



CASE 2017: “ONLY IN AMERICA”

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Sponsored by the CASE Steering Committee and Lake Zurich High School

Friday, February 24, 2017

Roosevelt University – 425 S. Wabash Ave. -Chicago

America is the home of the skyscraper, blues music, and the poetry of Walt Whitman; something in the American character has led to great discoveries, innovations, and art. Our underlying optimism and idealism have led the world in the direction of democracy, freedom, and human rights. Meanwhile, our country has great divides—political, social, racial, economic—that often seem unbridgeable. As teachers, we need to walk a line between showing our students the beautiful and the ugly, the positive and the negative, of the world into which they will soon graduate, all while balancing the need to give them an unbiased and fair vision yet staying true to many of our own beliefs and values.

8:00-8:45am: Registration and Breakfast – Room WB418

8:45-9:00am: Opening Remarks – Room WB418

9:00-9:50am: Keynote Speaker – Room WB418

Michael McDermott’s brand of rock n’ roll brims with the kind of well-honed style and wisdom that can only come from a career on the road and a pedigree in the studio. Effortlessly blending natural folk sensibility, pop hooks, and honest rock, McDermott’s music is as much for the outcast as the congregation. It’s an exploration of the dark corners of life’s journey and it resonates middle class truths through the passionate filter of a kid that grew up on Chicago’s Irish South Side.

10:00-10:50am: Breakout Session 1

WB418	<p><i>Was the Civil Rights Movement Successful: Racism, Gangs, and Segregation taught through the lenses of the Civil Rights Movement, The Interrupters and There Are No Children Here.</i> Cobe Williams, Cure Violence; Katy Newcomb and Anna Meyers Caccitolo, Lyons Township High School</p> <p>We are excited to bring you a unique partner presentation between two American Studies teachers from Lyons Township High School and Cure Violence’s very own Cobe Williams from <i>The Interrupters</i>. This session centers on the question that drives our Civil Rights unit: looking present time, was the Civil Rights Movement successful? We will show you practical ways to integrate content from <i>The Interrupters</i>, Civil Rights history, and <i>There Are No Children Here</i> to get students to think critically about how the Civil Rights movement has direct connections to today. We will provide a multitude of handouts, relevant websites, and class activities to aid in creative instruction that culminates in a Socratic circle. We hope to see you there!</p>
WB616	<p><i>Has the Myth of the Western Frontier Helped or Hindered American Culture?</i> Wally Brownley and Britt Connell, John Hersey High School</p> <p>As identified by Fredrick Jackson Turner in his 1893 Thesis (delivered here in Chicago), the Western Frontier helped develop national character in the 19th century, and arguably continues to live in the minds and acts of Americans today. This session chronicles a semester-ending project that asks students to analyze various texts and write an answer to the question “Has the Myth of the Western Frontier Helped or Hindered American Culture?” We will offer a list of potential sources as well as showcase one of the presentations we have crafted to show the legacy of the Western Frontier in popular culture.</p>

WB416	<p><i>Sports and Resistance in American History.</i> Mike Soffer and Matt Maloney, Oak Park River Forest High School</p> <p>The theme for CASE this year is truer in the realm of sports than just about anywhere else, as sports contains ways of understanding both the best and worst of America. We will provide another way for teachers to show the unvarnished, balanced truths of American History - in all their nuanced complexities - to students who might otherwise not have accessed the American History curriculum.</p> <p>Our course at OPRF examines American History and the sociology of America - with particular attention to issues of race, class, and gender - through the lens of sports. We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how and why this course came to be, and how it helps students connect to or see themselves in the standard American History curriculum. • Show the units we cover, the types of assessments we use in the course, and the course website that contains many of these, so that teachers will be able to utilize any part of our curriculum with ease. • Explain how this course can be adapted into other schools - either in its entirety, or as a unit, or as a single lesson.
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10:50-11:10am: Mid-morning Snack – Room WB418

11:10-12:00pm: Breakout Session 2

WB418	<p><i>Paradoxes of the 19th century Romantics – from Finney to Twain.</i> Stephen Heller (English) and Seamus Campion (History), Stevenson High School</p> <p>This session features an AP version of American Studies. This session will feature the historical and literary trends of the 19th century Romantic movement. Presenters will share a series of primary documents (both written texts and artwork) and teaching strategies that reveal to students the duality of the Romantic era. For example, presenters will share both Charles Finney’s sermons from the 2nd Great Awakening and Nathaniel Hawthorne’s more secular perspectives found in <i>The Scarlet Letter</i>. Participants will gain insights on how rhetorical analysis applies to both AP US History and AP English Language and Composition. By examining the distinct perspectives on Romanticism, students will gain practice in adopting multiple points of view over an extended period, as well as greater insights into key historical thinking skills: continuity and change over time, periodization, and causation.</p>
WB616	<p><i>Exploring the Possibilities: A Thematic Approach to Teaching American Studies.</i> Julie Jooste, Andrew Terleckyj and Kelly Klein, Reavis High Schools</p> <p>Come explore the possibilities that a thematic approach to teaching American Studies can offer. Three teachers from three different disciplines (English, Social Studies, and Art) will share the benefits that come with teaching via themes rather than chronology. Participants will walk away with a blueprint of the course’s units, including the major pieces of history, literature, and art used to support each theme.</p>
WB416	<p><i>Understanding Roots: Founding Fathers on Education and the Freedom/Order Paradox.</i> Luana Salvarani, University of Parma (Italy)</p> <p>The educational culture underlying the project of the new nation, as implemented by the Thirteen Colonies, tried from the start to reconcile liberal thought with Puritan and other religious components. But the inner contradiction between self-determination and the preservation and propagation of American citizenship is inside liberalism itself. The reflection upon the aims of education contributed to the shift from the original liberal culture of the Founders to a “Republican” mentality (well represented, e.g., in the educational reflections of Benjamin Rush) where the emphasis was on the community rather than on self-determination and individual freedom. My sessions focuses on two steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a keyword research and selection of texts from the Founders Online website, easily accessible and free; • historical commentary and reflection on the selected texts, focusing on the aforementioned themes and discussing the most controversial issues.

12:10-1:00pm: Breakout Session 3

WB418	<p><i>Destiny Made Manifest?: Critical Examination of Turner's Frontier Thesis as applied to Manifest Destiny paintings.</i> Sarah Stucky and Ann Goethals, Niles North High School</p> <p>This lesson, previously taught in an AP American Studies class, asks students to consider paintings of the Manifest Destiny period in conjunction with other critical texts, among them Sullivan's definition of Manifest Destiny, and F J Turner's Frontier Thesis from the Columbian Exposition. We ask a few synthesis-style questions. In particular, how does the painting from the Manifest Destiny period "treat" American Indians and "the West"? What is the mythos versus the reality of white Westward settlement? How do we as modern residents of the US handle this checkered past?</p>
WB616	<p><i>The Devils in Our Better Angels: Analyzing the Connection Between Creativity and Destruction in American Historical Development Through Reading Erik Larson's Devil in the White City.</i> Tim Libretti, Northeastern Illinois University</p> <p>This session will focus on how the good, the bad, and the ugly in American history and culture have often been inextricably intertwined in our national development—how the line between the enormous and beautiful creativity characterizing our national energy and the inhumane and systematic exploitation and genocide that constitute our history is a thin and perhaps often non-existent one, as they are often bound up with one another.</p> <p>In exploring this dynamic, I will look at how Erik Larson represents the twinned and intertwined forces of creativity and destruction in his work <i>Devil in the White City</i>. Larson's historiography gives us a new way of reading, presenting an aesthetic that critiques capitalism as a death culture, as a murderous system, by de-familiarizing its basic operations through a juxtaposition of two intertwined stories: architect Daniel Burnham, who designs and guides the construction of the White City for the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago, and H.H. Holmes, the first documented serial killer.</p> <p>What Larson means to illuminate in juxtaposing H.H. Holmes' murders with Burnham's architectural artistry, which often involves the exploitation of workers, the disregard for lives of workers if their safety and protection threaten the realization of his creative ambitions, and even the deaths and immiseration of others, is how we sanction and legitimate murder in the name of producing the splendors of civilization—in the name of economic development—and, more to the point, how we do not even understand such behaviors, systemic as they are, as murder.</p> <p>Larson's rendering of this dynamic provides for us a meaningful framework for thinking about American history and contemporary society and also more broadly for reading culture. I will touch on ways this conceptual framework helps us approach other cultural productions such as <i>Dexter</i>, <i>Mad Men</i>, and Richard Wright's <i>Native Son</i>, among other works.</p>
WB416	<p><i>Inaugural Poem Project.</i> Seth MacLowry and Matt McClure, Maine West High School</p> <p>Presidential elections provide Americans the opportunity every four years to take stock of who we are as a country and perhaps who we think that we could or should be. Elections force us to think about our culture's values and ideals. One powerful way to think about our own individual values and morals is to write them down in our stories, our personal essays, our plays and movies and songs, and in poetry.</p> <p>The Inaugural Poem Project is a celebration and not a competition. The idea is for students to read and study several or all of the inaugural poems, and think about what each poem says about the American experience, and how the poet creates and develops tone and theme. After analyzing the poems, and having students think about how the poem addresses the "present" moment in America, students will write and record their own inaugural poems.</p>

1:00pm: Closing Comments and Lunch – WB418

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