

Dr. Lee D. Baker
104 Social Science Bldg
Office Hours 1:00-2:00 Monday
& most days right after class

E-mail:Ldbaker@duke.edu
Time: MWF 11:55 AM-12:45 PM
Location: Soc Sci 229
Spring 2007

Life in America: Identity and Everyday Experience

What is American Culture? This is a very complicated question and impossible to answer. Culture is not a thing, and American cultural patterns and practices are continuously in flux. They often change in step with shifts in technology, migration patterns, class relations, and global relations, but not always.

One way to approach that amorphous entity called “American Culture” is to explore how people make sense of their everyday lives. Important to many Americans is the notion of identity, which is itself a complicated concept to explore. We will focus on the way people use, appropriate, marshal, and negotiate identity as an integral aspect of their everyday lives. By exploring how people use identity, we can systematically explore aspects of American culture. This course focuses on identity in everyday life in the United States.

We will focus on three interlaced themes. The first theme focuses on the fact that culture, power, and history structure society in ways that shape and impacts the everyday lives of all Americans. The second theme focuses on how particular groups shape and are shaped by unique (and sometimes not so unique) practices that often turn on ideas about race, language, or community. Although these practices may signify shared experiences that unify “a people,” they can also lead to fissures and fractures within the so-called community. The final theme we will explore looks at the role of individuals within communities, from iconoclasts to conformists, to demonstrate how an individual can at once resist and challenge prescribed notions of identity, while articulating that age-old virtue - -American individualism.

Course Requirements: You will be required to take 4 exams, and hand in 4 short essays. You will also be responsible for one course project. Class participation is a vital component of your overall evaluation. I may enhance the syllabus; any change will be communicated through blackboard at least a week in advance. Coming to class and being on time is also expected. There are many sensitive issues we explore through the readings and discussion. It is important that we engage each other as members of a learning community and foster a community of learning. Be respectful, thoughtful, and deliberate with your comments. As well, engage in a spirit of charitable interpretation of other people’s views.

Quizzes will be a combination of written essays and online multiple choice and short answer. I will give out a short essay on Friday, which will be handed in on Monday. The online quizzes will also be taken Monday mornings, after you hand in your essay.

Quiz: Monday February 5th, **Quiz:** Monday February 19th, **Quiz:** Monday March 5th **Final Quiz:** Monday April 2nd

Course Project: Course projects include a 7 page paper that explores a particular issue in everyday life in America. Using themes, concepts, and approaches gleaned from class, tackle an issue, explain a problem, or describe a unique or mundane cultural practice and how it relates to identity or people’s everyday experiences. You may work in teams of up to three people. Be advised, one paper is due for each team. Every member of the team gets the same grade, do your fair share of the work, and don’t get stuck with a lame partner.

Community Standard

Duke has a “community standard,” which I expect every student to adhere. We will be using the world wide web extensively as well as various forms of electronic communications. Your writing must be your own prose, and your ideas and quotes must be properly cited. Talking about and editing each other’s essays is fine and encouraged. However, you must adhere to the community standard and do not collaborate or work together on the essays. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

Writing Assignments

This course requires a number of written assignments designed to develop critical reading and writing, as well as enhance one’s analytical skills. Essays will be evaluated on critical analysis and close reading of the texts, making careful and creative connections between texts and various units, and your ability to synthesize films, lectures, and discussions in class. In short, essays should creatively bring it all together.

Required Textbook:

Lee D. Baker, Editor

Life in America: Identity and Everyday Experience. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Week 1: Life In America: Identity and Everyday Experience

Assignment Due Date 1/12

Lee D. Baker “Introduction: Identity and Everyday Life In America” LA Pp. 1-19

Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper 2001 “Beyond ‘Identity’.” *Theory and Society* 29:1-47 (**On Blackboard**)

Week 2: Post-Industrialism, Post-Modernism, and Civic Participation in Red and Blue States

Assignment Due Date 1/19

Foley, Douglas E. 1990 The Great American Football Ritual: Reproducing Race, Class, and Gender Inequality. *Sociology of Sport Journal* 7(2):111-135. (On Blackboard).

Maureen Dowd. 2005 What’s a Modern Girl to Do? *The New York Times* October 30, 2005 Sunday Late Edition - FinalSection 6; Column 1; Magazine; Pg. 50 (**On Blackboard**)

[Special Report: A portrait in red and blue - American politics; American politics](#); *The Economist*. London: Jan 3, 2004. Vol. 370, Iss. 8356; p. 31

[Divided we brand](#) Todd Wasserman. *Brandweek*. New York: Jun 17, 2002. Vol. 43, Iss. 24; p. S6 (10 pages)

[This Land is Your Land](#) (Jib Jab)

[Bib Box Mart](#) (Jib Jab)

[Nuckin Futs](#)- - The Jib Jab Year in Review

Putnam, Robert D. 2000 *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster. (On Blackboard).

Week 3: Race, Racism, and Democracy

Assignment Due Date 1/26

Lee D. Baker 2001 [Profit, Power, and Privilege: The Racial Politics of Ancestry](#). *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, & Society* 3(4):66-72.

Susan Koshy 2001 *Morphing Race into Ethnicity: Asian Americans and Critical Transformations of Whiteness*. *Boundary 2*. 28(1):153-196. (On Blackboard)

Luis Angel Toro 1998 *Race, Identity and "Box Checking:" The Hispanic Classification in OMB Directive No. 15* *In A Critical Reader: The Latino/a Condition*, edited by Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic. Pp. 52-59. New York: NYU Press. (On Blackboard)

Lennard J. Davis 2007 *Deafness and the Riddle of Identity*. *The Chronicle Review: Chronicle of Higher Education*. January 12, 2007:b6-b8. (On Blackboard)

Optional Reading:

Editorial by Naomi Zack <http://interracialvoice.com/zack.html>

Lee D. Baker 2000 [Color Blind Bind](#). *In Cultural Diversity in the United States: A Critical Reader*. New York: Blackwell.

Alicia P. Rodriguez 2000 [Adjusting the Multicultural Lens](#). *Race, Gender & Class*. New Orleans: Jul 31, 2000. Vol. 7, Iss 3; p. 150

Susan R. Graham 1993 *Grassroots Advocacy In American Mixed Race*. *The Culture of Microdiversity*, Naomi Zack, Ed. Pp.185-189 Lanhan, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. (On Blackboard)

Week 4: Conditions of Identity: Technology, Violence, and the "new" Immigration

Assignment Due Date 2/2

Anne Alison. "Cyborg Violence: Bursting Bodies and Borders with Queer Machines." *LinA* Pp. 25-45

Aiwa Ong. "Cultural Citizenship as Subject Making." *LinA* Pp. 156-175

Marcelo M Suarez-Orozco. "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Assimilation but were Afraid to Ask." *LinA* Pp. 45-62

Michael J. Bugeja 2006 "Facing the Facebook" *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. January 23, 2006 (On Blackboard)

Optional Reading

Judith Goode. *Dousing the Flames for Fanning the Flames: The Role of Human Relations Practitioners in Intergroup Conflict*. *LinA* Pp. 62-83.

Week 5: Church, Family and the Dynamics of Post-Civil Rights Migration

Quiz 1: 2/5

Assignment Due: 2/7 [note: discussion and assignment will be on Wednesday, Film will be Friday]

Pyong Gap Min. "Major Issues Related to Asian American Experiences" *In Asian Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues*, edited by Pyong Gap Min. Pp. 80-107. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forest Press. **(On Blackboard)**

Kelley Chong. "What It Means to Be Christian: The Role of Religion in the Construction of Ethnic Identity and Boundary among Second-Generation Korean Americans." *LinA* Pp. 88-106.

Karen Pyke. " 'The Normal American Family' as an interpretive structure of family life among grown children of Korean and Vietnamese immigrants." *LinA* Pp. 106-122

Kyeyoung Park. " 'I Really Do Feel I'm 1.5!': The Construction of Self and Community by Young Korean Americans." *LinA* Pp. 123-136.

Melynda Dovel Wilcox 1992. "The "Kye" to Success" *Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine*, May 1992 v46 n5 p120(1) **(On Blackboard)**

Optional Reading

Julie Willett. 2005. "Hands Across the Table": A Short History of the Manicurist in the Twentieth Century. *Journal of Women's History*. Bloomington: Fall 2005. Vol.17, Iss. 3; pg. 59-62 **(On Blackboard)**

In-Sook Lim 1997. Korean Immigrant Women's Challenge to Gender Inequality at Home: The Interplay of Economic Resources, Gender, and Family. *Gender & Society* 11.1 (February 1997): 31-51. **(On Blackboard)**.

Week 6: The Politics and Perils of Assimilation

Assignment Due: 2/16

Susan J. Ferguson. "Challenging Traditional Marriage: Never Married Chinese American and Japanese American Women" *LinA* Pp. 140-155.

Stacey J. Lee. More than "Model Minorities" or "Delinquents": A Look at Hmong American High School Students. *LinA* Pp. 181-196.

Yen Le Espiritu. "We Don't Sleep Around Like White Girls Do": Family, Culture, and Gender in Filipina American Lives." *LinA* Pp. 197-212.

Nazili Kibria. "College and Notions of 'Asian American': Second-Generation Chinese and Korean

Americans Negotiate Race and Identity.” LinA Pp. 212-224.

Toby Alice Volkman. 2005 “Embodying Chinese Culture: Transnational Adoption in North America” *In* *Cultures of Transnational Adoption*, Pp. 81-113. Edited by T.A. Volkman. Durham: Duke University Press. **(On Blackboard)**

Week 7: More than Consumption: Experiencing Gender, Class, and Race

Quiz 2:2/19

Assignment Due 2/23

Jeff Maskovsky. “Sexual Minorities and the New Urban Poverty.” LinA Pp.227-240.

Kathryn Herr. “Institutional Violence in the Everyday Practices of School: The Narrative of a Young Lesbian.” LinA Pp. 240-247.

Alyssa Cymene Howe. “Queer Pilgrimage: The San Francisco Homeland and Identity Tourism.” LinA Pp. 248-264.

John Cloud. [Time. New York: Oct 10, 2005.Vol.166, Iss. 15; pg. 43, 7 pgs](#)

Jacqueline Woodson [Being A Gay Teenager](#) May 30, 2001 NPR All Things Considered

Week 8: Policing Blackness, Authenticity, and the Soul Patrol

Assignment Due 3/2

John L. Jackson. Jr. “Birthdays, Basketball, and Breaking Bread: Negotiating with Class in Contemporary Black America..” LinA Pp. 267-290.

Mary Patillo-McCoy. “Nike’s Reign.” LinA Pp. 290-302.

Melissa Victoria Harris-Lacewell. 2004. “Truth and Soul” *In* *Barbershops, Bibles, and BET: Everyday Talk and Black Political Thought*. Pp. 161-203. **(On Blackboard)**

Maureen Mahon. *Black Like This: Race, Generation, and Rock in the Post-Civil Rights Era*. LinA Pp. 303-321

Devah Pager and Bruce Western (2005)

[Race at Work: Realities of Race and Criminal Record in NYC Job Market](#)

[Being a Black Man](#) Washington Post Series (Read Articles and Browse Site).

Week 9: Privilege, Power, and Anxiety of the Norm

Quiz 3: 3/5

Assignment Due: 3/9

Julia Hall. “It Hurts to be a Girl: Growing up Poor, White, and Female.” LinA Pp. 330-338.

Pamela Perry. "White Means Never Having to Say Your're Ethnic: White Youth and the Construction of 'Cultureless' Identities." LinA 339-358.

Kyle W. Kusz. " 'I Want to be the Minority': The Politics of Youthful White Masculinities in Sport and Popular Culture in 1990s America." LinA Pp. 356-377.

Setha Low. 2003 "Protecting Children and Safety for All." *In Behind the Gates*. Pp. 83-110. New York: Routledge. **(On Black Board)**.

Kirby Moss 2003 Chapter 2: School: Learning to Live upto the Paragon. *The Color of Class: Poor Whites and the Paradox of Privilege*. **(On Black Board)**.

Week 10: SPRING BREAK

3/12-----3/16

Week 11: Language, History, and Specificity

Assignment Due 3/23

Suzanne Oboler. "The Politics of Labeling: Latino/a Cultural Identities of Self and Others" LinA Pp. 381-392.

Brenda Bright " 'Heart Like a Car': Hispano/Chicano Culture in Northern New Mexico" Pp. 392-418.

Angela Valenzuela. " 'Checkin' up on My Guy': Chicanas, Social Capital, and the Culture of Romance." LinA Pp. 419-429.

Nathan Thornburgh 2006 "Inside the Life of the Migrants Next Door
Thirty years of migration--mostly illegal--connect a small town in Mexico to New York's wealthy Hamptons. How both sides have benefited, and paid a price." TIME MAGAZINE February 6, 2006 **(On Black Board)**.

Linda Chavez 1998 Out of the Barrio. *In A Critical Reader: The Latino/a Condition*, edited by Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic. Pp. 431-434. New York: NYU Press. **(On Blackboard)**

Elizabeth M. Iglesias 1998 Maternal Power and the Deconstruction of Male Supremacy. *In A Critical Reader: The Latino/a Condition*, edited by Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic. Pp. 508-5165. New York: NYU Press. **(On Blackboard)**

Claudio Sanchez "[Hispanic Students Most Ill-Served in U.S.](#)," NPR All Things Considered, November 1, 2005

[Optional Reading] Gregory Rodriguez. "[LATINOS: Assimilation Happens—Deal With It](#); The lower birthrate among second-generation Latinos has huge import for California,". Los Angeles Times. Los Angeles, Calif.: Oct 10, 2004. p. M.1

Week 11: Blood Politics and the Racial Currency of Culture

Assignment Due: 3/30

James F Hamill. 2003. "Show Me Your CDIB" *The American Behavioral Scientist* 47(3):267-281. **(On Blackboard)**

C. Richard King & Charles F. Springwood. 2000 "Fighting Spirits: The Racial Politics of Sports Mascots." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 24(3) 282-304. **(On Blackboard)**.

Circe Sturm. 2002 "The Law of Blood, Politics, and Nation," *In Blood Politics: Race, Culture, and Identity in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma*. Pp. 52-81. Berkeley: University of California Press. **(On BlackBoard)**

Clyde Ellis. 2003 "There is a Dance Every Weekend" : Powwow Culture in Southeast North Carolina." *In Southern Heritage on Display: Public Ritual and Ethnic Diversity within Southern Regionalism*. Celeste Ray, ed. Pp. 79-105. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press. **(On Blackboard)**

Week 12:

Quiz 4: 4/2

4/4 Classroom Presentations of Projects

4/6 Classroom Presentations of Projects

Week 13

4/9 Classroom Presentation of Projects

4/11 Classroom Presentation of Projects

4/13 Classroom Presentation of Projects

Week 14

4/16 Classroom Presentation of Projects

4/18 Classroom Presentation of Projects

4/20 Classroom Presentation of Projects

Week 15

4/23 Classroom Presentation of Projects

4/25 Classroom Presentation of Projects

Final Papers are Due at the beginning of class on April 25, 2006