

ETHN 120
Race & Performance: The Politics of Popular Culture
Fall Quarter 2021
MWF 3-3:50pm PST

Hybrid Schedule:

Mon – Warren West Outdoor Classroom

Wed – Warren West Outdoor Classroom

Fri – Zoom Class Discussions (online**)**

Instructor: Alexander D. Huezio, PhD

Email: ahuezio@ucsd.edu (include 'ETHN 120' in subject line)

Office Hours: email for in-person or Zoom appt

Zoom Link: <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/99914306105>

Meeting ID: 999 1430 6105

Course Description

This course explores both historical and contemporary racializations of the body as well as performances of race in the United States. We begin with some basic questions that underpin the entire course:

- Why do we talk about race in terms of 'performance' or 'performativity'?
- What is the 'politics of popular culture' and why does it matter?
- How do race and performance factor into the politics of popular culture?

We then transition to some historic platforms of racial display and performance (e.g., fairs, museums, minstrel shows) to think through racial ideas and tropes that persistent in the present. The second half of the course is focused on new platforms of display and performance that shape our ideas about race.

Along the way you will be asked to pose questions and provide examples that you would like your classmates to comment on. You will eventually present an in-depth analysis of an example of popular culture for your final project.

Weekly Expectations

Mondays – lectures and class discussions centered on assigned readings

Wednesdays – lectures and class discussions centered on assigned readings

Fridays – online group discussions centered on analysis of popular culture

Readings

You are not required to purchase texts for this course. All required readings – PDFs and links to articles – will be available online on Canvas in the modules on a week-by-week basis.

However, you may have to purchase access to some of the videos we will watch this quarter (see weekly schedule for details).

Communication

Reach out through email whenever you need to talk about ideas or concerns in this class. Make sure you read over the syllabus and any announcements carefully before you ask any questions.

Follow proper email etiquette when sending me an email:

- a) include ETHN 120 in the subject heading of the email
- b) provide a salutation (e.g., “Dear Alex” or “Hello Alex”)
- c) end the email properly (e.g. “Sincerely”, “Kind regards”...etc.)

Course requirements (100 points total)

Participation & Attendance (20 points)

- attendance will be taken randomly throughout the quarter
- make sure you actively participate in discussions to get full credit

Weekly Discussion Posts in Canvas (25 points total, Weeks 1-9)

You will randomly be placed in small groups for these discussions in Canvas:

- 1st POST - Due Wednesdays by 11:59pm PST (1 point)
- 2nd POST - Due Fridays¹² by 11:59pm PST (2 points)

Midterm Proposal + Glossary (25 points)

Directions will be posted in Canvas during week 5.

Final Critique (30 points)

You will record a short video that critiques an example of popular culture:

- make an argument about how this example of popular culture impacts the way race is represented or performed
- explain how race intersects with other categories of identity in your example
- incorporate glossary terms in your presentation

¹ No 2nd post during Week 5 because of midterm

² Delayed 2nd post during Week 9 because of holiday

Academic Integrity

Each student is expected to abide by UCSD's Code of Academic Integrity. When submitting work, please use your own ideas or to credit/cite your sources when borrowing from others. If you have any doubts or questions about what counts as plagiarism, please consult UCSD's Academic Integrity Office (<http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu>) or talk to me in office hours.

Learning Resources

Writing Hub; Supplemental Instruction; Tutoring; Mental Health Services

Community Centers

Learn about the different community centers on campus (Raza Resource Centro, Black Resource Center, LGBT Resource Center, etc.) <https://students.ucsd.edu/student-life/diversity/index.html>

Accessibility

Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), which is located in University Center 202 behind Center Hall. Students are required to present their AFA letters to Faculty (please make arrangements to contact me privately) and to the OSD Liaison in the department in advance so that accommodations may be arranged. Contact the OSD for further information: <https://disabilities.ucsd.edu/> | osd@ucsd.edu | 858. 534.4382

Majoring or Minor in Ethnic Studies

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of interest yet do not realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, education, medicine, public health, social work, counseling, journalism, government and politics, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor, please contact: 858-534-3277 or ethnicstudies@ucsd.edu or visit www.ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu.

DISCLAIMER:
THINK OF THIS SYLLABUS AS AN ORGANIC DOCUMENT THAT WILL INEVITABLY CHANGE THROUGHOUT THE QUARTER. ALWAYS CHECK FOR THE LATEST VERSION OF THE SYLLABUS IN CANVAS

Week 0	Introduction
Friday 9/24	Course Overview & Establish Guidelines for Discussions

Week 1	Race, Performance, Politics, Culture
Mon 9/27	"The Spectacle of the Other" (Hall 1997)
Wed 9/29	"Race" (Ferguson 2014) "Performance" (Manning 2014) "Politics" (Chuh 2014) "Culture" (Yúdice 2014)
Fri 10/1	Zoom Discussion

Week 2	Settler Colonial Fantasies
Mon 10/4	"Indians on the Midway: Wild West Shows and the Indian Bureau at World's Fairs, 1893-1904" (Moses 1991)
Wed 10/6	'Can you get more American than Native American?': drag and settler colonialism in RuPaul's Drag Race" (Upadhyay 2019)
Fri 10/8	Zoom Discussion

Week 3	Exhibiting Race
Mon 10/11	"A Troubled Legacy: Making and Unmaking Race in the Museum" (Teslow 2007)
Wed 10/13	"Deconstructing Systems of Bias in the Museum Field Using Critical Race Theory" (Adams 2017)
Fri 10/15	Zoom Discussion

Week 4	Minstrelsy
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Mon 10/18	"Minstrelsy, Satire, and the Threat of Vernacularity" (Jones 2021)
Wed 10/20	WATCH: <i>The Problem with Apu</i> (Kondabolu 2017) (available for purchase on multiple platforms)
Fri 10/22	Zoom Discussion

Week 5	Racism & Social Media Research
Mon 10/25	"Racism, Hate Speech, and Social Media: A Systematic Review and Critique" (Matamoros-Fernández & Farkas 2021) Midterm Guidelines published 9am PST
Wed 10/27	"This Is Who I Am: Instagram as Counterspace for Shared Gendered Ethnic Identity Expressions" (Perera 2021)
Fri 10/29	Zoom Discussion Midterm Proposal + Glossary due 11:59pm PST

Week 6	Racial Visibility on Social Media
Mon 11/1	"Producing white comfort through 'corporate cool': Linguistic appropriation, social media, and @BrandsSayingBae" (Roth-Gordon et al 2020)
Wed 11/3	"Tik Tok, Friendship, and Sipping Tea, or How to Endure a Pandemic" (Blanco Borelli & Moore 2021) https://screendancejournal.org/article/view/8238/6120
Fri 11/5	Zoom Discussion

Week 7	The Politics of Racialized Bodies in Music Videos
Mon 11/8	"Performing Post-Racial Asianness: K-Pop's Appropriation of Hip-Hop Culture" (Oh 2014) "'Ain't Got Enough Money to Pay Me Respect': Blackfishing, Cultural Appropriation, and the Commodification of Blackness" (Cherid 2021)

Wed 11/10	<p>“A Vernacular of Surveillance: Taylor Swift and Miley Cyrus Perform White Authenticity” (Dubrofsky 2016)</p> <p>“Race and Racialized Experiences in Childish Gambino's ‘This is America’” (Simmons 2018)</p>
Fri 11/12	Zoom Discussion

Week 8	Race Coding and Bending in Cosplay
Mon 11/15	“All the World’s a Con: Frontstage, Backstage, and the Blurred Boundaries of Cosplay” (Masi de Casanova et al 2020)
Wed 11/17	“On [dis]play: Outlier resistance and the matter of racebending superhero cosplay” (Kirkpatrick 2019)
Fri 11/19	Zoom Discussion

Week 9	Wrestling with Race
Mon 11/22	“Wrestling with the Revolution: The Iron Sheik and the American Cultural Response to the 1979 Iranian Revolution” (Rahmani 2007)
Wed 11/24	“‘You Can’t See Me,’ or Can You?: Unpacking John Cena’s Performance of Whiteness in World Wrestling Entertainment” (Taylor 2014)
Fri 11/26	Thanksgiving Holiday (No Class)

Week 10	Final Projects
Mon 11/29	TBD
Wed 12/1	TBD
Fri 12/3	TBD