

PY91501  
Critical Perspectives: Race, Gender, and Class

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Office Hours: Tuesday 5:00-6:00  
Wednesday 4:00-5:00

Spring, 2009  
Carney 304  
Tuesday 2:00-4:20 pm

**Description:** The focus of this course is the examination of racial and gender dynamics from a psychological and social justice perspective. Although class is an implicit focus of our seminar as well, as you will see, many theorists will argue that class is confounded with race and gender, which both are psychosocial constructions. We will accomplish our examination via a variety of types of media including film, autobiographies, fiction, and psychological and sociological theories. Our emphasis will be on how to use psychological theory to understand ourselves and to improve the gender and racial dynamics in U.S. society. Often this type of exploration is uncomfortable because we are symbolic of the larger society. **If you are never uncomfortable during this semester, then it means that I have failed in my efforts to make race and gender meaningful constructs to you. If you are uncomfortable and use that as an excuse to psychologically withdraw from the experiences of the class, then you have failed to use this potential growth opportunity.**

Some specific goals are to:

1. Engage in courageous conversations about race, gender, and class
2. Learn some race, gender, and class specific psychological theories
3. Examine the power dynamics of race and gender (and class) in society
4. View the world through someone else's eyes
5. Use this opportunity to self examine

**Required Readings:** We do a lot of reading in a short amount of time. So, if reading is not your forte, this will be a rough semester for you. The following required text is or will be in the bookstore:

Singleton, G. E., & Linton, C. (2006). *Courageous Conversations about Race*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Some other readings will be available to you through Blackboard vista. In addition, I have chosen some autobiographical books each semester that reflect the racial (but not necessarily the ethnic) experience of the racial groups present in class. I think this helps make the readings relevant. Although I have requested that a copy of all of the books be placed on reserve, because the class is so large, you may prefer to order these books online. It is possible that I (or you) will discover something during the semester that might be useful for us to read, but I'll try not to do that. If I do, then I will place it on Blackboard. **See the attached Reading List to determine which books you should order yourself, if you do not already have them.**

**Course Requirements:** There are four components of this course that determine your grade. Each accounts for about 25% of your grade. They are (a) class participation, (b) your reflection journal, (c) a team presentation, and (d) a final exam.

**Class Participation.** We are a seminar. So it's necessary for you to do the readings before class or we won't have anything to talk about. Such a circumstance would bore me a lot and I don't like to be bored. So, each class period, everyone should bring a written theme or question taken either directly from the readings or stimulated by the readings for us to discuss. I will not grade you directly on the quality of your question, but if you are on a grade borderline, I will use your class participation to help me decide on which side of the border you belong.

**Reflection Journal.** Each week you are expected to discuss with yourself your reactions to things that happened in the class. What you say in the journal will not affect your grade (e.g., you are allowed to disagree with me, your classmates, or who ever), which starts as an "A". However, not taking the assignment seriously (e.g., not having a weekly entry) is likely to lower your grade. Your entry will be turned in to me each week and I will return it to you with commentary. At the end of the semester, review your journal and give me a critical analysis of what you have learned about yourself this semester.

**Team Presentation.** You and your team member(s) will present something of your choice to the class. The only requirement for this presentation is that it teaches the class something about race and culture as your team sees them. This presentation may be an experiential activity (with an evaluation component), a research proposal, or other creative activities of your choice. You'll have an hour for your presentation and all team members receive the same grade for the project.

**Final Exam.** This will be a take home exam in which you Singleton and Linton's model of courageous conversation and some psychological theory that we have read this semester to design an intervention to alter racism/sexism/classism in some environment that is a part of your life. It should be written and demonstrate that you have learned something that pertains to how you conceptualize race and/or the intersections between race and the other psychosocial constructs that we have discussed this semester.

## Tentative Schedule

Week of	Topic	Assignment
<u>Philosophy, History, and Life Experiences of Race</u>		
1/20/09	Presidential Inauguration	Class Activities
1/27/09	Organization, Ground Rules for Courageous Conversation	Singleton: Part 1
2/ 3/09	The Dynamics of Race as the Focus of Oppression	Daniels, Gaertner & Dovidio
2/10/09	The Social Construction of Race	Jones, Ch. 2; Loo, Ch 2; "Eyes on the Prize"
2/17/09	Psychosocial Racial Theory	Helms; Singleton, Part 2; Bonilla-Silva
2/24/09	Applying Theory to Experience	Malcolm X; Lewis
2/25/03	Applying Theory to Experience	Richard Rodriguez; Lopez
3/ 3/03	Spring Vacation	
<u>Focus on Gender</u>		
3/10/09	Joy Luck Club: The Movie	Chin, Takaki
3/17/09	Social Construction of Gender	Lips, Ch1-3; Franklin
3/24/09	Gender Theory	Hare-Mustin; Thompson

3/31/09	Gender Experience	Belle & Nkono Singleton: Part 3
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**Social Class**

4/ 7/09	Social Class as Social Construct	Pimpare, TBA
4/14/09	Social Class as Psychosocial Construct	Liu et al. (both)
4/21/09	Class Presentations	
5/ 5/09	Class Presentations	
5/12/09	Class Presentations	

## Readings

\*Belle, E. L. K., & Nkomo, S. M. (2001). *Our separate ways: Black and White women and the struggle for professional identity*. Boston: Harvard Business School.

Bonilla-Silva, E. Lewis, A., & Embrick, D. G. (2004). "I did not get the job because I'm a Black man..." *Sociological Forum*, 19(4), 555-581.

Chin, J. L. Mother-daughter relationships: Asian-American perspectives.

\*Daniels, J. (1997). *White lies: Race, class, gender, and sexuality in White supremacist discourse*. Routledge

\*Franklin, A. J. (2004). *From brotherhood to manhood*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Hare-Mustin, R. T., & Marecek, J. (1988). The meaning of difference: Gender theory, postmodernism, and psychology. *American Psychologist*, 43, 455-464,

Helms, J. E. (1996). An Update of Helms's White and People of Color racial identity models. In J. G. Ponterotto, J. M. Casas, L. A. Suzuki, and C. M. Alexander (Eds.), Handbook of multicultural counseling (pp. 181-198).

Jones, James M. (1997). *Prejudice and racism*. New York: McGraw Hill. ISBN: 0-07-0033117-0

Lewis, A. E. (2003). Everyday race making: Navigating racial boundaries in schools. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 47, 283-305.

Lips, H. (1999). A new psychology of women: Gender, culture, and ethnicity. Mountain View, CA. Mayfield Publishing. ISBN: 1559343346

Liu, W. M., Pickett, T., & Ivey, A. (2007). White middle-class privilege: Social class bias and implications for training and practice. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 35(4), 194-206.

Liu, W. M., Soleck, G., et al. (2004). A new framework to understand social class in counseling: The Social Class worldview model and modern classism theory. *Journal of Multicultural counseling and Development*, 32, 95-122.

Loo, C. M. (1998). Chinese America: Mental Health and Quality of Life in the Inner City. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (pp. 29-53).

Lopez, I. (2008). Puerto Rican phenotype: Understanding its historical underpinnings and

psychological associations. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 30, 161-180.

Pimpare, S. (2008). *A people's history of poverty in America*: New York: New Press.

\*Rodriquez, R. (1983). *Hunger of memory: The education of Richard Rodriquez: An autobiography*. New York: Bantam Books.

Takaki, R. (1998). *Strangers from a different shore: A history of Asian Americans*. Boston: Little Brown. ISBN: 0316831301

Thompson, B., & Tyagi, S. (1996). *Names we call home: Autobiography on racial identity*. New York: Routledge. ISBN: 0-415-91162

\*X, Malcolm (1993). *The autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Ballantine Press. ISBN:?

Zinn, H. (1999). *A people's history of the US: 1492-present*. New York: Harper Collins.

\*Best prices can be obtained online.