IDST 2270 Honors Topic Seminar:  
American Cultural Myths  
Fall 2005  
TR 10:50-11:40AM / 211 Weir

Dr. K. Komara  
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208 Dickey, #792-7254  
Office Hours: M-R 1-2PM, F 11-noon, and by appointment

Contributing Professors:  
Dr. J. Cockroft, History/Political Science Dept., #792-7267  
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Text:  Colombo, Gary, Robert Cullen and Bonnie Lisle, eds.  

Course Description:  This course will explore American cultural myths in order that we may examine the influences these myths may have on our appearances, our tastes, our habits, our dreams, our goals. Because culture binds us as a community, we are often blind to its existence and its affect on us. By critically discussing and questioning various cultural myths, we should come to better understand our own place in the world and to look beyond embedded assumptions about culture and its myths.

Course Goals:  
- To explore American cultural myths with an emphasis on seeing myths that might be “invisible”.
- To examine some of the contradictions in American cultural myths.
- To emphasize pedagogical approaches that will foster critical thinking, active learning and effective written and oral skills.

Essay Responses:  Students will typewrite a 1-2 page response to specified reading assignments. The response should include the following:  
- A brief summary of the author’s work  
- A personal, honest response to the reading’s content  
- The broader implications of the issues
• At least one question or comment for class discussion

The essay responses will be evaluated on a point system. Each response will be worth 25 points. Any response receiving lower than 15 points will have to be revised and resubmitted. Late submissions will receive a five point deduction for each day, not class period, beyond the due date.

**Research Paper:** Due October 18, this paper (5-8 pages, including bibliography, minimum three sources, following MLA format) will form the foundation for your class presentation. You are expected to utilize the Writing Center during the revision process. Your research paper will be graded on a 100 point scale. **Revised research papers accepted on November 10.**

**Class Presentation:** Your presentations will be 20-minutes and will be on a cultural myth topic of your choice. You may not read your paper to the group; instead, you must prepare a presentation that will engage your audience’s attention and will elicit questions. Your presentation will be graded on a 100 point scale.

**Evaluation:**
Essay responses/class assignments 60%
Participation/class activities 10%
Research Paper 15%
Presentation 15%

**Campus Resources:**
Schreiner One Online Student Information System (http://info.schreiner.edu)
The Writing Center AC Schreiner Side Porch Entrance (792-7353)
Multimedia Technology
(Weir 008, 8-5M-F, ext. 431 or 739-1774)
Student Computer Technicians (TechHelp@schreiner.edu)
Computer Lab
(Dickey Hall 112)
William Logan Library (http://library.schreiner.edu)

Schreiner University is compliant with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 with respect to providing academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to qualified students.
Students requiring such adjustments should contact the Section 504 coordinator, Dr. Jude Gallik.

**Attendance Policy:** Since participation is key to classroom learning, class attendance is mandatory. Missing more than 10% of the regularly scheduled classes will negatively affect your grade, including a 10% reduction in your final grade. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Please be on time for class. Three late arrivals will count as one absence. If you arrive late, you should check at the end of the period to be certain that you were not marked absent.

**Classroom Deportment:** Since we will discuss some myths that may be controversial and that may provoke widely divergent opinions, we always must remember to be respectful of each other. As a community, we will remain committed to giving each other the time and space to speak freely without interruption.

**Academic Honesty:** Academic honesty is vital to the intellectual life of Schreiner University. Plagiarism which is presenting the work and/or ideas of another as one’s own and complicities in plagiarism will not be tolerated. All instances of plagiarism are subject to academic sanctions. Any and all instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Liberal Arts.

To support the community’s mission to uphold academic integrity, Schreiner University subscribes to Turnitin.com, an on-line database service designed both to detect plagiarism and to prevent it before it occurs. We will use this service for the research papers.
Course Schedule

August 25 introductions; the idea of American myths

August 31 Myth of the Model Family (17-21);
Rockwell (21-25)

September 1 Coontz (31-48); essay response

Dr. Cockroft: Myths of Gender (Write an essay response to one of the readings in this section.)

September 6 Gender Defined by Dominant Culture: De Tocqueville (417-421), Kincaid (421-424), Devor (424-433), Wollstonecraft (hand-out)

September 8 Rereading Gender Roles: Cofer (433-443), Allen (443-451), Brumberg (hand-out)

September 13 Power of Media: Kilbourne (455-477), Messner (477-489), Marcus (498-508)

September 15 Changing Notions of Femininity and Masculinity: Faludi (508-524), Sommers (524-539), Morgan (539-545)

Myth of the Model Family, Continued

September 20 Aulette (64-83), essay response

September 22 Visual Portfolio (84-90), response to photos

September 27 Myth of Individual Opportunity (293-296); Alger (297-303), essay response to Alger

September 29 Dalton (303-310); Rather (310-317)
Essay response to one of the essays

October 4 Mantsios (331-347), essay response

October 6 Kasser (364-374), essay response

October 11 Fall Break

October 13 Visual Portfolio (375-380, 211-214)

Research Paper Due October 18, 2005
Dr. Gallik: Myth of Education and Empowerment (Write an essay response to one of the readings in this section.)

October 18 Readings: TBA

October 20 Readings: TBA

October 25 Readings: TBA

October 27 Readings: TBA

November 1 Exploring American Myths

November 3 Exploring American Myths
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 8</td>
<td>Visual Portfolio (629-632)</td>
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<td>November 10</td>
<td>Revised Research Papers due</td>
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<td>Discuss Presentations</td>
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<td>November 15</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 17</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 22</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 24</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holiday</td>
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<td>November 29</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>December 1</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>December 6</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>Final Class (December 13 (T), 10:30AM)</td>
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<td>Presentations</td>
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