

CES/SOC/WST 300.1

Intersections of Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality [DIVR] [S] [M]

Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:35-11:50

Wilson-Short 6

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This class explores the complex interconnections among race, social class, gender, and sexuality, emphasizing the ways in which they alter, amplify, and impact one another. As such, it offers a deeper understanding of the social identities, cultural ideologies, and institutional arrangements. Throughout much of the course, our attention will be devoted to inequality and exclusion, as well as, dehumanization and disposability.

Learning Goals

This course will enhance student capacities to

1. grasp and grapple with the scope and significance of intersectionality;
2. understand how race, class, gender, and sexuality reinforce and reproduce social identities, cultural ideologies, and institutional arrangements;
3. locate themselves within an unequal social world;
4. explain the fundamental social forces, political arrangements, and historical conditions shaping the interactions of race, class, gender, and sexuality;
5. interpret primary sources; make sense not only of ideas and arguments in texts, but also of the contexts in which they were produced and circulated;
6. identify and think critically about problems; synthesize ideas, evidence, arguments, and knowledge to innovatively produce original analysis, ideas, and solutions;
7. determine information needed, access information efficiently, and use information effectively in course assignments;
8. communicate concepts, arguments, and beliefs coherently.

Required Readings

There are two required books in this class. They are available for purchase at the Bookie or Crimson and Grey; used copies may also be obtained online.

Patricia Hill Collins, Black Sexual Politics (Routledge).

Andrea Smith, Conquest (South End Press).

In addition, supplemental readings will be available online or as handouts.

Expectations and Policies

This course emphasizes active learning. It stresses discovery, analysis, and application through listening talking, reading, reflecting, and writing. It sets aside lecturing in favor of interaction and discussion. Given the subject of the class, our explorations demand respect and sensitivity; open and honest communication is essential to understanding. All participants are expected to come to class prepared, to be engaged and open once in class and to contribute to our ongoing discussions. A few points of etiquette warrant reiteration:

Treat others with respect and courtesy.

Show up to class on time. Students arriving late or leaving early disrupt the class and should not anticipate receiving credit for attendance.

Do the readings and assignments.

Do not have private conversation in class.

Do not read the paper or work on assignments for other classes.

Turn your cell phones off. Stow your laptops.

This is a reading intensive, discussion oriented class, thus I expect each student to carefully read and think critically about the assigned readings and come to class prepared to actively participate in class discussion, group activities, and individual writing assignments. Student participation will be evaluated on quality as well as quantity. If you remain quiet throughout the semester or rarely express yourself, you can expect to your participation grade to suffer accordingly. Of course, one cannot participate, if s/he does not attend class. Students are expected to attend every class and will be awarded points for each day that they do. Missing class for legitimate, documented reasons will be excused; oversleeping, job interview, work, dental visit and the like are important to be sure, but not legitimate reasons to miss class.

Office Hours

Dr. King and Mr. Krebs will hold regular office hours each week (Thursdays 12:00-2:00). Come speak to us if you are intrigued by something you read about for class or that was said in class and would like to read more about it. Come see us if you are puzzled or troubled about something that was said in class. Come see us if you need help with the term project, writing assignments, or readings. Come see us to talk about your grade. Come see us if you have ideas about how to make the course better.

Email

The best way to communicate with me is via email. I check it regularly and will do my best to respond within 24 hours (except for weekends, holidays, and when I am away from campus). If you cannot make my office hours or simply find it more convenient to use electronic mail, let me know via computer what is troubling, perplexing, and/or inspiring you.

Academic Integrity

PLAGIARISM OR CHEATING OF ANY KIND ON ANY ASSIGNMENT OR EXAM WILL NOT BE TOLLERATED AND WILL RESULT IN A FAILING GRADE IN THE COURSE. (Consult the WSU Student Handbook for further details). I encourage students to collaborate, study together, and talk about ideas raised in class with their peers, but I expect each student to do her/his own work. If ideas or words belong to another give them credit. The WSU Libraries have a useful webpage, including helpful tutorials, here: <http://libraries.wsu.edu/library-instruction/plagiarism>.

Access and Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Access Center (<http://accesscenter.wsu.edu>). All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center. Please stop by (Washington Building, Room 217), call (509-335-3417) or send an email (access.center@wsu.edu) to make an appointment with an Access Advisor.

Commitment to Campus Safety

Washington State University is committed to enhancing the safety of the students, faculty, staff, and visitors to the Pullman campus. As part of this commitment, the university has prepared this Campus Safety Plan, containing a listing of university policies, procedures, statistics and information relating to campus safety, emergency management and the health and welfare of the campus community. See: <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu/> and <http://oem.wsu.edu/>.

Requirements

Free Writing (15%)

Each class will open with a brief free write. These short reflections seek to encourage transition into the course material, focus students, prime discussion, assess understanding, and identify areas for clarification and follow up. These should not be understood as quizzes. **Note: Students who arrive after the brief writing has begun will not receive credit for it.**

Participation (15%)

The success or failure of this class (both in terms of pleasure and learning) derives from the active, thoughtful, and respectful involvement of everyone. Consequently, I will evaluate students daily for their contribution to class discussions. Getting a good score for this portion of the class is not simply about talking regularly in class (although this helps). Rather, I will take into consideration what is said, how it contributes to ongoing conversations, how it engages readings, films, ideas, and peers. A few suggestions: come to class prepared; take notes on films and readings; bring questions; anticipate differing opinions; realize there is much to learn; appreciate other perspectives; be open to new ideas; treat everyone with respect. **Note: Students, who text, engage in side conversations, or otherwise distract and disrespect the class, will not receive credit for participation on that day.**

Position Paper (15%)

This critical, self-reflective paper asks students to work through their social location or what might be dubbed their position. In the process, they will reflect on how their social location as way of seeing and being in the world, a complex assemblage that shapes the ways in which they think and act. Examining what some might term their “standpoint,” they will give special attention to the impact and importance of race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and their intersections. They will anchor themselves in contexts, marked by history, power, privilege, and violence. Papers will engage with three or more readings, employ proper citation (including a bibliography), and conform to stylistic conventions. They will run 4+ pages in length, typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. **Due 7 October 2014.**

Halloween Paper (15%)

Ritual celebrations offer unique opportunities to see ideologies in action. Halloween, in particular, provides keen insights into current ideas about and intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Students will conduct research, observing customs and parties, and interpret their findings in light of readings and class discussions in a 4+ page paper. Specific guidelines will be distributed well in advance. **Due 4 November 2014.**

Presentation (10%)

On one occasion, students, working in small groups, will make a brief presentation to the class, which build on the assigned readings, while providing comparative examples. For instance, in a class period focused on sexual violence and genocide in Native America, students might opt to take up similar issues in Rwanda. Student presentations will run roughly 20 minutes and ideally engage the class in discussion. Short readings may be assigned in advance. Topics should be discussed at least a week in advance with the instructor. Distribution of specific guidelines and signup will occur early in the term.

Community Event (5%)

Student will attend one community event during the course of the semester, writing a 2-3 page paper discussing it in relation to themes, ideas, and constructs from class. These may be lectures, films, plays, or other events. **Due one week after the event.** Opportunities will be announced in class. **Bonus: Student who bring an opportunity to the attention of the instructor and, if approved, announce them to the class, will receive extra credit.**

Community Engagement (25%)

In place of a more conventional research paper, students will learn more about the key ideas of the course through service, application, and experience. Working through the Center for Civic Engagement, students will identify and participate in ongoing programs and opportunities. Students will have the option of either (a) doing one intensive engagement (one placement for the term) or (b) three briefer, more contained opportunities. Students will be expected to keep a journal describing key elements and recording observations and reflections. This journal in dialogue with class readings and discussions will form the basis for a paper due at the end of the term. To keep students on track, they will submit a portion of their journal and recorded hours at midterm (14 October 2014). Distribution of specific guidelines and signup will occur early in the term.

A Note on the Center for Civic Engagement

The Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) offers WSU students, faculty, campus departments, and community partners opportunities to share knowledge, skills, and resources for the benefit of student learning and the well-being of our communities. The CCE facilitates service learning experiences as part of academic curricula and will be working with this class to provide appropriate community-based and/or civic leadership experiences for students.

You will manage your service learning experience on [CougSync](#). The system tracks your activities and can even provide you with a transcript or e-portfolio to show all of the activities you have participated in at WSU. This will be a great resource when applying for jobs and/or graduate school! You should receive an email inviting you to your course portal on CougSync. Log on to CougSync using your WSU network ID and password to access your course space. If you have not yet received this email or have any questions please contact a Peer Mentor at the CCE (servicelearning@wsu.edu or 509.335.7708), stop by our Student Resource Center in the CUB, L 45, or visit cce.wsu.edu.

Some Guidelines

This is a class seeks to promote mutual growth and shared learning about challenging subjects. To achieve this ideal, we will have to work together, treat one another respect, and push ourselves to get beyond our comfort zones. We will encounter difficult topics and sensitive material that may at times disturb or offend. This is perhaps unavoidable given that the readings and discussions prompt us to take up themes often left silent in our society, including race and racism, power and oppression, conflict and struggle. With this in mind, the following guidelines are meant to encourage open, productive, and reflexive conversations.

Acknowledge the existence of institutionalized forms of oppression, particularly racism, classism, sexism, and heterosexism.

Create a safe environment for discussion. Think about the language in which you choose to express yourself. Be aware that how you talk may impact others and their willingness to share. Avoid words that hurt, stigmatize, stereotype, or silence others.

Be respectful. Do not interrupt. Do not belittle. Listen to others. Treat others with the same dignity and compassion you would expect.

Be engaged. Commit yourself to the material, to getting at its political and personal implications.

Be open to others and their opinions.

Actively participate.

Read critically. Ask yourself: What is significant in this piece? What are the central arguments and what do they mean? What do they teach? How do they challenge? What feels or emotions do they evoke anger/sadness/laughter?

Reflect on your position. Recognize where you are at, that is, how your life, desires, and interpretations fit in a broader social context. Be willing to name your prejudices, ideologies, and privileges.

Resist the temptation to dismiss positions before you take them seriously.

Ground your comments in evidence.

Agree to actively work against myths and stereotypes.

Appreciate the knowledge and experience of your peers.

Avoid blaming.

Assume the people we study and who comprise this learning community always do the best they can.

Agree to question accepted understandings and challenge myths and stereotypes.

Remember class discussions should not be about embarrassing, showing off, winning, losing. Our meetings rather should be about dialogue, self-reflection, and learning.

Turn off. Tune in. Be Here Now. Before each class turn off your cellphone and other electronic devices. Stow your laptop. Failure to do so will result in a penalty (see above).

Course Outline

Please note: This schedule may change in response to unforeseen circumstances.

Readings marked with an asterisk (*) are recommended. All others required.

Date	Topic	Reading
26 Aug	Opening	
28 Aug	Spent	Barbara Ehrenreich, It is Expensive to be Poor
02 Sept	Intersectionality & Inequality	Packet to be distributed in class
04 Sept	Looking at Popular Culture CCE Presentation	King et al, selections from Animating Difference
09 Sept	On Ideology	Abby Ferber, Mongrel Monstrosities
11 Sept	Positionality	Packet to be distributed in class
16 Sept	Privilege	Alan Johnson, What is a System of Privilege? Alan Johnson, Who Me? Peggy McIntosh, On Privilege * Peggy McIntosh, Unpacking the Knapsack Gina Crosley-Corcoran, Explaining Privilege
18 Sept	The Race Swap Experiment	Listen to: TLDR Podcast Christopher Carbone, What I Learned
23 Sept	How many slaves work for You?	Determine your Slavery Footprint
25 Sept	Oppression	Iris Young, Five Faces of Oppression
30 Sept	Structural Violence	Paul Farmer, On Suffering & Structural Violence
02 Oct	Slow Violence	Rob Nixon, Slow Violence, Gender, and the Poor
07 Oct	(Open: King out of town)	Position Paper Due
09 Oct	Black Sexual Politics	<i>Black Sexual Politics</i> , Introduction* + Chapter 1
14 Oct	New Racism	<i>Black Sexual Politics</i> , Chapter 2 Journal Due

16 Oct	Racism & Heterosexism	<i>Black Sexual Politics</i> , Chapter 3
21 Oct	Black Femininity	<i>Black Sexual Politics</i> , Chapter 4
23 Oct	Black Masculinity	<i>Black Sexual Politics</i> , Chapter 5
28 Oct	Gender Ideology	<i>Black Sexual Politics</i> , Chapter 6
30 Oct	HIV/AIDS	<i>Black Sexual Politics</i> , Chapter 9
04 Nov	Unpacking Halloween	Halloween Paper Due
06 Nov	(Open: King out of town)	
11 Nov	Veterans Day	No Class
13 Nov	Sexual Violence as Genocide	<i>Conquest</i> , Foreword, Introduction, Chapter 1
18 Nov	Education for Extinction	<i>Conquest</i> , Chapter 2
20 Nov	Rape of the Land	<i>Conquest</i> , Chapter 3
25 Nov	Thanksgiving Break	No Class
27 Nov	Thanksgiving Break	No Class
02 Dec	Reproduction and Scientific Racism	<i>Conquest</i> , Chapter 4 + Chapter 5
04 Dec	Lessons from Engagement	Community Engagement Paper Due
09 Dec	Dead Week	Open
11 Dec	Dead Week	Classes End