

## Race and Ethnicity in American Cultural Arts

AAS. 458, Section 001

American Culture 310, Section 001

Wed. 3-5

Harold Cruse

This is a course in which the emphasis is going to be on Afro-american cultural history in the twentieth century. However, the course will survey that history within the multi-racial, multi-ethnic evolution of the practice of the cultural arts in the United States, doing so from their origins in colonial America to the present--and paying particular attention to how image-making and practice relate to Black, "Indian," and other ethnic groups. We will begin with Thomas Jefferson's colonial views of Black and Indian "cultures"; and then go on to examine anthropological, creative and artistic, and political interpretations of race and ethnicity in the cultural arts. Among the evolutionary developments that this course will study are the following: In the world of Music, Theater, and Dance, we will examine the root-origin relationship between the "Negro Stereotype" and the long-range influence of "Negro Minstrelsy;" the brief attempts to incorporate Black and Indian themes into American musical compositions (the Anton Dvorak-Jeannette Thurber thesis); the origins of Ragtime-Jazz-Blues in popular music culture as well as the effects of Puritanism, Americanisms, and Africanisms on the evolution of popular dance in America. In Literature and Literary Culture, the course will examine the legacy and the influence of Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin and, on the American Stage, 1913-1930 especially, that of Eugene O'Neill. Equally significant is the Harlem Renaissance (1917-1930) and its cross-cultural, trans-racial cross-fertilization of American literature, graphic arts, music, theater and dance. At the point where Politics and Culture intersect, we will look at the 1930's New Deal and the Works Project Administration (WPA). Student participation will be very much involved in the selection of areas to be covered for post-World War II developments in Afro-american cultural history.