

**ES/WS 390: GENDER AND RACE IN U.S. SOCIETY (E-Focus)**  
**SPRING 2008**  
**BUSAD D103**  
**12:30-3:00pm**

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For all updates on the syllabus see: <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, civil rights, and migration shaped social institutions like the courts, media, education, and health care? How have people fought back against gender and racial subordination? We examine particular historical contexts and contemporary issues to answer these questions. Thus, the entire course asks you to reflect on the ethics of building a society that is free of racial and gender discrimination. In doing, so we come to realize that concepts of race and gender change over time and that people do not experience their racial and gender identities apart from each other. Furthermore, one's race and gender also send out messages about one's sexuality and economic class. Thus, the thematic units in the course build on each other to communicate that:

- a) Experiences of gender and race are also mediated by the role of sexuality, class and nationality. Therefore, a comprehensive vision of social justice must take into account the intersections of different types of social hierarchies.
- b) This intersectional approach helps us place the contemporary experiences of different racial groups in historical context.

**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*).

Each week, 30 minutes will be devoted to student-led discussions in groups or as an entire class of the ethical issues that the material covered raise. The weekly assignments (20%), the student roundtables (10%), and the media analysis (10%) together make up the assignments that will develop your skills of ethical deliberations.

- \* 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.

**Required Readings:**

WS/ES 390 Reader is available at **Professional Image**, 2633 S. King St, 973-6599.

The following books are available at **Revolution Books** 2626 King Street, 944-3106. Please pay by check or cash. Credit cards are not accepted.

- 1) David Stannard. 2006. *Honor Killing: Race, Rape, and Clarence Darrow's Spectacular Last Case*. Penguin. [Stannard in Course Outline]
- 2) Andrea Smith. 2005. *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. South End Press. [Smith in Course Outline]
- 3) Sharmila Rudrappa. 2004. *Ethnic Routes to Becoming American: Indian Immigrants and Cultures of Citizenship*. Rutgers University Press. [Rudrappa in Course Outline]

**Learning Objectives:**

- Identify the ethical issues embedded in race and gender relations in U.S. society
- Evaluate the range of anti-racist and anti-sexist 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

**Getting a major, minor or certificate in Ethnic Studies and Women’s Studies:**

Many of you have been taking Ethnic Studies or Women’s Studies courses that qualify you for a major, minor, or certificate in these fields. ES/WS 390 fulfills Ethnic Studies’ course requirements in Category C and Women’s Studies’ requirement of coursework with a focus on gender, race and ethnicity in transnational perspective. To learn how to get a major, minor, or certificate in Ethnic Studies go to the Ethnic Studies Academic Programs webpage and contact Prof. Ibrahim Aoude at [aoude@hawaii.edu](mailto:aoude@hawaii.edu) or at 956-4000. For Women’s Studies, go to Women’s Studies Degrees webpage and contact Prof. Kathy Ferguson at [kferguso@hawaii.edu](mailto:kferguso@hawaii.edu) or at 956-6933.

**Assignments and Grade Distribution (Total=100)**

Weekly Assignments (see course outline)	20%
In-class Group Exercise (see course outline)	10%
Mid Term (Take Home) due 3/10	20%
Movie Review due 3/31	10%
Research Paper due 5/12	30%
Attendance and Participation	10%

## **Course Requirements:**

### **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 cannot sign the sheet if you come in late. Early departures or coming late to class — unless by permission — will be considered as absences. You are allowed one unpenalized absence during the semester (this amounts to a week's worth of class) 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:**

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.

### **Readings:**

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 reader or both) 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."*

**Weekly assignments** (20%): You will submit a response (max 2 pages) to the readings and an overall discussion question for the weeks marked in the Course Outline. The response must cover *all* the weekly readings and must reflect *critical thinking*. It should *not* be a summary of the readings. You will end the assignment with a "why/how/what" question on the overall themes of the readings. There are *no make-ups* for discussion questions and questions submitted by e-mail or dropped off by a friend are not acceptable. See the online syllabus for guidelines on doing this assignment.

**Mid Term** (20%): I will set essay questions based on the material covered in class for your midterm. The midterm will be an *open book take home*. You will be allowed to consult the relevant texts and class notes to answer the questions.

**Movie Review** (10%): I will provide you with a list of movies from which you will select one and write a review using the analytical tools used in the course.

**Research Paper** (30%): Students need to meet with me to discuss their research project at least *twice* during the semester. The research project will be based on primarily on library research. You may incorporate primary research material such as historical documents, interviews, and popular culture sources. On the *4<sup>th</sup> week* of class you will submit a research topic and a list of books, scholarly, articles, and web resources. You will work systematically on the project for the rest of the semester. This means reading the books and articles you have listed for your project and taking notes on them, doing your interviews, collecting archival material, watching and taking notes on shows or movies. There are *no extensions* on the research paper deadline.

**Group Exercise:**

Each student will sign up for one of the 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 leaders in charge of the topic will need to ensure that a) students discuss the ethical dilemmas and arrive at ways to address them; b) everyone present gets an opportunity to participate in discussions and share their ideas. See online syllabus for guidelines and resources for this assignment.

- Moral Panics: Media, Public Opinion and the Rule of Law in the Massie Case
- Confronting Sexism in Communities of Color
- Gender Violence and Culture
- Reproductive Choice, Reproductive Rights
- Cultural Appropriation, Cultural Appreciation

**Policies:****Late papers:**

All assignments are due at the beginning of the class. 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 eg., if you submit a A- paper a day late, the grade will be scaled down to a B+.

**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.

**Course Outline:****Unit I: Core Concepts****Week 1**

1/14: Introductions; AAA Statement (Download); Lorber, "Social construction of gender" (Reader)

**Week 2**

1/21: HOLIDAY

Keep up with the readings for 1/28

**Week 3**

- **Weekly assignment #1** on readings for 1/14 and 1/28 (2pts)

1/28: Omi and Winant, "Racial Formation" (Reader); Pierre, "Black Immigrants in the United States and Cultural Narratives of Ethnicity" (Download); Okimoto "Is Yellow Black or White?" (Reader); McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," (Reader); Zinn and Dill, "Theorizing Difference from Multiracial feminism" (Reader)

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

### **Week 4**

- **Weekly assignment #2** (2pts)
- **Research topic and list of references due**

2/4: Stannard, Chs 1-10; Davis, "Race Racism and the Myth of the Black Rapist"  
(Reader)

### **Week 5**

- **Weekly assignment # 3** (2pts)

2/11: Stannard, Chs 11-16; Lipsitz, "Bill Moore's Body" and "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness" (Reader); España-Maram, "'White Trash' and 'Brown Hoards'" (Reader); Yamanaka, "Kala gave me anykine advice" (Reader); NYT on Taxi Halls

### **Week 6**

2/18: HOLIDAY

Keep up with reading

### **Week 7**

- **Weekly assignment #4** (2pts)
- **Group Exercise: Moral Panics**

2/25: Stannard, Chs 17-28, Tengan Ch 2 and 6 (download)

## **Unit III: Violence against Women and Sexual Economies**

### **Week 8**

- **Weekly assignment #5** (2pts)

3/3: Smith, Chs 1 and 2; Adrienne Davis, "'Don't let nobody bother yo' principle,'" (Reader); Video: *No!*

### **Week 9**

- **Mid Term due in class 3/10** (20 pts)

Keep up with the reading

3/10: Video: *No!* (contd); Smith Ch 7; Anzaldúa, "Corner of 50<sup>th</sup> St and Fifth Av." (Reader)

### **Week 10:**

- **Weekly assignment #6** (2pts)
- **Group Exercise: Confronting Sexism**

3/17: Collins, "Get Your Freak On," and "Sexual Violence Revisited" (Reader)  
Video, *Beyond Beats & Rhymes*

### **Week 11**

**SPRING BREAK**

## **Week 12**

- **Movie Review due in class**(10 pts)
- **Weekly assignment # 7** (2pts)
- **Group Exercise: Gender Violence and Culture**

3/31: Rudrappa Ch 1- 4; Smith Ch 7; Rudrappa, “Madness, Diasporic Difference, and State Violence: Explaining Filicide in American Courts” (download)

## **Week 13**

- **Weekly assignment #8** (2pts)
- **Group Presentation: Reproductive Choice, Reproductive Rights**

4/7: Smith Ch 4; Roberts, “The Dark Side of Birth Control” and “From Norplant to Contraceptive Vaccines” (Reader)

## **Unit IV: Orientalism**

### **Week 14**

- **Weekly assignment #9** (2pts)

4/14: Said, “Orientalism” (Reader); David and Ayouby, “Studying the Exotic Other in the Classroom” (download); Jordan, “Islam and the USA Today” (Reader);

Video: *Under One Sky: Arab Women in North America Talk about the Hijab*

### **Week 15:**

- **Weekly assignment #10**

4/21: Uno, “Unlearning Orientalism” (Reader); Naber et al. “The Forgotten ‘-sim’” (Reader); Elia, “Islamophobia and the ‘Privileging’ of Arab American Women” (Reader); MacFarquhar, “Abused Muslim women in U.S. gain advocates” (download)

### **Week 16:**

- **Group Exercise: Cultural Appropriation, Cultural Appreciation**

4/28: Maira, “Trance-Formations: Orientalism and Cosmopolitanism in Youth Culture” (Reader); Rudrappa, Ch 5, 6, pp. 147-150, 159 (Rise of White ethnicity) –170

### **Week 17:**

5/5: Smith, Ch 8; Cho, “Beyond a day without an immigrant” (download)

**RESEARCH PAPER (30 pts) DUE ON 5/12 (M), GEORGE HALL 301, 3PM**

\* This syllabus is subject to minor changes