ANTH 180R: Race & Racism

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1:15-2:40 TTh; SL 206

Course Overview

This course addresses the history of "race" as a concept in the United States and its contemporary usage in science, medicine, politics, and everyday life. Tracing the historical account of the beginnings of the use of "race" in the colonial slave trade through the Civil War, the Civil Rights movement, and the rise of "post-racial" thinking, this course then turns to contemporary ethnographic accounts of "race" and racism in the United States. Students will attain a clear understanding of the cultural construction of race, how there is no scientific basis for race, and the varying ways – positive and negative – that racial concepts are deployed in the United States.

Foundationally, we examine how race is often thought about as Black and white in the United States, an effect of longstanding racial politics that emerged during the pre-Civil War period. We begin the course by examining the role that race played during this period, with specific attention to how whiteness came to be constructed through its opposition to blackness. Moreover, we focus on how, progressively, groups that were previously considered non-white – such as the Irish, Mediterraneans, and Jews – became "white" through complex economic, political, and social transformations in relation to Black citizens and immigration policies. We then turn to how other "racial" groups fit into this dominant Black/White axis, with special attention paid to Asian Americans as a "model minority."

The penultimate section of the course turns toward the role of indigenous politics in the U.S. and the ways that indigenous groups – and the formal relationship between the U.S. and tribal sovereigns – offer ways to reconceptualize the Black/White axis of race. By focusing on tribal politics and their relationships with dominant U.S. institutions, questions about race, ethnicity, and nationalism come into relief, particularly in the context of shifting understandings of tribal communities, belonging, and U.S. ethnonationalism.

Across materials that students engage with, we will discuss a wide variety of topics, including but not limited to: the political economy of race (with particular reference to the prison-industrial complex), the use of race in medicine and the medicalization of racialized conditions, the role of nationalism in the development of racial politics, and the ways that race and racism affect everyday life in the US.

Learning Outcomes

Students in all P courses will demonstrate an understanding of

1. United States society by paying substantive attention to three or more identitarian groups.
2. How these groups have affected and been affected by basic institutions of American society, such as commerce, family, legal and political structures, or religion, and by issues involving inequality.

Students in N courses will demonstrate

1. Knowledge of major concepts, models, and issues (and their interrelationships) of at least one of the social sciences: anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, or sociology.
2. An understanding of the methods used by social scientists to explore social phenomena, including, when appropriate to the discipline, observation, hypothesis development, measurement and data collection, experimentation, evaluation of evidence, and analysis by mathematics or other interpretive frameworks.

Reading List:
Books are available at the campus bookstore. All other readings are available through myCourses.

Harden, Jacalyn. Double Cross: Japanese Americans in Black and White Chicago. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

Hartigan, John. Race in the 21st Century: Ethnographic Approaches. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Porter, Dorothy. Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Create Race in the 21st Century. New York: New Press, 2011.

Roediger, David. Working Towards Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White. New York: Basic Books, 2018.

Simpson, Audra. Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014.

Sturm, Circe. Becoming Indian: The Struggle Over Cherokee Identity in the 21st Century. Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press, 2011.

Wilson Gilmore, Ruth. Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007.

Grading & Assignments:

Reading Guides (30%) – Students are required to complete at least 2 reading guides each week during weeks 2-15, and a total of 30 reading guides over the course of the semester (there are more readings [~40] than required Reading Guides, so students have some latitude in which readings and films they submit Reading Guides for). Reading Guides must be turned in to the instructor at the beginning of class in which the reading or film is discussed. Late Reading Guides will not be accepted for credit. Reading Guides are included as Appendix A (for non-fiction), B (podcasts) and C (films).

Student-Led Discussions (2 @ 10%) – At two points during the semester, each student will be required to lead a discussion based on the assigned readings and will be provided with a partner or team for doing so. Students will select these readings in consultation with the instructor and in the service of addressing Guiding Questions. Reading Guides cannot be turned in for the readings associated with your In-Class Presentation. Missing your presentation day will result in a failing grade for the assignment.

Thresholds (2 @ 15%; 1 @ 20%) – At three points in the semester, students will be asked to respond to a threshold prompt provided by the instructor. These prompts will draw on the Guiding Questions developed by the class, and will result in a 5-7 page paper.

Policies:

No exceptions to policies will be made for students who add the class late.

There is no extra credit available.

No late work will be accepted for credit.

Students taking the course Pass/Fail must earn a C to receive a Pass.

Workload: This course is a 4-credit course, which means that in addition to the scheduled lectures, students are expected to do at least 9.5 hours of course-related work each week during the semester. This includes things like: completing assigned readings, participating in lab sessions, studying for tests and examinations, preparing written assignments, completing internship or clinical placement requirements, and other tasks that must be completed to earn credit in the course.[1] I assume that undergraduate students can read 1 page of academic writing in 3 minutes; 100 pages of reading should require about 300 minutes, or 5 hours. You may need to read some of the texts more than once to fully understand them. In most cases, you should expect to be reading about 75-100 pages per week (approximately 4 hours) in addition to other course requirements.

1 http://www.binghamton.edu/academics/provost/documents/syllabus-credit-hours-0314.pdf

Disability-related Equal Access Accommodations: Students wishing to request academic accommodations to insure their equitable access and participation in this course should notify the instructor as soon as they are aware of their need for such arrangements. Authorizations from Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) are generally required. We encourage you to contact SSD at 607-777-2686 to schedule an appointment with the Director or Learning Disabilities Specialist. The SSD website (www.binghamton.edu/ssd) includes information regarding their Disability Documentation Guidelines. The office is located in UU-119.

Academic Integrity – Academic misconduct of any sort will not be tolerated. Evidence of academic misconduct – which is not limited to plagiarism and cheating – will result in an immediate failing grade in the course and actions as dictated by university policy regarding academic integrity for undergraduate students.[2]

Contacting Me: I only check my email between 2-4 PM on weekday afternoons and during my office hours. I will always respond to emails within 24 hours, except for emails received on Fridays, which will responded to on the following Monday. If you plan to stop by my office hours, please contact me ahead of time, either by email (mwolfmey@binghamton.edu) or in person before or after class.

Correspondence with instructors: Only correspondence that follows professional conventions of correspondence will be replied to by me. For example, your email should begin 'Dear Professor Wolf-Meyer,' and end with your signature. Beginning an email without a salutation, a 'Hey' or other informal forms of address will ensure your email will not be responded to. If the answer to your question is clearly stated in the syllabus or assignment guidelines, instructors may not respond to your email.

Style Matters: All written work should be double-spaced, 12 point font, in Times New Roman, with 1 inch margins on all sides, and page numbers. Citation should look like this: (Author Year: Page), e.g. (Wolf-Meyer 2009: 408). Failure to meet these standards will result in a reduced grade.

Letters of Recommendation: Before you ask me for a letter of recommendation, read this: http://bit.ly/2nwbeNG. My policy is to not provide students with a letter of recommendation before they complete a course with me. I also generally do not provide letters for students who have taken only one course from me (for reasons detailed in that link).

2 http://www.binghamton.edu:8080/exist9/rest/Bulletin2014-15/xq/2_academic_policies_and_procedures_all_students.xq?_xsl=/db/Bulletin2014-15/xsl/MasterCompose.xsl

Week 1: How to Talk about Race?
1.21.2020
Introduction to the Course; Syllabus overview

1.23.2020
Jenkins, Richard. "Rethinking Ethnicity: Identity, Categorization and Power." Ethnic and Racial Studies 17.2 (1994):197-223.

Week 2:
1.28.2020
Hartigan, John. Race in the 21st Century: Ethnographic Approaches. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. **Chapter 1**
Porter, Dorothy. Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Create Race in the 21st Century. New York: New Press, 2011. **Chapter 1**

1.30.2020
Hartigan, John. Race in the 21st Century: Ethnographic Approaches. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. **Chapters 2 & 7**

Week 3: Race and Nature
2.4.2020
Hartigan, John. Race in the 21st Century: Ethnographic Approaches. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. **Chapter 3**
Porter, Dorothy. Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Create Race in the 21st Century. New York: New Press, 2011. **Chapter 2**

2.6.2020
Porter, Dorothy. Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Create Race in the 21st Century. New York: New Press, 2011. **Chapters 3 & 4**

Week 4: How Race is (Mis)Used in Science
2.11. 2020
Porter, Dorothy. Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Create Race in the 21st Century. New York: New Press, 2011. **Chapters 5 & 6**

2.13.2020
Threshold #1 Delivered
Porter, Dorothy. Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Create Race in the 21st Century. New York: New Press, 2011. **Chapters 7 & 8**

Week 5: Whiteness

2.18.2020

Hartigan, John. Race in the 21st Century: Ethnographic Approaches. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. **Chapter 4**

Roediger, David. Working Towards Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White. New York: Basic Books, 2018. **Chapter 1**

2.20.2020

Threshold #1 Due

Roediger, David. Working Towards Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White. New York: Basic Books, 2018. **Chapters 2-4**

Week 6: Whiteness and the Racial Politics of Space

2.25.2020

Roediger, David. Working Towards Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White. New York: Basic Books, 2018. **Chapters 5 & 6**

Sugrue, Thomas. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998. **Selections** [my presentation example]

2.27.2020

Roediger, David. Working Towards Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White. New York: Basic Books, 2018. **Chapter 7 & Afterword**

Week 7: Blackness

3.3.2020

Hartigan, John. Race in the 21st Century: Ethnographic Approaches. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. **Chapter 5**

3.5.2020 **No Class – Winter Break**

Week 8: Prisons, Criminality, and Political Economy

3.10.2020

Wilson Gilmore, Ruth. Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007. **Chapters 2-4**

3.12.2020

Threshold #2 Delivered

Wilson Gilmore, Ruth. Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007. **Chapter 6**

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. "The Case for Reparations." The Atlantic 313.5 (2014): 54-71.

Week 9: Asian America Between Black and White

3.17.2020

Harden, Jacalyn. Double Cross: Japanese Americans in Black and White Chicago. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003. **Chapters 1-2**

Hartigan, John. Race in the 21st Century: Ethnographic Approaches. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. **Chapter 6**

3.19.2020

Threshold #2 Due

Harden, Jacalyn. Double Cross: Japanese Americans in Black and White Chicago. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003. **Chapters 3-5**

Week 10: Indigenous Racial Politics

3.24.2020

Sturm, Circe. Becoming Indian: The Struggle Over Cherokee Identity in the 21st Century. Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press, 2011. **Chapters 1-4**

3.26.2020

Sturm, Circe. Becoming Indian: The Struggle Over Cherokee Identity in the 21st Century. Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press, 2011. **Chapters 5-8**

Week 11: Indigenous Politics On and Off the Reservation

3.31.2020

Simpson, Audra. Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014. **Chapters 1-3**

4.2.2020

Simpson, Audra. Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014. **Chapters 4-6 + Conclusion**

Week 12: No Classes – Spring Break 4.7.2020-4.9.2020

Week 13: Can We Ever Be Post-Race?

4.14.2020

Hartigan, John. Race in the 21st Century: Ethnographic Approaches. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. **Chapter 8**

Porter, Dorothy. Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Create Race in the 21st Century. New York: New Press, 2011. **Chapter 12**

4.16.2020

Student-led discussions

Week 14:
4.21.2020
Student-led discussions

4.23.2020
Student-led discussions

Week 15:
4.28.2020
Student-led discussions

4.30.2020
Student-led discussions

Week 16:
5.5.2020
Student-led discussions
Threshold #3 Delivered

Final Exam Week
Threshold #3 due on final exam date, to be determined in February

Appendix A: Reading Guide for Non-Fiction
For each reading, you will need to fill out this form. Bring copies of each reading guide to class to receive credit and ensure that you understand each reading.

1. Who is the author? What kind of disciplinary background are they coming from (e.g. anthropology, history, sociology, medicine)?

2. Who is the piece written for? How can you infer the audience?

3. What is the main argument and goal of the writing? -- to verify something? or challenge a theoretical claim? In other words, if you had to explain it in class, how would you summarize it?

4. Identify the author's thesis.

5. What are the key concepts used? Are concepts challenged or invented?

6. Who are the texts' friends and enemies? How are citations used?

7. What is the article, book, or chapters about, empirically? In other words, what is being studied as the object? Where are the events and people geographically situated? What is the scale of analysis? (e.g. nation, region, city, institution, person?) When did the study take place?

8. What methods were used in collecting data? (ethnography, interviews, statistics, textual analysis, archival research?) Does the data look at what people do, say, or think? How was the data analyzed? What assumptions -- of the author or his or her society -- shaped the inquiry? What core values are assumed? What data would strengthen the text?

9. Discuss a passage (citing page number) that inspired you or frustrated you. Then type out a paragraph or two (160-300 words) discussing that passage (citing page number) and describing how it resonated or clashed with other course content (which might be a discussion, a film, or another text).

10. If you take one thing away from the text, what would it be? In other words, if you're telling a friend about this article, what's the one nugget you would share to make start a conversation?

Appendix B: Podcast Guide

For each podcast, you will need to fill out this form. Bring copies of each podcast guide to class to receive credit and ensure that you understand each podcast.

1. Who are the producers and hosts of the podcast? What kind of background are they coming from (e.g. podcastmaking, academia, journalism)?

2. Who is the podcast made for? How can you infer the audience?

3. What is the main argument and goal of the podcast? -- to demonstrate something? or tell a particular story? In other words, if you had to explain it in class, how would you summarize it? (If the podcast is comprised of multiple stories, you may need to answer this question repeatedly.)

4. Identify the podcast maker's intent. What is the big idea of the episode?

5. What are the key concepts used? Are concepts challenged or invented?

6. What is the podcast about, empirically? In other words, what is being studied as the object? Where are the events and people geographically situated? What is the scale of analysis? (e.g. nation, region, city, institution, person)? When did the events take place?

7. Discuss a scene from the podcast that inspired you or frustrated you. Then type out a paragraph or two (160-300 words) discussing that scene and describing how it resonated or clashed with other course content (which might be a discussion, another podcast, or a text).

8. If you take one thing away from the podcast, what would it be? In other words, if you're telling a friend about this podcast, what's the one nugget you would share to make start a conversation?

Appendix C: Film Viewing Guide
For each film, you will need to fill out this form. Bring copies of each viewing guide to class to receive credit and ensure that you understand each film.

1. Who is the director of the film? What kind of background are they coming from (e.g. filmmaking, anthropology, history)?

2. Who is the piece made for? How can you infer the audience?

3. What is the main argument and goal of the film? -- to demonstrate something? or tell a particular story? In other words, if you had to explain it in class, how would you summarize it?

4. Identify the filmmaker's intent. What is the big idea of the film?

5. What are the key concepts used? Are concepts challenged or invented?

6. What is the film about, empirically? In other words, what is being studied as the object? Where are the events and people geographically situated? What is the scale of analysis? (e.g. nation, region, city, institution, person)? When did the study take place?

7. Discuss a scene from the film that inspired you or frustrated you. Then type out a paragraph or two (160-300 words) discussing that scene and describing how it resonated or clashed with other course content (which might be a discussion, another film, or a text).

8. If you take one thing away from the film, what would it be? In other words, if you're telling a friend about this film, what's the one nugget you would share to make start a conversation?