

AAS 3500-003: Race, Culture, and Inequality

Spring 2013

Tuesdays and Thursdays
2:00 p.m.-3:15 p.m.
Wilson Hall 215

Instructor Info:

Professor Sabrina Pendergrass
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:30-4:30 p.m.
Office: 322 Dynamics Building (2015 Ivy Rd.)

Course Description:

Welcome to AAS 3500! In this course, we will examine how culture matters for understanding race and social inequality. The course will survey social science research about cultural forms such as everyday discourse, styles of dress, music, literature, visual arts, and media as they relate to race and inequality. As we examine these studies, we will learn about key thinkers in social science approaches to culture, and we will analyze core concepts such as cultural capital, framing processes, symbolic boundaries, scripts, and racial grammar. The course will draw on disciplines such as sociology, political science, anthropology, and more.

Grading Criteria:

Class Attendance and Participation: 30%

This includes attending each class, being prepared to discuss the readings, and contributing to the discussions.

Weekly Reading Responses: 20%

Please submit a brief written or video response to the readings on weeks where it is assigned on the course outline. The responses should be posted to the discussion forums of Collab by Wednesday at 2 p.m. Written responses should be between 150-250 words. Video responses (using Kaltura) should be 1-2 minutes. You may use the response to share your disagreements or agreements with the authors, to ask questions, to connect ideas across several readings, to link the readings to recent events in the news, or to respond to another student's response. You may focus on one reading or respond to all of the readings.

Research Paper: 20%

Your paper should address a popular or scholarly debate related to the intersections of race, culture, and inequality. The paper should be 12-15 pages, and it should draw on at least 8-10 scholarly sources related to the topic. It will be due on Friday, April 12, 2013. You will receive a more detailed handout to guide you.

Final Exam: 30%

The final exam will include multiple choice and short essay questions. It will examine your comprehension of key definitions, theories, and empirical findings from lectures and course readings. The exam will be held on Friday, May 10, 2013 from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in Wilson 315.

Readings:

All course readings will be available on Collab. They are linked from the online interactive syllabus.

COURSE OUTLINE

Introduction

January 15:

- First day of class!

No response assignment this week.

January 17:

- Smith, Philip. 2001. "What is Culture? What is Cultural Theory?" Pp. 1-6 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Discourse

January 22:

- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2012. "The Invisible Weight of Whiteness: The Racial Grammar of Everyday Life in Contemporary America." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35(2): 173-194.
- Bell, Joyce and Douglas Hartmann. 2007. "Diversity in Everyday Discourse: The Cultural Ambiguities and Consequences of 'Happy Talk'" *American Sociological Review* 72:895-914.

Assignment: Response to "Discourse" reading(s) due Wednesday, January 23 by 2 p.m.

January 24:

- Lewis, Amanda. 2001. "There Is No 'Race' in the Schoolyard: Color-Blind Ideology in an (Almost) All-White School." *American Educational Research Journal* 38(4): 781-811.

Naming**January 29:**

- Lieberman, Stanley and Kelly S. Mikelson. 1995. "Distinctive African American Names: An Experimental, Historical, and Linguistic Analysis of Innovation." *American Sociological Review* 60(6): 928-946.
- Sigelman, Lee, Steven A. Tuch, and Jack K. Martin. 2005. "What's In a Name?: Preference for 'Black' versus 'African-American' among Americans of African Descent." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 69(3): 429-438.

Assignment: Response to "Naming" reading(s) due Wednesday, January 30 by 2 p.m.

January 31:

- Small, Mario. 2008. "Four Reasons to Abandon the Idea of 'The Ghetto'" *City & Community* 7(4): 389-398.
- Mitchelson, Matthew L., Derek Alderman, and E. Jeffrey Popke. 2007. "Branded: The Economic Geographies of Streets Named in Honor of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr." *Social Science Quarterly* 88(1): 120-145.

Collective Memory**February 5:**

- Schwartz, Barry. 2009. "Collective Forgetting and the Symbolic Power of Oneness: The Strange Apotheosis of Rosa Parks." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 72(2): 123-142.
- Stow, Simon. 2010. "Agonistic Homegoing: Frederick Douglass, Joseph Lowery, and the Democratic Public Value of African American Public Mourning." *American Political Science Review* 104(4): 681-697.

Assignment: Response to "Collective Memory" reading(s) due Wednesday, February 6 by 2 p.m.

February 7:

- Harris, Frederick. 2006. "It Takes a Tragedy to Arouse Them: Collective Memory and Collective Action during the Civil Rights Movement." *Social Movement Studies: Journal of Social, Cultural, and Political Protest*. 5(1): 19-43.
- Balfour, Lawrie. 2003. "Unreconstructed Democracy: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Case for Reparations." *American Political Science Review* 97(1): 33-44.

News Media

February 12:

- Hurston, Zora Neale. 1950. "What White Publishers Won't Print." *Negro Digest* 8:85-89.
- Gilens, Martin. 2000. "The News Media and the Racialization of Poverty." Pp. 102-132 in *Why Americans Hate Welfare: Race, Media, and the Politics of Antipoverty Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Assignment: Submit brief note to the Collab discussion forums by Wednesday, February 13 at 2 p.m. about the topic you have selected for your research paper – 150 to 250 words

February 14:

- Saguy, Abigail and Kjerstin Gruys. 2010. "Morality and Health: News Media Constructions of Overweight and Eating Disorders." *Social Problems* 57(2): 231-250.
- Cohen, Cathy J. 1999. "All the Black People Fit to Print." Pp. 149-185 in *The Boundaries of Blackness: AIDS and the Breakdown of Black Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Literature and Criticism

February 19:

- Pescosolido, Bernice, Elizabeth Grauerholz, and Melissa A. Milkie. 1997. "Culture and Conflict: The Portrayal of Blacks in U.S. Children's Picture Books through the Mid- and Late-Twentieth Century." *American Sociological Review* 62(3): 443-464.
- Corse, Sarah M. and Monica D. Griffin. 1997. "Cultural Valorization and African American Literary History: Reconstructing the Canon." *Sociological Forum* 12(2):173-203.

Assignment: Response to "Literature and Criticism" reading(s) due Wednesday, February 20 by 2 p.m.

February 21:

- Chong, Phillipa. 2011. "Reading Difference: How Race and Ethnicity Function as Tools for Critical Appraisal." *Poetics* 39(1): 64-84.
- Johnston, Josee and Shyon Baumann. 2009. "Class and Its Absence" Pp. 173-202 in *Foodies: Democracy and Distinction in the Gourmet Foodscape*. New York: Routledge.

Visual Culture

February 26:

- Du Bois, W.E.B. 1913. "The Negro in Literature and Art." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 49: 233-237.

- Kidd, Dustin and Christina Jackson. 2010. "Art as Propaganda: Bringing Du Bois into the Sociology of Art." *Sociology Compass* 4(8): 555-563.

Assignment: Submit list of 8-10 scholarly sources you plan to use for your research paper to Collab by February 27 at 2 p.m.

February 28:

- Smith, Shawn M. 2004. "Spectacles of Whiteness: The Photography of Lynching." *Photography on the Color Line: W.E.B. Du Bois, Race, and Visual Culture*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Banks, Patricia A. 2011. "Cultural Socialization in Black Middle-Class Families." *Cultural Sociology* 6(1): 61-73.

Film and Television

March 5:

- Hunt, Darnell M. 2004. "Black Content, White Control." Pp. 267-302 in *Channeling Blackness: Studies on Television and Race in America*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hughey, Matthew. 2009. "Cinethetic Racism: White Redemption and Black Stereotypes in 'Magical Negro' Films." *Social Problems* 56(3): 543-577.

Assignment: Response to "Film and Television" reading(s) due Wednesday, March 6 by 2 p.m.

March 7:

- Hill-Collins, Patricia. 2005. "Booty Call: Sex, Violence, and Images of Black Masculinity." Pp. 149-180 in *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism*. New York: Routledge.
- Watkins-Hayes, Celeste, Courtney J. Patterson, and Amanda R. Armour. 2011. "Precious: Black Women, HIV/AIDS Risk, and Institutional Buffers." *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* 8(1): 229-240.

March 12 and 14: Spring Break

Music: General

March 19:

- Bryson, Bethany. 2002. "Symbolic Exclusion and Musical Dislikes." Pp. 108-119 in *Cultural Sociology*, edited by Lyn Spillman. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Grazian, David. 2003. "Blues in Black and White: The Politics of Race and Authenticity." Pp. 33-60 in *Blue Chicago: The Search for Authenticity in Urban Blues Clubs*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Assignment: Submit brief outline of research paper (approx. 1 page) to Collab by Wednesday, March 20 at 2 p.m.

March 21:

- Hancock, Blackhawk. 2005. "Steppin' Out of Whiteness." *Ethnography* 6(4): 427-461.
- Schnable, Alison. 2012. "Singing the Gospel: Using Musical Practices to Build Religious and Racial Communities." *Poetics* 40(3): 278-298.

Music: Hip-Hop**March 26:**

- Lee, Jooyoung. 2009. "Battlin' on the Corner: Techniques for Sustaining Play." *Social Problems* 56(3): 578-598.
- Lena, Jennifer. 2004. "Meaning and Membership: Samples in Rap Music, 1979-1995." *Poetics* 32(3-4): 297-310.

Assignment: Response to "Music: Hip-Hop" reading(s) due Wednesday, March 27 by 2 p.m.

March 28:

- Binder, Amy. 1993. "Constructing Racial Rhetoric: Media Depictions of Harm in Heavy Metal and Rap Music." *American Sociological Review* 58(6): 753-767.
- Hunter, Margaret L. 2011. "Shake It, Baby, Shake It: Consumption and the New Gender Relation in Hip-Hop." *Sociological Perspectives* 54(1): 15-36.

Black Consumption: General

Assignment: Submit first two pages of research paper on Collab by Monday, April 1 at 2 p.m.

April 2:

- Lamont, Michèle and Virág Molnar. 2001. "How Blacks Use Consumption to Shape Their Collective Identity: Evidence from Marketing Specialists" *Journal of Consumer Culture* 1(1): 31-45.
- Pattillo-McCoy, Mary. 1999. "Nike's Reign." Pp. 146-167 in *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril among the Black Middle-Class*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

April 4:

- Chin, Elizabeth. 2000. "Hemmed In and Shut Out." Pp. 91-116 in *Purchasing Power: Black Kids and American Consumer Culture*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Styles of Dress and Self-Presentation

April 9:

- Rooks, Noliwe. 2004. "Colored Faces Looking Out of the Fashion Plates. Well!": Twentieth-Century Fashion, Migration, and Urbanization." Pp. 65-88 in *Ladies' Pages: African Americans' Women's Magazines and the Culture that Made Them*. Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- May, Reuben A.B. and Kenneth S. Chaplin. 2008. "Cracking the Code: Race, Class, and Access to Nightclubs in Urban America." *Qualitative Sociology* 31(1): 57-72.

No reading response this week.

April 11:

- Morris, Edward W. 2005. "Tuck in That Shirt!: Race, Class, Gender, and Discipline in an Urban School." *Sociological Perspectives* 48(1): 25-48.
- Moore, Mignon. 2006. "Lipstick or Timberlands?: Meanings of Gender Presentation in Black Lesbian Communities." *Signs* 32(1): 113-139.

April 12: Research paper due by 5pm.

College Admissions and Hiring

April 16:

- Stevens, Mitchell. 2007. "Race." Pp. 140-183 in *Creating a Class: College Admissions and the Education of Elites*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Assignment: Response to "Culture and Social Mobility" reading(s) due Wednesday, April 17 by 2 p.m.

April 18:

- Kirschenman, Joleen and Kathryn M. Neckerman. 1991. "We'd Love to Hire Them But...': The Meaning of Race for Employers." Pp. 203-232 in *The Urban Underclass* edited by Christopher Jencks and Paul E. Peterson. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution
- Rivera, Lauren. 2012. "Hiring as Cultural Matching: The Case of Elite Professional Service Firms." *American Sociological Review* 77(6): 999-1022.

Politics

April 23:

- Tate, Katherine. 2002. "Symbols and Substance." Pp. 96-110 in *Black Faces in the Mirror: African Americans and Their Representatives in the U.S. Congress*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Alexander, Jeffrey. 2010. "Barack Obama Meets Celebrity Metaphor." *Society* 47(5): 410-418.

Assignment: Response to "Cultural Politics" reading(s) due Wednesday, April 24 by 2 p.m.

April 25:

- Pattillo-McCoy, Mary. 1998. "Church Culture as a Strategy of Action in the Black Community." *American Sociological Review* 63(6): 767-784.
- Hirsch, Nicole A. and Anthony A. Jack. 2012. "What We Face: Framing Problems in the Black Community." *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* 9(1): 133-148.

April 30:

- Review and Wrap-up

May 10: Final Exam 9:00 a.m.-12:00p.m. in Wilson 315