GALLATIN SCHOOL, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

GET ME BODIED: RACE, ETHNICITY, AND POPULAR MEDIA
IDSEM-UG1724
(11930)

Fall 2013
Day and Time: Thursday, 6:20pm-9:00pm
Classroom: Silver Center for Arts and Sciences, room 406
Office Location: 1 Washington Place, room 431 (Monday) and room 613 (Thursday)
Office Hours: Monday, 3:30pm-4:30pm and Thursday, 4:00pm-5:00pm
Email: law12@nyu.edu
Phone: 917) 609-3918
Mailbox: 1 Washington Place, 4th floor

Description:
What does it mean to use “media” as a site of cultural critique? What does critical race theory look like or sound like when we encounter it on the radio, on a dance-floor, or on a movie screen? In this course we will pay close attention to the racial politics of what neo-Marxist philosopher Theodor Adorno once famously called “the culture industries”: namely film, television, radio and popular music. We will also take a quick look at the not-so-popular form of media – theater. More specifically, we will examine how contemporary cultural workers of color (musicians, filmmakers, artists, actors, etc.) have utilized mass-mediated forms to resist, respond to, and reveal the conundrum of “race” in the 21st century. We will also consider questions of racial identity formation and representation, appropriation, and complicity. Our readings will include perspectives from a range of ethnic studies scholars such as Stuart Hall, Tricia Rose, Cornel West, Mark Anthony Neal and Daphne Brooks. We will also survey the more embodied or “performative” theoretical insights offered by figures such as Spike Lee, Lil Kim, R. Kelly, Tyler Perry, India Arie, Erykah Badu, Jennifer Lopez, Amy Winehouse, Billie Holiday, Savion Glover and Beyoncé Knowles, among others. In short, in this course we will think about media as more than a site for “representing” race, but rather also as a site for forming and constructing race as we know it.

Requirements
Students are required to complete weekly reading and assignments and to be prepared to discuss them during class meetings. To facilitate discussion students will post 2 questions about the assignment on NYU Classes by 8:00pm each Wednesday. These questions can address the theoretical perspective, themes, style, argument, evidence, and/or technique of the primary text and should provide a point of engagement with the material. Students will also present a text to the class and submit a hard copy of the presentation, either in essay or outline form.

Students will also write four 8-page essays: a textual analysis, a critical analysis, a comparative essay, and a critical introduction. The first three essays will form the body of what will ultimately be your own collection critical race theory analysis; the final essay will
serve as an introduction to that collection. You will have the opportunity to revise the body of essays and then submit the entire collection, with the introduction, as your final portfolio.

**Evaluation/Grading**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance, class participation, and discussion questions</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation (oral and written)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analytical Essay</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Critical Essay</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comparative Essay</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction and Final Portfolio</td>
<td>30%</td>
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**If you feel you would like additional help with your writing, please contact the Gallatin Writing Center at 1 Washington Place, room 423.**

See [www.nyu.edu/gallatin/writingschedule](http://www.nyu.edu/gallatin/writingschedule) for instructions on how to make an appointment.

**Class Policies**

**Be on time.**

**Attendance is mandatory.**

Unexcused absences **will** impact your final grade. If you have a compelling reason for missing class, talk to me in advance and complete make-up work.

**Hard copies of all papers.**

Grades for late papers will be reduced by 1/3 of a letter grade per day.

**Please turn off your cell phones. No calls. No texting.**

You do not need a laptop. If you really want to use one, you may, but please do so as a gracious and considerate human being, i.e. no Facebook, twitter, games, etc.

**Plagiarism**

All written work must be the original creation of the student. Nothing may be copied from other publications, the Internet, or another student’s work. Please be very careful to avoid plagiarism – intentional or inadvertent. Err on the side of caution: it is definitely better to over-cite than oversight. If you are unsure consult Turabian, the on-line writing lab, or ask me.

NYU’s policies on plagiarism:

The Instructor will uphold the University's code of academic and personal conduct for all instances of plagiarism. You may find this code in your NYU Gallatin Bulletin, page 100. You can download the bulletin at: [http://www.nyu.edu/gallatin/pdf/GallatinBulletin.pdf](http://www.nyu.edu/gallatin/pdf/GallatinBulletin.pdf)
Texts (available at Shakespeare & Co.):
Alsultany, Evelyn                          Arabs and Muslims in the Media
Brooks, Daphne                              Bodies in Dissent
Fleetwood, Nicole                            Troubling Vision
Harris, Frederick                           The Price of a Ticket
Johnson, E. Patrick                        Appropriating Blackness
Jones, Douglas A. & Harry J. Elam           Methuen Drama - Post-Black Plays
Lee, Shayne                                 Erotic Revolutionaries
Molina-Guzman, Isabel                       Dangerous Curves
Neal, Mark Anthony                         Soul Babies
Rose, Tricia                                Hip Hop Wars
Taylor, Yuval and Jake Austen              Darkest America
Wallace, Michelle                           The New Jim Crow

Electronic Texts (available on NYU Classes)
Du Bois, W.E.B.,                              The Souls of Black Folk
Gilroy, Paul,                                 The Black Atlantic (excerpts)

**Throughout the semester, with plenty of advance notice, I will post some supplement reading.

ON-LINE WRITING LAB: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

Films
Basir, Quasim “Q,” Dir., Mooz-lum

Recommended Texts
Turabian, Kate L., Student’s Guide to Writing College Papers

Syllabus
Week 1:
Thursday, September 5th
Introduction

PART I: Modernity, Blackface and Beyond
Week 2:
Thursday, September 12th
Reading: Du Bois and Gilroy

Week 3:
Thursday, September 19th
Reading: Taylor and Austen (Kira)
Week 4:
Thursday, September 26th

Reading: Rose (Gigi & Vaia & Justin)

**Analytical Essay due in class**

Week 5:
Thursday, October 3rd

Reading: Johnson (Frank & Symphony)

PART II: Women of Color and the Racialized Female Body

Week 6:
Thursday, October 10th

Reading: Brooks (Vanessa & Chelsea)

Week 7:
Thursday, October 17th

Reading: Molina-Guzman (Karen & Gabby)

Week 8:
Thursday, October 24th

Reading: Fleetwood (Jessica & Diandra)

**Critical Essay due in class**

Week 9:
Thursday, October 31st

Reading: Lee (Maddie & Isabelle)

PART III: Post-Racial?

Week 10:
Thursday, November 7th

Reading: Neal (Phoebe)

Week 11:
Thursday, November 14th

Reading: Jones and Elam (Esthela)
PART IV: The Shifting Contours of Race and Racism in the 21st Century

Week 12:
Thursday, November 21st

Reading: Wallace (Shaquille & Siena & Elliot)

**Comparative Essay Due in Class

Week 13:
Thursday, November 28th

*NOVEMBER RECESS 😊*

Week 14:
Thursday, December 5th

Reading: Harris (Sam)

Week 15:
Thursday, December 12th

Final Class Meeting

Reading: Alsultany (Casey & John)

**Final Portfolio due in class**