Introduction and Course Description

Sitting in class the pessimism is often palpable. Discussions about curtailing and even eliminating global poverty, inequality, and injustice often leaves students paralyzed, unsure about the opportunities to initiate change. Talking seems disconnected from change, as students experience what Henry Giroux calls “the culture of cynicism” – the cooptation of dreams by the marketplace. Interventions seem hopeless and social movements appear meaningless in the face of powerful opposition. Movements committed to social justice and activism is virtually alien at this historic moment, not because younger generations do not want to fight for a more just society, but because they are unable to envision an alternative to their present condition. Calls for a society without poverty, exploitation, abuse, and injustice are met with nervous laughter or dismissing reasons.

In this regard, we are collectively unable to imagine the path and tools required to force an alteration of the status quo. The insurmountability of oppression, violence and despair paralyzes us. We are unable to dream a “world anew.” Arguing that people do not join social movements, participate in boycotts, or risk life and limb because of “misery, poverty and oppression,” Robin Kelley, in Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination, provides an alternative explanation for the initiation of social change. “People are drawn to social movements because of hope,” in response to the visions and dreams articulated through and within various social movements.

Dreams and articulations of hope are not solely conceived within the Ivory Tower or America’s think tanks, but from those on the “frontlines” of social movements and cultural productions. Keeping in this mind, the focus on this class is reflecting on, analyzing, and thinking about “Freedom Dreams,” the efforts to, the individuals committed to and organizations dedicated to dreaming the world anew. Specifically, this class works to highlight the persistence injustice within the United States and globally, offering a larger historic, social, political and economic context of intervention. This class simultaneously examines the existence of movements committed to securing justice all while using the class to develop tools and visions for a more just, inclusive, and empowering society.

Key Course features

It is important that everyone begin class with an open-mind, a critical gaze (a willingness to go beyond common assumptions) and most importantly a willingness and desire to read and write.

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1 Henry Giroux, Fugitive Cultures: Race, Violence and Youth (New York: Routledge), 1996
2 Robin Kelley, Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), jacket cover
Without writing and reading skills (as well as a desire to engage in those elements of learning) this class will be a struggle. This class may challenge your assumptions about justice and injustice. If you are unwilling to engage in material that questions our belief in the universality of applied justice (meaning, you do not have to agree, but you may not dismiss or disbelieve just because), you will struggle within this class. You do not have to agree with others or me in the class, but YOU DO NEED TO ENGAGE

**Required Reading**


In addition to purchasing all of the required texts, it is also required for this class that you have and check e-mail because I will regularly send class announcements and other important information. Please also be engaged with the course blog: [http://socialjusticeces440.wordpress.com/](http://socialjusticeces440.wordpress.com/)

**Defining Social Justice Visually (100 points)**

On a sheet of paper, 8 x 10, define and represent social justice. Through words, images, graphs, or any other signifiers, it is your job to provide an understanding and clear visual definition of social justice. To a person unfamiliar with the idea of and meaning behind social justice, design a mini poster that documents and visually represents social justice

**Pamphlet (100 points)**

A point of emphasis for this class is our engagement with and reflection on movements for social justice. While we focus great attention on social injustice and the movements working toward secured justice, we also focus on the tools and approaches adopted by social justice movements. Consciousness raising and education (framing) are central to movements for social justice. This assignment asks you to create a pamphlet that offers information, images, narrative, insights, quotes etc. about an injustice in Louisiana – Katrina, prison abuse, or the Jena 6. It is your opportunity to teach and educate those outside the classroom about course materials, challenging them to reflect on both the injustice and the struggles for justice
Midterms or Blog (200 x 2)

Midterm
The midterm will consist of short-answer questions, identifications, objective questions and essays. The midterms will be in-class, closed book exams.

OR

BLOG (400 POINTS)
In lieu of the midterms, students can create and maintain a blog related to social justice. In order to complete the blog assignment, students must sign-up with the instructor by the end of the second week of classes (no exceptions). Beginning in the third week, students must send to the instructor the URL for the student blog.

Beginning the week of September 6, 2011, students must begin to post on their blog, offering at minimum one post per week (should be at least 500 words). Some weeks, I will suggest or provide a question that can serve as the basis of a blog discussion. Other weeks, it will be your responsibility to generate a topic that engages and builds upon course information. On those weeks where there is no specific instruction given you can post relevant information that connects with course materials, engages relevant current news stories, provide reflections on class readings and discussions, or anything else relevant to our course discussions/focus.

Students are responsible for posting to their blog weekly; the posts should be diverse with some posts addressing specific question/topic, some offer responses to reading, some connecting current events to readings, and some engaging videos, etc. related to issues of social justice. Your blog posts must be thoughtful, engaged, and meaningful. They should include links to other blogs relevant to your issue, photos, video and commentary. Linking to other blogs and formulating engaging blog posts will also help increase the visibility of your blog and the chance that others will comment.

Students are also expected to comment on their classmates’ blogs. Over the course of the semester you must comment on at least 8 different classmate blogs. Comments should be engaged with the posts and substantive reactions to the materials posted. By the end of the semester you should have a blog with multiple page tabs, a blogroll consisting of your classmates’ blogs and other blogs related to social justice/injustice, video and photo posts, in-depth information related to course materials, links to news items relevant to our discussions, links to and commentary on the history and current state social justice movements, and ideas for those who want to help or raise awareness about a myriad of issues we will focus on this class. Though you may continue with your blog after the semester is over, anything posted after FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2011 BY 4 P.M. will not be considered as part evaluation for your final course grade.

BLOG GUIDELINES:
1) If you currently have a blog you must create a NEW and distinct blog. It will not be acceptable to just add posts to your existing blog. This blog assignment must be exclusively devoted to the readings and topics from this course.

2) You may not do a “blog” on a social network such as Myspace or Friendster or Facebook. You can easily establish a free blog at www.wordpress.com or www.blogspot.com or use another suitable blogging tool, for instance TypePad or MoveableType.

3) The blog must directly engage, quote, and build upon course readings. While the blog SHOULD not be a summary of readings, you must engage and build (demonstrate understanding) upon course readings.

4) It is important that you form a dialogue with course materials, course topics, and the learning community. This can be done by staying on topic. Blogs early in the semester should reflect on social justice, the history of social justice movements, and other more theoretical discussions. The middle portion of the course should deal with food, globalization, and issues connected to these issues, with the final section focusing on Katrina and its aftermath.

**Attendance**
You are expected to attend class every day, arrive on time and participate in an informed and consistent matter. Attendance will be taken regularly taken (at the beginning of class), so lateness will potentially lead to an absence for that day. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to check on announcements made while you were away. Attendance will be considered as part of your participation grade.

**Participation (100 points)**
In order for this class to be productive you will need to come to class each and every day prepared to discuss the material. This requires more than simply doing the reading (WHICH IS ESSENTIAL), but arriving at class with a readiness to discuss the issues for that day. Recognizing that silence is not always a result of a lack of interest or preparation, I envision participation along many lines. Participating in class not only consists of talking, but also includes listening (please do not talk while others are speaking), interacting with your peers, and contributing to our classroom energy (body language, being engaged – no newspapers, no playing “rock, paper scissors,” or cell phones).

There are three additional ways to enhance your participation grade and contribution to class:

- You can participate in online discussions, comment on the course blog or otherwise engage our learning community.
- You can e-mail me comments or questions prior to class.
- You can hand me a note at the beginning of class that asks specific questions (or relays comments) about readings, a previous lecture or film – I will do my best to incorporate into that day’s class.
- You can also enhance participation grade by reading the daily newspapers in print or
online and bringing the class’s attention to relevant articles/developments

**Participation Portion of grades based on following:**

85-100 Points: Active participant in class in all regards; enhances and invigorates the class; active and successful with student response device

70-84.99 Points: Participates and contributes regularly; does not push class conversations in new directions but often contributes

55-69.99 Points: Contributes on occasions but does so at basic level; engaged, but not active

40-54.99 Points: Rarely contributes, but present; shows limited effort and interest in class

25-39.99 Points: Does not contribute, but physically present for most part; brings little energy and generally demonstrates little interest or effort within class

0-24.44 Points: Detracts from overall success of class because of disinterest, use of cell phone in class, sleeping during class, disengagement, negative attitude, rudeness, non or disruptive/destructive participation, etc.

**Commodity Origin Story (300 Points)**

In 2010, a course at The California College of the Arts, offered a global and geographic map deconstructing the taco. The project was described in the following way:

Examining the ingredients in a taco paints a picture of the globalization of our food production network.

Look closely enough at anything and you can start to see the sum of its parts. Even, for instance, a single taco, which, when examined recently by a group of architecture students, became a window into the complexities of globalization. The assignment was part of URBANlab, a program of The California College of the Arts that took place under the guidance of landscape architect David Fletcher and members of the art and design studio Rebar.

The goal was to map the local "tacoshed," which, much like a watershed, establishes the geographical boundaries of a taco's origins-the source of everything from the corn in the tortilla to the tomatoes in the salsa.

By thoroughly understanding what it takes to make a taco, the class hoped to become "better able to propose and design a speculative model of a holistic and sustainable urban future."³

³ [http://www.good.is/post/your-taco-deconstructed/](http://www.good.is/post/your-taco-deconstructed/)
This assignment replicates the intended purpose of this assignment, asking students (in groups) to chronicle the global origins of a particular “product.” Beyond geographically placing the origins of individual ingredients, students will be responsible for elucidating/providing details about the source, location, and conditions of production. In the end, groups will produce a visual documentation (preference online) that highlights the geographic origins of each ingredient in a product and also the conditions where those ingredients were produced.

Students will work in groups with each student being responsible for a particular ingredient. The following represents the food “groups” for the assignment:

- Hot fudge sundae
- Hamburger
- Taco
- Vanilla latte
- Pepperoni and Mushroom Pizza
- Chocolate chip cookies
- Fruit salad
- Under the Christmas tree
- Valentine’s day gifts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Date* &amp; **</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grade Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 1, 2011</td>
<td>Defining Social Justice</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 27, 2011</td>
<td>Midterm or Blog</td>
<td>200 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 8, 2011</td>
<td>Midterm or Blog</td>
<td>200 Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 6, 2011</td>
<td>Pamphlet</td>
<td>100 Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 14, 2011</td>
<td>Commodity Origin Story</td>
<td>300 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyday</td>
<td>Participation and attendance</td>
<td>100 Points</td>
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</tbody>
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*Please note, you are entitled to one late assignment (within reason – a week) because life/school happens. After using one “get out of on-time delivery assignment card,” late assignments will be penalized accordingly.

**We hold right to change due dates in your favor according to your needs and desires – Communicate

**Grading Scale**

- 100-93: A
- 92-90: A-
- 89-87: B+
- 86-83: B
- 82-80: B-
- 79-77: C+
- 76-73: C
- 72-70: C-
- 69-67: D+
- 66-63: D
Course Schedule

8/23 -- Introduction

8/25 –
Readings: Fox-Piven, pp. 1-36

8/30 –
Readings: Fox-Piven, pp. 37-54

9/1 –
Reading: Fox-Piven, pp. 55-80

9/6–
Reading: Fox-Piven, pp. 81-108

9/8 –
Reading: Fox-Piven, pp. 109-146

9/13 –
Reading: Solomon, pp ix-30

9/15 –
Readings: Solomon, pp 31-60

9/20
Reading: Solomon, pp 61-92

9/22 –
Reading: Solomon, pp 93-128

9/27 – Exam #1

9/29 –
Reading: Patel, chapters #1-2

10/4–
Reading: Patel, chapter #3

10/6 –
Reading: Patel, chapters #4-5

10/11 –
Readings: Patel, chapters #6-7

10/13 –
Reading: Patel, chapter #8

10/18
Reading: Patel, chapters #9-10

10/20 --
Reading: Giagnoni, pp. 1-35

10/25 –
Reading: Giagnoni, pp. 36-74

10/27 –
Reading: Giagnoni, pp. 75-116

11/1 --
Reading: Giagnoni, pp. 117- 168

11/3–
Reading: Giagnoni, pp. 169-211+

11/8 – Exam #2

11/10 –
Reading: Flaherty, pp. 1-30

11/15 –
Reading: Flaherty, pp. 31-78

11/17 –
Reading: Flaherty, pp. 79-112

11/29 –
Reading: Flaherty, pp. 135-182

12/1 –
Reading: Flaherty, pp. 183-212

12/6 –
Reading: Flaherty, pp. 213-226

12/8 –
Reading: Flaherty, pp. 227-266
This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances and shifts in class needs. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to check on announcements made in your absence.

**Course Policies**

1. To be successful in this class you must read prior to arrival to class; you need to be prepared each and every day.

2. The following are unwelcome and unacceptable within this class:
   a. Sleeping, daydreaming or otherwise tuning out during class.
   b. Habitual tardiness. If you are late, you MUST SIT IN THE FIRST ROW AND SPEAK WITH ME AT THE CONCLUSION OF CLASS.
   c. Packing up your notebook and other materials prior to the end of class.
   d. Reading the newspaper, another book, or otherwise focusing on something other than class.
   e. Chatting to classmates.
   f. Getting up during class because you feel thirsty or hungry.
   g. Leaving class early.

2. Turn cell phones off upon arrival to class – Please note that if I see your cell phone/other handheld device (not if it rings) whether because you’ve decided to text message, check scores, show a friend a picture or listen to messages, you will be marked absence for the day.

3. Computer usage within class is strictly forbidden except in specific circumstances (disability accommodation) and with permission from instructor.

**Course Expectations**

Despite the size of the class, it is my hope that this class is a lively educational space defined by interaction, discussions, and critical thinking. It is important to produce a classroom that is open, respectful, and trusting. Following the above rules will contribute to a productive educational environment; of equal importance will be the respect shown for the class, its members, and the ideas discussed therein. As such, it is crucial that we adhere to certain guidelines.

1. Be respectful of others, in terms of engaging and listening to lectures, peer comments, and other course materials.
2. Reflect on social location and work to understand alternative arguments, analysis, and narratives, as well as anger.
3. Acknowledge that racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, and other institutionalized forms of oppression exist.

4. Acknowledge that one mechanism of institutionalized racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, etc. is that we are all systematically taught misinformation about our own group and about members of other groups. This is true for members of privileged and oppressed groups.

5. **Read in an engaged way**, recognizing the ideology and politics imbedded in every text. Make notes in the margins – “dialogue” with the text, using exclamation points, questions or issue complete statements, questions or critiques. Ask yourself: what is significant in this piece, what elicits anger/sadness/laughter, but go beyond emotional responses to be prepared to make specific statements about the reading!

6. **Be aware of your own subject position, ideologies, privileges and prejudices.** Recognize your own relationship to institutions of power and structures of domination. This can help you make specific connections to the reading, class discussions and other forms of feedback. Rather than proclaiming, “This article sucks,” or “You are wrong,” you can get more specific about the basis and origins of your reaction. For example, rather then engaging in a discussion about homosexuality with statements of disgust and contempt, it might be better to state: “From my position as a white male, who was raised with the teachings of the Bible, I find homosexuality a bit troubling, especially in the context of the arguments made by ________ on page ____.”

7. Agree to **combat actively the myths and stereotypes** about your own “group” and other groups so that we can break down the walls that prohibit group cooperation and group gain. Read and listen with recognition of other people’s subject position and ideologies. **LISTEN TO OTHERS!**

8. Reflect on our **choice of language in and outside of class**, striving to rid our vocabulary of racist, sexist, homophobic words, phrases. Recognize that your choice of words reflect your own ideological position and may bother others (think about how others may react to your words – not just content, but the way we chose to express those thoughts)

9. **Create a safe atmosphere for open discussion.** If members of the class may wish to make comments that they do no want repeated outside the classroom, they can preface their remarks with a request that the class agree not to repeat the remarks. Also, think about your language (including body language), posture, etc. contributes to safe/empowering or disempowering/unsafe learning environment.

10. **Take Risks:** I want this class to be a space where everyone should feel comfortable enough to disagree with each other. This needs to be safe space so reflect on the ways you engage others with your own pronouncements and how you react (with words, body language) to their statements – react privilege and positionality

11. **Read and dialogue in a politically engaged way.** Racial Dynamics, for our purposes here, reflects **power**, and relationship to systems/sources of power. Power dynamics are contextual (situational) and relational. You may have power in some spaces and lack it in others, all depending on social location. Ask yourself these questions while reading and discussing within the classroom space:
Is the analysis leaving anyone relevant out? For what reasons? Where is this analysis coming from? Whose knowledge base is being explored or forwarded?

12. **Speak with evidence** and “facts” on your side. Despite the popular pronouncements that there are no wrong answers, there are incomplete, problematic, superficial, surfaced, and unsubstantiated answers. Reflect on your own answers and the basis of your conclusions.

13. **Go beyond an either/or dichotomy. Incorporate a both/and approach** rather than an “either/or.”

14. **Recognize the knowledge base of your peers.** Its ok – recommended and great, in fact – to respond to a counterpoint with “hey, I’ve never thought of it that way,” or “well, you do make a good point – I’ll have to think about that for a while.” Discussion in this class isn’t about proving, embarrassing, showing off, winning, losing, convincing, holding one’s argument to the bitter end – its about dialogue, debate and self-reflections.

**Cheating**

DON'T DO IT! What constitutes cheating: Turning in any work that is not yours and yours completely, which includes using a “cheat sheet,” copying the answers from a peer, copying and pasting from a website, copying a friend's work, etc. If someone else said it, wrote it, thought it, etc. give them credit – DON’T STEAL THE INTELLECTUAL WORK OF OTHERS. Your failure to follow these basic instructions, to respect the classroom, to take the easy route, to be in the business of pretending to learn, think, analyze, and otherwise be a student, is not acceptable in any regard. What this means is that if you cheat, you will receive a “0” for that assignment and you will be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students. Any decision to violate the sanctity and purpose of the classroom leaves me with little choice in this regard. If you are unfamiliar with WSU policy regarding cheating and confused as to what constitutes cheating (plagiarism), please consult the Standards for Student Conduct found here: [http://conduct.wsu.edu/default.asp?PageID=109](http://conduct.wsu.edu/default.asp?PageID=109)

**Students with Disabilities**

I am committed to providing assistance to help you be successful in this course. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodation to fully participate in this class, please visit the Disability Resource Center (DRC). All accommodations MUST be approved through the DRC, located Washington Building, Room 217. To make an appointment with a disability specialist, please call 335-3417.

**Emergency Notification System:**

WSU has made an **emergency notification system** available for faculty, students and staff. Please register at myWSU with emergency contact information (cell, email, text, etc). You may have been prompted to complete emergency contact information when registering for classes on RONet. Please refer to the University emergency management website [http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies](http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies) as well WSU ALERT [http://alert.wsu.edu](http://alert.wsu.edu) for

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4 From T & L 589 syllabus of Dr. Paula Groves Price
information on WSU’s communication resources WSU will use to provide warning and notification for emergencies. The entire WSU safety plan can be found at http://safetyplan.wsu.edu.

**Primary Learning Outcomes**

- Articulate a clear working definition of injustice and social justice
- Understand ideas of criminalization, colonialism, imperialism, hegemony, capitalism, white supremacy and globalization
- See the differences between activism and organizing and the ways in which each operate in a myriad of contexts
- Understand dialectical relationship between race/gender-based ideologies, poverty, injustice, globalization
- Ability and willingness to connect contemporary world affairs to our own privileges
- Analyze the relationship between cultural processes and social structures evident in globalized practices
- Recognize and understand the ways in which race, masculinity, femininity, “the other,” America, white supremacy, resistance, globalized cultures, and capitalism affect one another
- Articulate the ways in which global workers and citizens resist structures of oppression; do the same for consumers
- Articulate the ways in which citizen-consumers are complicit with injustice
- Recognize the connections between U.S. foreign policy and global practices to national identity, race, gender and sexuality
- Make connections between various examples, histories, and themes discussed within class
- Relate notion of personal being political to concepts discussed in class