

Contents

List of plates	ix
Acknowledgements	x
Introduction	1
<i>An exceptional place or what is America?</i>	1
<i>What is American Studies?</i>	4
<i>Using the book</i>	7
<i>Critical approaches</i>	8
<i>A culture of many voices</i>	11
<i>Cultural politics/cultural studies</i>	12
<i>Power and position</i>	14
<i>Dialogism</i>	15
<i>The continuous 'play' of culture, history and power</i>	16
<i>Notes</i>	17
<i>References and further reading</i>	17
1 New beginnings: American culture and identity	20
<i>Reading Columbus</i>	22
<i>The American dream of identity: The Great Gatsby</i>	23
<i>Maybe this is Heaven: Field of Dreams (1989)</i>	26
<i>'The surface of an identity': The past as presidential discourse</i>	27
<i>Counter-cultural dreams</i>	30
<i>Multiplicity, difference and re-vision</i>	33
<i>New Age possibility: Grand Canyon (1992)</i>	35
<i>Conclusion: new interrogations – Gloria Anzaldua, Barry Lopez and Trinh T. Minh-ha</i>	36
<i>Notes</i>	41
<i>References and further reading</i>	41
<i>Follow-up work</i>	43

2 Ethnicity and immigration: between many worlds	44
<i>Ethnic America: 'A vast ingathering'</i>	44
<i>Native Americans: assimilation and resistance</i>	46
<i>Reinscribing the tribe: writing ethnicity</i>	48
<i>Immigration and Americanisation</i>	51
<i>The crucible of difference</i>	56
<i>Immigrant stories: Jewish Americans</i>	57
<i>The future belongs to the mixture: melting pot, mosaic or hybrid?</i>	64
<i>Conclusion</i>	67
<i>Notes</i>	69
<i>References and further reading</i>	69
<i>Follow-up work</i>	72
3 African Americans: 'I don't sing other people's voices'	74
<i>Out of slavery</i>	74
<i>New black histories</i>	76
<i>Imaginative cultural retrieval</i>	82
<i>Links in the chain: music and speech</i>	86
<i>New black voices</i>	92
<i>Conclusion</i>	94
<i>Notes</i>	95
<i>References and further reading</i>	96
<i>Follow-up work</i>	99
4 In God we trust?: religion in American life	100
<i>The eyes of all people shall be upon us</i>	103
<i>Changing patterns in American religious life</i>	105
<i>Contemporary evangelicalism</i>	109
<i>African-American religion</i>	116
<i>Conclusion</i>	121
<i>References and further reading</i>	121
<i>Follow-up work</i>	122
5 Approaches to regionalism: the West and the South	124
<i>Case study 1: revising the American West</i>	125
<i>Imagined Wests</i>	126
<i>Land and the West</i>	128
<i>Masculinity and the land</i>	131
<i>Women and the West</i>	134
<i>A new feminine West: Willa Cather's O Pioneers</i>	136
<i>Conclusion: the contested landscapes of the contemporary West</i>	138
<i>Case study 2: the South – beyond comprehension?</i>	140
<i>A diverse South</i>	141
<i>Documentary reportage</i>	146

Writing the South	149
Southern music	151
Film and the South	153
Conclusion	156
Notes	156
References and further reading	157
Follow-up work	161
6 The American city: 'the old knot of contrariety'	162
Can we read the city?	162
Competing versions of the city	164
Theoretical city: the desire for control and order	166
The undivulged city: Poe's 'The Man of the Crowd'	169
The 'persuasive light': commerce and the city	171
The spaces of the city: architecture, art and ambivalence	173
Collage city	179
Living with the city: rap music	183
Conclusion, or no conclusion possible?	184
Notes	185
References and further reading	186
Follow-up work	187
7 Gender and sexuality: 'to break the old circuits'	189
Nineteenth-century roots: cultural politics	190
Nineteenth-century roots: literature and the 'First Wave' of feminism	193
Gender and the 1950s' 'Second Wave'	197
Out of the 1950s: Sylvia Plath, <i>The Bell Jar</i> (1963)	202
Sexuality and gender	205
Conclusion	209
Notes	211
References and further reading	212
Follow-up work	214
8 Representing youth: outside the sunken nursery	215
Youth/history/representation	216
Boundaries and youth spaces	219
Housing the self	220
A model youth text? – <i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i>	223
The dream of Eden	225
The spaces of self-creation	228
At the edge: the dark mood	232
Conclusion: Generation X – an ironic, but enchanted space	236
Notes	239
References and further reading	239

<i>Follow-up work</i>	240
9 Beyond American borders	242
<i>The will of Heaven: themes in the ideology of American foreign policy</i>	243
<i>The Vietnam experience: understanding the war</i>	252
<i>Remembering the war I: other voices</i>	257
<i>Remembering the war II: the Vietnam Memorial</i>	259
<i>Remembering the war III: the Vietnam syndrome</i>	262
<i>The transmission of American culture</i>	265
<i>Conclusion</i>	268
<i>References and further reading</i>	269
<i>Follow-up work</i>	271
10 Technology and media cultures: 'the uncertain trajectory'	272
<i>Media power: the television family</i>	273
<i>Sit-coms: 'models of appropriate domesticity'?</i>	275
<i>From suburban home to global village</i>	281
<i>American media imperialism</i>	282
<i>The corporate voice – case study: Viacom</i>	286
<i>Imagining the present: cyberpunk</i>	288
<i>New alliances</i>	290
<i>'Hello, you're talking to a machine. . .': the Terminator films and cyborg culture</i>	292
<i>Conclusion: 'a powerful infidel heteroglossia'</i>	294
<i>Notes</i>	295
<i>References and further reading</i>	295
<i>Follow-up work</i>	297
Epilogue	298
References	299
Index	301