

SYLLABUS
ANTH 4505.01- RACE, ETHNICITY, AND IDENTITY
FALL 2017

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:00- 11:30,
Thursdays 2- 3:20, by appointment
Office: Chilton Hall 308C

Class meetings: Mon-Wed-Fri
from 9:00- 9:50
Meeting location: CHEM 352

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Overview of the Class

Welcome! This is an especially timely moment for this class. Claims that the United States has become a “post-racial” society are being increasingly challenged by news media coverage of state violence against various persons of color (POC), and more recently, images of white nationalists wielding torches to publicly claim the supremacy of one race over all others. In this class, we are going to take a critical approach to the study of race, ethnicity, and identity. We will analyze how categories of race and ethnicity have been socially constructed over time, especially in and through intersecting norms about gender, sexuality, class, and nationality; and we will focus on the complex ways that hierarchies of race and ethnicity have operated in U.S. politics and culture.

The first half of the course we will build a theoretical foundation for the study of race and ethnicity, using scholars from within and outside of anthropology. In particular, we will center the concept of intersectionality, and highlight the contributions of black feminist theorists to a critical analysis of race and ethnicity. The second half of the course we will focus our attention on two contemporary social movements that foreground matters of race, ethnicity, and identity in their articulations of their vision of social justice. We will put scholarly, activist, media, fiction, and other forms of writing in conversation with each other to understand how cultural meanings about race, ethnicity, and identity are transmitted, reproduced, and contested.

Course Objectives:

- Understand and evaluate foundational concepts and theories in the study of race, ethnicity, and identity
- Develop and exercise critical thinking skills in the analysis of race, ethnicity, and identity
- Understand and be able to use the concept of intersectionality
- Critically analyze how historical processes and relationships continue to impact the cultural meanings we attribute to various forms of social difference today

- Critically analyze how popular understandings of race, ethnicity, and identity influence are constructed and reinforced through a variety of cultural institutions

Required Texts:

There is one required texts for this course, which is available at the UNT Bookstore.

1. *Ethnicity Inc.* (2009) by John L. and Jean Comaroff

All other required readings will be available for download on Blackboard Learn.

Course Expectations:

This course requires considerable reading and writing. Although you do not need a background in anthropological theory to succeed in the class, you will be expected to grapple with difficult texts that you may need to re-read and sit with to fully understand. In other words, cursory readings will not be sufficient.

We may cover material in this course that challenges your personal beliefs and opinions. I do not expect you to agree with course materials in order to do well in this course, but I do expect you to approach these topics in an open and intellectual fashion. Comments that are disrespectful to your classmates and/or myself will not be tolerated.

Each class period, I will expect you to:

- Have completed the readings
- Pose questions for clarification or extension of points
- Participate actively in discussion and debate
- Respectfully challenge your instructor and peers where appropriate
- Contribute positively to the classroom climate

Late work: I do not accept late assignments unless you have made specific arrangements with me in advance, have a doctor's note, and/or otherwise received my approval.

Extra Credit: Extra credit can be earned at any point during the semester. I will suggest several opportunities in class, and I am relatively open to creative ideas from you. Options to earn extra credit include: relevant movie/documentary analysis, attending a related talk/lecture on campus, a personal reflection that puts course content in conversation with an experience you have had, or developing a creative piece such as poetry or artwork. You must get approval from me ahead of time for your choice, so check with me before you do the work.

Electronics in the Classroom: Please turn off your cell phone prior to coming to class. Students may use laptop computers to take notes and for class purposes only; students checking email, using Facebook, etc. will be asked to turn off their computers and will not be allowed to use their computers in subsequent classes.

Academic Honesty: The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own. It may be inadvertent or intentional. Any

facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of any information that is not common knowledge, should be cited. Students suspected of any of these will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; if found guilty they can receive an automatic “F” in the course. In addition, I reserve the right to pursue further disciplinary action within the UNT legal system, which may result in your dismissal from the university. For more information on paper writing, including how to avoid plagiarism, and how to use citations, see <http://www.unt.edu/anthropology/writing.htm>. For information on the University’s policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>.

Academic Accommodations: The University of North Texas is committed to providing accommodation for all students with disabilities. If you have or acquire a disability that may affect your participation in class, I will strive to accommodate your needs. To ensure that the necessary accommodations are made, be sure to contact the Office of Disability Accommodation (located in Sage Hall) as soon as possible to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner. They will work with both of us to ensure proper accommodations are made. If you need accommodations, please remember that reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Office of Disability Accommodation. Note that students need to obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or revise segments of the syllabus. Any changes in the course schedule will be announced in class and on the course webpage.

Evaluation

Attendance	5%
Class Participation	5%
Critical Discussion Questions	30%
Project Proposal	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Paper	30%

I. Attendance (50 POINTS)

Attendance will be taken on ten days throughout the semester. Attendance checks will be random and unannounced. Students will earn 5 points if they are in class. Students who are absent will not be given the opportunity to earn these points unless they have a documented excuse.

II. Class Participation (50 POINTS)

This class relies on the intellectual commitment and active participation of all students. In order for the course to be effective, all students must have completed the reading assignments and be ready for in-depth discussion for each class. The topics we will be discussing can be politically charged, so I expect everyone to *actively* listen to others as well as be respectful of each other’s ideas. Importantly, you need to bring assigned readings to

class each day as we will refer to and utilize them throughout our meetings. You should take notes regarding lectures and classroom discussions because these notes, alongside your marginalia/notes on the readings, will come in very handy for exam preparation and your final project.

III. Critical Discussion Questions (25 points each)

The course schedule below provides a list of readings for each class period. By **THURSDAY AT 3:00 PM each week**, in the “Critical Discussion Questions” folder on Blackboard Learn, you will submit ONE insightful and critical discussion question that addresses a scholarly reading from that week. You may choose to dig deeper into a particular passage within the text, or make connections between class readings or between a scholarly reading and a current event, but your question must show me that you have read the scholarly text you choose. Please note, “I thought it was interesting” is neither insightful nor critical.

IV. Project Proposal (100 points)

For this course, you will complete a final project (see below for more information). On October 20 you will turn in a 1-2 page project proposal that describes in narrative form your idea for your own final project, including the argument or thesis of the paper. In addition, you will include an annotated list of 3 scholarly sources (*that are in addition* required course readings) with a 2-3 sentence description for each that explains the topic of the source and why you think it will be useful for your paper.

V. Midterm Examination (200 POINTS)

There is one examination for this class, a midterm. It will be an essay exam that will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of, and ability to apply, course content. Course content includes assigned readings, lectures, discussions, videos, and presentations. The exam will be administered outside of class. As such, it is open book and open note, but note that this courtesy comes with increased expectations on my part and thus a higher standard for success. This means that proper preparation for the exam is key to doing well. I will provide study guidance one week before the exam.

VI. Final Paper (300 POINTS)

Your objective will be to write a 7-8 page paper that analyzes some form of representation or discourse that relates to issues of race, ethnicity, and/or identity. This could include literature; magazine/newspaper articles; TV, movies, or other cinematic representation; online blogs or other media; law and policy; various institutions such as the university, hospitals, or prisons; any related activist/advocacy groups or materials. This paper is due December 6.

This paper should present an ARGUMENT. I want you to analyze what messages the specific representations, discourses, rhetorics that you are looking at tell the world? What do these representations tell us about forms of social difference such as race and ethnicity? What do they tell us about how these concepts relate to identity and to ideas of the nation? And who is “us”-- who is included in this vision of the world/nation/group and who is not?

This paper will give you a chance to think through critical questions that are timely and important to all of us, particularly with recent political and cultural events. It also allows you to bring in “outside” materials into the classroom, forcing us to negotiate the relationship between theories, methodologies, politics, activisms, and agencies. You will be required to research and use at least 5 outside academic sources (i.e. were not required readings for the course in your paper) in addition to any of the course materials. One of your central objectives of this assignment is to work towards applying and extending analyses and concepts acquired throughout the course towards your particular topic, and to juxtapose these concepts and analyses to articles you have found in your own research.

***A Note on Paper Formatting: All required papers are to be double spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins on all sides. In-text quotes and references should be properly cited using whatever format you are most familiar with (i.e. MLA, APA, Chicago). All papers should contain a works cited/references page.**

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER
Every Thursday: Critical Discussion Questions Due
10/9-10/13: Midterm Exam
10/20- Project Proposal Due
12/6- Final Paper Due

COURSE SCHEDULE

- 8/28: Introduction to the Course - no assigned readings
- Thinking Anthropologically About Race, Ethnicity, and Identity
- 8/30: Adrienne Rich “Claiming an Education”
AAA Statement on Race
(<http://www.americananthro.org/ConnectWithAAA/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=2583>)
- 9/1: Yolanda Moses “Thinking Anthropologically about ‘Race’: Human Variation, Cultural Construction, and Dispelling Myths”
- 9/6: Karen Brodtkin “How Did Jews Become White Folks?”
- 9/8: Paul Farmer “An Anthropology of Structural Violence”
Keesha Beckford “Dear White Mom”
- 9/11: Comaroffs “Prologue” and “Three or Four Things About Ethno-Futures” in *Ethnicity Inc.*

→ Critical Race Theory, Cultural Studies, and Other Approaches to Race and Ethnicity

- 9/13: Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic- Critical Race Theory: An Introduction
- 9/15: Michael Omi and Howard Winant- "Introduction" in *Racial Formations in the United States*
- 9/18: Stuart Hall *New Ethnicities*

→ Intersectionality in Theory and Practice

- 9/20: Audre Lorde- "Age, Class, Race, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference"
Combahee River Collective Statement
Shadowproof- "Why the Combahee River Statement Matters 40 Years Later"
- 9/22: Kimberlé Crenshaw- "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color"
- 9/25: Zine Magubane- "Which Bodies Matter? Feminism, Poststructuralism, Race, and the Curious Theoretical Odyssey of the 'Hottentot Venus'"
Fieldnotes- Kara Walker's "A Subtlety"

→ The Power of Representation

- 9/27: Stuart Hall "What is the Black in Black Popular Culture?"
- 9/29: Lisa Marie Cacho "Racialized Hauntings of the Devalued Dead"
- 10/2: Leo Chavez "Toward a Framework for Reading Magazine Covers" in *Covering Immigration: Popular Images and the Politics of the Nation*
- 10/4: Comaroffs "Commodifying Descent, American-style" in *Ethnicities Inc.*
- 10/6: Comaroffs "A Tale of Two Ethnicities" in *Ethnicities Inc.*

10/9-10/13

MIDTERM EXAM

→ The Complexities of Recognition and Identity-Based Politics

- 10/16: Lynn Stephen "Gender, Citizenship, and Identity"
- 10/18: Cathy Cohen "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics"
Hari Ziyad "My Gender is Black"
- 10/20: Dean Spade "Intersectional Resistance and Law Reform"
Latino Rebels "Why I Chose not to be Latinx"

Project Proposal Due

→ Topics in Race, Ethnicity and Identity (Politics): Black Lives Matter

- 10/23: Sara Ahmed "Making Strangers"
New York Times "The Condition of Black Life is One of Mourning"
Review Black Lives Matter website, especially "About Us," "Our Herstory," and "Principles" links <http://blacklivesmatter.com/who-we-are/>
- 10/25: Mimi Thi Nguyen "The Hoodie as Sign, Screen, Expectation, and Force"
- 10/27: Angela Davis "Slavery, Civil Rights, and Abolitionist Perspectives Towards Prison" in *Are Prisons Obsolete?*
Review Audre Lorde Project website (www.alp.org)
- 10/30: Alexandra Cox "The Racialized Consequences of Neoliberal Juvenile Justice Practices"
- 11/1: U. Aggarwal "The Politics of Choice and The Structuring of Citizenship post-Brown v. Board of Education"
- 11/3: Setha Low "Maintaining Whiteness: The Fear of Others and Niceness"
- 11/6: Yarimar Bonilla and Jonathan Rosa "#Ferguson: Digital protest, Hashtag Ethnography, and the Racial politics of Social Media in the United States"

→ Topics in Race, Ethnicity, and Identity (Politics): Native Rights/Sovereignty Claims

- 11/8: Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill "Challenging Connections Between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy"
- 11/10: Deborah Miranda "Extermination of the Joyas: Gendercide in Spanish California"
- 11/13: J. Kahaulani Kauanui "The Politics of Blood and Sovereignty in Rice v. Cayetano"
- 11/15: Circe Sturm "Reflections on the Anthropology of Sovereignty and Settler Colonialism: Lessons from Native North America"
- 11/17: Audra Simpson "Whither Settler Colonialism?"
- 11/20: Jon Eagle Sr. "Turbulent Water: The Dakota Access Pipeline and Traditional Cultural Landscapes"
Nick Estes "Fighting for Our Lives: #noDAPL in Historical Context"
Red Nation "The Red Nation 10 Point Program"

11/22- 11/24: Thanksgiving Break, No Class

→ Considering Agency and Activism

11/27: *Final Paper Workshop- No Readings Required*

11/29: Gayatri Spivak "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

12/1: Selections from INCITE Anthology (TBD)

12/4: Comaroffs "Conclusion" in *Ethnicity Inc*

12/6: Concluding Thoughts
Final Papers Due