturalism" which fostered the turning-back of affirmative action in California via Proposition 209, for example. And it is exactly this "power to affiliate" which shapes the very academic departments that remain quite un-diverse throughout the University of California system with which Hollinger and Gitlin have both been associated. As with the question posed by the film *Independence Day*, we need to ask ourselves whether a "post-nationalist" American Studies actually hopes to break down these national boundaries of inquiry or whether they will be repackaged under a new rubric of difference controlled.

For me, it is critically important to understand why—for American liberal academics—it is “separatist” and dangerous for scholars who study race and ethnicity, or one particular racial-ethnic group, to organize themselves into an academic department. Clearly Ethnic Studies departments should meet the same rigorous demands of scholarship and teaching implicit in any university department. And clearly, one cannot call “separatist” any intellectual discipline which seeks its place among others at the table of intellectual inquiry. Indeed, the proliferation of departments which have focused on one nation or one linguistic group seems never to have threatened before the “unity” of scholarly inquiry at the university.

The work of literary scholar Chris Newfield and sociologist Avery Gordon points toward an answer to these questions through the advent of “managerial democracy”—developed often in the corporate business world’s attempt at diversity management—in the world of academia, particularly in the humanities.<sup>46</sup> They have stressed that this newfound interest in managing multiculturalism on college campuses has its roots in a larger discourse at the heart of the University of California system. Former University of California President Clark Kerr memorialized this version of postwar university management philosophy when he wrote thirty years ago, “To make the multiversity work really effectively, the moderates need to be in control of each power center, and there needs to be an attitude of tolerance between and among the power centers, with few territorial ambitions. When the extremists get in control of the students, the faculty, or the trustees with class warfare concepts, then the ‘delicate balance of interests’ becomes an actual war.”<sup>47</sup> Is this what is going on? Does moving American Studies to the forefront of the study of race ensure that moderates will remain in positions of power—moderates being the newly tenured members of the New Left, rather than the “tenured radicals” predicted by the New Right?

Or is this impulse combined with an underexplored form of identity politics—that of white males of the left, whose own concept of the American nation requires a department of diversity to lay claim to a “new American future?” In some academic conversations, I often feel as if my own scholarship, if not my very body, is just a leg of a scaffold being built which allows these pronouncements of an “exceptional America” to be professed. Do I threaten this delicate scaffold when I ask to surround myself with scholars from the field which I know nurtures best my own intellectual interests?

I say all of this as someone committed to participating in the future of American Studies. I do not believe that my voice in this conversation carries any less weight because it emerges from the fields of Chicano Studies and



American history. But I also know that if a true conversation is to exist between Ethnic Studies and American Studies, we must collectively fight off the tendency to collapse difference into some new nationalist paradigm, even if “multicolored.”

A post-nationalist American Studies must find a way to incorporate the various intellectual traditions in a multicultural United States and the specific histories at individual campuses without assuming a position of ideological control over the study of race and ethnicity. Moreover, few ethnic faculty want to face the age-old question, “Are you American?” by having to decide to contribute to either an overarching American Studies program or a marginalized Ethnic Studies program. And very few American Studies faculty believe that a multicultural curriculum can be sustained without advances in the hiring and promotion of faculty of color who specialize in the study of specific racial/ethnic groups in the United States.

In short, American Studies programs and departments are unable to transcend the very divisions of race and power that shape American institutions and society as a whole. Acknowledging our discomfort with our power and privilege because of our citizenship, I call on American Studies scholars to re-examine notions of nationhood which presume that the health of the nation should be equated with the absence of conflict and questioning. Indeed, if American Studies and Ethnic Studies are to exist together in a positive relation in academia, those involved must accept conflict and compromise as a function of the continued marginalization of ethnic scholarship and scholars by their institutions. Rather than simply considering conflict as debilitating for academic discourse, American Studies scholars must see themselves at the forefront of a truly multicultural university, willing to struggle with the consequences of continued inequality while pushing forward for a new re-configuration of power and a sharing of privilege in American society.

## NOTES

1. The film *Independence Day* was directed by Roland Emmerich (Twentieth Century Fox, 1996).

2. For a further exploration of these issues, see Michael Rogin, *Independence Day, or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Enola Gay* (London: British Film Institute Publishing, 1998).

3. For our collective group's own debates over the meaning of the terms *post-national* and *post-nationalist*, see the introduction to this volume.

4. Mary Helen Washington, “‘Disturbing the Peace: What Happens to American Studies If You Put African American Studies at the Center?’: Presidential Address to the American Studies Association, 29 October 1997,” *American Quarterly* 50: 1 (March 1998), p. 6.

5. Ibid., p. 3.

6. Indeed, the analysis which follows is a result of being invited as an outside re-

viewer of or consultant to at least eight different American Studies programs over the past four years. From this vantage point, similar tensions seemed to exist across campuses, although the problems encountered and possible solutions varied dramatically depending on specific institutional histories between the areas.

7. Quoted in Sean Wilentz, "Integrating Ethnicity into American Studies," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 29 November 1996, p. A56.

8. Ibid.

9. See Lizbeth Cohen, *Making A New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Gary Gerstle, *Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914–1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); and Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (London: Verso, 1996).

10. One exception is Gary Gerstle, who struggles with these questions in "Liberty, Coercion, and the Making of Americans," *Journal of American History* 84: 2 (September 1997), pp. 550–70.

11. Gary Nash, "The Great Multicultural Debate," *Contention: Debates in Society, Culture, and Science* 1: 3 (Spring 1992), p. 17.

12. Ibid., p. 24.

13. Michael Lind, *The Next American Nation: The New Nationalism and the Fourth American Revolution* (New York: The Free Press, 1995); Todd Gitlin, *The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America Is Wracked by Culture Wars* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1995); David Hollinger, *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1995). See also Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Disuniting of America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992); Peter Brimelow, *Alien Nation: Common Sense about America's Immigration Disaster* (New York: Random House, 1995); Dinesh D'Souza, *The End of Racism* (New York: The Free Press, 1995); Richard Bernstein, *Dictatorship of Virtue: Multiculturalism and the Battle for America's Future* (New York: Knopf, 1994); Michael Tomasky, *Left for Dead: The Life, Death, and Possible Resurrection of Progressive Politics in America* (New York: The Free Press, 1996); Jim Sleeper, *The Closest of Strangers: Liberalism and the Politics of Race in New York* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1990); Robert Hughes, *Culture of Complaint: The Fraying of America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); and Paul Craig Roberts and Lawrence M. Stratton, *The New Color Line: How Quotas and Privilege Destroy Democracy* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 1995).

14. Lind, *Next American Nation*, p. 12.

15. Ibid., p. 98.

16. Ibid., pp. 116–17.

17. Michael Kammen, "On Colorblindness: A Rational Argument from the Extreme Center," *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 2 July 1995, pp. 2, 9.

18. Gary Gerstle, "Class-Conscious Patriot," *Tikkun* 10: 5 (September/October, 1995), p. 90.

19. Ibid., pp. 92, 93.

20. Ellen Willis, "A Neocon Goes Back to Class," *The Nation*, 28 August/4 September 1995, pp. 211–14.

21. Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology* (Glencoe: Free Press 1960); and David Potter, *People of Plenty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954).

22. Gitlin, *Twilight of Common Dreams*.



23. For an account of Gitlin's involvement in SDS, see Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1987); and James Miller, *Democracy Is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987).

24. Gitlin, *Twilight of Common Dreams*, pp. 68–69.

25. Ibid., p. 70.

26. Ibid., p. 100.

27. Ibid., p. 101.

28. Ibid., p. 103.

29. David Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams: America in the 1960s* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1994); Doug Rossinow, "The New Left in the Counterculture: Hypotheses and Evidence," *Radical History Review* 67 (Winter 1997), pp. 79–120.

30. See, for example, Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Arnold Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940–1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); and George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

31. Dan T. Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich: Race in the Conservative Counterrevolution, 1963–1994* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996).

32. Gitlin, *Twilight of Common Dreams*, p. 215.

33. Robin D. G. Kelley, *Yo Mama's Disfunktional!: Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997), p. 119. See especially chapter 4, "Looking Extremely Backward: Why the Enlightenment Will Only Lead Us into the Dark," pp. 103–24, for a thorough repudiation of the "enlightenment" perspective, and chapter 5, "Looking Forward: How the New Working Class Can Transform Urban America," pp. 125–58, for a description of various post-sixties movements which have embodied a transracial organizing strategy without ignoring race.

34. Gitlin, *Twilight of Common Dreams*, p. 125.

35. Ibid., pp. 151–59.

36. Gitlin, *Twilight of Common Dreams*, p. 236.

37. Much the same point is made by Kelley, *Yo Mama's Disfunktional!*, pp. 118–19.

38. Hollinger, *Postethnic America*.

39. Ibid., p. 65.

40. Ibid., p. 54.

41. Ibid., p. 60.

42. Ibid., p. 84.

43. Ibid., pp. 85–86.

44. The same critique is made by Gerstle in "Liberty, Coercion, and the Making of Americans," pp. 554–57.

45. Hollinger, *Postethnic*, p. 129.

46. Avery F. Gordon and Christopher Newfield, "Introduction," and "Multiculturalism's Unfinished Business," in *Mapping Multiculturalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

47. Clark Kerr, *The Uses of the University* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 39.

*Syllabus* INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN STUDIES AND ETHNICITY

University of Southern California

*Instructor: George J. Sánchez*

This course explores a variety of themes, theoretical influences, and methodological approaches currently alive in American Studies, and its related disciplinary fields. My aim is to introduce you, at the graduate level, to a wide array of ongoing “conversations” in the field of American Studies and Ethnicity with the hope of promoting active engagement in those discussions from you. Particular emphasis is placed on the current controversies and scholarship surrounding the area of cultural studies and scholarship focused on race, ethnicity, and gender.

After providing a general mapping of the current intellectual terrain in the field, this course is organized around four sections, each designed to explore a particular direction in American/Ethnic Studies. “Origins in Place” will explore some of the historical origins of American Studies, centered around regional/spatial issues in a variety of subfields. “Immigration and Response” will examine interdisciplinary approaches to understanding the entry of newcomers to American society, as well as the ability of the United States to change as a result of immigration. “Performing Identity” will explore various approaches to the relationship between the individual and the larger community, focusing on cultural arenas of performance where difference is expressed. “One Nation, Many Peoples” examines the historical and contemporary sites of ethnic interaction, as well as the hierarchies of race which continue to shape American society.

*Schedule*

Week 1: Introduction to Course

Week 2: New Directions and Old Issues in American Studies

Mary Helen Washington, “‘Disturbing the Peace: What Happens to American Studies If You Put African American Studies at the Center?’: Presidential Address to the American Studies Association, 29 October 1997,” *American Quarterly* 50 (March 1998), pp. 1–23.

Amy Kaplan, “‘Left Alone with America’: The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture,” in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, ed. Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1993), pp. 3–21.

Allen F. Davis, “The Politics of American Studies,” *American Quarterly* 42: 3 (September 1990), pp. 353–74.

Gene Wise, “‘Paradigm Dramas’ in American Studies: A Cultural and Institutional History of the Movement,” *American Quarterly* 31 (1979), pp. 293–337.



## ORIGINS IN PLACE

## Week 3: Slavery and the South

Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Alexander O. Boulton, "The American Paradox: Jeffersonian Equality and Racial Science," *American Quarterly* 47 (September 1995), pp. 467–92.

Priscilla Wald, "Terms of Assimilation: Legislating Subjectivity in the Emerging Nation," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, pp. 59–84.

## Week 4: Conquest and the West

Frieda Knobloch, *The Culture of Wilderness: Agriculture as Colonization in the American West* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

Brad Evans, "Cushing's Zuni Sketchbooks: Literature, Anthropology, and American Notions of Culture," *American Quarterly* 49 (December 1997), pp. 717–45.

Richard Slotkin, "Buffalo Bill's 'Wild West' and the Mythologization of the American Empire," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, pp. 164–81.

## Week 5: Power and the City

Mike Davis, *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1998).

Sean McCann, "Constructing Race Williams: The Klan and the Making of Hard-Boiled Crime Fiction," *American Quarterly* 49 (December 1997), pp. 677–716.

William Sharpe and Leonard Wallock, "Bold New City or Built-Up 'Burb?: Redefining Contemporary Suburbia," *American Quarterly* 46 (March 1994), pp. 1–30.

## IMMIGRATION AND RESPONSE

## Week 6: Acting as Immigrants

Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1996).

K. Scott Wong, "The Transformation of Culture: Three Chinese Views of America," *American Quarterly* 48 (June 1996), pp. 201–32.

Roger Rouse, "Mexican Migration and the Social Space of Postmodernism," *Diaspora* 1 (Spring 1991), pp. 8–23.

## Week 7: Anti-Immigrant Nativism

Michael Peter Smith and Joe R. Feagin, eds., *The Bubbling Cauldron: Race, Ethnicity, and the Urban Crisis* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).

George J. Sánchez, "Face the Nation: Race, Immigration, and the Rise of Nativism in Late Twentieth-Century America," *International Migration Review* 31 (Winter 1997), pp. 1009–30.

William H. Katerberg, "The Irony of Identity: An Essay on Nativism, Liberal Democracy, and Parochial Identities in Canada and the United States," *American Quarterly* 47 (September 1995), pp. 493–524.

#### Week 8: Moving Beyond Multiculturalism?

David Hollinger, *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1995).

Robert James Branham, "'Of Thee I Sing': Contesting 'America,'" *American Quarterly* 48 (December 1996), pp. 623–52.

Christopher Newfield and Avery F. Gordon, "Multiculturalism's Unfinished Business," in *Mapping Multiculturalism*, ed. Avery F. Gordon and Christopher Newfield (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), pp. 76–115.

#### PERFORMING IDENTITY

#### Week 9: Performing Race, Performing Gender

Dorinne Kondo, *About Face: Performing Race in Fashion and Theatre* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

Pamela Fox, "Recycled 'Trash': Gender and Authenticity in Country Music Autobiography," *American Quarterly* 50 (June 1988), pp. 234–66.

Chela Sandoval, "U.S. Third World Feminism: The Theory and Method of Oppositional Consciousness in the Postmodern World," *Gender* 10 (1991) pp. 1–24.

#### Week 10: Cultural Politics in Exhibition

Alicia Gaspar de Alba, *Chicano Art Inside/Outside the Master's House: Cultural Politics and the CARA Exhibition* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998).

Kristine C. Kuramitsu, "Internment and Identity in Japanese American Art," *American Quarterly* 47 (December 1995), pp. 619–58.

James Clifford, "On Collecting Art and Culture," in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp. 215–51.

#### Week 11: Watching Race, Watching Culture

Herman Gray, *Watching Race: Television and the Struggle for Blackness* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).

George Lipsitz, "Listening to Learn, Learning to Listen: Popular Culture, Cultural Theory, and American Studies," *American Quarterly* 42 (1990), pp. 615–36.



Lynn Spigel, "High Culture in Low Places: Television and Modern Art, 1950–1970," in *Disciplinary and Dissent in Cultural Studies*, ed. Cary Nelson and Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar (New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 313–46.

#### ONE NATION, MANY PEOPLES

Week 12: American Studies Association conference, Seattle, Washington

Week 13: Thanksgiving

Week 14: The Politics of Cultural Interaction

Neil Foley, *The White Scourge: Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

Robert Orsi, "The Religious Boundaries of an Inbetween People: Street Feste and the Problem of the Dark-Skinned Other in Italian Harlem, 1920–1990," *American Quarterly* 44 (September 1992), pp. 313–47.

Laura Pulido, "Multiracial Organizing among Environmental Justice Activists in Los Angeles," in *Rethinking Los Angeles*, eds. Michael J. Dear, H. Eric Shockman, and Greg Hise (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1996), pp. 171–89.

Week 15: Reexamining Whiteness

George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

Eric Lott, "White Like Me: Racial Cross-Dressing and the Construction of American Whiteness," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, pp. 474–95.

Shelley Fisher Fishkin, "Interrogating 'Whiteness,' Complicating 'Blackness': Remapping American Culture," *American Quarterly* 47 (September 1995), pp. 428–66.