Contents

List of plates	ix
Acknowledgements	X
Introduction	1
An exceptional place or what is America?	1
What is American Studies?	4
Using the book	7
Critical approaches	8
A culture of many voices	11
Cultural politics/cultural studies	12
Power and position	14
Dialogism	15
The continuous 'play' of culture, history and power	16
Notes	17
References and further reading	17
New beginnings: American culture and identity	20
Reading Columbus	22
The American dream of identity: The Great Gatsby	23
Maybe this is Heaven: Field of Dreams (1989)	26
The surface of an identity': The past as presidential discourse	27
Counter-cultural dreams	30
Multiplicity, difference and re-vision	33
New Age possibility: Grand Canyon (1992)	35
Conclusion: new interrogations – Gloria Anzaldua, Barry Lopez and	
Trinh T. Minh-ha	36
Notes	41
References and further reading	41
Follow-up work	43
and the same of th	10

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

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