

Relational Formations of Race: Blog Assignment

Note: Directions for instructors are in italics.

Below you will find a template for the assignment. You are welcome to scale it up or down, depending on whether you are teaching a graduate or undergraduate course, or to change it as needed if you are teaching an interdisciplinary versus discipline-based course. I'd love any feedback you may have.

In this assignment, students connect a current event to 2-3 other events, historical or current, to show how using the lens of race as a relational concept can make visible the connections among subordinated groups and the logic that underpins the forms of inclusion and dispossession they face. (**For an interdisciplinary class, the kinds of "events" used for comparison might be expanded to include sources such as cultural productions, songs, videos, local art exhibits*)

For example, in this blogpost (*see link or attachment <https://dornsife.usc.edu/csii/blog-natalia-molina/>*) the author used a current event: The United Constitutional Patriots (UCP), a right-wing militia group, detaining immigrants at the New Mexico-Mexico border (*New York Times*, April 19, 2019). She then presented two examples showing how the violence the UCP perpetrated at the border has been informed by practices directed at other communities of color.

- Example 1- KKK activity and violence: The subjection of African Americans in the years after the Civil War as seen in KKK activities. KKK activity targeted at Mexican immigration on the US-Mexico border in 1977.
- Example 2- How people in power deploy a relational strategy of using fear of other groups to mobilize and intensify fear of Latinx immigrants, as seen in both policing at the border and policing in our neighborhoods.

If using this assignment in an undergraduate course, you might break it down further:

1. Research historical or contemporary events which marginalized a specific group of people. (*You can give students some sources for ideas, such as media databases or other image-rich sources*)
2. Compare and contrast your selected event with the event under discussion.
3. Write an 800-1000-word blog post with two cited sources
4. Post your submission on the Blackboard Blog by Thursday, February 27 by 11:59 pm. Select the link from the course menu to be directed to the blog.

The blog posts created in response to this assignment can be distributed in a variety of ways.

- *You can develop a class blog site (course enhancement funds may be available for this).*
- *For graduate classes, you can reach out to local/appropriate websites to see if they would be interested in publishing the blogs.*

You might also develop a grading rubric to make sure the students get out of the assignment what you most want, i.e. identifying primary sources, analysis, writing, creativity.