

AFAM 460: Race, Politics, Society, and Culture
Winter 2011
Wednesdays 2-5pm, Kresge 2-425

Professor: Mary Pattillo

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Course Description:

What is the purpose of the category of “race” – and in particular, the category of “blackness”? What are its effects? How have the category and its effects changed over space and time? What are its prospects into the future? How have black populations questioned, practiced, analyzed, and struggled with and against these categories and their effects. These are the questions that guide this course. Drawing upon relevant texts in the fields of political science, history, anthropology, and sociology, among others, we will focus on the topics of race and blackness, politics, culture, class, social movements and protest, gender, and inequality,. The course moves from the creation of race and blackness as categories, through practices of self-definition and struggle, to contemporary inequalities. We will also discuss challenges to the idea that race and blackness are still useful concepts. Each class session will involve a brief introductory lecture, and then discussion lead by assigned leaders.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Seminar Participation - 10%

All participants are expected to do the readings in advance. All are expected to participate in class discussions and make informed contributions.

Seminar Leader - 20%

Each seminar participant will co-lead one course during the quarter (with the professor and another student). During that week, the co-leaders are responsible for crafting discussion questions to use in class, and facilitating class discussion.

Midterm Paper - 20% - Due in Class Feb 16

Submit a 5-page paper that takes DuBois’s “Of Our Spiritual Strivings” as a departure point to engage any other course reading(s). There are many themes in DuBois’s essay, both explicit (e.g., two-ness) and implicit (e.g., racial essentialism). Write a paper that puts DuBois into critical dialogue with any other author(s). The purpose of this paper is to both provide practice with key concepts in AFAM, and also to give you early feedback on your analysis and writing.

Final paper 50% - Due Monday, March 14 by midnight

A 20- page paper on a topic of your choosing related to the themes and concepts discussed in the seminar.

Course Readings:

The books below are ones from which we will read substantial portions and thus are recommended for purchase. I have ordered them at the Norris Bookstore, but of course on-line sources may be cheaper. Other course readings will be available on Blackboard.

Cathy Cohen, *The Boundaries of Blackness*

Eddie Glaude, *Exodus*

Winthrop Jordan, *The White Man's Burden*

Aldon Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*

Melissa Nobles, *Shades of Citizenship* *Available electronically from NU Library!

Dorothy Roberts, *Killing the Black Body* *Available electronically from NU Library!

Penny Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957*

William Julius Wilson, *The Declining Significance of Race*

Course Schedule:

Part I: The Emergence of Race and Blackness

January 5: Race and Economics

- Jordan, *The White Man's Burden*, Part I and Chpt 8
- Oliver Cromwell Cox, *Caste, Class, and Race*, Preface, Intro, Prologue, and "Race Relations," on Blackboard

January 12: Race, Science, and Culture

- Frazier, "The Negro Family in America" on Blackboard
- Melville Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past*, Chapter 6, on Blackboard
- Jordan, Chpts 6, 12, 13
- Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, Intro, Chapters 5, on Blackboard
- Lee Baker, *From Savage to Negro*, Chapter 5, on Blackboard
- WEB DuBois, "Of Our Spiritual Strivings" from *Souls of Black Folk*, on-line at <http://www.bartleby.com/114/index.html>

January 19: Race, Politics and the State

- Nobles, *Shades of Citizenship*, Chapters 1-3
- David Theo Goldberg, *The Racial State*, Intro, Chpt 5, on Blackboard
- Jordan, Chpts 3, 14

Part II: Theory and Action

Jan 26: Against Slavery and Colonialism

- Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*, Chapters 1-4
- Glaude, *Exodus*, Chapters 1-3, 6, 8

Feb 2: Against U.S. Terror and Jim Crow

- Aldon Morris, *Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, Chapters 1-4, 9, 11
- Ida B Wells, “Lynching: Our American Crime,” on Blackboard, and (if you want) “The Red Record” at <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/14977/14977-h/14977-h.htm>; and “Southern Horrors” at <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/14975/14975-h/14975-h.htm>
- Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent*, Chapters 3 and 7, e-book through NU Library
- Robin DG Kelley, “We Are Not What We Seem”: Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South.” *JAH* 80: 75-112, on Blackboard.

Feb 9: Contemporary Politics

- Cohen, *The Boundaries of Blackness*, Chapters 1-3, 6-9
- Phillip Thompson, *Double Trouble*, Chapter 1, on Blackboard
- Harris-Lacewell, *Barbershops, Bibles, and BET*, Chapter 4, on Blackboard

Part III: Inequality, Intersectionality, and Post-Blackness

Feb 16: Class

- DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, Chapters 1, 2, 9, full-text on-line at <http://www.archive.org/details/philadelphianegr001901mbp> or <http://media.pfeiffer.edu/lridener/DSS/DuBois/pntoc.html>
- Wilson, *The Declining Significance of Race*, Chapters 1, 5-8
- Arthur H. Goldsmith, Darrick Hamilton, and W.A. Darity Jr. "From Dark to Light: Skin Color and Wages among African Americans." *Journal of Human Resources*, 2007, on Blackboard
- Mary Pattillo, “Negotiating Blackness: For Richer or For Poorer,” *Ethnography* 4: 61–93.

Feb 23: Gender and Family

- Roberts, *Killing the Black Body*, Intro, Chapters 1-2, 4-5, 7
- Patricia Hill-Collins. 2001. “What’s in a Name? Womanism, Black Feminism, and Beyond” *The Black Scholar* 26: 9-17, on Blackboard.
- Leith Mullings, 2005, “Resistance and Resilience: The Sojourner Syndrome and the Social Context of Reproduction in Central Harlem” *Transforming Anthropology*, on Blackboard
- Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “The Negro Family: The Case for National Action,” on line at <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/history/webid-meynihan.htm>

March 2: Education

- Signithia Fordham and John Ogbu, 1986, “Black students' school success: coping with the ‘burden of acting White’,” *The Urban Review*, on Blackboard
- Karolyn Tyson, et al, “It’s Not ‘a Black Thing’,” *American Sociological Review*, 2005, on Blackboard
- Prudence Carter, “Straddling Boundaries: Identity, Culture, and School,” *Sociology of Education* 2006, on Blackboard
- Roland Fryer, “Acting White,” *Education Next*, 2006, on Blackboard
- Garvey Lundy, “School Resistance in American High Schools,” *Evaluation and Research in Education*, 2003, on Blackboard.
- Claude Steele and Joshua Aronson, “Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African Americans,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* v. 69 (November 1995), on Blackboard

March 9: Color-Blindness, Hybridity, and the Future of Blackness

- Michael Hanchard, *Party/Politics*, Chapter 7, on Blackboard
- Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, “Are Blacks Color-Blind Too?” from *Racism without Racists*, and “The Linguistics of Color Blind Racism,” *Critical Sociology*, 2002, on Blackboard
- Paul Gilroy, “Race Ends Here,” on Blackboard
- Nobles, Chapters 4-5

March 14: FINAL PAPER DUE IN MY BOX IN SOCIOLOGY (by 5pm) OR BY EMAIL (by midnight)

HAPPY SPRING BREAK