This course will survey the art and visual culture of North America, primarily in the United States, from European contact to the present. Beginning with imagery of the first New World encounters, we will go on to trace the roles played by visual expression in the conceptualization of American culture during the Revolutionary and antebellum periods, the Civil War, reconstruction and westward expansion, the Gilded Age, Modernism, the Great Depression, postwar consumerism, and the global era. While the course runs roughly chronologically, most lectures are thematic. Among topics considered will be the development of various modes of representation (from painting, sculpture, and photography to more everyday forms such as design, illustration, cinema and other media), the emergence of American artistic institutions including schools, museums, and criticism, the role of the visual in constructions class, race, and gender, issues of local and regional expression, and the relationship between art, nation and identity.

Professor Jason Weems
Monday and Wednesday, 12:40–2:00pm, Arts Screening Room 335

For more information on the Department of the History of Art visit: http://arthistory.ucr.edu

Above: Andrew Wyeth, Christina’s World, 1948