

**UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I AT MĀNOA**  
**Department of Ethnic Studies**  
**Spring 2009**

**ES 440: Contemporary African Diaspora and Black Communities**  
**Beyond the United States**

**Instructor: Dr. Elisa Joy White**  
**Office: 341 George Hall**  
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**Class Location: KUY 305**  
**Class Time: Wednesday 12:30 - 3**

**Course Description:**

The African Diaspora and Black identity are overwhelmingly examined in the context of the United States and, more specifically, African American experiences. By limiting discussions to the US context, we ignore the diversity of global African Diaspora communities and their varied site-specific conditions, historically situated circumstances and differential racialization. However, not only is the African Diaspora much broader than the contours of the US, but we also must consider the reality that most Blacks do not live in the United States. To add to the complexity, there are also contemporary communities that may identify as Black and/or be racialized as Black but do not necessarily locate themselves within the African Diaspora.

Hence, the goal of the course is twofold: 1) To examine social and cultural experiences of contemporary African Diaspora communities outside of the US context (i.e. Europe, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific) and 2) To present students with a more expansive understanding of the political, social and cultural meaning of “Blackness” across a range of global communities. Overall, the course will enable students to better comprehend the form and function of contemporary diasporic and transnational communities, as well as interrogate prevalent understandings of racialized identities.

Students are expected to complete all readings and to fully participate in class discussions. During the semester students will be assigned readings to present to the class as a means of enhancing student involvement with the structure of class discussions and encouraging critical examinations of the subject matter. Additionally, each student will choose an African Diaspora community to monitor and, throughout the semester, have the opportunity to discuss issues, concerns and activities that have an impact on the social, cultural and/or political circumstances experienced by the group. A list of possible communities will be given to the class but choices are not limited to the list. On three occasions, students will write a 5-7 page paper examining the assigned group and its

relation to course readings, discussions, lectures and other related materials about the African Diaspora and Black identity. Additionally, students are required to briefly present their findings to the class. Students will receive written feedback on each of their diaspora writing assignments. The critique will focus on strengthening a student's writing ability as well as cultivating the effective communication of research results. Students will have the option to revise one of the three diaspora writing assignments (by the last class, May 6, 2009).

Each student is required to submit a final paper (10-12 pages, double-spaced) on a comparative topic of her or his choosing, emerging out of lectures, readings, media hand-outs, screenings and class discussions. Students are required to submit an outline of the final paper on April 29, 2009. The outline will be reviewed by the professor and receive in-person feedback to facilitate student revisions of the paper before the final due date of Wednesday May 13, 2009.

**Guidelines for presentations and papers will be handed out later in the semester. Final paper topics must be approved in advance by the instructor. Papers will not be accepted via e-mail.**

#### **Course Requirements:**

Attendance and Participation: 10%      In-Class Diaspora Presentations: 15%  
Diaspora Papers: 30%                      Final Paper: 45%

#### **Required Texts:**

Dominic Thomas, *Black France: Colonialism, Immigration, and Transnationalism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006)

Norman E. Whitten and Arlene Torres (Eds), *Blackness in Latin America & the Caribbean: Social Dynamics and Cultural Transformations (Volume 1)* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998)

Course Reader (Available at BWI Campus Copy – First Floor, Campus Center)

### **Diaspora and Black Identity**

#### **Wednesday January 14, 2009**

Introduction to class

#### **Wednesday January 21, 2009**

Brent Hayes Edwards, "The Uses of Diaspora" (See Reader)

Kim Butler, "Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse" (See Reader)

**Wednesday January 28, 2009**

Alaina Lemon, "What Are They Writing About us Blacks?": Roma and "Race" in Russia" (See Reader)

Tariq Modood, "Political Blackness and British Asians" (See Reader)

Diaspora Paper#1 Due and Discussion

**The Black Atlantic, Black Canada and the Caribbean****Wednesday February 4, 2009**

Paul Gilroy, "The Black Atlantic as a Counterculture of Modernity" in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (See Reader)

Althea Prince, "Racism Revisited: Being Black In Toronto In The 1960s" (See Reader)

Althea Prince, "Stop Calling Us 'Slaves'" (See Reader)

**Wednesday February 11, 2009**

Deborah A. Thomas, "Modern Blackness: Progress, "America," and the Politics of Popular Culture in Jamaica" (See Reader)

Frank Manning, "Celebrating Cricket: The Symbolic Construction of Caribbean Politics" (See Reader)

**Black Latin America****Wednesday February 18, 2009**

Whitten and Torres, Introduction pp. 34-53

Whitten and Torres pp. 75-99 (Ecuador)

Whitten and Torres pp. 100-118 (Panama)

**Wednesday February 25, 2009**

Whitten and Torres pp. 119-132 (Costa Rica)

Whitten and Torres pp. 244-277 (Venezuela)

**Wednesday March 4, 2009**

Whitten and Torres pp. 426-444 (Bolivia)

Whitten and Torres pp. 278-310 (Colombia)

Whitten and Torres pp. 311-334 (Colombia)

**Wednesday March 11, 2009**

Derek Pardue. "Putting Mano to Music: The Mediation of Race in Brazilian Rap" (See Reader)

Diaspora Paper#2 Due and Discussion

**Black Europe****Wednesday March 18, 2009**

Thomas Chapters 2, 3 and 4

**SPRING BREAK****Wednesday April 1, 2009**

Thomas Chapters 5, 6 and 7

**Wednesday April 8, 2009**

Stuart Hall interviewed by Kuan-Hsing Chen, "The Formation of a Diasporic Intellectual" (See Reader)

Stuart Hall, "Old and new identities, old and new ethnicities" (See Reader)

Naz Rassool "Fractured or Flexible Identities? Life Histories of 'Black' Diasporic Women in Britain" (See Reader)

**Wednesday April 15, 2009**

Elisa Joy White "Forging African Diaspora Places in Dublin's Retro-Global Spaces: Minority Making in a New Global City" (See Reader)

Tina M. Campt "Afro-German Cultural Identity and the Politics of Positionality: Contests and Contexts in the Formation of a German Ethnic Identity" (see Reader)

Ika Hügel-Marshall, excerpt from *Invisible Woman: Growing Up Black in Germany* (see Reader)**Wednesday April 22, 2009**

Allison Blakely, "The Black 'Pilgrims'" (See Reader)

Meredith Roman, "Making Caucasians Black: Moscow Since the Fall of Communism and the Racialization of Non-Russians" (See Reader)

Diaspora Paper #3 Due and Discussion

**The Black Pacific and Black Asia****Wednesday April 29, 2009**

Bernard Scott Lucious, "In the Black Pacific: Testimonies of Vietnamese Afro-Amerasian Displacements" (See Reader)

John Russell, "Race and Reflexivity: The Black Other in Contemporary Japanese Mass Culture" (See Reader)

**Outline of Final Papers Due**

**Wednesday May 6, 2009**

Andrew Grainger, "From Immigrant to Overstay: Samoan Identity, Rugby, and Cultural Politics of Race and Nation in Aotearoa/New Zealand" (See Reader)

Peter Brown, "From exclusion and alienation to a 'multi-racial community': The image of the métis in New Caledonian literature" (See Reader)

Final Discussions

Last day to submit a revised Diaspora Paper

**Final Papers are due on or before Wednesday May 13, 2009.  
No late papers will be accepted.**