

HISTORY 105: RACE AND RACISM



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Fall 2011-T/R 2-3:15 | Buckman 225

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COURSE OBJECTIVES: This class will help you to understand how “race” came to function as an *axial concept*. It structured how Europeans came to see themselves and to represent *others*. This congealed into a worldview by the end of the nineteenth-century with fateful consequences in the twentieth century. This seminar will also examine how “race” and racism have been contested and re-articulated in a number of anti-colonial and civil rights struggles that pose continuing questions for us today. The course is also designed to introduce students to the varieties of academic approaches to the topic of racism within the academy. Finally, as a writing intensive class we will focus on strengthening our expository prose. Consequently, students will read and critically evaluate both primary and secondary sources, and write a set of reflective essays, as well as longer evaluative essays.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: When President Obama was elected it ignited a debate about whether America has finally become “post-racial.” How is this assertion belied by an entrenched underclass of blacks and immigrants and by the dramatic rise in anti-Semitic incidents and Islamophobia globally? After considering the debates about race at present, we will trace the long history of this discussion. We start with anti-Semitism, termed the “longest hatred,” then move on to the role of the discovery of the New World and the development of the Atlantic slave system, and its impact on the Enlightenment. From there, we consider how central race was to European and American dominance by the end of the nineteenth-century. The last portion of the class will focus on the last century, considering the centrality of racism to the Holocaust, the Civil Rights movement, and the anti-apartheid struggle. We will conclude by addressing the overlaps and disconnects between anti-black, anti-Jewish, and anti-Islamic racism today.

Books to Purchase:

George M. Fredrickson, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002). ISBN: 0-691-11652-0.

Eds. Robert Bernasconi and Tommy L. Lott, *The Idea of Race* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2000). ISBN: 0-87220-458-8.

Ed. Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader* (Malden and Oxford: Blackwell, 1997). ISBN: 0-631-20137-8.

George L. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985). ISBN: 0-299-10184-3.

Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000). ISBN: 1-58367-025-4.

Additional Readings are in Faculty Folder on the Acad_Dept_Pgm Volume on the campus server.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

Grade Breakdown:

- Reflective writing: 25%
- Paper #1: 20%
- Paper #2: 25%
- Paper #3: 20%
- Participation: 10%

Course Schedule

R	8/25	Introduction
T	8/30	Fredrickson, <i>Racism</i> , “Appendix,” and Selections from <i>Patterns of Prejudice</i> issue on Obama and Race by Emily Bernard and Richard King
R	9/1	Matti Bunzl, “Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia” <u>Reflective Writing #1</u> : What does Bunzl argue and what do you think of his argument? (3 pages)

Religion and the Origins of Racism

T	9/6	Fredrickson, <i>Racism</i> , Introduction and Chapter 1
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- R 9/8 Stephen Haynes, <http://jsr.fsu.edu/honor.htm> and *Reluctant Witnesses: Jews in the Christian Imagination* (selection)
Guest Professor: Stephen Haynes
- T 9/13 Primary Sources on Christian Anti-Semitism
- R 9/15 Paper #1: Is Christian anti-Judaism racist? (5 pages)*
*This paper can be re-written and re-submitted after revision

No Class

Interlude: Anthony Appiah on Race

- T 9/20 Reading: Appiah, "Race"
Guest Professor: Scott Newstok
- W 9/21 Mandatory Pubic Lecture: Anthony Appiah, *The Honor Code*,
Hardie Auditorium, 7:30 pm
- R 9/22 Appiah, "Racisms" | Bernasconi and Lott, 13-14 | Appiah, *The Honor Code* (selection) | Judaken interview with Appiah:
<http://tinyurl.com/AnthonyAppiah>

Reflective Writing #2: What is Anthony Appiah's argument in *The Honor Code* and what are its shortcomings? (3 pages)

Race and the Enlightenment

- T 9/27 Race and the Atlantic Slave System
Guest Professor: Dennis Laumann
- R 9/29 Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, Prologue, Introduction, Ch. 1, 2
Frederickson, *Racism*, Chapter 2
No Class
- T 10/4 The Classification of Races: Bernasconi and Lott, *The Idea of Race*, Introduction, Source Chapters 1, 2, 5 | Eze, *Race and the Enlightenment*, Introduction, Source Chapters 1-2
- R 10/6 Race in Enlightenment Discourse: Eze, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9
- T 10/11 The Kant-Herder Debate and Hegel: Bernasconi and Lott, *The Idea Of Race*, 3-4, 6 | Eze, 4-5, 10
- R 10/13 Paper #2: Discuss how you understand the relationship between the Enlightenment and Racism/Antisemitism. When making your argument, make sure you draw upon at least 5 of the primary sources we read (7 pages)
- T 10/18 Fall Break

Racism in the Nineteenth Century

R 10/20 Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 3-7

T 10/25 Bernasconi and Lott, 7-9

Reflective Writing #3: What were the key factors that crystallized forging racism into a worldview in the nineteenth century? (3 pages)

No Class

Racial States in the Twentieth Century

R 10/27 *Toward the Final Solution*: Mosse, 8-11

T 11/1 Racial Regimes: Fredrickson, 3 | Mosse, 12-14

Debunking Racism

R 11/3 The myth of race: Bernasconi and Lott, 10-12

T 11/8 Negritude: Bernasconi and Lott, 15 | Sartre, “Black Orpheus”
Guest Professor: Andrew Daily

R 11/10 No Class

T 11/15 Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, 7-78

Reflective Writing #4: What does Césaire argue in *Discourse on Colonialism*? What do you think about how he depicts the relationship between colonialism and the Holocaust? (3 pages)

R 11/17 Frantz Fanon, “The Fact of Blackness” | Rychetta Watkins,
Black Power, Yellow Power and the Making of Revolutionary Identities (selection)
Guest Professor: Rychetta Watkins

T 11/22 Race and the anti-apartheid struggle

R 11/24 Thanksgiving

T 11/29 Apartheid After Race: J.M. Coetzee, “The Humanities in Africa”

R 12/1 Film Discussion: *Disgrace*

T 12/6 Paper #3: Compare and Contrast the film *Disgrace* and the section of *Elizabeth Costello* on “The Humanities in Africa” with respect to its representation of race (5 pages)

Written Assignments:

There are two kinds of writing that we will be doing in this class. The Reflective writing assignments ask you to summarize key points in the argument of a text and to critically assess those points. This form of writing will hone your skills in determining what is essential to understand in a complex document and to evaluate those arguments. These assignments do not ask you to reflect on how you feel about a work we are reading, but rather how the contentions of an author fit into the broader discussion we are having in class that reference wider intellectual debates. These papers will be evaluated based on their clarity and acuity, style and organization. Your three evaluative papers ask you to enter into the intellectual debates we are considering and to take your own position on these disputed areas of our discussion. In these papers, you will be writing evaluative essays that ask you to interpret and draw upon primary sources to make an argument. These papers will be evaluated on the basis of the strength of the thesis/argumentation, organization/structure, evidence, and prose style. There will be further information about writing and how it will be graded in class.

Attendance, Discussion, and Participation

This class will function as a seminar, which means that each student is responsible for doing all the reading and coming to class prepared to engage critically with it. I will also come to every class modeling passionate engagement, critical reflection, and careful reading. But the success of this class will depend on the willingness of each student to join in the ongoing conversation. Listening is not enough; each student is expected to make a contribution to the discussion so that others may benefit from their insight or perspective.

I define “participation” as active engagement with the ideas, readings, and conversations that are an integral part of this course. Class attendance is necessary for class participation, since you cannot participate if you are not present. However, you do not earn a very good participation grade simply by showing up to class. Rather, you must actually contribute by joining in the class discussion, posing questions, sharing ideas, and interpreting the readings with your classmates in a thoughtful and reflective way.

I will record a participation grade for every class session so that this grade accurately reflects what actually happens in each class. Note: the best form of participation is not necessarily the person who speaks the most or with the greatest enthusiasm, but rather the student whose contributions or questions contribute the most to the general class engagement with the material—those who foster fodder for our communal conversation will see this reflected in their participation grades.

Please note that the classroom is a public space and that I will call on students and solicit responses. Your engagement with the material can also be reflected in individual conversations in office hours or via email (when that is a suitable medium for exchange), or through non-oral means (for example, by bringing in article from a publication relevant to the class material). All these forms of communication will count towards your participation grade.

Policies and Procedures

General

1. I expect you to come to each class prepared to listen, ask questions, discuss readings, and take notes. You should bring all necessary materials to class including all reading assignments for the day, your reading notes, notes from previous classes, and materials that I may ask you to prepare for a particular class session.
2. I recommend bringing questions that you have about reading assignments or about the previous class meeting if what we discussed is not entirely clear to you. I also recommend bringing a list of comments that you wish to make during class discussion so that you will be ready to contribute. If you are someone who has difficulty speaking in class for whatever reason, please speak to me about alternative ways of participating in addition to class participation.
3. You should come to every class session. Since all of our lives are complicated, however, you are allowed to miss the equivalent of one week's worth of class time (i.e. two class periods) without it having a negative effect on your grade. I would still like to be notified by phone or email about the reasons for your absence. Please note that this policy regarding absences includes what are sometimes deemed "excused" absences. All additional absences beyond the two permitted will adversely affect your grade for the course since you cannot participate in our community of scholars if you are not present.

If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to speak first to your fellow classmates and then to me to find out what you have missed. Make sure you have at least one class "buddy" who can fill you on anything we have covered in class. I cannot reiterate for you what we have discussed in a class session, especially since much of the time the content will be provided by your classmates and outside professors. But I can help to clarify what your classmates have explained. I frequently distribute handouts or make additional assignments in class, so you need to check with me to find out if I have done so for the day of your absence. You are still responsible for all material covered in each class period regardless of whether you attended it.

I will assign a participation grade after every class meeting to record your contribution.

Arriving late to class is a distraction to your fellow students and for our guest professors or me. This form of distraction reflects negatively on your participation. Still, I would rather have you come to class late rather than miss it, so when necessary please enter quietly and quickly.

4. You are each bound by the Honor Code as elaborated in the Student Handbook. No violation will be tolerated. Please review the Student Handbook if you are unclear about the details of the Honor Code, particularly the definitions in Article I, Section 3. If you are unfamiliar with the definition of "plagiarism," you can find it there. On every assignment, you should reaffirm the Honor Code by writing the entire honor pledge and signing your name. No work will be accepted without an Honor Code pledge. Studying together and engaging in peer evaluations of one another's papers is always a good idea, but make sure that your work is your own. Note that collaboration on an assignment that results in remarkably similar results, whether intentional or accidental, is a violation of the honor code.

5. I might make changes to the syllabus as the semester progresses, but I will always make changes known to you as soon as possible, and I will make reasonable accommodations for assignment due dates should the schedule changes warrant it. I also reserve the right to give

unannounced writing assignments in class or to make short assignments for the next class period with no advance notice.

6. All assignments must be turned in to be eligible for a passing grade in this course. No student will be allowed to pass without having turned in every assignment.

Essays

7. All writing is due at the beginning of class as indicated on the syllabus. When a writing assignment is given and no class is held that day, the assignment is due by 2:00 p.m. on the date due. I will accept papers only from students who are present in class on the date on which the paper is due; I will not accept papers submitted by proxy. Late papers will not be accepted except in extreme circumstances.

You are responsible for keeping a backup copy of each writing assignment for the course. In the unlikely event that I misplace your essay, I will ask you for another copy as soon as I realize that I need it. If you cannot provide a copy of any assignment to me upon request, you will forfeit your entire grade for that assignment.

Courtesy

8. Turn off all cell phones during class time unless I have approved their continued activation in advance. If you leave the classroom to answer a cell phone call, do not return. You are welcome to use laptops or tablets to take your notes, but please do not check email, Facebook, or any websites not relevant to the course material and discussion while in class.

9. Learning happens when done in an environment in which everyone feels free to express him or herself openly. Please be considerate and respectful of the opinions of others, especially as we are discussing a difficult and fraught subject. I encourage you to disagree with your fellow students and professors' ideas, but never to disparage in any form other members of our learning community.

Disabilities

10. I am happy to make reasonable accommodations to people with documented disabilities. Please consult the appropriate College administrators before coming to see me. Once you have done so, please discuss your particular needs with me as soon as possible. Please note, however, that all students are evaluated according to the same criteria and set of expectations.