

University of Florida

Department of Political Science

INR 4931

THE COLOUR LINE: RACE AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

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Course Description

Scholars of international politics have long neglected the role of race and racism in world affairs, even though the origins of international relations as an academic discipline rest in the early years of the 20th century, when questions of imperialism and governance over different races necessitated the development of new ways of thinking about inter-state and inter-racial relations. Over the past decade, however, prompted by insights from the post-colonial theory but also by continued Western military engagements in the Middle East and Africa, new scholarly publications have sought to bring back the analysis of “the color line” into our conversations about global politics. The topics that these works have highlighted include –among others - the role of African-Americans in the development of international relations and the U.S. foreign policy, the impact of scientific racism on Western understanding of itself and its political projects in the world, the rise of Afro-Asian solidarity and the non-aligned movement during the Cold War, and different articulations of non-Western subjectivities and their prospects for having “a voice” in world affairs.

This is the course about the role of race and racism in international politics. The key impetus for the creation of the course is to bring an even more diverse group of undergraduate students into the conversations about international politics on our campus. The study of international relations in the United States is still a

predominantly white endeavor. One of the main goals of this course is to encourage students from a variety of backgrounds to enter the field of international politics with an understanding that others have done it before them.

Readings

Most readings will be available on Canvas. Additional readings pertinent to the class might be emailed through the listserv or posted in Announcements.

Students are required to acquire the following book:

Sorayya Khan, *City of Spies* (Little A, 2017).

Requirements

Grade will be based on:

- Brief (250 words maximum) responses to weekly questions, based upon your readings. Questions will be posted in advance of the readings and discussions in class. They will open each Thursday at 5 p.m. and will be due on Sunday at 8 p.m. You will have one hour to respond to the question, so you will have to start answering before 7 p.m. on Sunday to meet the deadline. Over the course of the semester, each student will have to respond to 10 questions, worth 3 points each, for the maximum of 30 points.
- Three written assignments - a brief research paper (2500 words maximum, 15 points) due March 29 (topics and the format will be discussed in class), a book review (1250-1500 words, 10 points) due April 10, and a cumulative take-home exam due April 24 (2500 words maximum, 25 points). Questions for the take-home exam will be distributed on April 17.
- Two visual - Adobe Spark - projects (10 points each) due February 27 and March 13 respectively.
- Participation/attendance grade works the following way: students who do not miss a single class will receive 3 extra points, students who miss 2 classes will

receive 1 extra point, students who miss 3 or more classes will not receive any extra points.

Please note that students who miss more than 30% of classes (12) will not be allowed to take the final exam and will receive a failing grade for the course.

Grade scale is 94-100 A; 90-93 A-; 87-89 B+; 84-86 B; 80-83 B-; 77-79 C+; 74-76 C; 70-73 C-; 67-69 D+; 64-66 D; 60-63 D- .

For current regulations on grades and grade point averages at the University of Florida please

see <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Attendance

Participation/attendance grade works the following way: students who do not miss a single class and actively participate in discussions will receive extra 3 points, students who miss 1 class will receive 2 extra points, students who miss 2 classes will receive 1 extra points, students who miss 3 classes or more will not receive any extra points. Students who miss more than 30% of classes (12) will not be allowed to take complete the course and will receive an E for the course. If you are missing classes for legitimate (medical) reasons, please bring appropriate evidence (along with exact dates of classes that you have missed) at the end of the semester, preferably in class on April 19th. It is very difficult for me to keep track of emails or brief mentions of absences at the end or beginning of classes and guarantee that your absences will be excused when points for attendance are ultimately calculated.

WARNING: WE WILL BE WATCHING A NUMBER OF FILMS AND DOCUMENTARIES IN CLASS. TREAT THEM WITH THE SAME DEGREE OF ATTENTION AND SERIOUSNESS AS YOUR READINGS. VISUALS SPEAK JUST LIKE WORDS.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION POLICY

I am always happy to write a letter of recommendation for students who have taken at least two classes with me, and received As in both classes. Some exceptions are possible, but they are very, very rare. If you are graduating and think that you may need a letter for recommendation in a few years from now, you should ask your professors for a letter before you leave the University. It is very difficult to write a meaningful letter for a student, no matter how brilliant, several years after graduation. Keep in mind that the key word for a letter is **meaningful** – your letter writers should be familiar with you and with your work in order to be able to write letters that truly speak about you, your work, and your accomplishments. Generic letters, even if glowing, are useless in admissions processes in graduate schools and law schools. Ask for your letters those professors or teaching assistants who are most familiar with your work, even if they teach in a discipline different from the one that you are applying for in graduate school.

WEEKLY OUTLINE

Week 1 – INTRODUCTION

Tuesday, January 9

Introductory class – syllabus, requirements, assignments, grades

Thursday, January 11

Race and International Politics: Why bother?

Max Boot, "2017 Was the Year I Learned About My White Privilege," *Foreign Policy*, December 27, 2017

Take tests on "Race" and "Native" on [Harvard's Project Implicit](#) page. Record your results for both tests on paper (or, even better, print the page with your results) and bring it class on Thursday. Please, make sure that the page on which the results are recorded (or the printout) do not have any identifiers.

Week 2 – WHAT IS RACE?

Tuesday, January 16

"Race," in Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (New York: Routledge, 1998).

Richard Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," in Paula Rothenberg (ed.) *White Privilege: Essential Readings on the Other Side of Racism* (New York: Worth Publishers, 2005).

Thursday, January 18

Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me* (New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2015)

Week 3 – WHAT IS RACISM?

Tuesday, January 23

Ibram X. Kendi, *Stamped From the Beginning* (New York: Nation Books, 2016) – Prologue

George M. Frederickson, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002)

Thursday, January 25

"I am not your Negro" - Film

Week 4 – COLONIALISM

Tuesday, January 30

Ann Laura Stoler, "Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers," in Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (eds.) *Tensions of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997)

Frederick Copper, "States, Empires, and Political Imagination," a chapter from *Colonialism in Question* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

Thursday, February 1

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963) - excerpts

Week 5 – SLAVERY

Tuesday, February 6

Browse and read through the documents and texts on UNESCO's website SLAVE ROUTE.

Thursday, February 8

Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations," *The Atlantic*, June 2014

Week 6 – IR AND RACE I

Tuesday, February 13

Robert Vitalis, "The Graceful and Generous Liberal Gesture: Making Racism Invisible in American International Relations," *Millennium* 29:2, June 2000

Thursday, February 15

Michel Rolph-Trouillot, "Haitian Revolution as a Non-Event" in *Silencing the Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995)

Michael Paul Rogin, "Liberal Society and the Indian Question," *Politics & Society* 1:3, 1971

Week 7 – IR AND RACE II

Tuesday, February 20

Robert Vitalis, "The Birth of a Discipline" in David Long and Brian C. Schmidt (eds) *Imperialism and Internationalism in the Discipline of International Relations* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005)

Thursday, February 22

Srdjan Vucetic, *Anglosphere: A Genealogy of Racialized Identity in International Relations* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2011), excerpt

Week 8 – AFRICAN-AMERICAN IR SCHOLARS

Tuesday, February 27

W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) and "The African Roots of War" (1915)

Thursday, March 1

Robert Vitalis, "Worlds of Color" in *White World Order, Black Power Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015)

Susan Pedersen, "Destined to Disappear" – review of Vitalis' *White World Order, Black Power Politics* in *London Review of Books*, 38:20, October 20, 2016

Week 9 – SPRING BREAK

Tuesday, March 6

Spring Break

Thursday, March 8

Spring Break

Week 10 – DE-COLONIZATION – The Struggle

Tuesday, March 13

Mahatma Gandhi, "Quit India" speech

Frantz Fanon, "Concerning Violence" from *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963)

Thursday, March 15

Battle of Algiers - film

Week 11 – DE-COLONIZATION

Tuesday, March 20

Adam Hochschild, "In the Heart of Darkness," *New York Review of Books*, October 6, 2005

Thursday, March 22

Lumumba - film

Week 12 – BANDUNG AND NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT

Tuesday, March 27

Mustapha K. Pasha, The 'Bandung Impulse' and International Relations. In S. Seth. (ed) *Postcolonial Theory and International Relations: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2012)

Thursday, March 29

Robert Vitalis, "The Midnight Ride of Kwame Nkrumah and Other Fables of Bandung (Ban-doong)," *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development*, 4:2, 2013

Jelena Subotic and Srdjan Vucetic, "Performing Solidarity: Whiteness and Status Seeking in Non-Aligned World," *Journal of International Relations and Development*, August 2017

Week 13 – ISA Conference

Tuesday, April 3 - No class

Thursday, April 5 - No class

Week 14 – COLONIALISM AND ITS RACIALIZED AFTERLIFE

Tuesday, April 10 – Sorayya Khan, *City of Spies* (Little A, 2017)

Thursday, April 12 – Sorayya Khan, "Raising Brown Boys in Post 9/11 America," Longreads, September 2017

Week 15 – COLONIALISM AND ITS RACIALIZED AFTERLIFE

Tuesday, April 17

Laleh Khalili, "Reckoning with Britain's Racism and Xenophobia," Truthout.org, June 30, 2016

Gurminder K. Bhambra, "Brexit, Class and British National Identity," Discover Society, July 5, 2016

Naeem Inayatullah, "The Eternal Return of Benign Colonialism," The Disorder of Things, October 7, 2017

Thursday, April 19

The Price of the Ticket - film

Week 16 – WHERE/WHAT NEXT?

Tuesday, April 24

Wrap-up