

ETHN 100: Theories and Methods in Ethnic Studies

Fall 2006

Instructor: Yen Le Espiritu

Office: Social Science Building 228

Phone: 858-534-5206

E-mail: yespiritu@ucsd.edu

Office Hours: Tues: 2:00-4:00; Thurs: 9:30-10:30

Course Description and Objective:

This course investigates the relationship between racial knowledge and power, paying special attention to the disciplinary constructions of the “racial subject.” We will read anthropological and sociological formulations of race and ethnicity to identify how they describe racial subjection, how they characterize the racial privileged and racial subaltern subject, and the strategies of emancipation they suggest. At the same time, we will examine critical and oppositional writings by racial subaltern scholars (in the United States and elsewhere) and their proposed strategies for racial emancipation. The objective of the course is not to replace racism’s projections with the “truth” of our reality, but rather to take seriously the power of language and discourse, and to develop the tools to recognize and challenge “common sense” assumptions about “race.”

Required Readings

Note: Please bring texts to class.

- 1) Laura Briggs. *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico.*
- 2) Robin d.g. Kelley. *Yo’ Mama’s Disfunktional: Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America.*
- 3) Laura Hyun Yi Kang. *Compositional Subjects: Enfiguring Asian/American Women.*
- 4) Reader on E-Reserve

Course Requirements

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| 1) Attendance and active class participation | 20% |
| 2) Exercises: | |
| Assignment # 1: Due date: October 12 (3rd week) | 10% |
| Assignment # 2: Due date: Nov. 21 (8th week) | 10% |
| 3) Midterm (Take-home): Due date: November 2 | 30% |
| 4) Final (Take-home): Due date: Scheduled final exam date | 30% |

Reading and Lecture Schedule

Note: * denotes E-Reserve

9/21: Introduction

Week 1. Sept. 26 & 28 – Ethnic Studies and Ghostly Matters

* Yen Le Espiritu, “Disciplines Unbound: Notes on Sociology and Ethnic Studies,”
Contemporary Sociology 1999, pp. 510-514

*Avery Gordon, "Her Shape and His Hand," pp. 3-28 in Avery Gordon's *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minnesota 1997)

Laura Kang, *Compositional Subjects*, Introduction (pp. 1-27)

Note: 9/26 —Video "On strike!: Ethnic Studies, 1969-1999"

Week 2. Oct. 3 & 5 – Power and Knowledge: Writing the Racial Subject

* Louis Agassiz, "The Varieties of Races," pp. 457-461 in *Racial Thought in America*, Vol. 1 (University of Massachusetts Press, 1969).

* Achille Mbembe, "Introduction: Time on the Move," pp. 1-23 in *On the Postcolony* (UC Press 2001).

* Chandra Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourse" pp. 51-80 in *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (Indiana)

Laura Kang, *Compositional Subjects*, Ch. 1 (29-70).

Week 3. Oct. 10 & 12 – The Sociology of Race Relations

*Robert Park, "Our Racial Frontier on the Pacific," pp. 138-151 in *Race and Culture* (Free Press, 1950)

*Robert Park, "The Bases of Racial Prejudice," pp. 230-243 in *Race and Culture* (Free Press, 1950).

Robin Kelley, *Yo' Mama's Disfunktional!*, Introduction and Chapter 1 (pp. 1-42).

October 12. First Exercise Due

Week 4. Oct. 17 & 19 – Culture and Power

*Oscar Lewis, "Introduction," pp. xi-liv, in *La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty—San Juan and New York* (1996).

*Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action," pp. 126-159 in *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965).

Robin Kelley, *Yo' Mama's Disfunktional!*, Chs. 2 and 3 (pp. 43-102)

Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire*, Ch. 6 (162-192)

Week 5. Oct. 24 & 26 – Historical -Materialism

*Oliver Cox. "Race Relations—Its Meaning, Beginning, and Progress." Pp. 321-352 in *Caste, Class, & Race* (Doubleday, 1948).

*David Roediger, "Class, Coons and Crowds in Antebellum America." Pp. 95-114 in *The Wages of Whiteness : Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (Verso, 1991).

Robin Kelley, *Yo' Mama's Disfunktional!*, Chs. 4 & 5 (pp. 103-158).

Week 6. Oct. 31 & Nov. 2 –

Oct. 31 – Catch-up and Review Day

Nov. 2—Take -home midterm due. Note that we will not have class on that day.

Week 7. Nov. 7 & Nov. 9 -- Women as Objects of Knowledge

Laura Kang, *Compositional Subjects*, Chs. 2-3 (pp. 71-163)

Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire*, Ch. 5 and Epilogue (pp. 162-209)

Week 8. Nov. 14 & Nov. 16 -- Global/Transnational Approach to Ethnic Studies

*Denise Silva, "Towards a Critique of the Socio-logos of Justice: *The Analytics of Raciality* and the Production of Universality," *Social Identities* 7: 3 (2001): 421-454.

Laura Kang, *Compositional Subjects*, Ch. 4 (pp. 164-214).

Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire*, Introduction and Ch. 1 (pp. 1-45)

*Smith, Linda Tuhiwai, Chapter 6 in *Decolonizing Methodologies : Research and Indigenous Peoples*, (Zed Books, 1999).

Week 9. Nov. 21 & -- American Exceptionalism, U.S. Imperialism

Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire*, Chs. 2-4 (pp. 46-141)

Nov. 21 – Second Exercise Due

Week 10. Nov. 28 & Nov. 30 – Contending with Representation

Laura Kang, *Compositional Subjects*, Ch. 5 (pp. 215-270)

Review and Conclusion

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