

# **The Saloon in American Culture: Life Behind Swinging Doors**

American Studies 102/Spring 2015

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar investigates the culture of the saloon, a unique American drinking establishment that emerged in the middle of the nineteenth century only to disappear with the passage of Prohibition. We will explore the social dimensions of saloons, focusing on the multiple purposes these gathering places served, mostly for men, who came together often because of class and/or ethnic affiliation. We will also attend to women, both in- and outside the saloon, paying particular attention to their relationships to the men behind and belly up to the bar. Because saloons varied by neighborhood and region, we will examine how local and regional issues shaped saloon culture, and how saloons in turn encapsulated, protected, and advertised community identity. Finally, we will consider the representation of saloons in popular culture, most notably in twentieth-century Hollywood westerns.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

Madelon Powers, *Faces Along the Bar: Lore and Order in the Workingman's Saloon, 1870-1920*, 1998

Kelly J. Dixon, *Boomtown Saloons: Archaeology and History in Virginia City*, 2005

Elliot West, *The Saloon on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier*, 1979

Thomas J. Noel, *The City and the Saloon: Denver, 1858-1916*, 1982

Perry R. Duis, *Public Drinking in Chicago and Boston, 1880-1920*, (1983); 1999

Various articles and essays available through electronic databases.

## A note about essays available through electronic sources

Assigned readings available electronically and accessible through the UCB library will NOT be posted on bcourses. Students will be required to find these essays. You need to become proficient at research, not only for this class, but for all your future projects, and only through practice will you develop these skills. If you are having trouble finding an essay ask a friend, then ask a librarian, and if you still cannot find it, then ask me.

## LIBRARY PROXY

You must set up your computer's browser so that you can access the UCB library through the proxy server. These settings will allow you to access all databases, etc., from off-campus. If you do not go through the proxy, you will limit your research to time that you are on campus (not very efficient for you). Instructions to connect proxy service can be found on the library home page.

## CLASS FORMAT

This course will consist of extensive and intensive class discussions. The discussion format requires all of us, including myself, to keep up with the reading and to be actively thinking about course content – even when not in class. Discussions encourage and enable students to develop their intellectual independence. In a good discussion class, you can't just sit back: you have to jump in and get involved – you have to help set the agenda for discussion. For discussions to work, as we all know, everyone must be prepared: everyone has to do the reading; everyone has to have an idea or question in reserve in case things start to drag or stall. I'm assuming that if you stay in this class, you are declaring your willingness to do those things. Rest assured, though, that I wouldn't ask you to do anything if I weren't sure you could do it well.

## CLASS ETIQUETTE

No sleeping, napping, texting, or surfing. Please turn off your cell phone and do not take calls or texts while in class. No checking email while doing in-class research. No reading for another class or doing homework for another class.

## ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Consistent and regular attendance and participation is required. You should be on time, prepared, and attentive. If you miss even one day of class, expect that absence to affect how well you understand course material. If do you miss a day, it is your responsibility to complete all work and familiarize yourself with material you have missed.

## PLAGIARISM POLICY

I expect your papers, exams, and other assignments to be your work and your work alone. I have a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism and cheating. All cases of plagiarism will result in an automatic zero for the assignment and the case will be sent to the administration for further disciplinary action.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, passing off another author's ideas and/or words as your own without proper acknowledgements. I will accept no excuses for your failure to understand what is the proper way of acknowledging other authors. If you do not understand what plagiarism is and/or how to properly acknowledge your sources, consult a style manual and, if necessary, ask me for clarification.

## DUE DATES, LATE POLICY, AND EMERGENCIES:

**All papers and assignments are due in class on the due date, unless you have a legitimate accommodation.** If an emergency occurs that prevents you from attending class and/or completing an assignment on time, notify me ASAP and, if possible, provide documentation. Documentation is not required if you are sick and decide to stay at home to recover. Indeed, if you become ill and are contagious, I'd ask that you not come to class. (Going out of town for personal, familial, or professional obligations does not count as an emergency. If this is the case, make advance arrangements with me in person.)

### ADA NOTICE:

Students with physical, sensory, emotional or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Please meet with the instructor in the first week of classes to make arrangements.

## OVERVIEW OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS/REQUIREMENTS

### CRITICAL REVIEWS

During the first part of the term, you will be writing a weekly critical review of one of the assigned texts. These reviews will help sharpen your critical thinking, and provide me with an opportunity to give you feedback on your writing. Separate instructions will be handed out.

### CHAPTER CLASS PRESENTATIONS

During the first part of the term, you will work in small groups and present one or two chapters from an assigned book. Separate instructions will be handed out.

### “FINDINGS”

Each week, you will be responsible for posting on the course wiki content related to the saloons. At times, you will be able to post anything. Other times, I will impose restrictions on the content. These posts will need to be formatted correctly, and will need to be completed before class. We will have “show and tell” for the “Findings.”

### RESEARCH PROJECT

Research Project will consist of multiple parts, including proposal, bibliography, class presentation, and final paper. This assignment is an opportunity for students to develop research, writing, and analytical skills. It is also intended to prepare American Studies majors to write a senior thesis. Research papers will consist of original thinking on a topic of your choosing that corresponds to the framework and content of this course.

## GRADE BREAKDOWN

Critical Reviews = 10% (5 x 100 points ÷ 5 = average)

Class Presentations on texts = 10 % (5 x 100 points ÷ 5 = average)

Class Participation (Attendance, Findings, contributions to class) = 20 %

Research Project = 60 %

Broken down as follows:

Formal Research Paper Proposal = 5% pts

Research Bibliography = 5% pts

Class Presentation based on Research = 15%

Final Paper = 35 %

## DISCLAIMERS

The course schedule is subject to change. It is the student's responsibility to attend class and pay attention to announcements. If a class meeting is missed, it is the student's responsibility to find out what was announced.

## SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND ASSIGNMENTS

### **1/26 Topic: Introduction**

In-class: Introductions, Course Mechanics, Preliminary Thoughts, and First "Findings"

### **2/2 Topic: Miners and the Frontier**

Read for Today: West, *The Saloon on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier*, 1979

Due in Class: 2 Page "Critical Review" of West

In-class: Presentation and discussion of chapters (6)

Show and Tell: "Findings"

### **2/9 Topic: The Western City**

Read for Today: Noel, *The City and the Saloon: Denver, 1858-1916*, 1982

Due: 2 Page "Critical Review" of Noel

In-class: Presentation and discussion of chapters (10)

Show and Tell: "Findings"

### **2/6 No Class**

However, you need to post a "Finding" for this week.

### **2/23 Topic: Back East**

Read for Today: Duis, *The Saloon: Public Drinking in Chicago and Boston*, (1983); 1999

Due: 2 Page "Critical Review" of Duis

In-class: Presentation and discussion of chapters (Intro + 9)

Show and Tell: "Findings"

### **3/2 Topic: Excavating the Saloon**

Read for Today: Dixon, *Boomtown Saloons*, 2005

Due: 2 Page "Critical Review" of Dixon

In-class: Presentation and discussion of chapters (Intro + 7 + Conc)

Show and Tell: "Findings"

**3/9 Topic: Gender and Class**

Read for Today: Powers, *Faces Along the Bar*, 1998

Due: 2 Page "Critical Review" of Powers

In-class: Presentation and discussion of chapters (Intro + 10 + Conc)

Show and Tell: "Findings"

**3/16 Topic: Material Culture**

Read for Today: Jules David Prown, "Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture, Theory and Method," from *Winterthur Portfolio*, Volume 17, 1982. 1 – 17

Due: Possible Paper Topic(s) Proposal/Areas of Further Research

In-class: Presentation of Possible Topics/Discussion of Further Readings

Topics/Workshop on the Material Culture of the Saloon

Show and Tell: "Findings" related to Material Culture Reading

**3/23 Topic: Saloon as Actor**

Read for Today: TBA

Due for Today: Formal Research Paper Proposal

In-class: Presentation and discussion Further Topics

Show and Tell: "Findings"

**3/30 Spring Break**

**4/6 Topic: Tourism**

Read for Today: Nelson Graburn, "Secular Ritual: A General Theory of Tourism," from *Tourists and Tourism: A Reader* (2009).

Due for Today: Research Bibliography

Show and Tell: "Findings" related to Tourism Reading

**4/13 Research and Writing Workshop**

In-class: Research Workshops

Show and Tell: "Findings" related to Research Paper

**4/20 Topic: Class Presentations**

**4/27 Topic: Class Presentations**

**4/4 Dead Week**

Individual Consultations/Research Paper Due