Class Meeting
Tuesday, Thursday 2:00 – 3:20pm
Room:

Professor Patricia Alvarez Astacio
Office:
Office Hours: 10:00 am – 12:00pm

Course Description

From the emergence of Black Lives Matter, to the Dakota Access Pipeline protests, and a resurgence of white nationalism; in recent years, categories of race and ethnicity have become heated sites of contestation and public debate. Discussions about race and ethnicity permeate much of our current media and political climate. These forms of identity are also extremely personal. Racial and ethnic identities show us, to cite the popular feminist adage, how the personal is political.

In this course, we will examine theories and ethnographies of race and ethnicity to understand why and how these forms of identity are such important aspects of our everyday lives. Throughout the semester we will explore the diverse social, political, cultural and historic dynamics that shape racial and ethnic identities in the US and around the world. Anthropology has played a key role in producing ideas about race, ethnicity and human diversity. We will start the course by looking at how anthropology’s history shaped understandings of race and ethnicity. In the first half of the class we will cover key concepts in the study of race and ethnicity, starting with Boasian approaches to race and unpacking diverse interventions made by scholars and anthropologists of color. This background will allow us to understand how racial thinking was a tool of colonialism and key to the development of nation-states. Readings will
highlight intersectionality, postcolonial theory, critical race theory, and indigenous scholarship. We will also discuss the importance of understanding racism, not just race. In the second half of the course, we will explore how ideologies and categories of race and racism operate in a global, capitalist world. Themes that will be discussed include the relationship between multicultural identities and capitalism, the re-emergence of the biologization of race in light of developments in genomics, and the need to imagine new racial futures. During the semester we will think through our own identities, experiences, and beliefs in a safe environment. Students will learn how to approach the subject of race and ethnicity from a critical perspective.

Required Texts:

- Franz Fanon, Black Skin, White Masks
- Kim TallBear, Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science
- Mark Anderson, Black and Indigenous: Garifuna Activism and Consumer Culture in Honduras
- Octavia Butler, Fledgeling
- All other required readings are available online through LATTE

Films will be screened during class time. Students must come prepared to discuss the film in relation to the assigned readings for that day.

Course Requirements

Attendance

Regular, punctual attendance is non-negotiable. Attendance will be taken each class through a sign-in sheet. It is your responsibility to sign in. If you forget to sign in you will be marked as absent. Signing the name of a student who is not present will be considered a violation of the academic integrity. Both students will be marked absent.

You are allowed 2 unexcused absences. Three unexcused absences will result in a 1/3 grade markdown on the final course grade. More than 6 unexcused absences will result in a failing grade. Arriving to class more than 15 minutes late counts as 1/2 absence. Excused absences should be cleared with me before class, with the exception of extenuating last-minute emergencies. Reasons like “I have to study for another class,” or simply saying “I'm not feeling well” will not be considered as excused absences.

Participation

Class participation is essential. Discussion is a central part of this class, the learning process, and your final grade. You are expected to attend class having done the assigned readings for that day. Be prepared to participate in class discussion with questions and comments. Bring your readings to class as well as notes you took as you read, questions you have, and material you would like to discuss.
This classroom is a safe space. We will closely hear each other’s thoughts, feelings, opinions and responses to class material. As discussion unfolds, we will respond to each other in a respectful and thoughtful manner avoiding insults, disrespectful comments or devaluations of anyone’s thoughts or experiences. It is important that we can have an honest, respectful and critical conversation. An important learning objective is to develop the ability to grapple with sensitive subjects, differing perspectives in order to foster mutual understanding.

**Assignments**

Late assignments will NOT be accepted. All due dates are stated in the course schedule. Assignments must be handed in hard-copy; emailed electronic versions will not be accepted. The only assignment that must be emailed are the discussion questions.

In order to get full credit, students must fulfill the stated specified instructions for each prompt. For example, if an essay is 3 pages long, you must write 3 full pages, not 2 pages and a half. Proofread all written assignments before handing them in. All written assignments must be double-spaced using font size 12, margins at 1,” include proper citations, and works cited page.

**Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism is a serious offence and will NOT be tolerated. The work you turn in for this class has to be your own and come from your own critical engagement with class material. If you use, incorporate or discuss ideas in your work found elsewhere, you must cite and provide the source following a citation style.

You are expected to be familiar and to follow the University’s policies on academic integrity (see [http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/sdc/ai](http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/sdc/ai)). Faculty will refer any suspected instances of alleged dishonesty to the Office of Student Development and Conduct. Instances of academic dishonesty may result in sanctions including but not limited to failure in the course, failure on the assignment in question, suspension from the University and/or educational programs.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

**Class Communications**

All communications will occur through a class mailing list using your Brandeis email address. Be sure to regularly check your Brandeis account during the duration of the semester.

**Evaluation**
- Attendance and Participation (15%)
- Discussion Questions (15%)
- 3 Critical Essays (15% each a total of 45%)
- Race/Ethnicity Interviews (25%)

**Assignments for graduate students will be discussed with the professor at the beginning of the semester.**

**Assignments**

**Discussion Questions:** You will hand in a well-written, critical and thoughtful discussion question before class. These must be handed in before class by 8 am on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Discussion questions must refer to the readings assigned for that day. A good discussion question is one that requires analysis, synthesis, interpretation, and critical thinking in order to answer it. Questions based on a particular passage should encourage and challenge us to articulate and uncover meaning in the text. I will provide more guidelines for this assignment. These questions will be used to foster class discussion.

**Critical Essays:** Each essay will be 3 – 4 pages in length. I will provide a prompt for each essay. The due dates for each essay are listed in the course schedule. You must cite at least 3 of the assigned course readings and include a references page.

**Race/Ethnicity Interviews:** You will conduct three different, ethnographic interviews with people about their understanding and experiences of race. You will take notes and record the interview. Using the data from your interviews, write a 5-7 page essay commenting on what you learned from the interviews and how it relates to the material covered in class. You should cite at least 5 class sources including one from Week 15. I will provide a more detailed prompt later in the semester.

**Course Schedule**

**Week 1**

**Introduction**
August 31, Thursday

Introductions, discuss syllabus and assignments

**Week 2**

**History of Anthropological Approaches to Race and Ethnicity**

*September 5, Tuesday*

  - Chapter I: History and Theory of a Racialized Worldview
  - Chapter 5: Rethinking Race at the turn of the Century: W.E.B Du Bois and Franz Boaso

September 7, Thursday

  - Chapter 5: The Concept of Race

- Boas, Franz. 1940. *Race Language and Culture*
  - Race and Progress (1931)
  - Race and Character (1932)

Film: Bathing Babies in Three Cultures, Margaret Mead

Week 3

September 12, Tuesday


Race, Colonialism and the Technologies of Power

September 14, Thursday

  - Chapter 2: Blacks and Indigenous in Latin Americas
  - Chapter 3: Early Approaches to Blacks and Indigenous People, 1920s to 1960s

Week 4

September 19, Tuesday

-Deborah Poole, An Image of “Our Indian”: Type Photographs and Racial Sentiments in Oaxaca 1920-1940, Hispanic American Historical Review, 84(1), February 2004

**September 21 No Class**

**Week 5**

**Ethnic Interventions**

**September 26, Tuesday**

-Audre Lorde, *The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House*

Film: *Daughter’s of the Dust*, Julie Dash, 88min

**September 28, Thursday**

-Gloria Anzaldúa, La Conciencia de la Mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness in *Borderlands: La Frontera: The New Mestiza*

-Margaret Anderson and Patricia Hill Collins, *Why Race, Class, and Gender Still Matter*

-Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color*

**Week 6**

**On Whiteness**

*October 3, Tuesday*

***Critical Essay #1 is due***

-Peggy McIntosh, *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*


Interactive Documentary: The Whiteness Project

*October 5 No Class*

**Week 7**
**Ethnicity, Nation, Identity**

*October 10, Tuesday*

-Jean Comaroff, The Empire’s Old Clothes: Fashioning the Colonial Subject in *Cross Cultural Consumption: Global Markets, Local Realities*

-Emma Tarlo, Searching for a Solution in the late Nineteenth Century in *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India*

*October 11 Brandeis Thursday*


-Nickolas Mirzoeff, All the Monuments Must Fall #Charlottesville, http://www.nicholasmirzoeff.com/bio/all-the-monuments-must-fall-charlottesville/


Recommended:


**Week 8**

**Theorizing Race and Ethnicity**

*October 17, Tuesday*

-Marisol de la Cadena, Women are more Indian: Ethnicity and Gender in a Community Near Cuzco in *Ethnicity, Markets and Migration in the Andes: At the Crossroads of History and Anthropology*

-Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, Ch’ixinakax utxiwa: A Reflection on the Practices and Discourses of Decolonization, *South Atlantic Quarterly* 111(1)

*October 19, Thursday*

-Stuart Hall, *Old and new Identities, Old and New Ethnicities*
-Paul Gilroy, The Black Atlantic as a Counterculture of Modernity in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*

Film: *Ethnic Notions*, Marlon Riggs, 56min, 2014

**Week 9**

*October 24, Tuesday*

- Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*
  Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2

*October 26, Thursday*

- Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*
  Chapters 3, 4 and 5

**Week 10**

*October 31, Tuesday*

- Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*
  Chapters 6, 7 and 8

**Race and Ethnicity in Capitalism**

*November 2, Thursday*

***Critical Essay #2 Due***


- Mark Anderson, Introduction, *Black and Indigenous: Garifuna Activism and Consumer Culture in Honduras*

**Week 11**

*November 7, Tuesday*

- Mark Anderson, *Black and Indigenous: Garifuna Activism and Consumer Culture in Honduras*
  Chapters 1 and 3

*November 9, Thursday*
- Mark Anderson, *Black and Indigenous: Garifuna Activism and Consumer Culture in Honduras*  
  Chapters 4 and 5

**Week 12**

**Race and Science Today**

*November 14, Tuesday*


- Stephan Palmié, *Genomics, Divination, Racecraft*, *American Ethnologist*

- Matthew Wolf-Meyer, *Biomedicine, the whiteness of sleep, and the wages of spatiotemporal normativity in the United States*, *American Ethnologist*

*November 16, Thursday*

- Kim TallBear, *Native American DNA*  
  Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2

**Week 13**

*November 21, Tuesday*

- Kim TallBear, *Native American DNA*  
  Chapters 3, 4, and Conclusion

Day 2: November 23 **No Class**

**Week 14**

**Imagining Racial Futures**

***Critical Essay #3 Due***

Day 1: November 28, Tuesday

- Amade M’charek, *Beyond Fact or Fiction: On the Materiality of Race in Practice*, *Cultural Anthropology* 28(3)

- Mark Bould, *The Ships Landed Long Ago: Afrofuturism and Black SF*, *Science Fiction Studies* 34(2)
Day 2: November 30, Thursday – **AAA No Class**

- Start reading: Octavia Butler, *Fledgeling*

**Week 15**

Day 1: December 5, Tuesday

- Octavia Butler, *Fledgeling*

Day 2: December 7, **Last Day of Class**

- Susana M. Morris, Black Girls are from the future: Afroturist Feminism in Octavia E. Butler’s Fledgeling, *Women’s Studies Quarterly 40*(3/4) Enchantment

- Chuck Robinson, Minority and Becoming-Minor in Octavia Butler’s Fledgeling, *Science Fiction Studies 42*(3)

**Final Race/Ethnicity Interviews will be handed in the day of finals**