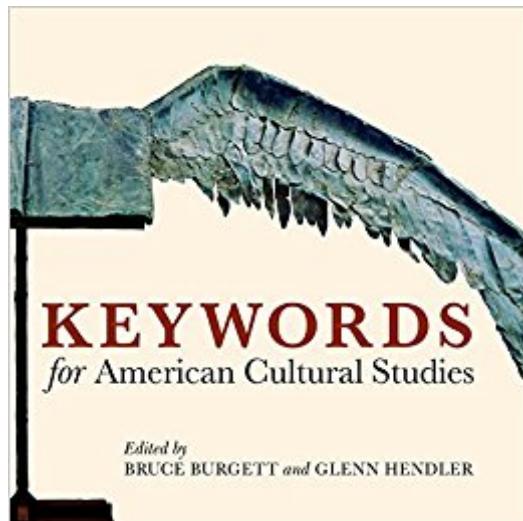


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# Keywords For American Cultural Studies



## Synopsis

Instructors: check out [keywords.nyupress.org](http://keywords.nyupress.org), where you'll find a link to the Keywords Collaboratory, a wiki-based space where classes and other groups collaborate on keywords assignments that take their method, focus, or inspiration from the essays published in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a "keyword" is "a word that is of great importance or significance." On the web, "keywords" organize vast quantities of complex information. *Keywords for American Cultural Studies* offers these features and more to its readers, providing indispensable meditations on terms and concepts used in cultural studies, American studies, and beyond. Collaborative in design and execution, *Keywords for American Cultural Studies* collects sixty-four new essays from interdisciplinary scholars, each on a single term such as "America," "body," "ethnicity," and "religion." Alongside "community," "immigration," "queer," and many others, these words are the nodal points in many of today's most dynamic and vexed discussions of political and social life, both inside and outside of the academy. Here are essays by scholars working in literary studies and political economy, cultural anthropology and ethnic studies, African American history and performance studies, gender studies and political theory. Some entries are explicitly argumentative, others are more descriptive. Throughout, readers will find clear, challenging, critically engaged thinking and writing. *Keywords for American Cultural Studies* provides an accessible A-to-Z survey of prevailing academic buzzwords, and a flexible tool for carving out new areas of inquiry. It is equally useful for college students who are trying to understand what their teachers are talking about, for general readers who want to know what's new in scholarly research, and for professors who just want to keep up. Contributors: Vermonja R. Alston, Lauren Berlant, Mary Pat Brady, Laura Briggs, Bruce Burgett, Christopher Castiglia, Russ Castronovo, Eva Cherniavsky, Krista Comer, Micaela di Leonardo, Brent Hayes Edwards, Robert Fanuzzi, Rod Ferguson, Shelley Fisher Fishkin, Elizabeth Freeman, Kevin Gaines, Rosemary Marangoly George, Kirsten Silva Gruesz, Sandra M. Gustafson, Matthew Pratt Guterl, Judith Halberstam, Glenn Hendler, Grace Kyungwon Hong, June Howard, Janet R. Jakobsen, Susan Jeffords, Walter Johnson, Miranda Joseph, Moon-Ho Jung, Carla Kaplan, David Kazanjian, Kanta Kochhar-Lindgren, Eric Lott, Lisa Lowe, Eithne LuibhÁfÁ©id, Susan Manning, Curtis Marez, Meredith L. McGill, Timothy Mitchell, Fred Moten, Christopher Newfield, Donald E. Pease, Pamela Perry, Carla L. Peterson, Vijay Prashad, Chandan Reddy, Bruce Robbins, David F. Ruccio, Susan M. Ryan, David S. Shields, Caroline Chung Simpson, Nikhil Pal Singh, Siobhan B. Somerville, Amy Dru Stanley, Shelley Streeby, John Kuo Wei Tchen, Paul Thomas, Priscilla Wald, Michael Warner, Robert Warrior, Alys Eve Weinbaum, Henry Yu, George YÁfÁ°dice, and Sandra A. Zagarell.

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## Customer Reviews

“Filled with lively and incisive contributions from leading scholars in the field, *Keywords for American Cultural Studies* will serve as a touchstone for American Studies and related fields for years to come.” -Penny Von Eschen, University of Michigan  
“Keywords for American Cultural Studies can and should be used as an essential handbook, but it really is more like a treasury of the intellect, bulging with sharp insights and lasting revelations.” -Andrew Ross, author of *Fast Boat to China*

Bruce Burgett is Professor and Associate Director of the Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences Program at the University of Washington, Bothell, and graduate faculty in the Department of English at the University of Washington, Seattle. He is the author of *Sentimental Bodies: Sex, Gender, and Citizenship in the Early Republic*. Glenn Hendler is Associate Professor of English at Fordham University. He is the author of *Public Sentiments: Structures of Feeling in Nineteenth-Century American Literature*.

“*Keywords*” is probably one of the handiest reference books in Cultural Studies, American Studies, and related disciplines as it offers fairly concise definitions of terms frequently used in these disciplines. While “*Keywords*” is intended more for students, scholars, and academics, it’s not

completely beyond the grasp of a lay person to comprehend. Granted these aren't terms to toss out in everyday conversation but they are frequently used in academia and scholarly papers and more and more frequently in the media, especially terms like trope and meme. In theory you could Google these terms or use Wikipedia or Urban Dictionary but I somehow doubt most serious scholars would trust their validity. There are certain terms I'd like to see added such as Fordism, but I realize this is hardly a comprehensive glossary of terms. Useful indeed but it may become somewhat outdated as new terms are added and others fall from favor. My hunch is revised editions will follow before too long!

As a teacher of American Studies courses I've looked for a volume like *Keywords for American Cultural Studies* for a number of years. Somehow, in the past I'd missed this 2007 publication. The title of the book might suggest that it is little more than a dictionary; however, that is not the case. *Keywords for American Studies* does define terms such as "Culture," "Class," "Abolition," "Queer," "Secularism," and so on, but each definition is a miniature essay that puts the term into context, and especially into the context of how it is used in the discipline of American Studies. It is an ideal supplement for any undergraduate American Studies course.

It is a **MUST HAVE** for all Cultural Studies students. It's a brief run through many major keywords, and if you're keen at Cultural Studies, you'll also detect a sense of how the essays themselves are affected by the priorities and specialties of the authors. Different scholars write each keyword and their multiple meanings and associations. It gives you a sense of history and impact. It's a really fun exercise to create your own keyword essays, but again, if you're into that sort of thing.

Wonderful text to use in class. The wiki page activity is also a phenomenal extension of topics discussed in the text. I have used the text and wiki with a community college class and also use the text in my high school class. Excellent starting place for an intro American Studies or Cultural Studies class.

I used different articles from this book for a class before I purchased it and found them to be very helpful. Each of the entries is written by scholars in the field of American Studies with concentrations and interests in the given areas-- getting definitions and histories about the various words, ideas, movements, and groups by academics and critics actively working in the field is helpful and accurate!

Very interesting concepts in here, but rather dense. I don't mind dense reading if circumstances necessitate it be so, but in certain essays,.. it felt like the authors were trying to hard to display knowledge and were being wordier than needed.

Bought for my class, and it's convenient and cheaper than paperback version. Also, I don't have to wait for the delivery.

As a grad student and a teacher I like utilizing "keywords" to structure class. I enjoy the essays in the collection and recommend it as a reference for anyone interested in cultural and/or interdisciplinary studies.

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