

White People 2016



White people are often invisible when it comes to having a race. In this course we will examine the formation of whiteness as an always present if often ignored racial category that came ashore with the Pilgrims. We will explore how whiteness has changed in the past 400 years even as it remains a stable category. We will also situate whiteness, like all racial categories, as entangled with class, gender, sexuality and nation.

Laurie Essig
Office hours:
Wed. 2-3
Thurs 11-1
or by appointment
Office: 202 Chellis

Class Meets: Tues/Thurs
3-4:15
Classroom: RCD B11

Readings:

To be purchased online or are on the website (marked with *).

Website: sites.middlebury.edu/gsfswHITEpeople

To be purchased at your favorite online retailer:

- Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*
- Grace Elizabeth Hale, *Making Whiteness*.
- James Hannaham, *Delicious Foods*
- Nancy Isenberg, *White Trash: The 400-Year Untold History of Class in America*
- David Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness*.
- Matt Wray *Not Quite White*.

Requirements:

~Participation and reading responses 20%

Each student is expected to be an active member of this seminar. To facilitate this, you must send typed reading notes/responses to at least 20 of the 22 classes.

These reading notes might include interesting quotes and page numbers as well as some sort of analysis. For instance, you might ask something that might seem like a stupid question, like “what is the author’s argument” or you might move beyond the basic questions and ask “why didn’t I buy this argument?” or “how could this argument be applied to Middlebury?” or you might just note some facts or key concepts from the readings- like a theoretical term that you can apply to better understand race.

PLEASE NOTE: You will only get full credit for the reading notes if you email them to me by the class period they are assigned (easiest to email them to me although I will accept a typed response in class). If you hand them in later that day, you will receive half credit. After that, you will receive no credit at all for them.

~Research Paper: 60% total;

This course requires a semester long research paper. You absolutely cannot put this off till the end of the semester or you will fail. Thus I require you to hand in pieces of it along the way:

1. Research Question/Topic 5%
Write one paragraph on what particular facet of whiteness you would like to explore this semester
Due: 9/20
2. Annotated Bibliography 10%
At least five secondary sources (scholarly) that you will use to think through this topic. These are your secondary sources.
Due: 10/4
3. Research Strategy (Primary Research) 10%
What will you do to answer your research question? What primary sources will you consider? Whether it’s “South Park” or an exploration of Middlebury architecture as a “whitetopia” it is important to have a very clear idea of what exactly you will do to collect data on this topic. 2-3pp
Due: 10/20
4. Outline of Paper/Rough Draft 15%
This is a crucial piece of your paper since it is your only chance to get feedback on how you are putting the whole thing together. Please hand in as much as possible, including at least 7-10pp of actual writing and the rest can be in outline form.
Due: 11/17
5. Final paper 20%
Due: 12/12

Please see “Writing for White People” on class blog

A note on the importance of being here: I do not take attendance in class. I will never know if you are here or not except by the depth of your work. However, if you do come, then I expect you to be here. That means no computers- seriously. Feel free to take notes by hand, doodle, knit, or whatever else you need to do to focus. But I do not allow computers in my class since nearly everyone taking notes on them is also answering emails, Facebooking or watching the next really cute kitten video. The point is, if I can't watch that really cute kitten video or send a tweet during class, then neither can you. You can use a flat reader- like a kindle- if you wish to bring readings to class.

A note on painful topics: The history of whiteness is not pretty and our discussions and readings reflect that history. I do not give trigger warnings since everything we read and discuss involves social power, oppression, and the messiness of race as well as gender, class, sexuality, sex and more. I encourage you to decide upon reading this whether you feel comfortable not receiving trigger warnings. If you do not, I encourage to find a class that makes more sense for you.

SEEING WHITENESS

9/13 Introduction

9/15 *Sara Ahmed, "A phenomenology of whiteness," in *Feminist Theory* and *Linda Alcoff, "Latino/as, Asian Americans and the black/white binary," *Journal of Ethics*.

MAKING WHITENESS

9/20 David Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness*, p. 1-132

Research Question/Topic Due

9/22 Roediger, pp. 133-244.

9/27 Hale, *Making Whiteness*, pp. 3-84

9/29 Hale, pp. 85-198.

10/4 Hale, pp. 199-298.

Annotated Bibliography Due

10/6 Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, Chapter 1

Also watch: **Please watch "Gone With the Wind" for instance at**

<http://megashare.info/watch-gone-with-the-wind-online-TWpRMk1BPT0>

10/11 *James Kincaid, *Erotic Innocence* and *Tavia Nyong'o, "Racial Kitsch and Black Performance." *Robin Bernstein, *Racial Innocence*, pp. 30-68, 146-193.

SCIENTIFIC WHITENESS

10/13 *Anna Stubblefield, "Beyond the Pale" in *Hypatia* and *Alexander Sanger, "Eugenics, Race and Margaret Sanger Revisited" also in *Hypatia*. *Ann Morning, "Race," *Contexts*, *Charis Thompson, "Race Science," *Theory, Culture & Society*.

10/18 Fall Break

10/20 *Jenny Reardon and Kim TallBear, "Your DNA is Our History," *Current Anthropology* and David Skinner, "Racialized Futures," *Social Studies of Science* (<http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.middlebury.edu/stable/25474453>)

Research Strategy Due

WHITE TRASH

10/25 *John Hartigan, Jr. "Blood will Tell" and *"Unpopular Culture" in *Odd Tribes* and Matt Wray, *Not Quite White*, Intro-pp. 46.

10/27 Wray, *Not Quite White*, pp. 47-144.

11/1 Nancy Isenberg, *White Trash*, Preface and Chapters 1-5

11/3 Isenberg, *White Trash*, Chapters 6-12, Epilogue

ANGRY WHITENESS/IRONIC WHITENESS

11/8 * Charlie Gillis, "In Glenn We Trust," *Macleans*, *Darrel Enck Wanser, "Barack Obama, the Tea Party, and the Threat of Race," *Communication, Culture and Critique*, and *Jason T. Eastman and Douglas P. Schrock, "Southern Rock Musicians Construction of White Trash in Race Gender," *Class*.

11/10 NO CLASS Work on your papers!!!!

11/15 Michael Kimmel, *Angry White Men* (this is an ebook available through the Middlebury Library- log in and search through ezproxy, Chapt. 1, 2, 6 and 7.

11/17 *Michael Chaney, "Coloring Whiteness and Blackvoice Minstrelsy," *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, *Mark Greif, "What was the Hipster?" and *Loren Kajikawa, "Eminem's 'My Name Is': Signifying Whiteness, Rearticulating Race" in *Journal of the Society for American Music*.

Rough Draft Due

WHITE EMPIRE: RACIAL PRIVILEGE AND THE "GOOD"

Good Space/Good Food

11/22 *John Fiske, "Surveilling the City," *Theory, Culture and Society*" and *Setha Low, "Maintaining Whiteness," *Transforming Anthropology*. *Robert Vanderbeck, "Inner City Children, Country Summers" in *Environment and Planning* and *Angie

Beeman, "Whiteness as Property" in *Critical Sociology*. Start James Hannaham, *Delicious Foods*.

11/24 Thanksgiving

11/29 *Rachel Slocum, "Whiteness, space and alternative food practices," *Geoforum*,
**Amy Bently, "Martha's Food. Whiteness of a Certain Kind," *American Studies*, 2001
and *Dana Berthold, "Tidy Whiteness," *Ethics and the Environment*, 2010.

12/1 We will discuss James Hannaham's *Delicious Foods* so finish it by now.

12/6 Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, Chapters 2-4

12/8 Alexander, Chapters 5-6.

Final Papers Due 12/12

