

COURSE DETAIL

ALTERNATIVE AMERICAS: THE OTHER NINETEENTH CENTURY

Country

United Kingdom - England

Host Institution

King's College London

Program(s)

English Universities, King's College London

UCEAP Course Level

Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)

English American Studies

UCEAP Course Number

132

UCEAP Course Suffix

E

UCEAP Official Title

ALTERNATIVE AMERICAS: THE OTHER NINETEENTH CENTURY

UCEAP Transcript Title

ALTERNATIVE AMERICAS

UCEAP Quarter Units

6.00

UCEAP Semester Units

4.00

Course Description

Historians and literary critics have long identified 19th century America as a period when categories such as race, nation, and gender became established modes for defining identity. According to the narrative, U.S. citizens increasingly defined their selfhood by relating it to fixed categories, such as their place of birth, ethnic background, or sexual choices. This course tells a different story by looking at texts that offer other ways of living, writing, and perceiving in the 19th century United States. This perspective allows students to create an alternative set of categories for thinking about 19th-century life and rejuvenate the canon by incorporating minoritarian voices, genres, and texts. The course explores the writing of revolutionary African Americans, popular Native American dime novels, immigrant novels, and forgotten utopian fiction. Through the testimony of such literature, the course penetrates into the subterranean, barely visible, American communities that existed on the margins of mainstream culture. Many of the texts that this course covers were out of print for many years and have only recently been rediscovered, meaning that their canonical status is still up for dispute. Students learn to question their own ethics by exploring these works.

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number

6AAEC087

Host Institution Course Title

ALTERNATIVE AMERICAS: THE OTHER NINETEENTH CENTURY

Host Institution Campus

King's College London

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree

Host Institution Department

English

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