
Rereading America

Cultural Contexts for Critical Thinking and Writing

Fifth Edition

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The myth of the model family as visualized by America's most popular
illustrator.

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"Most historians warn readers that to grasp 'family' history you must
first abandon the idea that you already know what 'family' means."

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"For weeks I had drunk Kool-Aid and watched morning reruns of *Fa-
ther Knows Best*, whose family was so uncomplicated in its routine that
I very much wanted to imitate it. The first step was to get my brother
and sister to wear shoes at dinner."

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"Early in the summer of 1987, I flew back east to tell my parents I was
in love with a woman. . . ."

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STEPHANIE COONTZ
- “What most people really feel nostalgic about . . . is the belief that the 1950s provided a more family-friendly economic and social environment, an easier climate in which to keep kids on the straight and narrow, and above all, a greater feeling of hope for a family’s long-term future, especially for its young.”
- About Marriage* 69
DANIELLE CRITTENDEN
- “Compared to today’s frantic two-career households, the suburban married life that was deemed so stifling and unfulfilling a generation ago seems blissfully peaceful and affluent.”
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AND DOUGLAS PHILLIPS
- “Video games are the most dangerous medium of the electronic war zone.”
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- “Finally it got so I didn’t worry as much about the folks at home. I would be out walking in the evening and know someone else’s presence was with me.”
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BEBE MOORE CAMPBELL
- “‘It’s not fair,’ I wailed. Ole Blondie had her dollhouse-making daddy whenever she wanted him. . . . Jackie, Jane, and Adam had their wild, ass-whipping daddy. . . . Why couldn’t I have my daddy all the time too?’”
- Black Women and Motherhood* 112
PATRICIA HILL COLLINS
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“Francine say she gonna send this quilt to Washington like folks doing from all ’cross the country, so many good people gone. Babies, mothers, fathers, and boys like our Junie....”

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“Education, then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is the great equalizer of the conditions of men,—the balance-wheel of the social machinery.”

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“School...is an essential support system for a model of social engineering that condemns most people to be subordinate stones in a pyramid that narrows as it ascends to a terminal of control.”

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“...public schools in complex industrial societies like our own make available different types of educational experience and curriculum knowledge to students in different social classes.”

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INÉS HERNÁNDEZ-ÁVILA
- “... we were not only equal but superior to them.
That was why I studied.
If I could do it, we all could.”
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- “The success of black students may depend less on expectations and motivation—things that are thought to drive academic performance—than on trust that stereotypes about their group will not have a limiting effect in their school world.”
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- “My homemade education gave me, with every additional book that I read, a little more sensitivity to the deafness, dumbness, and blindness that was afflicting the black race in America.”
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- “Many Americans who criticize their own school system for being ‘too easy’ idealize the Japanese school system because they are drawn to its tough image.... They see it as a samurai version of their own fantasies about the American work ethic.”

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LYNNE V. CHENEY

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- Where I Come From Is Like This* **433**
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- Advertising and the Construction of Violent White Masculinity* [MEDIA SELECTION] 466
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 NEW YORK TIMES
 "G.I. Joes have morphed over the last three decades into muscle-bound hunks that can harm the self-esteem of boys, according to a new study."
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 CHRISTINA HOFF SOMMERS
 "... American women enjoy many aspects of 'la différence.' Many want things that gender feminists are trying to free them from, be it conventional marriages and families, or fashions and makeup that sometimes render them 'sex objects.'"
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 "I needed to figure out if there was any Christian support somewhere that said I could reconcile my love for Jean and my love for my faith."
- Girls Have All the Power: What's Troubling Troubled Boys* [MEDIA SELECTION] 510
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 "Tirelessly they repeated the details of a Spur Posse 'game' that had riveted the media. It was a sex-for-points intramural contest in which

each time you had sex with a girl, which they called 'hooking up,' you racked up a point. You had to achieve penetration and you could only get one point per girl."

From Fly-Girls to Bitches and Hos [MEDIA SELECTION] **527**
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"The seemingly impenetrable wall of sexism in rap music is really the complex mask African-Americans often wear both to hide and express the pain."

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"I advance it therefore, as a suspicion only, that the blacks . . . are inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind."

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LANGSTON HUGHES

"O, let America be America again—
The land that never has been yet—
And yet must be—the land where every man is free."

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VINCENT N. PARRILLO

"Prejudice is a complex phenomenon, and it is most likely the product of more than one causal agent."

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STUDS TERKEL

"A Klansman and a militant black woman, co-chairmen of the school committee. It was impossible. How could I work with her?"

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SHELBY STEELE

"I think the racial struggle in America has always been primarily a struggle for innocence. . . . Both races instinctively understand that to lose innocence is to lose power."

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LEONARD STEINHORN AND BARBARA DIGGS-BROWN

"By its very nature television creates imaginary or virtual relationships among people. What makes its impact on race unique is that for most whites their television contact with blacks is the closest they will ever come to crossing the color line."

- Models of American Ethnic Relations:
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GEORGE M. FREDRICKSON

"Four basic conceptions of how ethnic or racial groups should relate to each other have been predominant in the history of American thought about group relations—ethnic hierarchy, one-way assimilation, cultural pluralism, and group separatism."

- Notes of a Native Speaker* **611**
ERIC LIU

"I never asked to be white. I am not literally white. . . . But like so many other Asian Americans of the second generation, I find myself now the bearer of a strange new status: white, by acclamation."

- Assimilation* **625**
SHERMAN ALEXIE

"Mary Lynn wanted to have sex with any man other than her husband. . . . She was a Coeur d'Alene Indian married to a white man; she was a wife who wanted to have sex with an indigenous stranger."

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- Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only?* **642**
MARY C. WATERS

"For all of the ways in which ethnicity does not matter for White Americans, it does matter for non-Whites."

- Secret Latina at Large* **653**
VERONICA CHAMBERS

"...like my homeland, I am a narrow being flanked by two oceans of heritage. I'm a secret Latina-at-large and that is more than enough for me."

Gray Boys, Funky Aztecs, and Honorary Homegirls 660

LYNELL GEORGE

"Here, where Central and South America meet the Pacific Rim and West Indies, the definitions of what it means to be black, white, brown, or yellow blur...."

Child of the Americas 673

AURORA LEVINS MORALES

"I am a child of the Americas,
a light-skinned mestiza of the Caribbean,
A child of many diaspora, born into this continent at a crossroads."

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in American History*"

683

FREDERICK JACKSON TURNER

"American social development has been continually beginning over again on the frontier. This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character."

Three Thousand Dollar Death Song 691

WENDY ROSE

"... You: who have
priced us, you who have removed us: at what cost?"

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WALLACE STEGNER

"Cut off from control, ungoverned and virtually untaxed, people learned to resent the imposition of authority, even that which they had created for themselves. Dependent on their own strength and ingenuity in a strange land, they learned to dismiss tradition and old habit, or rather, simply forgot them."

- Dear John Wayne* [MEDIA SELECTION] 705
LOUISE ERDRICH

“How can we help but keep hearing his voice,
the flip side of the sound-track, still playing:
*Come on, boys, we've got them
where we want them, drunk, running.*”

- The Myth of the West* [MEDIA SELECTION] 708
ROBERT V. HINE AND JOHN MACK FARAGHER

“Thus, the progressive narrative of the western is consistently subverted by the presence of pathfinders who are also critics of civilization, outlaws who are Robin Hoods, and whores who have hearts of gold. Americans are drawn to characters of paradoxical impulse, to ‘good-badmen,’ or army scouts who identify with the Indian enemy.”

- The American West and the Burden of Belief* 734
N. SCOTT MOMADAY

“This is a crucial point, then: the West was occupied. . . . Those Europeans who ventured into the West must have seen themselves in some wise as latecomers and intruders. In spite of their narcissism, some aspect of their intrusion must have occurred to them as sacrilege. . . .”

- Visual Portfolio* 750
READING IMAGES OF THE WEST, WILDNESS,
AND THE MYTH OF AMERICAN FREEDOM

- The Adventures of the Frontier in the Twentieth Century* 755
PATRICIA NELSON LIMERICK

“The term ‘frontier’ blurs the fact of conquest and throws a veil over the similarities between the story of American westward expansion and the planetary story of the expansion of European empires. Whatever meanings historians give the term, in popular culture it carries a persistently happy affect, a tone of adventure, heroism, and even fun. . . .”

- The Price of Admission: Harassment and
Free Speech in the Wild Wild West* [MEDIA SELECTION] 777
STEPHANIE BRAIL

“The Internet is the Wild Wild West. . . . And just as it's easy to romanticize the Wild West, forgetting the abuses that took place during that savage time, it's easy to romanticize these pioneer days of the Internet as well.”

The Origins of Gun Culture in the United States, 1760–1865 **792**

MICHAEL A. BELLESILES

“Before we accept an individual right to gun ownership in the Second Amendment, we must establish who were ‘the people’ who were allowed to ‘keep and bear arms.’ . . . We will find that gun ownership was exceptional in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, even on the frontier. . . .”

Freedom and Want: The Western Paradox **814**

DONALD WORSTER

“Two dreams then are tugging at our feelings: one of a life in nature, the other with machines; one of a life in the past, the other in the future. Nature makes us what we are, we still like to think, makes us good and decent; but it is technology that makes us better.”

Department of the Interior **826**

LINDA HOGAN

“The experience of the wild is inside us, beyond our mental control, and it lies alongside the deep memory of wilderness, and it has rules and laws that do not obey our human will.”

Looking for Nature at the Mall **836**

JENNIFER PRICE

“The Nature Company constitutes a store-size contradiction between how we want to connect to nature and how we actually do, and between what we want Nature to be and what nature actually is.”

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