

RACE, MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY

SPRING 2020
GRAPHIC SYLLABUS



ANSWERS TO IMPORTANT QUESTIONS!

WHO'S THE PROFESSOR?

Anjali Vats, JD, PhD

WHEN AND WHERE DOES THE CLASS MEET?

Tuesday/Thursdays in McGuinn 121 @ 4:30pm – 5:45pm

WHAT IS THIS SYLLABUS EVEN?!?

Pedagogy scholars argue that the contract model of syllabuses is increasingly outdated (when was the last time you read your Instagram terms of service?!?). This is a way of making the material in the class accessible and interesting! Plus, it keeps your professor from having to tell you to read the syllabus.

WHAT WILL I LEARN IN THIS CLASS?

In this class, we'll discuss the intersections of race, media, and technology in various forms, including print, film, television, social media, podcasts, and video games with an emphasis on literature in media studies and cultural studies. After defining race, media, and technology, we will explore how those concepts continue to structure contemporary life, even as we maintain fictions of "meritocratic," "postracial," and "colorblind" culture.

HALP! HOW DO I GET TO OFFICE HOURS?

Sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/yqygodvw>

Come to St. Mary's South S455 at your appointment time! Please make sure you show up at your scheduled time or cancel.

CAN'T I JUST EMAIL YOU?!?

Yes and no. I will do my best to respond to short, easy questions not addressed on the syllabus within 48 hours, not including weekends/holidays. For all other questions, face-to-face contact is ideal. You can email me at vats@bc.edu.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO READ/WATCH?

A lot of academic articles and long form journal articles posted on Canvas! Also, some books, TV shows, podcasts, and movies.

WHAT WILL I BE GRADED ON THIS SEMESTER?

Glossary Quizzes – 3 @ 125 points	375 points
Current Event – 1 @ 125 points	125 points
TOTAL	500 points

CAN YOU SAY MORE ABOUT ALL THAT?

I can and will as the semester goes on!

WHAT ABOUT LATE ASSIGNMENTS? AND FILE FORMATS?

Late assignments will lose 10 points per day. I will accept them for 7 days. All assignments must .doc, .docx, or .pdf format. There are no makeups for pop quizzes.

OKAY, WHAT IF I HAVE TO MISS CLASS?

Cool. But Department of COM policy requires me to count *all* absences toward your total, whether excused or not. That means you don't need to tell me if you're not going to be in class. But if you miss two weeks of classes, I have to reduce your grade by one letter and if you miss three weeks of classes, I have to give you an F.

BUT I HAVE THIS SPECIAL EXCUSED THING!

There are no exceptions, truly. It's out of my hands. Asking again won't change the answer to the question.

SIGH, WELL, HOW CAN I GET THE NOTES I MISSED?

From a classmate! I will answer lingering questions only.

WHAT ABOUT MAKEUP WORK?

I don't allow makeup work, except in the case of emergencies and excused absences. If you have a foreseeable issue, please get in touch in advance. In this class, you will have the opportunity to drop one assignment in order to compensate for this policy.

CAN I USE MY COMPUTER, PHONE, IPAD, GRAPHING CALCULATOR...?

I run a no technology classroom. For our time together, I would like you to be 100% present and engaged. For most humans, technology makes that very difficult in my experience.

WHAT'S THE GRADE SCALE?

Grading will be done on a total points scale, calculated into a percentage, and translated as follows:

A	4.0	94- 100%
A-	3.66	90- 93%
B+	3.33	87- 89%
B	3.0	84- 86%
B-	2.66	80- 83%
C+	2.33	77- 79%
C	2.0	74- 76%
C-	1.66	70- 73%
D+	1.33	67- 69%
D	1.0	64- 66%
D-	.66	60- 63%
F	0	59% or below

WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH MY GRADE?

I'm happy to discuss your grade concern! However, if you want to discuss or challenge your grade you must: (1) wait 24 hours after receiving your score, (2) email me a paragraph summary of your concerns, making reference to the assignment, and (3) make an appointment to meet with me. I'll entertain grade disputes for one week after papers are returned. And please know that grades can go up or down if I regrade your paper!

WHAT IF I NEED A DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION?

I'll do everything I can to support you! You can start the process by contacting Kathy Duggan, (617) 552-8093, at the Connors Family Learning Center regarding learning disabilities, or Paulette Durrett, (617) 552-3470, in the Disability Services Office regarding all other types of disabilities.

HOW ARE WE GOING TO TALK ABOUT RACE?

Talking about race is tough! And often triggering. We're going to try to create a safe classroom space in which everyone is comfortable speaking. This is no small task. It requires respect, vulnerability, thoughtfulness, and self-awareness. Perhaps most importantly, it requires acting instead of reacting, by understanding how our trauma gets in the way of hearing each other. We won't be perfect, that's not the goal. But we'll try to create a space without harassing or discriminatory language, with a supportive environment in which we can support one another even when we make mistakes.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO CREATE A "SAFE SPACE?"

"Safe space" is a term that gets used a bunch. In short, we're trying to minimize additional trauma to each other in our conversations. That also means that we need to be present and engaged with each other. Texting, sleeping, and other distracting behaviors are not consistent with creating a safe space or an engaged and supportive space.

ONE MORE THING, ACADEMIC INTEGRITY!

I'll abide by BC's academic integrity policy. You signed this when you arrived and I've attached it here.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT ALL THIS?

My door is always open and I'm 100% happy to talk with you about any of the issues outlined here!



AMULET, MARVEL COMICS



MARSHAWN LYNCH, OAKLAND RAIDERS



OPRAH, MEME EDITION



WHITE TEARS, RACIAL DARK COMEDY

COURSE SCHEDULE

1.14 COURSE INTRODUCTION

Syllabus and Introduction

Reading in the Information Age

"We're Training Machines to Be Racist," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N-Lxw5rcfZg> [In Class]

1.16 WHAT IS RACE?

"Racial Bias in Photography," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d16LNHIEJzs> [In Class]

Wendy Chun, "Race and/as Technology; or How to Do Things to Race"

1.21 NO CLASS – ADMINISTRATIVE MONDAY

1.23 WHAT ARE MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY?

"Diverse Casting Wasn't Brave, It Was Human," https://www.washingtonpost.com/video/entertainment/shonda-rhimes-diverse-casting-wasnt-brave-it-was-human/2015/04/14/63971986-e2bf-11e4-ae0f-f8c46aa8c3a4_video.html [In Class]

Douglas Kellner, "Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism, and Media Culture," in *Gender, Race, and Class in Media*

David P. Croteau and William Hoynes, "The Economics of the Media Industry" in *Gender, Race, and Class in Media*

1.28 WHAT DOES RACE HAVE TO DO WITH MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY?

"It's Not Color, It's Culture," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Ayf8Iny9Eg> [In Class]

Lisa Nakamura and Peter Chow White, "Race and Digital Technology" in *Race After the Internet*

1.30 HOW DO WE STUDY RACE, MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY?

Glossary Assignment Requirements

"The Reason #BlackTwitter Exists (And Is Totally Awesome)," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTRNptAvBIQ> [In Class]

David Hesmondhalgh and Anamik Saha, "Race, Ethnicity, and Cultural Production"

2.4 NO CLASS – CONFERENCE

1619 Project, Episode 3, "The Birth of American Music" [In Class]

2.6 WHO MAKES MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY?

Matthew D. Morrison, "Race, Blacksound, and the (Re)making of Musicological Discourse"

2.11 COMIC BOOK RACISM

"Marvel's Comic Diversity," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_rjXXT6Qwk [In Class]

Bisma Parvez, "Marvel's Newest Superhero, Amulet, is an Arab American from Dearborn,"

<https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/wayne/2020/01/02/marvel-superhero-amulet-arab-american-dearborn/2796337001/> [In Class]

C. Richard King, "Alter/native Heroes: Native Americans, Comic Books, and the Struggle for Self-Definition"

2.13 CABLE TELEVISION AND THE SPORTS MEDIA COMPLEX

NacionESPN [InClass]

Ian Blair, "White Privilege on the Football Field,"

https://www.salon.com/2014/02/07/white_privilege_on_the_football_field_peyton_mannings_benefit_of_the_doubt/

Jorge Moraga, "On ESPN Deportes: Latinos, Sports Media, and the Cultural Politics of Visibilities"

2.18 RADIO RACISM

Guest Speakers from the Kominas and Saraswati Jones [In Class]

"The Kominas Lampoons TSA, Border Profiling Questions," <https://www.colorlines.com/articles/watch-kominas-lampoons-tsa-border-profiling-questions-new-freedom-music-video> [In Class]

Ahmed Afzal, "You'll Learn Much About Pakistanis from Listening to Radio," Pakistani Radio Programming in Houston, TX" in *Global Asian American Popular Cultures*

2.20 RACE ON THE INTERNET

"Susie Bubble: What's In My Wardrobe," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=34CtThzJ1jk> [In Class]

Minh-Ha Pham, *Asian Wear Clothes on the Internet* [TBD]

2.25 RACE ON THE INTERNET

"Morning Joe: *Black Software* Looks at the Internet and Racial Justice," <https://www.msnbc.com/morning-joe/watch/-black-software-looks-at-the-internet-and-racial-justice-72468037793> [In Class]

Charlton McIlwain, *Black Software: The Internet & Racial Justice from the Afronet to Black Lives Matter* [TBD]

2.27 RACE & SOCIAL MEDIA

"danah boyd Talks to Lee Rainie," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVfUB-WZQl0> [In Class]

danah boyd, "White Flight in Networked Publics: How Race and Class Shaped American Teen Engagement with MySpace"

3.3 NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

3.5 NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

3.10 RACE & SOCIAL MEDIA

"An Interview with the Founders of #BlackLivesMatter: Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi",

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbicAmaXYtM> [In Class]

Sarah Jackson, "(Re)imagining Intersectional Democracy from Black Feminism to Hashtag Activism"

3.12 RACE & ALGORITHMS

Current Events Assignment Guidelines

"Stop Assuming Data, Algorithms, and AI are Objective," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hft8xiycH2Y> [In Class]

Safiya Noble, *Algorithms of Oppression* [Excerpts TBD]

3.17 RACE & ALGORITHMS

"Science Behind the News," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0gX_z0VOnE [In Class]

R. Joshua Scannell, "This is Not *Minority Report*: Predictive Policing and Population Racism"

3.19 PODCAST (CULTURES)

"Chitlin Circuit," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=huQQksGrSDw> [In Class]

Sarah Florini, "The Podcast Chitlin Circuit: Black Podcasters, Alternative Media, and Audio Enclaves"

3.24 PODCAST (CULTURES)

Second Wave [In Class]

Tony Tran, "Creating Sound in Silences"

3.26 NO CLASS – BOOK TALK

3.31 TECHNOLOGIES OF WHITE NATIONALISM

"Dylan Roof Confession Video: Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church,"

<https://www.cnn.com/videos/justice/2016/12/10/dylann-roof-church-massacre-confession-ekr-orig-vstop.cnn> [In Class]

Rishi Chebrolu, "The Racial Lens of Dylann Roof: Racial Anxiety and White Nationalist Rhetoric on New Media"

4.2 TECHNOLOGIES OF WHITE NATIONALISM ON THE WEB

"Momondo: The DNA Journey," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fw7FhU-G1_Q&feature=emb_logo [In Class]

"White Supremacists Are Using Ancestry Tests for a Creepy Purpose," https://www.huffpost.com/entry/white-supremacists-are-using-genetic-ancestry-tests-for-a-creepy-purpose_n_59961087e4b0a2608a6b1e44 [In Class]

Jessie Daniels, "Race and Racism in Internet Studies: A Review and Critique"

4.7 RACE IN VIDEO GAMES

"Resident Evil 5," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FYFXo33-Wo> [In Class]

Andre Brock, "When Keeping It Real Goes Wrong: Resident Evil 5, Racial Representation, and Gamers"

4.9 NO CLASS – EASTER BREAK

4.14 RACE IN VIDEO GAMES

Fortnite and the Milly Rock Debate, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Hqtu3PxiRk> [In Class]

Wayne Marshall, "Social Dance in the Age of (Anti-)Social Media: *Fortnite*, Online Video, and the Jook at a Visual Crossroads"

4.16 RACIAL VIRALITY

“Steve Harvey Crowns the Wrong Miss Universe,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQLk4fagQrA> [In Class]
Maria Elena Cepeda, “Putting a ‘Good Face on the Nation’”

4.21 RACIAL VIRALITY

Is it OK to Use Black Emojis and GIFS? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cyq6fTYxztc> [In Class]

Lauren Michele Jackson, “We Need to Talk about Digital Blackface in Reaction GIFs,”

<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/digital-blackface-reaction-gifs>

JStor, “All the Feels: The Morphology of Reaction GIFS,” <https://daily.jstor.org/the-morphology-of-reaction-gifs/>

Rachel Kuo, “Animating Feminist Anger: Economies of Race and Gender in Reaction GIFs”

4.23 CURRENT EVENTS DISCUSSION

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY FROM THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

The College [of Arts and Sciences] expects all students to adhere to the accepted norms of intellectual honesty in their academic work. Any forms of cheating, plagiarism, or dishonesty or collusion in another's dishonesty is a fundamental violation of these norms. CHEATING is the use or attempted use of unauthorized aids in any exam or other academic exercise submitted for evaluation. This includes data falsification; the fabrication of data; deceitful alteration of collected data included in a report; copying from another student's work; unauthorized cooperation in doing assignments or during an examination; the use of purchased essays, term papers, or preparatory research for such papers; submission of the same written work in more than one course without prior written approval from the instructor(s) involved; and dishonesty in requests for either extensions or papers or make-up examinations. PLAGIARISM is the deliberate act of taking the words, ideas, data illustrative material, or statements of someone else, without full and proper acknowledgment, and presenting them as one's own. COLLUSION is assisting or attempting to assist another student in an act of academic dishonesty. As part of your scholarly development, you must learn how to work cooperatively in a community of scholars and fruitfully utilize the work of others without violating the norms of intellectual honesty. You have a responsibility to learn the parameters of collaboration and the proper forms for quoting, summarizing and paraphrasing.

Faculty members who detect any form of academic dishonesty have the responsibility to take appropriate action. The faculty member also has the responsibility to report the incident and penalty to the Department Chairperson and the appropriate Class Dean. The report will remain in your student file until you graduate. If the gravity of the offense seems to warrant it or if the faculty member prefers that another academic authority decide the matter, he or she may refer the case to a Dean. In addition, if the student is unwilling to accept the faculty member's decision, he or she may choose to have the matter adjudicated either by an Associate Dean or by an Administrative Board. The section of the College of Arts and Sciences in the Boston College Undergraduate Catalogue has further details about this process. Academic integrity is a very important matter. If you have any questions in any of your courses about what is allowed or not allowed, please discuss the matter immediately with the instructor.