

Comparative Ethnic Studies 444
White Power Movement and Ideologies
Fall 2011

Instructor	Dr. David Leonard	E-mail	djl@wsu.edu
Phone	335-6854	Office Hours	Tuesday and Thursday, 12-1 and By Appointment
Office	Wilson 117		

Introduction and Course Description

A few years back, while walking my dogs near Pullman, high school, I noticed a flyer posted on a pole, which read the following: “Missing: A Future for White Children.” Such a flyer, like the “business cards” that I have often found on campus, or the recent efforts to post and distribute white supremacist literature, are not entirely out of the ordinary in Pullman. The task of this class can be seen through this short anecdote in many regards: (1) We will use the classroom space to analyze, historicize, comprehend and synthesize the history of white supremacist movements and literature (propaganda), focusing on their ideological and organizational foundations; (2) We will reflect on the ways in which white supremacist/nationalist/ separatist movements are connected to the mainstream political, racial theory and discursive formation. In other words, while popular discourse and media often represents white nationalists as extremists, as crazy, as stupid, backwards, and most significantly as the authentic racist, thereby pathologizing white nationalists and letting the mainstream off-the-hook, we seek links between “the extreme” and the mainstream. We will use this class to offer analysis of this discourse, questioning its veracity and thinking about the links and connections between the extreme and the mainstream; (3) We will use class as an opportunity, whether in looking into the local community, analyzing popular culture, or looking at the ways in which white nationalists utilize new media to examine the ways in which white nationalists, who analysts estimate to total over 1 million (there are 16 different organizations in Washington) function, affect, and impact our daily lives. It is easy to dismiss white separatists or white supremacists (nationalists) as a relic of past racism, as nothing more than extremist rhetoric of a few disillusioned white youth, yet as we examine their presence in the culture, their presence globally, the visibility within mediums of new media, and the dialectics between the extreme and mainstream, we will begin to see their significance along many fronts.

Key Requirements

It is important that everyone arrives in 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. Without writing and reading skills (as well as a desire to engage in those elements of learning) this class will be a struggle. For those students who want to improve these skills, this class will facilitate that process and assist you in tapping into the resources on campus.

Required Reading

- Jack Levin, *The Violence of Hate: Confronting Racism, Anti-Semitism, and Other Forms of Bigotry* (Prentice Hall, 2010) - **ISBN-13:** 978-0205710843
- Abby Ferber, *White Man Falling: Race, Gender, and White Supremacy* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999) - **ISBN-13:** 978-0847690268
- Jessie Daniels, *Cyber Racism: White Supremacy Online and the New Attack on Civil Rights* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2009) - **ISBN-13:** 978-0742561588
- Frank Meeink and Jody M. Roy, Ph.D, *Autobiography of a Recovering Skinhead: The Frank Meeink Story* (Hawthorne Books, 2010) - **ISBN-13:** 978-0979018824

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 potentially will send class announcements and other important information. Please also be active and engaged with course blog:

<http://ces444whitenationalism.wordpress.com/>

Defining White Nationalism (150 points)

This assignment has 5 parts: (1) write the first 5-10 words that come to mind when you think of a white supremacist. (2) Draw a picture of a white supremacist. (3) Where (on a map) would you find a white supremacist? (4) Provide a profile of the “average” white supremacist. (5) Write 1-2 pages reflecting on your responses to questions 1-4, offering some insight and analysis about how you depict and imagine a white nationalist.

MIDTERMS (200 points x 2)

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

BLOG (300 POINTS)

For a final project, your job is to create and maintain a blog concerned with white nationalist movements and ideologies. On September 1, 2011 students must submit a one-paragraph explanation of the blog focus, the blog title and the URL for the 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 and your blog theme. On those weeks where there is no specific instruction given you can post relevant information about your topic, current news stories linked to your topic, reflections about your topic based on class readings and discussions, or anything else relevant to your topic.

Students are responsible for posting to their blog weekly (failure to produce weekly posts and to produce a blog that offers entries throughout the semester will be marked down); 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 pertaining to white nationalism. Your blog posts must be thoughtful, engaged, and meaningful. They should include links to other blogs relevant to your focus, images, 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 exposing white nationalism, video and image 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 of white nationalism, 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 14, 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 should generate a theme or focus for your blog. While your blog will deal with white nationalism, it is crucial that you narrow the focus, providing your reader with a clear thematic focus. Some suggestions or ideas for a theme are as follows

- Religion
- Science (use of)
- Fashion/subculture
- Pop culture (again could be focused, music, etc)
- Immigration
- Affirmative action (other policy debates too)
- Prison/gangs/crime
- Extreme meets mainstream
- Historical revisionism (Holocaust denial; interpretations of the west; founding fathers)
- Nationalism (white, Christian, etc)
- USA in comparison (Europe or South Africa or Australia)
- Gender/sexuality
- Views on Multiculturalism

New Media

White power and military

Youth movements (skinheads to youth for western civilization)

Strategies to combat

- 3) 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.
- 4) 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
- 5) 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.
- 6) Scores will be awarded at 3 points (around the midterms and the conclusion of the semester) during the semester

Attendance

You are expected to attend class every day, arrive on time, and participate in an informed and consistent manner. 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 (150 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:

- 120-150 Points: Active participant in class in all regards; enhances and invigorates the class
- 95-119 Points: Participates and contributes regularly; does not push class conversations in new directions but often contributes
- 70-94 Points: Contributes on occasions but does so at basic level; engaged, but not active
- 45-69 Points: Rarely contributes, but present; shows limited effort and interest in class
- 20-44 Points: Does not contribute, but physically present for most part; brings little energy and generally demonstrates little interest or effort within class
- 0-19 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.

Due Date* & **	Assignment	Grade Value
August 30, 2011	Defining White Nationalism	150 points
September 29, 2011	Midterm	200 points
November 10, 2011	Midterm	200 Points
December 14, 2011	Blog	300 Points
Everyday	Participation and attendance	150 Points

*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

62-60: D-

59 and Below: F

Course Schedule

8/23 -- Introduction

8/25

Readings: Levin #1

8/30

Readings: Levin #2

9/1

Reading: Levin #3; Ferber #3

9/6

Reading: Levin #4; Ferber #2

9/8

Reading: Levin #5

9/13

Reading: Ferber, pp. 3-15; 47-65

9/15

Readings: Ferber, pp. 69-97

9/20

Reading: Ferber, pp. 99-129

9/22

Reading: Ferber, pp. 131-158

9/27 -- TBA

9/29 -- Exam #1

10/4

Reading: Daniels, chapters 1 & 2

10/6

Readings: Daniels, chapters 3 & 4

10/11

Reading: Daniels, chapters 5 & 6

10/13

Reading: Daniels, chapters 7 & 8

10/18

Reading: Daniels, chapters 9 & 10

10/20 - No class

10/25

Reading: Devin Burghart and Leonard Zeskind, "Tea Party Nationalism" (online)

10/27

Reading: Devin Burghart and Leonard Zeskind, "Tea Party Nationalism" (online)

11/1

Reading: TBA

11/3

Reading: TBA

11/8 - TBA

11/10 – EXAM #2

11/15

Reading: Melnick, pp. 19-58

11/17

Reading: Melnick, pp. 55-111

11/29

Reading: Melnick, pp. 113-186

12/1

Reading: Melnick, pp. 187-229

12/6

Reading: Melnick, pp. 231-265

12/8

Reading: Melnick, pp. 267-314

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, sexist, 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 than 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 not 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>

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:¹

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

¹ From T & L 589 syllabus of Dr. Paula Groves Price

website <http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies> as well WSU ALERT <http://alert.wsu.edu> for 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

1. Articulate a clear working definition of white nationalism, white supremacy, and white separatist movement
2. Understand the ways in which a discourse of "hate" fails to capture the complexity and significance of white nationalist movements
3. Recognize and understand the ways in which race, Otherness, masculinity, femininity, America, white supremacy, difference, equality, sexuality, class, nation are imagined and defined within white nationalist movements
4. Ability to analyze and deconstruct the ideological underpinnings that guide white nationalist movements
5. Analyze the relationship between racism, sexism, homophobia, and xenophobia within white nationalist discourse
6. Ability and willingness to link discourse, practice and ideology of white nationalists to those in the mainstream
7. Provide a historical background or context for the emergence and persistence of white nationalist movements within the United States and elsewhere
8. Understand the ways in which white nationalist ideology and organizations exist and affect our daily lives
9. Decode and analyze the ways in which white nationalist utilize new media, technology and representation to galvanize, mobilize, and terrorize
10. Explore and understand the dialects of the mainstream and extremism as it relates to white nationalism