Performance, Race, Violence and the Body
Fall 2012
AFR/ANT 391/LAS
Professor: Christen A. Smith, Ph.D.
Office Location: SAC 5.136
Office Hours T: 2:00pm-3:00pm and by appointment

Course Description: This course examines the complex relationship between performance, the body politic, violence, race and gender. Course participants will engage with a survey of texts that interrogate this relationship from the colonial/conquest/slavery period through today. The focus, while global, will primarily concentrate on the Americas. Using the ethnographic and theoretical lens of performance, performativity and enactment, we will examine the multivalent layers of violent repression at work within multiple societies at various temporal moments. Within this framework, participants will critically reflect upon how violence, in its alternate forms, impacts identity formation by inscribing race, gender and sexuality onto the body at multiple social and culture junctures. One of the primary objectives of the course is to theoretically engage with the relationship between the body, identity, and state, structural and symbolic violence. Addressing the politics of representation as a principle theme, we interrogate how theories of performance make power somatically legible, and how the relationship between performance and the body have everything to do with social order and repression.

***Objectives*:** 1) To critically engage with the body politics of race, gender and sexuality; 2) To define and analyze the mechanisms of representation; 4) To define and analyze multiple aspects of performance, performativity and enactment; 5) To define and analyze violence; 6) To critically engage with the performative aspects of violence and how they relate to the politics of representation; 6) To link violence and representation historically; 7) To analyze the role the state plays in the production of bodies and identity through violent acts; 8) To reflect critically on the politics of the social production of the body.

Assignments

Class Participation: Participants in this course are expected to 1) actively and respectfully participate in weekly discussions; 2) arrive in class promptly and adequately prepared; and 3) complete all class assignments on time. The primary objective of this course is to critically engage with the readings and the subject matter. Therefore, *course participants are expected to have completed the reading prior to class and prepare thoughtful reflections/commentaries to share with fellow colleagues.* In line with this, the success of this course hinges on the active participation of everyone. Class participation is of the utmost importance.

Discussion Leading: Each student will be required to prepare a presentation that summarizes, synthesizes and analyzes the weekly readings ***at least twice*** during the semester. These presentations will be done in groups of 2 or more. As part of this assignment, groups will submit a 1-3 page critical reflection on the texts for that week. Details for this assignment will be explained in class.

Final Research Project: The final assessment for this course will be a substantive research project. Students may elect to write a traditional 15-25 pp. research paper or develop a substantive and new creative piece (play, performance, etc.) on a topic of the student's choosing related to the themes of the class. All projects must be approved by the instructor. Details for this assignment will be discussed in class. **Due date: December 6**

Grading: Class Participation 25%; Discussion Leading 25%; Final Research Project 50%

Course Schedule

Bodies On Display: Conquest/Colonialism/Slavery, Performance and Embodied Memory

August 30 - - "The Other History of Intercultural Performance" (1994) – Coco Fusco
- "Culture of Terror – Space of Death: Roger Casement's Putumayo Report and the Explanation of Torture" – Michael Taussig (1984 - abridged)
- "Ishi's Brain, Ishi's Ashes: Anthropology and Genocide" (2001 - abridged)– Nancy Scheper Hughes

Film Screening and Discussion - "The Couple in the Cage: A Guatanaui Odyssey"

September 6 - - *Representation* (1997) – Stuart Hall [Chapter 4]
- "Black Bodies White Bodies" (1985) – Sander Gilman
- "The Venus Hottentot" – Elizabeth Alexander http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/182775
- "Performance Studies" (2002) – Dwight Conquergood
- *Performance: A Critical Introduction* (2003) – Marvin Carlson [Introduction, Part I]

Play Screening and Discussion: "The Anarcha Project" (Performative Lecture)

September 13 The Archive and the Repertoire (2005) – Diana Taylor

Supplemental Readings: The Practice of Everyday Life (1984) – Michel de Certeau
Performance: A Critical Introduction (2003) – Marvin Carlson [Parts II and III]

Subject Formation, Terror and Spectacle

September 20 - *A Spectacular Secret: Lynching in American Life and Literature* (2006) - Jacqueline Goldsby [select chapters]
- *Without Sanctuary* - http://withoutsanctuary.org/ - Allen, James et. al. (browse the online musarium)
- *The Body in Pain* – Elaine Scarry [Introduction, Chapter 1]
- "Safe" (1929) – Georgia Douglas Johnson

Film Screening and Discussion– "Ethnic Notions"

September 27 *Black Skin White Masks* (1967)

October 4 *Scenes of Subjection* (1997) - Hartman, Saidiyah

Blackness, Ontology and the Legacies of Conquest/Colonialism/Slavery

October 11 *Monstrous Intimacies* (2010) - Sharpe, Christina

Short Film Screening: "The Attendant" – Isaac Julien
Supplemental Reading: *Corregidora* – Gayle Jones

October 18 *Poncia Vivencio* (2007) – Conceicão Evaristo
"Metamorphose" (1995) - Geni Guimaraes

October 25 *Red, White and Black* (2010) – Frank Wilderson

Que(e)r(y)ing Gender and the State

November 1 - *Undoing Gender* (2004) – Judith Butler [Select chapters]
- *Gender Trouble* (1990) – Judith Butler [Preface 1990, Chapter 1]
- "Symbolic Violence" (1992) – Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant
- "On Suffering and Structural Violence" (1997) – Paul Farmer

November 8 *Venceremos* (2011) – Jafari S. Allen
"Prison Industrial Complexity" (2011) - Albert Woodfox and Jackie Sumell

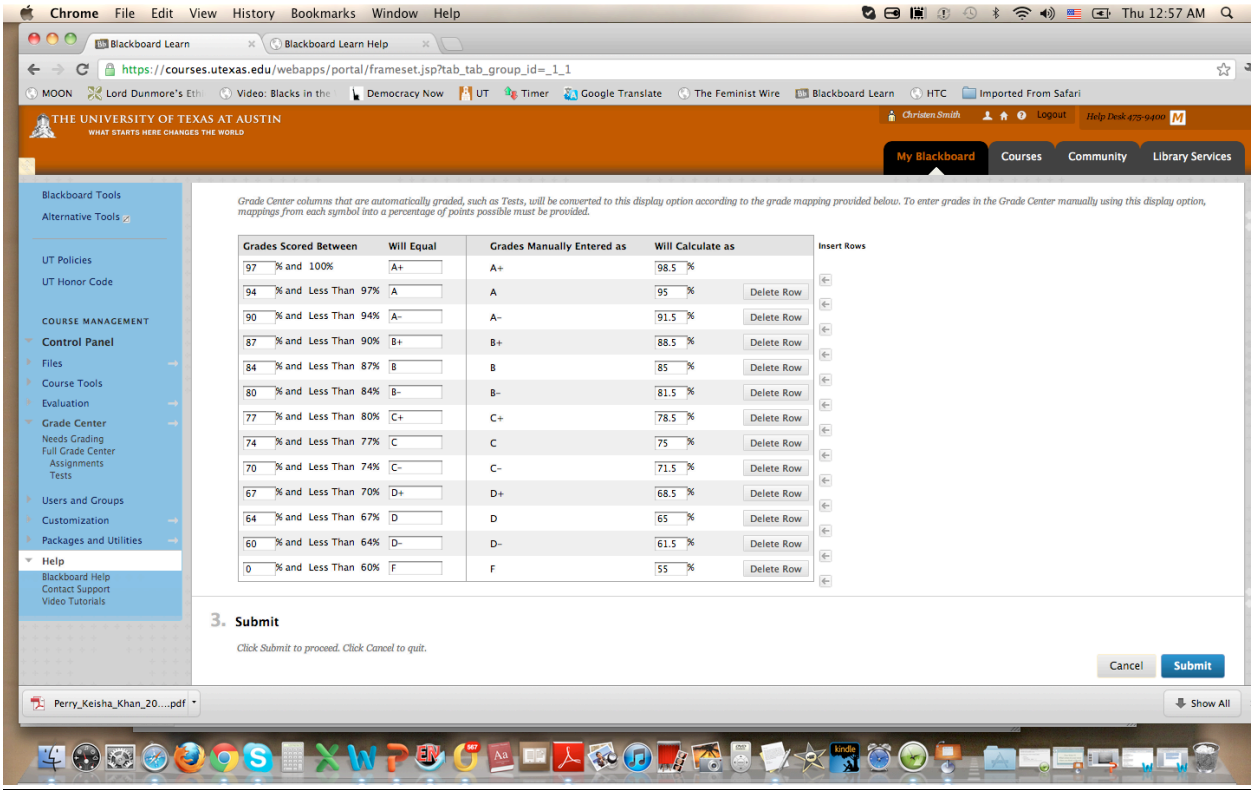
November 15 *Terrorist Assemblages* (2007) - Jasbir K. Puar

November 22 NO CLASSES – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

November 29 *Pedagogies of Crossing* – Jacqui Alexander [select chapters]

December 6 Research Project Presentations and Wrap Up Discussion

Grading Scale



GUIDELINES

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA BLACKBOARD AND BY HARD COPY AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE DUE DATE
LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE HEAVILY PENALIZED

Due Dates/Late Policy: As a general policy late assignments will not be accepted without the instructor's prior approval. Any late assignments accepted will carry a penalty of 10% of the assignment grade per day late. **– six days late or more will automatically receive a grade of 0.**

I will make exceptions to this penalty policy **only** in the event of a documented medical or family emergency, or if you have official, documented University of Texas business off-campus; in such a case, please notify me as soon as possible.

Format Guidelines for Writing Assignments:

All coursework must be double-spaced and typed in 12pt Times New Roman font. All papers must have 1-inch margins on all sides. Please use the AAA Style Guide: http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style_guide.pdf as a guideline for bibliographies and citations.

Grading Evaluation

Rubrics: Rubrics will be used as grading criteria for most course assignments including class participation. These rubrics will be available on Blackboard and will be discussed in-class.

Class Policies

1. Again, please come to class on time and prepared to participate actively in class discussions each day.

2. Hot and cold beverages are okay to bring to class, but please NO FOOD ALLOWED IN THE CLASSROOM (unless you have brought a goodie for everyone and you have cleared it with me first).

4. Please be attentive and polite to one another during class. If you wish to read the *Texan*, surf the web, talk with your neighbor during lecture, sleep, or do anything else disruptive, then please go elsewhere.

5. Please respect your classmates and your instructor. In this course, there will be a lot of lively discussion and debate. Even if you don't agree with someone, you should still treat that person with respect and be kind. We are all here to learn!

5. Due dates for all assignments are listed on the syllabus and/or will be announced in class and/or will be announced on Blackboard. Late assignments carry stiff penalties. Please see note on "due dates" above.

6. **ACADEMIC HONESTY IS IMPERATIVE.** I will refer all cases of academic dishonesty (i.e. cheating and plagarism) to the Dean of Student's Office. If you have questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, visit the University's official statement: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

Documented Disability Statement

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD. *(Note to Faculty: Details of a student's disability are confidential. Faculty should not ask questions related to a student's condition or diagnosis when receiving an official accommodation letter.)*

- Please notify me as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible (e.g., instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper alternative text conversion, etc.).

- Please notify me as early in the semester as possible if disability-related accommodations for field trips are required. Advanced notice will permit the arrangement of accommodations on the given day (e.g., transportation, site accessibility, etc.).

- Contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) or reference SSD's website for more disability-related information: http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work

assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Q drop Policy

The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231:

> "Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number."

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Process for grade appeals (Liberal Arts): Students must first contact course instructor, then if dispute not resolved, they must contact Associate Chair. If Associate Chair declines appeal, the student can appeal to the Dean. See below for details. (I have attached the linked pdf to this email as well)
http://www.utexas.edu/cola/student-affairs/_files/pdf/grade_appeals_form_student_version.pdf