

**050:303**

**Decade in American Studies: The 1970s**

This course explores American cultural and intellectual life in the 1970s. Against the backdrop of defining political and social developments, including the Vietnam War, Watergate, the energy crisis, Roe v. Wade, and battles over affirmative action and desegregation, we will examine major trends in the culture of the period. Using a variety of documents, including social criticism, film, literature, and music, we will consider how American artists, intellectuals, and other "culture makers" reacted to the political and economic problems of the 1970s and how in turn the cultural production of the period helped shape political and social discourse. Topics will include the rise of modern feminism, the resurgence of religious fundamentalism, the birth of neo-conservatism, gay liberation, postmodernism, black power and its legacy, punk and disco, and the problem of violence in American life. A special goal will be to assess the meanings of liberation and community in the cultures of the 70s.