

ETHN 100: Theories and Methods in Ethnic Studies

Fall 2007

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Office Hours: Tues: 2-3:30; Thurs: 9-10:30

Course Description and Objective:

This course investigates the relationship between racial knowledge and power, paying special attention to the disciplinary constructions of the “racial subject.” We will read anthropological and sociological formulations of race and ethnicity to identify how they describe racial subjection, how they characterize the racial privileged and racial subaltern subject, and the strategies of emancipation they suggest. At the same time, we will examine critical and oppositional writings by racial subaltern scholars (in the United States and elsewhere) and their proposed strategies for racial emancipation. The objective of the course is not to replace racism’s projections with the “truth” of our reality, but rather to take seriously the power of language and discourse, and to develop the tools to recognize and challenge “common sense” assumptions about “race.”

Required Readings

Note: Please bring texts to class.

- 1) Laura Briggs. *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico.*
- 2) Robin d.g. Kelley. *Yo’ Mama’s Disfunktional: Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America.*
- 3) Laura Hyun Yi Kang. *Compositional Subjects: Enfiguring Asian/American Women.*
- 4) Reader on E-Reserve

Course Requirements

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| 1) Attendance and active class participation | 20% |
| 2) Exercises: | |
| Assignment # 1: Due date: October 18 (3rd week) | 10% |
| Assignment # 2: Due date: Nov. 27 (9th week) | 10% |
| 3) Midterm (Take-home): Due date: November 8 | 30% |
| 4) Final (Take-home): Due date: Scheduled final exam date | 30% |

Reading and Lecture Schedule

Note: * denotes available on E-Reserve

**** denotes available at SSH Library Circulation desk**

9/21: Introduction

Week 1. Oct. 2 & 4 – Ethnic Studies and Ghostly Matters

* Yen Le Espiritu, “Disciplines Unbound: Notes on Sociology and Ethnic Studies,”
Contemporary Sociology 1999, pp. 510-514

*Avery Gordon, "Her Shape and His Hand," pp. 3-28 in Avery Gordon's *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minnesota 1997)

Laura Kang, *Compositional Subjects*, Introduction (pp. 1-27)

Note: Oct. 2 —Video "On strike!: Ethnic Studies, 1969-1999"

Week 2. Oct. 9 & 11 – Power and Knowledge: Writing the Racial Subject

* Louis Agassiz, "The Varieties of Races," pp. 457-461 in *Racial Thought in America*, Vol. 1 (University of Massachusetts Press, 1969).

* Achille Mbembe, "Introduction: Time on the Move," pp. 1-23 in *On the Postcolony* (UC Press 2001).

* Chandra Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourse" pp. 51-80 in *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (Indiana)

Laura Kang, *Compositional Subjects*, Ch. 1 (29-70).

Week 3. Oct. 16 & 18 – The Sociology of Race Relations

**Robert Park, "Our Racial Frontier on the Pacific," pp. 138-151 in *Race and Culture* (Free Press, 1950)

**Robert Park, "The Bases of Racial Prejudice," pp. 230-243 in *Race and Culture* (Free Press, 1950).

Robin Kelley, *Yo' Mama's Disfunktional!*, Introduction and Chapter 1 (pp. 1-42).

October 18. First Exercise Due

Week 4. Oct. 23 & 25 – Culture and Power

*Oscar Lewis, "Introduction," pp. xi-liv, in *La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty—San Juan and New York* (1996).

*Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action," pp. 126-159 in *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965).

Robin Kelley, *Yo' Mama's Disfunktional!*, Chs. 2 and 3 (pp. 43-102)

Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire*, Ch. 6 (162-192)

Week 5. Oct. 30 & Nov 1 – Historical -Materialism

** Oliver Cox. "Race Relations—Its Meaning, Beginning, and Progress." Pp. 321-352 in *Caste, Class, & Race* (Doubleday, 1948).

*David Roediger, "Class, Coons and Crowds in Antebellum America." Pp. 95-114 in *The Wages of Whiteness : Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (Verso, 1991).

Robin Kelley, *Yo' Mama's Disfunktional!*, Chs. 4 & 5 (pp. 103-158).

Week 6. Nov. 6 & 8 –

Nov. 6 – Catch-up and Review Day

Nov. 8—Take -home midterm due. Note that we will not have class on that day.

Week 7. Nov. 13 & 15 -- Women as Objects of Knowledge

Laura Kang, *Compositional Subjects*, Chs. 2-3 (pp. 71-163)

Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire*, Ch. 5 and Epilogue (pp. 162-209)

Week 8. Nov. 20 -- American Exceptionalism, U.S. Imperialism

Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire*, Chs. 2-4 (pp. 46-141)

Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire*, Introduction and Ch. 1 (pp. 1-45)

Week 9. Nov. 27 & 29 - -Global/Transnational Approach to Ethnic Studies

*Denise Silva, "Towards a Critique of the Socio-logos of Justice: *The Analytics of Raciality* and the Production of Universality," *Social Identities* 7: 3 (2001): 421-454.

Laura Kang, *Compositional Subjects*, Ch. 4 (pp. 164-214).

*Smith, Linda Tuhiwai, Chapter 6 in *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, (Zed Books, 1999).

Nov. 27 – Second Exercise Due

Week 10. Dec. 4 & 6 – Contending with Representation

Laura Kang, *Compositional Subjects*, Ch. 5 (pp. 215-270)

Review and Conclusion

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Ethnic Studies 100 -- Espiritu

GUIDELINES/SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTIVE LEARNING

This course is designed to promote active participation, critical thinking, and intellectual advancement of students. Toward this goal, I encourage you to be active learners and to take responsibility to teach yourself and your classmates. This requires that you unlearn ways of learning that are passive, competitive, and uncollaborative. The American philosopher of education, John Dewey, believed that collaborative or cooperative learning, and the potential tensions that may arise in this interaction, are critical to the qualitative growth of individuals. In the same way, the Brazilian philosopher and educator Paulo Freire equates education with a people's triumph over the attempted "domestication" of their intellect.

Suggestions for Active Learning:

- 1) Attendance (should weigh very heavily)
- 2) Participate in class discussion on a regular basis
- 3) Write and accumulate study notes on the readings
- 4) Volunteer (in advance) to take responsibility (as an individual or as a group) to initiate discussion in class (discussion questions must be prepared in advance in consultation with instructor)
- 5) Come to class with written questions on scheduled readings
- 6) Meet with a study group on a regular basis (once a week, once every two weeks; each student needs to document meeting)
- 7) Visit professor during office hours to discuss issues raised in class and in the readings; bring one or two classmates with you.
- 8) Contribute possible exam questions.
- 9) Watch a documentary film or educational program that focus on communities of color and share your reaction and/or critical insights with your classmates and in a written commentary to instructor (one page).
- 10) Organize a student panel to dramatize/illustrate the issues of the week (through spoken words, talk show format . . .)
- 11) Notify the class of events on- or off-campus that address the issues discussed in class.
- 12) Bring in your favorite piece of music that address the class themes and share with the class.
- 13) Attend a cultural/ethnic/gender celebration and share your reaction with your classmates and in a written commentary to instructor (one page)
- 14) Volunteer at a local organization; document your experience
- 15) Any other creative way you can actively participate in class.

Self-Evaluation: You are encouraged to monitor your own participation level, and to evaluate your overall participation and engagement at the end of the course. Please submit a one page self-evaluation of your participation in the course, and to recommend a "participation grade" which will account for 20% of your final grade.

Due date: Please submit your self-evaluation when you submit your final exam.

Some Criteria to Use In Evaluating Your Own Active Learning:

- Attendance level
- Degree to which I made conscious connections between different theories and explanations covered in class
- Degree to which I made myself available to classmates who needed help
- Degree to which I sought help from classmate or professor when I needed help
- Degree to which I participate in the group-based research project.
- The percentage of time I came to class having done the reading
- The amount of time I invested in reading, studying, and reflecting on the material
- The degree to which I engaged my classmates or professors in thoughtful questions and comments (including in office hours)
- Degree to which I consciously and genuinely employed the participation methods above to advance my own and my classmates' learning and intellectual growth.
- Degree to which my motivation for following these suggestions was grounded in my desire to learn and to grow intellectually, rather than a desire to impress someone.

LET'S HAVE A GREAT QUARTER!!