

Ethnic Studies 120
Race and Performance: The Politics of Popular Culture
Spring 2010

Wednesday 5 – 7:50 PM
CSB 004

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Office Hours: Monday 11:30 am - 1 pm, Wednesday 12 – 1:30 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

How have racial categories and ideologies been constructed through performance and displays of the body in the United States and other sites? This course considers racial formation through popular performances such as world's fairs, minstrelsy, film, fashion, and political protests. Nineteenth-century colonial exhibits like museums and ethnographic entertainment contributed to the objectification and commodification of culture. However, we will pay particular attention to how racialized subjects use performance to deconstruct dominant ideologies of racial and cultural difference and engage in forms of social and political mobilization.

Required Texts (available at Groundwork Bookstore, 452-9625, and on reserve at SSH Library)

- 1) Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class*. New York: Free Press, 1996.
- 2) John Leland. *Hip: The History*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2005.
- 3) Dick Hebdige. *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. London: Routledge, 1979.

There are also articles available for download as pdf documents through the course website on WebCT: <http://webctweb.ucsd.edu>. Each such reading has the notation “*” in the syllabus. I strongly advise that you print out **all** of the articles at the beginning of the quarter to avoid any problems with downloading and printing.

Students are expected to complete and comprehend the material by the beginning of class. By this, you are required not only to read the material but to read *critically* and process it, whether that means taking notes, writing an outline, or reviewing with classmates. Please bring **all assigned readings** for the current week and previous week to class.

Requirements

- 1) Participation and In-class Assignments: 20%

Attendance is critical and mandatory for you to succeed in this class. Lateness and absenteeism will result in deductions from your participation grade. Merely being present and sitting passively means you will receive a failing participation grade, while those who actively listen and contribute to class discussion or group work will be rewarded. Moreover, I recognize

thoughtful and quality participation, not quantity. Film and media shown in class will not be available for re-screening.

- 2) Warm-up group project (week 3, April 14): 20%
Group Presentation (10%) and 2-page paper (10%)
- 3) Reading and/or media quizzes (dates unannounced): 10%
- 4) Midterm examination (week 5, April 28): 20%
- 5) Group Performance Paper and Presentation (week 10, June 2): 30%
Individual Paper and Portfolio (20%) and Presentation (10%)

Course Policies

- Classroom conduct: Please be respectful to other students and the professor. The use of laptops is not allowed in class. Phones must be turned off in the classroom. Please do not arrive late or leave early, read unrelated material while in class, or converse about unrelated topics.
- No early or make-up quizzes and assignments will be scheduled, and no incompletes will be given in this course. All assignments must be submitted to receive a final grade.
- Writing assignments are due at the beginning of class and must be submitted as hard copies only; no e-mailed papers accepted. Late papers will receive one-half letter grade deduction for each day they are submitted past the due date, and no papers will be accepted more than one week after the due date. Professor reserves the right to make copies of student papers and assignments.
- If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon. Please bring a notification letter from the Office for Students with Disabilities outlining your approved accommodations.
- Students are responsible for following all oral and written directions for assignments. Please keep in mind that your grade may be adversely affected for disregarding guidelines. Please ask questions if you require clarification.
- Your grade is not an entitlement; it must be earned. Furthermore effort alone will not guarantee a high grade. If you submit careless and mediocre work, you will receive a grade that correlates with your submission. However, continual excellent work will be rewarded.


Academic Honesty Policy

Plagiarism is a serious violation, whether intentional or inadvertent. Easily recognized, plagiarism is insulting to those who take the time to read your work, but an embarrassment to you most of all. All work submitted in this course must be your own and original. You may not copy sentences or paragraphs from books, websites, or any other source. The use of sources such as ideas, quotations, paraphrases, or anything written by someone else must be properly acknowledged and cited. If you have questions about when and how to use citations, please refer to this guide: Charles Lipson, *Doing Honest Work in College: How to Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.


Each student is expected to be familiar with UCSD's Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, available at <http://www-senate.ucsd.edu/manual/appendices/app2.htm#AP14>.

Course Schedule


Week 1. March 31. Introduction

Media 	"The Couple in the Cage: a Guatinaui Odyssey" (Coco Fusco, 1993, 31 min.)
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Week 2. April 7: Race and Alterity

Readings	<p>*Stuart Hall. "The Spectacle of the 'Other,'" in <i>Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices</i>. ed. Stuart Hall. London: Sage, 1997. 223-290.</p> <p>*Coco Fusco, "The Other History of Intercultural Performance," in <i>English Is Broken Here: Notes On Cultural Fusion in The Americas</i>, (1999), 21-64.</p>
Media 	24

Week 3. April 14. Colonialism and Displays of the Body

Readings	<p>*Stuart Hall. "The Poetics and Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures," in <i>Representation</i>. 153 – 168.</p> <p>*Curtis M. Hinsley, "The World as Marketplace: Commodification of the Exotic at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893." in <i>Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display</i>. ed. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine. Washington : Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991.</p> <p>*Richard Slotkin. "The White City and the Wild West: Buffalo Bill and the Mythic Space of American History, 1880-1917." In <i>Gunfighter Nation: the Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America</i>. 1992.</p> <p>*David Barboza, "China Turns Out Mummified Bodies for Displays," <i>The New York Times</i> 8 August 2006, online ed. http://www.bodiestheexhibition.com/ (Bodies: The Exhibition) http://www.bodyworlds.com/index.html (Body Worlds)</p>
Media 	"Bontoc Eulogy" (Marlon E. Fuentes, 1995); 2010 Olympics, First Nations ceremony
Assignments Due	Warm-up Group Presentations and Individual Short Paper

Week 4. April 21. Politics and Cultural Practices

Readings	Robin D.G. Kelley. <i>Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class</i> . Introduction, Ch. 1, 2. *George Lipsitz. <i>Footsteps in the Dark: The Hidden History of Popular Music</i> . Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. 154-183. *K. Wayne Yang. 2007. "Organizing MySpace: Youth walkouts, pleasure, politics, and new media." <i>Educational Foundations</i> 21(1-2), 9-28.
Media 🎬	Barack Obama Father's Day Speech; NWA Straight Outta Compton
Assignments Due	Group Performance Paper Topic and Method (1 page, typed)

Week 5. April 28: The Politics of Popular Culture

Readings	*George Lipsitz. "But Is it Political? Self-activity and the State," in <i>Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Music, Postmodernism, and the Poetics of Place</i> . New York: Verso, 1994. *Momiala Kamahele. "Ilio'ulaokalani: Defending Native Hawaiian Culture." <i>Amerasia</i> 26.2 (2000). 38-65. *Adria L. Imada. "Hawaiians on Tour: Hula Circuits Through the American Empire." <i>American Quarterly</i> 56 (2004): 111-149. *Angela R. Riley. "Sucking the Quileute Dry." <i>New York Times</i> . 8 February 2010.
Media 🎬	Merrie Monarch hula festival; "Twilight" (2008)
Assignments Due	Midterm Examination in class

Week 6. May 5. Fashion and Commodity (Sub)Cultures

Readings	Dick Hebdige. <i>Subculture: The Meaning of Style</i> (1979), pp. TBA. *Angela McRobbie. <i>In the Culture Society: Art, Fashion and Popular Music</i> . London: Routledge, 1999. ch. 3, "Bridging the Gap: Feminism, Fashion and Consumption." 31- 45. *Jafari Sinclair Allen. "For 'the Children' Dancing the Beloved Community." <i>Souls</i> . 11.3. (2009). 311-326.
Media 🎬	"Paris is Burning" (dir. Jennie Livingston, 1992).

Week 7. May 12. Blackface Minstrelsy and its Legacies

Readings	John Leland. <i>Hip: The History</i> (2004), Introduction, Ch. 1, 5, 6. *Eric Lott. <i>Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class</i> . New York: Oxford UP, 1995. 15-62. *Jim Windolf. "Ali G for Real." <i>Vanity Fair</i> , August 2004.
Media 🎬	"Da Ali G Show" (2004-05)

Week 8. May 19. Group field research; prepare presentations**Week 9. May 26. Performance Conference**

Assignment Due	Group Presentations Individual Performance Portfolios collected
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Week 10. June 2. Blackface Minstrelsy and its Legacies, cont'd.

Readings	<i>Hip: The History</i> . Ch. 7, 10, 15 *Michael Rogin, <i>Blackface, White Noise: Jewish Immigrants in the Hollywood Melting Pot</i> . Chs. 1, 2, 3-44.
Media 🎬	TBA

Ethnic Studies Major or Minor at UCSD

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because they're interested in the topic or simply need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of interest yet have no information about the major or minor and don't realize how close they are to a major, minor, or even a double major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, public policy, government and politics, journalism, education, public health, social work, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor at UCSD, please contact Yolanda Escamilla, Undergraduate Advisor, Department of Ethnic Studies at 858-534-3277 or yescamilla@ucsd.edu.