

**WS/ES 390: GENDER AND RACE IN U.S. SOCIETY (E-Focus)**

**FALL 2015**

**KUY 210**

**T, Th 9:00-10:15 AM**

Dr. Monisha Das Gupta  
George Hall 306  
Ph: 956-2914  
dasgupta@hawaii.edu

**Office Hours:**

Thursday: 1:30-3:00 pm

Friday: 1:30-3:00 pm and by appointment

This syllabus and updates to it will be posted at:

<http://www2.hawaii.edu/~dasgupta/>

(The page can also be accessed through the Ethnic Studies Home Page)

**Course Description**

This course looks at the interlinked social processes that make gender and race in the United States. How have social relations like colonization, slavery, and migration shaped social institutions like the courts, prisons and media as well as the movements that resist these processes? We examine particular historical contexts and contemporary issues to answer this question. Thus, the entire course asks you to reflect on the ethics of building a just society. In doing, so we come to realize that concepts of race and gender change over time and space. Ideas about race and gender, and people's lived experiences of inhabiting these categories are fluid, not fixed. People do not experience their racial and gender identities apart from each other and these experiences of gender and race are also mediated by the role of sexuality, class and nationality.

\* Please use my office hours. If you cannot make those, make an appointment to see me. One-to-one meetings enable us to discuss your ideas, help you with any difficulty you face with the course material, and help me to get to know you better.

\* Students who have special needs should make an appointment to see me within the first week of class so that we can ensure your full participation.

**Contemporary Ethical Issues Focus**

Most often we use a binary moral framework of "good" or "bad" to judge the contemporary social problems that face us. Social problems, like racism and sexism, are multidimensional. To understand the complex roots of these problems and to effectively address them, we need finer tools that are based in ethics, rather than morality, so that we can see that there are more than two opposite sides of an issue. In this class, we will focus on the complexities of the ethical questions that each of the units raises, to learn how to develop appropriate ethical positions. In doing so, we will learn how to bridge the gap between normativity (how society should be) and reality (the way society is).

## Required Readings

The following books are available at Revolution Books 2626 King Street, 944-3106 (7 days a week 12 noon-6pm).

David Stannard. 2006. *Honor Killing: Race, Rape, and Clarence Darrow's Spectacular Last Case*. Penguin. [Stannard in Course Outline]

Andrea Smith. 2005. *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. South End Press. [Smith in Course Outline]

Michelle Alexander. 2012. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: New Press [Alexander in Course Outline]

## Learning Objectives

- Identify the ethical issues embedded in race and gender relations in U.S. society
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history of Hawai'i's multi-ethnic working people and their struggles for social justice
- Evaluate the range of anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-imperialist responses in order to arrive at ethical means of social action
- Link historical events and issues to contemporary concerns; trace change over time in the ethical frameworks of antiracist and anti-sexist efforts
- Think relationally across racial and gender groups
- Become critical thinkers. The course challenges you to move away from description to analysis by learning to ask “what,” “why,” “how” questions about the material.
- Develop writing and oral presentation skills

## Grade Distribution (Total=100)

- \* **Participation** (10%)
- \* In-class **Quizzes** (10%)
- \* 10/8 (Th), 11/3 (T), 12/10 (Th): **Short Papers** on Units II, III, IV (10% $\times$ 3=30%)
- \* Group Exercise: **Ethical Deliberation** (15%): See schedule below
- \* **Thesis Statement and List of References** for Research Paper (10%)
- \* 12/14 (M) by 3pm in George Hall 301: **Research Paper** (25%)
- \* Write up for **Extra Credit Events** (4 extra points max)
- \* 11/24, 12/8, 12/10: **Research Paper Presentations** (I will consider the quality of the presentation when grading your final paper)

## Course Requirements

Students who do not meet these course requirements (attendance, participation, respectful behavior in class, media protocol, and handing in assignments on time) risk failing the course. I invite you to meet with me when you are having trouble with these requirements so that we can jointly resolve the problems.

#### ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is mandatory. You are not supposed to be anywhere else during the scheduled class period. An attendance sheet will be passed around at the beginning of class. You will be marked absent if you come in late. Early departures or coming late to class — unless by permission — will be considered as absences.

You are allowed two unpenalized absence during the semester (amounts to a week's worth of classes). But in all cases of absence, you need to inform me via e-mail.

I reserve the right to fail a student whose attendance is irregular. Please understand that if you are absent then you obviously cannot participate in class. Your absences will be reflected in the grade you receive for participation.

#### PARTICIPATION:

Our collective goal is to create an interactive learning environment. Speaking and active listening in class counts for participation. The success of this E-focus class depends on honest and respectful discussion that engages with the ideas presented in the readings, lectures, videos, and by your classmates. The grade of students who do not participate in class discussion will automatically drop to a "B." If you have problems speaking in a classroom setting, please talk to me about it.

Disruptive and disrespectful behavior in the classroom that interferes with the learning environment is inappropriate and can lead to disciplinary action under the terms provided by the university's [Student Code of Conduct](#) (See [Proscribed Conduct, Section IV B.2-5](#))

#### READING:

You must come to class having done the assigned reading. You cannot participate in class discussions or do the weekly assignments without doing the readings. This is an upper level class. In taking it, you are making a commitment to come to class prepared. Please bring the readings we are covering on a particular day (books or articles) to class.

#### WRITING:

All written work for this course needs to be word-processed, grammatical, free of spelling errors, and well organized. All direct quotations taken from the readings must be cited. A paper that does not cite direct quotes taken from the readings by author and page number or that inadequately paraphrases the readings will receive an "F." For the purposes of this class Wikipedia is not a valid source of reference.

For all writing assignments refer to Common Grammatical Mistakes posted on Laulima Under Resources/Assignments so that you may avoid them.

For short essays and research paper, follow either of [the two Chicago systems \(notes or parenthetical\)](#) or the [MLA Style Sheet](#).

#### COMMUNICATION WITH YOU:

I often communicate with the class through the Laulima e-mail tool. Please read your UH email.

I send around a signup sheet so that you can meet me during my office hours. Utilize these meetings for your group ethical deliberations, research project as well as any other course related issues.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS:

In-Class Quizzes (10%)

From time to time, I will administer in-class quizzes. There are no makeups.

Learning Objective: The purpose of the quizzes is to assess your grasp of concepts used in the course.

Short Essays (3x10%= 30%):

Each essay is 3 pages long. For these assignments, you will answer essay questions I will set based on the material covered in Units II, III and IV. These assignments will be open book take homes. This means you will be allowed to consult the relevant texts and class notes to answer the questions. You will need to cite all your sources and ideas. A poorly or inadequately cited paper will receive a *failing grade*.

Learning Objective: The purpose of these assignments is to ascertain that you are reading, that you can critically engage with the materials, and that you are working on your bibliographical citation skills.

Final Research Paper (10%+ 25%=35%):

The process of writing your final research paper is broken up into steps over the semester.

Step 1: Choose your topic and post it on a google doc for the course. I will provide a list of suggested topics. If you are interested in a topic that is not on the list, please discuss this with me first either by meeting with me or by email. Any changes to your research topic will be made in consultation with me. You cannot switch your research topic after Week 8 (mid-Oct).

Step 2: Mid-Sept- Early Nov: Mandatory meeting with me about your topic. We will discuss the topic, your progress and identify resources. You are welcome to meet with me more than once about your research project.

Step 3: Oct 8 is Library Day. You meet with the Ethnic Studies librarian and spend the class time in Hamilton Library finding resources on your topic.

Step 4: On Nov 12 you will hand in your thesis statement and list of responses. We will do a workshop on how to write a thesis statement on Nov 5.

Step 5: Each of you will do a 5-min presentation on your research project in class on Nov 24, Dec 8 and Dec 10.

Step 6: On Dec 14, you will turn in your final research paper. There are no extensions on the research paper deadline.

Learning Objective: You will exit this course feeling confident that you can research a topic by using academic and reliable online sources; you can present the main points of your research cogently; you can organize and write a research paper; you know how to cite your sources and generate a list of references according to a bibliographical style.

Group Exercise: Ethical Deliberation (15%):

*The group exercise is not a traditional presentation.* Each student will sign up for one of the five topics listed below to formulate group exercises that will allow students to deliberate on the range of ethical positions that one can take on the topic. The topics are based on the materials you will be covering in class. The presenters will design the exercise to stage the ethical questions outlined in the guidelines provided and in consultation with me. During the in-class discussion, the facilitators will ensure that a) students discuss the ethical dilemmas and arrive at ways to address them; b) everyone in the class gets an opportunity to participate in discussions and share their ideas.

- \* 9/17 (Th): Race and Gender: Fluidity/Fixity
- \* 10/15 (Th): Moral Panics
- \* 10/29 (Th): Crime, Punishment, Justice
- \* 11/19 (Th): Criminalization/Sexual Autonomy
- \* 12/3 (Th): Decolonial Practices

Learning Objective: The purpose of this assignment to develop the skills to deliberate on ethical issues; sharpen your critical thinking skills; and apply the material covered in class to contemporary issues. The exercise also allows you to develop the skills you need to work collaboratively; it challenges you to productively participate in discussions by presenting your ideas, listening to other people's ideas, and responding constructively.

Extra credit: (4 credits per semester)

You can earn up to 4 extra credits by attending events on campus that I will notify you by e-mail or a combination of attending events. To get credit for attending the event, you need to submit a short write-up within a week of the event. The write-up should explain the event and your response to it, including a question you asked or wanted to ask.

Learning Objective: The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to take advantage of the vibrant intellectual environment of our university. This is one of the few times in your life that you will get to hear and interact with leading scholars. To participate in these events is an important part of your undergraduate education.

## **Policies**

### **PROTOCOL:**

Cell phones need to be turned off. Text messaging, surfing the internet, doing work for another course, reading the newspaper, sitting in class with your headphones on or other activities not related to the course will not be tolerated in this class. If you want to do these things, please do not come to class. If I notice that you are engaged in any of these activities, you will be asked to leave. Students who breach classroom protocol, and take away from our learning environment risk penalties, including a *failing grade in the course*.

### **LATE PAPERS:**

All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. The dates on which the papers are due are firm deadlines. You will lose 1/3 of a grade for every day that an assignment is late. For example, if you submit an A- paper a day late, the grade will be scaled down to a B+. There are no late submissions allowed for the final research paper.

### **Absences:**

Attendance is mandatory.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

Any infraction of codes of academic honesty will lead to sanctions from the instructor. You will receive a failing grade if you copy or submit other people's work, or do not properly attribute ideas that are not original to you. Please read [Section IV B.1 of Proscribed Conduct of the Student Conduct Code](#) for familiarizing yourself with what constitutes academic dishonesty. See also the [Academic Grievance Procedure](#) to familiarize yourself with the process.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

*Sources for the readings listed are fully cited in the Table of Contents (Laulima/Resources)*

**Unit I: Core Concepts**

**Week 1**

**8/25**

Introductions; Building blocks

**8/27**

Laulima/Resources: Omi and Winant (2015), "The Theory of Racial Formation" (105-109)

[AAA Statement](#)

Interview with Cornel West (2015), "[The Fire of a New Generation](#)"

**Week 2**

**9/1**

Laulima/Resources: Omi and Winant (2015), "The Theory Racial Formation" (Racialization, 109-112; Contemporary Reiterations of Scientific Racism, 117-121; Racial Projects and Racism 124-130)

**9/3**

Laulima/Resources: Kandaswamy (2012), "Gendering Racial Formation" Smith, Ch 1

**Week 3**

**9/8**

Laulima/Resources: Borstein (1994), "Which Outlaws? Or Who Was That Masked Man?" [Mock](#), "On Redefining Realness"(Part 1); "Disclosure"(Part 2), "Passing,"(Part 5), "Talks at Google" (You will find the video when you scroll down to the bottom of the page. Make sure to listen to the end of the google interview and the Q&A)

**9/10**

Laulima/Resources: McKibben (2014),"The Current State of Multiracial Discourse"

**Week 4**

\* 9/17: Group 1, Ethical Deliberation: Race and Gender: Fluidity/Fixity (15%)

**9/15**

Laulima/Resources: Lipsitz (1998), "Bill Moore's Body" and "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness" excerpted from The Possessive Investment in Whiteness

**9/17**

Laulima/Resources: Bonilla-Silva (2011), "The Invisible Weight of Whiteness" Williams, [Seeing a Color-Blind Future](#)

**Unit II: Honor Killing: Race, Masculinity and Femininity**

**Week 5**

**9/22**

Stannard, Chs 1-7

**9/24**

Stannard, Chs 7-14

Laulima/Resources: Davis (1981), "Race Racism and the Myth of the Black Rapist"

**Week 6**

**9/29**

Stannard, Chs 15-20

**10/1**

Stannard, Chs 21-25

Laulima/Resources: Sonoda (2008), "A Nation Incarcerated"

Chesney-Lind and Brown (2008), [Hawai'i incarceration rates](#)

Guest Speaker

**Week 7**

\* 10/8 (Th): Short Paper on Unit II to be submitted on Laulima by 8am, Thursday (10%)

**10/6**

Stannard, 26-28

Video: Impact of Massie Case

DMZ Hawaii, [Military Sites in Hawai'i](#)

**10/8**

LIBRARY DAY: MEET IN HAMILTON LIBRARY

**Unit III: Race, Gender and Punishment**

**Week 8**

\* 10/15 (Th): Group 2, Ethical Deliberation: Moral Panics (15%)

**10/13**

Video: [What is Neoliberalism?](#) S&F Online 11(1-2)

Gowan (2012-2013): "[Thinking Neoliberalism, Gender, Justice](#)," S&F Online 11(1-2)

**10/15**

Alexander, Ch 1

[Michelle Alexander speaking about her book on Making Contact](#) (2011)

**Week 9**

**10/20**

Alexander, Chs 2 and 3

**10/22**

Alexander, Ch 4 (97-127)

**Week 10**

\* 10/29 (Th) Group 3, Ethical Deliberation: Crime Punishment Justice (15%)

**10/27**

Alexander, Ch 5

**10/29**

Alexander, Ch 6

Crenshaw (2015), [Black Girls Matter: Pushed Out, Over Policed and Underprotected](#)  
(African American Policy Forum Report)

Kelly (2013), [The U.S. v. Trayvon Martin: How the System Worked](#)

## **Unit IV: Decolonizing Bodies and Spaces**

### **Week 11**

\* 11/3 (T): Short paper on Unit III due in class (10%)

**11/3**

Laulima/Resources: Sedgwick (1993), "Queer and Now"

Laulima/ Resources: Stanley, Spade, Queer(In)Justice (2012), "Queering Prison Abolition, Now?"

**11/5**

[Democracy Now! interview with #BlackLivesMatters founders](#)

Laulima/Resources: Selection from American Quarterly Forum (TBA)

Thesis statement workshop

### **Week 12**

\* 11/12 (Th): Thesis statement (argument) for your research paper and list of references due in class (10%)

See p. 2 of Research Topics and Guidelines.

**11/10**

Smith, Ch 4

**11/12**

Laulima/ Resources: Berlant (1994), "America, 'Fat', the Fetus"

Laulima/ Resources: Paltrow and Flavin (2013), "Arrests of and Forced Interventions on Pregnant Women in the United States, 1973–2005: Implications for Women's Legal Status and Public Health"

Tambe (2015), "[The Indiana foeticide case: Why Purvi Patel's Indianness matters](#)"

Rudrappa (2012), [India's reproductive assembly line](#)

### **Week 13**

\* 11/19 (Th): Group 4, Ethical Deliberation, "Criminalization/Sexual Autonomy" (15%)

**11/17**

Smith, Ch 7

**11/19**

Laulima/Resources: David and Ayouby (2005), "Studying the Exotic Other in the Classroom"

Laulima/Resources: Abu Lughod (2002), "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?"

**Week 14**

**11/24**

Research Project Presentations

**11/26**

THANKSGIVING BREAK

**Week 15**

\*12/3 (Th) Group 5, Ethical Deliberation: Decolonial Practices (15%)

**12/1**

Laulima/Resources: Atshan and Moore (2014), "Reciprocal Solidarities: Where the Black and Palestinian Queer Struggles Meet"

Guest Speaker

**12/3**

Smith, Start Ch 8

**Week 16**

\*12/10 Short Essay on Unit IV due in class (10%)

**12/8**

Smith, Finish Ch 8

Research Project Presentations

**12/10**

Wrap up and Reflection

Research Project Presentation

**FINAL RESEARCH PAPER (25%) DUE ON 12/14 (M), GEORGE HALL 301, 3PM  
NO EXTENSIONS**

See p. 3 of Research Topics and Guidelines for the assignment.

\* This syllabus is subject to minor changes. All updates will be posted online.