

Race Matters – Race Made to Matter

AAAS 63 / SOCY 71

Fall 2019 | 2A (T/Th 2:25 – 4:15) | x-hour: Wed 4:35

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Dist: SOC; WCult: CI

I reserve the right to modify this syllabus.

Course Description

Genetics demonstrates that humans cannot be divided into biologically distinct subcategories... human genetics challenges the traditional concept of different races of humans as biologically separate and distinct.

The American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG), November 1, 2018

"If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."

Thomas Theorem - William I. and Dorothy Swain Thomas

What is race? What are the consequences of race in our daily life? How do our personal experiences with race intersect with other social structures (i.e., hierarchies of class, color, and gender) and reflect broader issues of inclusion and exclusion, including whom people love and hate? How has science shaped our understanding of race and human diversity? And, how do ideas and practices of race in the U.S. compare with other countries beyond its shores? Indeed, “[f]or centuries, race has been used as potent category to determine how differences between human beings should and should not matter” and explain dissimilarity in, for instance, athleticism, criminality, inequality, intelligence, and morality.¹ These ideas remain robust globally, even as diverse sciences have established that human beings are over 99% genetically identical. Still, race continues to play a central role in everyday life, ranging from how people are perceived, categorized, and represented to disparities in health, wealth, education, and incarceration to where people live and work to ancestry testing and race-specific pharmaceuticals. While focusing primarily but not exclusively on the U.S. and African descended people, this course examines the social construction of race and how this concept debunks common misconceptions of race as biology or genetics, also known as scientific racism, while illustrating how and why race is a lived experience thus real in its consequences. Race is an uncomfortable, sensitive topic—the elephant in the room—but to ignore or remain ignorant (i.e., lacking knowledge) of race and its negative effects (i.e., stereotype, discrimination, racism, violence, etc.), ultimately allows for their perpetuation in society.

Drawing principally on reading from the social sciences, film, and other visuals as social texts, this course is a combination of lectures, discussions, and presentations.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will:

- be able to recognize common misconceptions about race as biology and science;

¹ “How Not To Talk About Race And Genetics.” 2018. Center for Genetics and Society. Retrieved March 1, 2019 (<https://www.geneticsandsociety.org/article/how-not-talk-about-race-and-genetics>)

- understand in a global context how and why race is a social construction and by whom it was constructed;
- understand the role and consequences of race in the U.S. and other societies;
- understand critical race theories;
- not think about or understand race in the same way.

Required Reading

Nelson, Alondra. 2016. *The Social Life of DNA: Race, Reparations, and Reconciliation After the Genome*. Boston: Beacon Press

Roberts, Dorothy. 2011. *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-create Race in the Twenty-first Century*. New York: New Press

Asim, Jabari. 2007. *The N Word: Who can say it? Who shouldn't and why?* New York: Houghton Mifflin Company

Steele, Claude. 2010. *Whistling Vivaldi and Other Clues to how Stereotypes Affect Us*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company

*Reading not from the required books is posted on Canvas. Secondary reading is optional but highly recommended for your assignments, in particular your final project.

Assignments and Grading

A. Participation, Discussion, Reading Response – 20%

You are expected to have read the required material completely and be prepared to discuss the readings in class. Two thought-provoking reading questions are due once a week for in-class discuss and must be upload to the Canvas website no later than 9am the morning of class.

B. Midterm Exam – 30%

The exam consists of an essay question in which you apply the concepts examined in this course to your personal lived experience to demonstrate the role and effects of race in your everyday life.

C. Comprehensive Final Group Project - Student-Led Discussion and Paper – 50%. Guidelines will be provided.

Evaluation

I will evaluate your work based on its clarity, quality, and degree to which you adhere to the assignment. I am fundamentally interested in your demonstrating mastery of the material through the above assignments and your use of academic writing and **citing** to convey and reflect that understanding. I will provide a grading rubric and guidelines.

Ground Rules & Class Policies

We will examine some difficult, at times painful, issues in this course. These ground rules and expectations are designed to create a safe and open environment in which to exchange—not

police—ideas and **guide your success** in this course. I support students' rights to express their opinions in keeping with Dartmouth's [Standards of Conduct](#) and with the following additional guidelines in mind:

- When discussing issues, make sure you are actually “hearing” the other person’s point of view, rather than making assumptions about it. This aspect necessitates active listening in order to evaluate another’s ideas.
- You do not have to agree with each other, or me, but should you disagree, critique the person's position or ideas rather than be critical of the person.
- Listen to all ideas, especially if you do not agree with them because views that run counter to your own may be correct.
- Be open to changing your mind and views, especially when the evidence supports doing so.
- Try not to debate someone’s personal experience. Rather, speak to your own understanding and/or experience.
- Recognize that each of us brings different perspectives and experiences to a discussion, both as individuals and as members of various groups.

***Laptops/Computers:** Studies show that computer use in the classroom can hinder and have a negative effect on academic learning. You may, however, use your laptop computers for note taking **ONLY**, but you must switch off all internet, audio, and video connections. Failure to do so will result in the lowering of your grade.

***Recording the Course:** **It is strictly prohibited to video or audio record this course in any fashion.** Recording your classmates and professor without our permission both violates our rights and jeopardizes the safe environment that I strive to create for open discussion.

***Social Media and Other Devices:** phone use, text messaging, and social media in general are **prohibited in this class.** Studies show that students are less successful if they cannot disconnect from social media, which lessens their ability to focus, listen, and engage with the world in front of them.

Sleeping in class: I realize that the sleep monster comes to visit during classtime, but avoid nodding off in class at all costs, especially in front of speakers and your professor! If you feel the urge to sleep, simply stand up and go to the back of the room. Or, if you feel the need to leave class for this purpose, please do so. **You learn nothing falling asleep during class.**

* [Academic Honor Principle](#): Students at Dartmouth are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with this Principle.

***Access and Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** “Students with disabilities who may need disability-related academic adjustments and services for this course are encouraged to see [me] privately as early in the term as possible. All inquiries and discussions will remain confidential.

Students requiring disability-related academic adjustments and services must consult the Student Accessibility Services Office (205 Collis Student Center, 646-9900, Student.Accessibility.Services@Dartmouth.edu). Once SAS has authorized services, students must show the originally signed SAS Services and Consent Form and/or a letter on SAS letterhead to me. As a first step, if students have questions about whether they qualify to receive academic adjustments and services, they should contact the SAS office.”

***Religious Observance:** If the class schedule or requirements conflict with a religious observance, please see me in advance of that date to discuss any accommodations needed.

Course Schedule – Three Parts

This schedule may change to accommodate our guest speakers.

Reading from the required books are listed under the author's last name; again, all other reading is posted on Canvas.

Part I: Setting a Context – Clarifying our Terms and Concepts

Week 1

Tu Sept 17 Course Overview and Introductions

Reading Entire Syllabus

Th Sept 19 What is Race? What is Racism? Definitions

Reading Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. 1994. "Racial Formation." Pp. 55-76 in *Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s*. New York, NY: Routledge Press

Feagin, Joe and Sean Elias. 2013. "Rethinking Racial Formation Theory: A Systemic Racism Critique." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36(6): 931-960

Cornell, Stephen and Douglas Hartmann. 2007. "Mapping the Terrain, Definitions." Pp. 15-38 in *Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities in a Changing World*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge

Secondary Reading

Keaton, Trica. 2018. "Race." Pp. 1-3 in *Keywords for African American Studies*, edited by Erica R. Edwards, Roderick A. Ferguson, and Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar. New York: New York University Press

Hammonds, Evelyn and Rebecca Herzig. 2008. "Dictionary Definitions of Race." Pp. 1-3 in *The Nature of Difference: Sciences of Race in the United States from Jefferson to Genomics*, edited by Evelyn Hammonds and Rebecca Herzig. Cambridge, MA: MIT

Week 2

Tu Sept 24 Inventing Race

Reading Roberts. "The Invention of Race." Pp. 3-26

Winant, Howard. 2004. "The Modern World Racial System." Pp. 94-108 in *The New Politics of Race: Globalism, Difference, Justice*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press

Bernasconi, Robert. 2010. "Who Invented the Concept of Race?" *Ethnicities*10(1):141-48

Th Sept 26 Category Formation in an Historical Context

Reading Painter, Neil. 2010. "Johann Friedrich Blumenbach Names White People

‘Caucasian.’ Pp. 72-90 in *The History of White People*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton

Secondary Reading

Stuart, Hall. 1992. “The West and the Rest.” Pp. 185-213 in *Formations of Modernity*. Cambridge England: Polity Press

Gould, Stephen. 1994. “The Geometer of Race.” *Discover Magazine*. Retrieved May 23, 2018 (<http://discovermagazine.com/1994/nov/thegeometerofrac441>)

Part II: “Scientific” Racism: Race as Biology in the Age of Genomics

Week 3

Tu Oct 1 Debunking Race as Biology

Reading Duster, Troy. 2015. “A Post-genomic Surprise. The Molecular Reinscription of Race in Science, Law and Medicine.” *The British Journal of Sociology* 66(1):1-27

Roberts. “Redefining Race in Genetic Terms.” Pp: 57-81

Panofsky, Aaron, and Catherine Bliss. 2017. “Ambiguity and Scientific Authority Population Classification in Genomic Science.” *American Sociological Review* 82(1):59-87

Film *Race: The Power of an Illusion, Episode I* (in-class)

Secondary Reading

Graves, Joseph L. 2015. “Great Is Their Sin: Biological Determinism in the Age of Genomics.” *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 661(1):24–50

The American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG). 2018. “ASHG Denounces Attempts to Link Genetics and Racial Supremacy.” *The American Journal of Human Genetics* 103: 636-636

Th Oct 3 The Pursuit of Ancestry

Reading Nelson. Chapters 4-5. Pp. 69 – 107

Panofsky, A. and J. Donovan. 2017. “Genetic Ancestry Testing Among White Nationalists.” Retrieved September 10, 2018 (osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/7f9bc)

Graves, Joseph L. 2017. “Race ≠ DNA: If race is a social construct, what’s up with DNA ancestry test?” *Teaching Tolerance*. Retrieved May 23, 2018
<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/summer-2015/race-dna>

Secondary Reading

Nelson. Chapter 8. Pp. 69-95

Week 4

Tu Oct 8 Race and Intelligence

Reading Roberts. Chapter 2. Pp. 26-56

Steele. Chapters 1-3. Pp. 1-44

Graves, Joseph L. 2013. "Race, Genomics, and IQ: Slight Return." Pp. 69-86 in *Intelligence Quotient: Testing, Role of Genetics and the Environment and Social Outcomes*, edited by Joseph Kush, Hauppauge. NY: Nova Scientific Publishers

Th Oct 10 Stereotype Threat and Academic Performance

Reading Steele. Chapter 5. Pp. 85-99; Chapter 9. Pp. 152-191

Week 5

Tu Oct 15 Midterm Preparation

Th Oct 17 MIDTERM EXAMINATION

Part III: Race as a Lived Experience of Racism – Student-Led Discussions Begin

Week 6

Tu Oct 22 The Matter of Black Lives and Policing: The Case of Ferguson

Reading West, Cornel. 2017. "Nihilism in Black America." Pp. 10-22 in *Race Matters, 25th Anniversary Edition*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press

Akalis, Scott and Mahzarin Banajia et al. 2008. "CRIME ALERT! How Thinking about a Single Suspect Automatically Shifts Stereotypes toward an Entire Group." *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* 5(2):217–33

U.S. Department of Justice. 2015. *Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department*. Washington, D.C.: Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division.
Required pages: 1-28; 62-70; 79-81

Secondary Reading:

Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. 2016. "Black Lives Matter: A Movement, Not a Moment." Pp. 150-190 in *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books

Th Oct 24 Discussion – Peer Review

Week 7

Tu Oct 29 The Question of the N Word and Stigma Reversal - Student-led Discussion

Reading: Asim. Chapters 1,8,9,10,15. Pp. 9-20; 99-150; 212-235

Secondary Reading

Du Bois, W.E.B. 1916. "That Capital 'N'." *The Crisis*, February 11, 184-184

Davis, James. 1994/2010. "The One Drop Rule Defined & Uniqueness of the One Drop Rule." Pp. 1-6; 11-13 in *Who is Black? One Nation's Definition*. University Park, PN: Penn State Press

Tu Oct 31 Discussion – Peer Review

Week 8

Tu Nov 5 The Lived Reality of Whiteness – Student-led Discussion

Reading Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2006. "The Central Frame of Color-Blind Racism." Pp. 25-53 in *Racism without Racists*. Oxford, U.K.: Rowman and Littlefield

Metzl, Jonathan M. 2019. "Introduction." Pp. 1-21 in *Dying of Whiteness*. New York, NY: Basic Books

Simi, Pete et al. 2017. "Addicted to Hate: Identity Residual among Former White Supremacists." *American Sociological Review* 82(6):1167–87

DiAngelo, Robin. 2011. "White Fragility." *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*. 3(3):54-70

Secondary Reading

Jacobson, M. F. 1998. "Free White Persons' in the Republic, 1790-1840." Pp. 15-31 in *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Banks, Antoine J. and Nicholas A. Valentino. 2012. "Emotional Substrates of White Racial Attitudes." *American Journal of Political Science* 56(2):286–97

Th Nov 7 Discussion – Peer Review

Week 9

Tu Nov 12 Race and Europe – Student-led Discussion

Reading Small, Stephen. 2018. "Theorizing visibility and vulnerability in Black Europe and the African diaspora." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41(6):1182-1197

Wekker, Gloria. 2016. "...For even though I am Black as Soot, My Intentions are Good": The case of Zarte Pietie/Black Pete." Pp. 139-168 in *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press

Osei-Kofi, Nana. 2018. "From Afro-Sweden with Defiance: The Clenched Fist as Coalitional Gesture?" *New Political Science* 40(1):137–150

El Tayeb, Fatima. 2011. "Theorizing Urban Minority Communities in Postnational Europe." Pp. xi-xlvi in *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press

Secondary Reading

Merrill, Heather. 2013. "Who Gets to Be Italian: Black Life Worlds and White Spatial Imaginaries." Pp. 135-161 in *Geographies of Privilege*, edited by France Winddance Twine and Bradley Gardener. New, NY: Routledge

Th Nov 14 Discussion – Peer Review

Week 10

Tu Nov 19 Fall term classes end

Fri Nov 25 Final paper due