Course Description:

I am given no chance. I am overdetermined from without. I am the slave not of the “idea” that others have of me but of my own appearance.

- Frantz Fanon

Visuality is a specific term to refer to the way in which power relations construct our visual field. In other words, how we make sense of what we “see” is mediated by existing power relations. Visuality classifies through the power to name, categorize and define, thus producing what is legible. This system of classification is a means of social organization that began with the casta system and plantation slavery, but is now transhistoric in its reproduction and expansion of colonial effects such as racial profiling and the coloniality of gender. Visuality also speaks to the naturalization of this system of classification that has serious immediate and long-term material consequences: it functions to both renew power relations and preempt colonial subjects from organizing for their collective interests. For this reason presenting a counternarrative to visuality has been central to queer of color critique.

Required Texts:

Books can be purchased at the UCSD Bookstore:


All other course readings can be viewed and downloaded via TED.

-Please bring copies of the readings to class.
-Please note: Readings may be edited or added depending on class discussions.

Accommodations:

I would like to ensure this class is accessible to everyone. Please contact me as soon as possible if you require any specific accommodations for a disability or medical reason.
Course Requirements:

Reader Response: 10%
Précis (three of them): 10% each = 30%
Online Discussion Contributions: 10%
Participation: 20%
Final Paper: 20%
Presentation: 10%

Attendance/Participation:

Seminar style classes are discussion based. So while I will lecture to help elucidate, contextualize or elaborate a particular concept, it is also expected that students will come to class ready to engage in a discussion.

Please arrive in class having completed the assigned readings for the day. Informed and engaged discussion is a critical part of the learning process and everyone is, of course, expected to contribute.

Grading Policy:

Students must complete all assignments to get a passing grade in the class.

All submitted assignments should be double-spaced in 12pt font Times New Roman or equivalent.

Schedule:

Week 1
January 7
Welcoming and Introductions

UNIT 1
Brief Historical Context

January 9
Ilona Katzew. Excerpt from Casta Painting
Deborah Miranda. “Extermination of the Joyas.”

Week 2
January 14
W.E.B. Dubois. Excerpt from The Souls of Black Folk

January 16
Due: 2-page reader response
UNIT 2
Defining Visuality

Week 3
January 21

January 23
Jean-Paul Sartre. Excerpt from Being and Nothingness
Due: 2 page précis of Sartre

Week 4
January 28
Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Excerpt from Phenomenology of Perception

January 30
Frantz Fanon. Black Skin, White Masks. Pages xi—44

Week 5
February 4
Fanon cont’d. Pages 45—88

February 6
Fanon cont’d. Pages 89—184

Week 6
February 11
Fanon cont’d. Pages 185—206
Due: 3 page précis of Fanon

UNIT 3
Brief Overview of Semiotics

February 13

UNIT 4
Sexual Identity in a Colonial Context

Week 7
February 18
Rory Crath. “Reading Fanon in ‘Homosexual Territory’: Towards a Queering of Queer Pedagogy.”

February 20
Jacqueline Martinez. Phenomenology of Chicana Experience and Identity. Pages 1—31
Week 8
February 25
Martinez cont’d Pages 33—80

February 27
Martinez cont’d Pages 81—133
Due: 3 page précis of Martinez

UNIT 5
Orientations

Week 9
March 4
Linda Martin-Alcoff. “Phenomenology of Racial Embodiment.”
Arturo Castellon. “Down a New Road: Thoughts on Fanon’s Revolutionary Praxis.”

March 6
Sara Ahmed. Excerpt from Queer Phenomenology

UNIT 6
The Students Teach!

Week 10
March 11
Presentations

March 13
Presentations continued

Final: 5-7 minute presentation based on final paper. Final paper is to be 7-10 pages. A prompt will be provided.

Final Papers Due March 15th by 7pm at SSB 226.