CES 301: Race and Global Inequality (3 credits)
Spring 2014
Wilson-Short 6
MWF 12:10 - 1:00

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and by appointment

The philosophy of the course syllabus

There are two general kinds of course syllabus: the recipe and the map. The syllabus-as-recipe provides a literal, formal, precise set of rules that govern every minute of every class meeting, from which deviation is viewed as disruptive and is therefore discouraged. In the first week, you may look at the recipe-syllabus and know exactly what will be happening in class midway through the second meeting of the twelfth week. The map-syllabus, on the other hand, provides a suggestive, informal sense of where the course begins and where it intends to go. It is flexible and allows for, even shows, alternative routes for deviations. Under institutional and economic pressures, college courses are increasingly required to be "accountable" and quantitative, to adopt the recipe-syllabus. The result is an outcomes-oriented course that, like standardized tests, forces teachers and students to conform to an institutionally determined template for "learning." Here, the syllabus will serve as a map, in an effort to be more student-centered and responsive to current events and the demands of social justice and real education.

Course texts

Delia D. Aguilar and Anne E. Lacsamana, eds. *Women and Globalization*. Amherst, NY: Humanity, 2004.

Ben Crow and Suresh K. Lodha. *The Atlas of Global Inequality*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2011.

Mike Davis. *Planet of Slums*. New York: Verso, 2007.

Manning Marable. *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America: Problems in Race, Political Economy, and Society.* Rev. ed. Boston: South End, 2000.

We will also read or view various handouts, films, and Web sites. You are responsible for keeping up with these as they are assigned.

Introduction, course description, learning goals, learning outcomes

Though not directly linked to CES 201, this course will continue the work of contextualization begun in that course. Now we expand our focus to the globe. While a course titled "Race and Global Inequality" could conceivably exist in other departments such as history and political science, it exists here because the central goal of Ethnic Studies is social justice. This is a political work, and yet it is every bit as academically and intellectually rigorous as the work of those other departments. We could even argue that, in order to reach our political goal convincingly, we must be even more intellectually rigorous than those departments. In any case, the most important tool for doing good work in this course will be critical reading and thinking.

In fifteen weeks, we cannot cover all the world's injustices and inequalities. We will look at some of them, and hope to perceive patterns that might help us understand injustices elsewhere. This entails risk, of course. But the particularities of multiple colonizations beg to be

known. Many native Hawaiians, for example, insist that their stories be told separately from those of Asian Americans. And so we might be wisest to look for patterns only in the *processes* of racism, colonization, sexism, and what Vandana Shiva calls corporate globalization—while acknowledging that the *effects* of these injustices may well differ, depending on context.

In an essay in the MLA's *Profession 2006* Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o argues, "An irony of globalization is that the globe is shrinking into a village because of information technology and yet its divisions of culture have deepened" (37). He goes on to blame these divisions on "varieties of fundamentalism: ethnic, racial, and nationalist," and explains:

> Democracy becomes defined as the right of capital to move freely within and across states but not as the right of labor. Racism, which also takes the extreme form of religious bigotry through the boast 'my race is the chosen race,' has become more pronounced, and as a result some countries are even calling for the erection of actual physical barriers around their territories. (37-38)

Claiming that racism is becoming a more serious threat to global justice, he goes against a trend among political, media, and corporate leaders, who assume that racism is such "old news" that we no longer need such Civil Rights-era legislation as Affirmative Action and voting-rights laws. And if he is right to observe that democracy exists for capital but not for workers, and that this problem crosses national borders, then the work of global justice is truly difficult.

Our goals include a pursuit of answers to these questions:

1) How can Ethnic Studies cross borders and examine global inequalities?

2) To what extent, if any, are global inequalities merely an extension of inequalities within a nation such as the United States?

3) To what extent must resistance be localized? and to what extent must it be globalized?

4) Given the massive scale of global inequalities, how can we measure progress?

5) How can we think and write critically about injustices and resistances?

6) How can we think and write critically without co-opting the voices of oppressed peoples who live thousands of miles away?

7) How can we turn resistance into justice?

As for learning outcomes, by semester's end we should achieve the following goals: 1) general knowledge of the history of racism and inequality in the United States, 2) ability to apply that knowledge to a knowledge of the history of racisms and inequalities elsewhere, 3) ability to recognize similarities and differences in these two sets of knowledge, 4) recognition of the role of political economies in those histories, 5) awareness of efforts at resistance by victims of local and global injustices, 6) understanding of what lasting justice might demand of both victims and profiteers of injustice. Because achievement of these goals may be uneven, may overlap, and will surely involve frequent returns to previously studied injustices, no timeline for these goals is possible or desirable. Moreover, because it is the aforementioned institutional pressures that demand a timeline—in their insistence that "student learning outcomes . . . are observable and measurable" (see *WSU Syllabus Checklist*, August 7, 2013, page 7), an insistence that seems like a naïve threat to police classrooms—the interests of historically marginalized peoples are best served only by demonstrating and using our knowledge, not measuring it.

Requirements

Attendance: Attendance is required. After the fifth class meeting, I will distribute an attendance signup sheet, and then you will be permitted three unexcused absences, after which each absence results in deduction of one-third of a letter grade for the course. Any absence is unexcused if it is

not legitimate and not cleared with me in advance. **Your ninth unexcused absence results in an automatic F in the course.** As our readings and discussions will consider theory and application, attendance is especially important. Therefore, **doctors' appointments, study sessions for other classes, and career fairs are *not* excusable absences**. Do not come to me late in the semester with explanations for earlier absences. It is your responsibility to let me know as soon as possible about excusable absences. If you wait till weeks later, those absences will not be excused. You are expected to attend class every day, arrive on time, leave only when class is over, and participate in an informed and thoughtful manner. These policies are absolute, and they are not negotiable.

Participation: Class discussions will depend on your reading the assigned texts and coming to class ready to talk about them. Participation takes many forms: discussing issues raised in class or in our texts, keeping up with local and national and global events that are relevant to our work, joining an activist group working for social justice, writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine or Web site on an issue we discuss, even presenting your research at an academic conference. Some form of participation is required. If you do not participate, do not expect to get a high grade.

Journals: You will write four journals, one on each book. Each journal must clearly identify and respond to the text. For Davis, Marable, and the Atlas, write a one-sentence statement of each reading's thesis or argument, and explain, in 300 to 500 words, why it is (or is not) persuasive. I will give you special instructions for your journal on Aguilar and Lacsamana.

Final paper: Your final paper must be five to seven pages, engaging an issue we discuss and read about. Though the paper itself is due near the end of the term, you will start working on it early. This early assignment will be a proposal, a one-page typed statement of a problem in global inequality that you wish to explore in detail, with your plan for researching and covering the issue. On a second page, you will write a tentative bibliography, naming at least three sources. In the last three weeks you will present your paper before the class.

Here is a breakdown of the course grading, based on a 400-point system:

Attendance and participation	15 percent (60 points)
Journals	20 percent (80 points)
Proposal	20 percent (80 points)
Paper	40 percent (160 points)
Presentation	5 percent (20 points)

Course policies and community standards

Ideally, each class meeting will be a lively, student-directed and student-centered discussion of our course material. Short of that ideal, you will still come to class prepared to discuss readings assigned for that day. I hope we will model a good community, driven by shared concerns and goals even when we disagree. To do well, please note the following guidelines:

1) For all reading assignments, be sure to read authors' explanatory footnotes and to scan their sources. *Bring the assigned reading to class.*

2) No written assignments will be accepted late unless cleared, for good and documented reason, in advance.

3) No assignments will be accepted through e-mail unless cleared, for good reason, in advance.

4) All written assignments must be typed, in standard font and margins, and stapled. Number your pages. Your final paper should have a title.

5) Extra credit opportunities exist. However, you are responsible for keeping up with events on campus or in the area and letting me and your classmates know about them in advance, so that you may write a one-page analysis of them. Each analysis is worth 5 points.

6) If, in any of your written assignments, you use information or ideas from other sources, whether you are quoting or merely paraphrasing, you must cite those sources. This is true even when your sources are interviewees for oral histories. Failure to cite will be counted as plagiarism and will result in a failing grade.

7) Do not read outside material in class, and turn off cell phones and all other media devices unless you can show that you are using them for note-taking.

8) You may choose your citation style—whether MLA, Chicago, Turabian, APA, AMA, CBE, Harvard, or any other—but you must remain consistent. Do not mix styles.

9) I will be very disappointed if, at some time during the semester, you don't find extremely distasteful or disagreeable a comment made by me or a classmate. Argue—defend your position, demonstrating your knowledge of history. But do so respectfully. Name-calling is not educational. Nor is hate speech.

10) The best way to show your respect is by listening. Cultivate good listening skills, if you have not done so already. And ask questions.

11) Consider others' views. Reflect on your own social location and your privileges.

12) Learn a historically informed definition of racism—Ruth Wilson Gilmore's definition at the end of this syllabus is a good place to start—and challenge all racist discourse.

13) Reflect your own grasp of history and social relations by respecting shy and quiet classmates, and by deferring to the experiences of people of color.

14) Finally, understand and consider the rage of people who are victims of systematic injustice. James Baldwin wrote that people of color have an obligation to feel and express rage over this nation's history of racism. If injustice does not fill you with rage, then you should ask yourself why.

Note on language: In our readings and discussions you may encounter words or phrases that will be, to some sensibilities, coarse or vulgar or racist. By themselves, no "mere" words are offensive. What makes a word vulgar or racist is its usage by a particular speaker in a particular context. Insensitive white men such as Glenn Beck complain that, for example, they are not allowed to say the "n" word without being labeled racist but that black men use it among themselves all the time. To "earn" the right to that word, Beck must first endure 500 years of racism. When you see and hear such words, consider their context. Who speaks them? Why? And to whom?

While in this course no words or phrases will be absolutely forbidden—that is, we will not serve as Language Police—still you should bear in mind the implications of your language, not for reasons of "political correctness" but to demonstrate both your intelligence and your sensitivity to historically marginalized peoples. For example, historically, who has used the term "colored people" and why? Should you use it? Why or why not?

Academic integrity

Cheating of any kind will result in your failing the course. See the WSU Standards for Student Conduct WAC 504-26-010 (3). You should read and familiarize yourself with these definitions and standards.

Academic honesty is much easier to achieve than academic dishonesty, if only you observe Course Policy 6 above: Whenever you use someone else's information or ideas, cite the source. If you write a five-sentence paragraph and use a source for all five sentences, even if it is the same source for all the sentences, you must cite that source in every sentence. If you cite your source only at the end of the paragraph, then you have plagiarized the first four sentences (unless you use a style that permits this), and your grade will be lowered. This is not negotiable. You are expected to know the rules. In college, ignorance is no excuse.

Students With Disabilities: "Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit or call the Access Center (Washington Building 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center."

Safety and Emergency Notification: "Washington State University is committed to enhancing the safety of the students, faculty, staff, and visitors. It is highly recommended that you review the Campus Safety Plan (http://safetyplan.wsu.edu/) and visit the Office of Emergency Management web site (http://oem.wsu.edu/) for a comprehensive listing of university policies, procedures, statistics, and information related to campus safety, emergency management, and the health and welfare of the campus community."

Schedule

Please note: Assignments are subject to change. You are responsible for keeping up with changes. Marable and Davis are identified by their names; the Atlas is simply identified as Atlas; and Aguilar and Lacsamana are identified as *Women*.

Jan 13: Course and community introductions.
Jan 15: Read Atlas, Introduction and first three sections of Chapter 1, pp 9-21.
Jan 17: Read Atlas, rest of Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, pp 22-38. Discuss Occupy Wall Street.

Jan 20: No class. MLK Day.
Jan 22: Read Atlas, chapters 3 and 4.
Jan 24: Read *Women*, Introduction.

Jan 27: Read *Women*, chapter 2.
Jan 29: Read *Women*, chapter 4.
Jan 31: Read *Women*, chapter 5.

Feb 3: Read *Women*, chapter 6.
Feb 5: Read *Women*, chapter 8.
Feb 7: Read *Women*, chapter 11.

Feb 10: Read *Women*, chapter 12.
Feb 12: Read *Women*, chapter 14.
Feb 14: Read Marable, xv-xl. FIRST JOURNAL DUE (on *Women*).

Feb 17: No class. Presidents Day.
Feb 19: Read Marable, 1-19. PROPOSAL DUE.
Feb 21: Read Marable, 21-51.

Feb 24: Read Marable, 53-76.
Feb 26: Read Marable, 76-130.
Feb 28: Read Marable, 131-180.

Mar 3: Read Marable, 180-214.
Mar 5: Read Marable, 215-263.
Mar 7: Read Davis, chapter 1. SECOND JOURNAL DUE (on Marable).

Mar 10: Read Davis, chapter 2.
Mar 12: Read Davis, chapter 3.
Mar 14: Read Davis, chapter 4.

Week of March 17: Spring break.

Mar 24: Read Davis, chapter 5.
Mar 26: Read Davis, chapter 6.
Mar 28: Read Davis, chapter 7

Mar 31: Read Davis, chapter 8 and Epilogue.
Apr 2: Read Atlas, chapter 5. THIRD JOURNAL DUE (on Davis).
Apr 4: Read Atlas, chapter 7.

Apr 7: Read Atlas, chapter 6.
Apr 9: Read Atlas, chapter 8.
Apr 11: PAPER PRESENTATIONS. FOURTH JOURNAL DUE (on Atlas).

Apr 14: PAPER PRESENTATIONS.
Apr 16: No class.
Apr 18: No class.

Apr 21: PAPER PRESENTATIONS.
Apr 23: PAPER PRESENTATIONS.
Apr 25: PAPER PRESENTATIONS.

Apr 28: PAPER PRESENTATIONS.
Apr 30: PAPER PRESENTATIONS.
May 2: FINAL PAPER DUE. End of semester errands and final notes.

A useful definition of racism:
Racism, specifically, is the state-sanctioned or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death.

Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2005. 28.