

## ***HIST/CLS 468: Popular Culture in Multi-racial United States***

Professor Nan Enstad  
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Class: T Th 11-12:15  
Office hours: Th 1:30-3:30

### ***Course Description:***

This course explores how popular culture over the past 170 years has been a location for racialization (that is, the formation of race identities and ideas) and exploitation as well as for community formation, the creation of new ideas and cultural formations, and resistance. The explosion of forms of media and leisure activities since about 1870 (popular theater and fiction, movies, radio, records, television, etc) means that popular culture increasingly defines people's daily routines, their ways of socializing and the ways they see the world and become who they are. Who we are as people can not entirely be separated from the media and products we use daily. In addition, virtually everyone participates in popular culture, unlike government politics or high finance or foreign policy, so when we study popular culture in history we study lots of people, not just elites. By looking closely at old popular culture forms and phenomenon we can see the traces of how people formed and challenged social hierarchies, especially race, class, gender and sexual hierarchies, and hopefully better understand the world we inherited.

This is not a lecture class! Your participation will be required on a daily basis, as we discuss readings or popular culture examples in class. I will regularly talk for part of a session in order to set up themes or theories, but you will also be asked to contribute ideas, research findings, and responses to others.

### ***Attendance Policy***

Attendance is required because so much of this course happens in class; each unexcused absence over two will lower your final semester grade by one third of a letter grade.

### ***Required Texts***

note: books are available on reserve at College Library and for purchase at the Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative at 426 W. Gilman Street. Turn right on Gilman from State when walking toward the capitol.

Rachel Rubin and Jeffrey Melnick, *Immigration and American Popular Culture*  
Adrian Burgos, Jr., *Playing America's Game: Baseball, Latinos, and the Color Line*  
Eric Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles*  
Suzanne Smith, *Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit*  
Imani Perry, *Prophets of the Hood: Politics and Poetics in Hip Hop*

A required Course Packet, available on line through ereserves at College Library OR in hard copy at Student Print in the Memorial Union. To access ereserves: Login to MyUW portal: <http://my.wisc.edu/>. Click on your **Academic** tab. Note that in your list of current courses, those with library reserves available contain a link for "**library/reserve**". Click that link to go to your reserves.

### ***Course Requirements:***

#### 1. Participation (10%)

You will be assigned a number grade (of possible 100) for your participation, based on the quality and quantity of your participation in small and large class discussions.

#### 2. Learn@UW assignments (10%)

You will be asked to contribute thoughts or questions or other information related to the readings on

Learn@UW on a weekly basis. You will receive the assignments via the email list. You must complete all of these brief assignments in order to receive full credit. At least one of the assignments will require you to participate in a small-group blog; this assignment will be graded on a point system. Total number of possible points for all assignments is 100.

3. Position Paper (15%)

This paper will ask you to take a position on a question emerging from Unit 1. 4 pages.

4. Exam I (in class) (20%)

This in-class exam will consist of identifications, short answers, and a short essay. Covers everything in Unit 2, except for Avila. You will receive a study sheet in advance, and will be allowed to bring in one 3x5" index card with notes.

5. Exam II (take home) (20%)

This take-home exam will consist of identifications and an essay. Covers everything in Unit 3 and in Unit 4 through 11/13.

6. Final Paper (25%)

This final paper will be written in response to a question I provide. You will draw upon three sources in order to discuss the question: some aspect of rap; another popular culture form we have discussed in the class; and a popular culture form that you find interesting that we have not discussed in class. You will receive the question and more detailed parameters near the end of the semester. 8 pages.

**Course Schedule** (note: complete readings before class. Please bring relevant readings to class.)

**Unit One: Foundations-- Race as Performance**

Week 1: *How is Race Performance?*

T 9/4 Introductions

Th 9/6 Handout—Obadike; Kelley.

Week 2: *Love and Theft: Racialization in the era of Commercialized Recreation*

T 9/11 Roediger, "White Skins, Black Masks" Packet

Th 9/13 Sotiropoulos "Vaudeville Stages and Black Bohemia" and "Coda: Hokum Redux" Packet

Week 3: *Occupying Contradictions and Contradictory Occupations*

T 9/18 Kasson, "American Indian Performers in the Wild West" Packet

Th 9/20 Garcia, "Just Put on that Padua Hills Smile" Packet

**Unit Two: The Black/White Binary in a Multiracial Society**

Week 4: *"America" and Sports as a Technology of Belonging*

T 9/25 **DUE: POSITION PAPER.** no new reading

Th 9/27 Burgos, *Playing America's Game* pp. 17-67

Week 5: *Sports and Segregation's Contradictions*

T 10/2 Burgos *Playing America's Game* pp. 71-176

Th 10/4 Streible, "Race and the Reception of Jack Johnson Films" Packet

España-Maram, "From the 'Living Doll' to the 'Bolo Puncher': Prizefighting..." Packet

Week 6: *The Cultural Imaginary of Immigration Before WWII*

T 10/9 Beltrán, "Dolores Del Rio, the 1st 'Latin Invasion,' & Hollywood's Transition to Sound" Packet;

Lim, "I Protest: Anna May Wong and the Performance of Modernity" Packet

Th 10/11 Rubin and Melnick, "Hollywood, 1930: Jewish Gangster Masquerade" *Immigration* pp. 17-48

Week 7: *War and Postwar Shifts in the Stakes of Racialization*

T 10/16 Rubin and Melnick, "Los Angeles, 1943: Zoot Suit Style..." *Immigration* pp. 49-87

Th 10/18 Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight*, pp. 1-64

**Unit Three: Suburbanization, "Integration" and the New Geography of Race**

Week 8 *How did Suburbanization affect Racialization?*

T 10/23 **IN-CLASS EXAM**. no new reading

Th 10/25 Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight*, pp. 65-105

Week 9: *Is This What Integration Looks Like?*

T 10/30 Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight* pp. 106-242

Th 11/1 Burgos, *Playing America's Game*, pp. 179-226.

Week 10: "Integration" vs. *Multiracial Spaces*

T 11/6 Rubin and Melnick, "Broadway, 1957: West Side Story & Nuyorican..." *Immigration* pp. 88-128

Garcia, "Memories of El Monte: Dance Halls and Youth Culture..."

**Unit Four: Culture Industries and the Marketing of Oppositional (?) Voices**

Th 11/8 Smith, *Dancing in the Street*, pp. 54-138.

Week 11 *Social Movements and Consumer Markets*

T 11/13 Smith, *Dancing in the Street*, pp. 138-208

Rubin and Melnick, "Monteray, 1967: The Hippies Meet Ravi Shankar" *Immigration* pp. 129-175

Th 11/15 **DUE: TAKE HOME EXAM** no new reading.

Week 12: *Social Movements and "Authentic" Voice*

T 11/20 Smith, *Dancing in the Street*, pp. 209-246

Broyles-González, "El Teatro Campesino & the Mexican Popular Performance..." Packet

Th 11/22 Thanksgiving NO CLASS

Week 13: *Who is Speaking in Rap Music?*

T 11/27 Rubin and Melnick, "South Bronx, 1977: Jamaican Migrants..." *Immigration* pp. 176-211

Chang, "The Culture Assassins" and "Becoming the Hip-Hop Generation" Packet.

Th 11/29 Perry, *Prophets of the Hood*, pp. 1-57

Week 14: *Prophets and Profits*

T 12/4 Perry, *Prophets of the Hood*, pp. 102-154

Th 12/6 Perry, *Prophets of the Hood*, pp. 155-203

Week 15: *Global Circulations and Personal Identities*

T 12/11 Rubin and Melnick, "Cyberspace, Y2K: Giant Robots, Asian Punks" *Immigration* pp. 212-247

Negrón-Muntaner, "Barbies Hair: Selling Out Puerto Rican Identity..." Packet.

Th 12/13 Last Class! No new reading.

Final Paper due NOON December 20 in my office (Humanities 5113) or mailbox ((Humanities #5002, 5<sup>th</sup> floor, by elevator in corner nearest Memorial Library). You may turn your paper in earlier, but not later, than this date and time.

PACKET CONTENTS:

Roediger, "White Skins, Black Masks"  
Sotiropoulos "Vaudeville Stages and Black Bohemia" and "Coda: Hokum Redux"  
Kasson, "American Indian Performers in the Wild West"  
García, "Just Put on that Padua Hills Smile"  
Streible, "Race and the Reception of Jack Johnson Films"  
España-Maram, "From the 'Living Doll' to the 'Bolo Puncher': Prizefighting, Masculinity..."  
Beltrán, "Dolores Del Rio, the 1st 'Latin Invasion,' & Hollywood's Transition to Sound"  
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Negrón-Muntaner, "Barbies Hair: Selling Out Puerto Rican Identity in the Global Market"