

# AMST 726/HIST 714 STUDYING RACE RELATIONALLY

Yale University, DRAFT Spring 2018 Course Syllabus,  
T 3.30-5.20PM



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## A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar examines relational and comparative scholarship on racial identity, racial formation, and race-based social movements. Scholarship across the humanities and social sciences now commonly conceptualizes race as a social construction shaped in specific historical, social and political contexts. The dominant paradigm of this work examines the experiences, struggles and characteristics of one subordinated group (e.g. African Americans, Native Americans, Latino/as, and Asian Pacific Islanders) and their standing within white supremacist and colonial structures of power. Groups are studied primarily in relationship to whiteness and through a white/non-white binary.

By contrast, relational and comparative approaches to race consider the racialization and formation of subordinated groups in relation to one another. This scholarship conceptualizes racialization as a dynamic and interactive process; group-based racial constructions are formed not only in relation to whiteness, but also in relation to other devalued and marginalized groups. By studying race relationally, and through a shared field of meaning and power, scholars are able to make visible the connections among such subordinated groups and the logic that underpins the forms of inclusion and dispossession they face.

The first part of the seminar engages recent work in American studies, history, cultural studies, ethnic studies, and the humanistic social sciences to build theoretical and thematic fluency around a wide range of topics, including:

- Indigeneity, colonialism and racialization;
- Relational frameworks of race, gender and sexuality
- Multiracial cultural imaginaries and performances;
- Legal productions of race, citizenship and social hierarchy;
- Third World, anti-colonial and women of color politics;
- Afro-pessimism and frameworks of specificity and exceptionalism;
- Diasporic and transnational racial formation.

Students will produce a draft of an article or chapter (roughly 6,000 words) around an original research topic related to the course; the paper will be workshopped in small groups during the last meeting of the seminar. The seminar will not meet on April 10 or April 17 to allow for extended individual meetings with the instructor as well as additional writing time.

Other highlights of the seminar include (1) class visits or talks with three scholars working at the forefront of comparative and relational scholarship, and (2) an ongoing discussion about the role of collective scholarly initiatives, including edited volumes, special journal editions, and publication series, in advancing intellectual projects; (3) an opportunity to engage curators at the Beinecke Library with expertise in source materials that relate to the course and to student research interests.

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## B. READINGS AND REQUIRED TEXTS

As the syllabus indicates, most of the weekly readings will be drawn from a combination of scholarly articles and book chapters. Four books are also required—please acquire through an online retailer or the Yale Library:

- **Vijay Prashad**, *Everybody Was Kung Fu Fighting: Afro-Asian Connections and the Myth of Cultural Purity*, Beacon, 2002.
- **Lisa Lowe**, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*, Duke University Press, 2015.
- **Jason Chang**, *Chino: Anti-Chinese Racism in Mexico, 1880-1940*, Illinois, 2017.
- **Cherríe Moraga** and **Gloria Anzaldúa** edited, *This Bridge Called My Back, Fourth Edition: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, 4th Edition, (State University of New York Press, 2015).

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## C. ASSIGNMENTS (ALL OF THE ASSIGNMENTS BELOW MUST BE COMPLETED IN ORDER TO PASS THE COURSE).

1. **WEEKLY READING RESPONSE PAPERS.** Beginning Week 2, students will submit a 1-2 page response paper synthesizing the key insights and questions from the readings. Detailed directions will be provided at the first seminar meeting. These papers must be submitted via Canvas by 5 PM on Monday, the day before the seminar meeting. **(30% of final grade).**
  2. **TEXT PRESENTATION.** Beginning Week 3, students will sign up in advance to provide a framework for the weekly discussion, based on their engagement with the readings and the themes raised in the weekly response papers. **(10% of final grade)**
  3. **FINAL PAPER.** Students must submit a final paper, oriented toward publication in a journal or edited volume, of approximately 6,000 words, based on original research conducted for the class. All students should meet with the instructor by the end of Week 4 to discuss their final paper. The paper will be due via Canvas on **Wednesday May 9 at 5 PM.** A draft from any section of the paper of at least ten pages will be due by April 19 **(50% of final grade).**
  4. **PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE.** Attendance is taken every class; advanced reading and participation are critical. You must notify the instructor in advance if you anticipate missing a class meeting **(10% of final grade).**
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## COURSE SCHEDULE

### WEEK ONE: January 16, Course overview—'Accompaniment' and the Social Production of Knowledge

Please read in advance:

- Barbara Tomlinson and George Lipsitz. "American Studies as Accompaniment." *American Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (2013): 1-30.  
<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/503941/pdf>

### WEEK TWO: January 23, Theoretical frameworks

- Daniel Martinez HoSang and Natalia Molina, "Introduction" in *Studying Race Relationally*, edited by Natalia Molina, Daniel HoSang, and Ramón Gutiérrez (forthcoming, University of California Press).
- "Race as a relational theory: Roundtable discussion with George Lipsitz, Kelley Lytle Hernandez, and George Sánchez" in *Studying Race Relationally*.
- Grace Kyungwon Hong and Roderick A. Ferguson, "Introduction" in *Strange Affinities: The Gender and Sexual Politics of Comparative Racialization*, (Duke, 2011).

- **Antonio T. Tiongson Jr.** "Afro-Asian Inquiry and the Problematics of Comparative Critique." *Critical Ethnic Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, 2015, pp. 33–58.
- **Shih, Shu-Mei.** "Comparative Racialization: An Introduction." *PMLA*, vol. 123, no. 5, 2008, pp. 1347–1362.
- **Sharon P. Holland,** "When Characters Lack Character: A Biomythography." *PMLA*, Volume 123, Number 5, October 2008, pp. 1494–1502.
- Book proposal for *Studying Race Relationally* with anonymous readers reports

### WEEK THREE: January 30, Global and Relational Indigeneity and Colonialism

#### Readings:

- **Patrick Wolfe,** *Traces of History: Elementary Structures of Race*, (Verso 2015). (selections).
- **Alyosha Goldstein,** "Entangled Disposessions: Race and Colonialism in the Historical Present." In *Studying Race Relationally* (forthcoming).
- **Steven Salaita,** "How Palestine Became Important to American Indian Studies," In *Inter/Nationalism: Decolonizing Native America and Palestine*, (Minnesota, 2015).
- **LeeAnn Simpson,** "Nishnaabeg Internationalism" in *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

**Friday, February 2, 10:00-11:30a.** Meeting at the Beinecke Library with curators Melissa Barton and George Miles to view and discuss source materials related to course themes and student research projects.

### WEEK FOUR: February 6, Indigenous Life and Afro-Pessimism

#### Readings:

- **Tiffany Willoughby-Herard,** "More expendable than slaves? Racial justice and the after-life of slavery," *Politics, Groups, and Identities* Vol. 2, Iss. 3, 2014.
- **Tiya Miles,** "Uncle Tom Was an Indian: Tracing the Red in Black Slavery," *Confounding the Color Line: Indian-Black Relations in Multidisciplinary Perspective*, ed., James Brooks, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002). Available at <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~tiya/images/uncle-tom-2013.pdf>
- **Jared Sexton,** "People-of-Color-Blindness: Notes on the Afterlife of Slavery." *Social Text* 28:103 (2010)
- **J. Kēhaulani Kauanui,** "Tracing Historical Specificity: Race and the Colonial Politics of (In)Capacity." *American Quarterly*, Volume 69, Number 2, June 2017

### WEEK FIVE: February 13, The question of coalition: solidarity and complicity

*Readings:*

- **Andrea Smith**, "Indigeneity, Settler Colonialism, White Supremacy," in Martinez-HoSang, LaBennett, and Pulido edited, *Racial Formation in the Twenty-First Century* (University of California Press, 2012): 66-90.
- **George Lipsitz**, "Like Crabs in a Barrel: Why Interethnic Racism Matters Now." In *American Studies in a Moment of Danger*. (Minnesota, 2001).
- **Robin Kelley**, "Roaring from the East: Third World Dreaming" in *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*. (Beacon, 2002).
- **Roderick Ferguson**, "The Relational Revolutions of Anti-Racist Formations," in *Studying Race Relationally*.
- **Jennifer Nelson**, "Race, Class and Sexuality" in *Women of Color and Reproductive Rights* (New York University Press, 2003).

**WEEK SIX: February 20, Racial Formation and State Building**

**Guest scholar**, Jason Chang, University of Connecticut

*Readings:*

- **Jason Chang**, *Chino: Anti-Chinese Racism in Mexico, 1880-1940*, Illinois, 2017.
- **Moon-Ho Jung**, "Outlawing 'Coolies': Race, Nation, and Empire in the Age of Emancipation," *American Quarterly* 57.3 (2005).

**WEEK SEVEN: February 27, Afro-Asian Cultural Imaginaries**

*Readings:*

- **Vijay Prashad**, *Everybody Was Kung Fu Fighting: Afro-Asian Connections and the Myth of Cultural Purity*.
- **Claire Jean Kim** (2000) "Playing the Racial Trump Card: Asian Americans In Contemporary U.S. Politics." *Amerasia Journal*: 2000, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 35-65.
- **Colleen Lye**, "The Afro-Asian Analogy," *PMLA*, Vol. 123, pp.1732-1736, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25501979>

**WEEK EIGHT: March 6, Gender, Race and Sexuality Across Borders**

*Readings:*

- **Lisa Lowe**, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*.
- **Nayan Shah**, "Policing Privacy, Migrants, and the Limits of Freedom." *Social Text* 23 (3-4 84-85), 275-284.
- **Nayan Shah**, "'Between Oriental Depravity' and Natural Degenerates': Spatial Borderlands and the Making of Ordinary Americans. *American Quarterly* 57.3 (2005) 703-725.

- **Public Talk, Wednesday, March 7, Nayan Shah**, Department of American Studies and Ethnicity, University of Southern California. Time and location TBA

### SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES

#### WEEK NINE: March 27, Re-visiting *This Bridge Called My Back*

- *This Bridge Called My Back, Fourth Edition: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (selections)
- **M. Jacqui Alexander**, "Remembering This Bridge Called My Back, Remembering Ourselves" in *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred*, Duke University Press, 2006

#### WEEK TEN: April 3—Racialization, citizenship and borders

**Guest scholar:** Natalia Molina, University of California, San Diego

#### *Readings:*

- **Natalia Molina**, "The Long Arc of Dispossession: Racial Capitalism and Contested Notions of Citizenship in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands in the Early Twentieth Century." Winter 2014, issue, 45.4.
- **Natalia Molina**, "Examining Chicana/o History through a Relational Lens," *Pacific Historical Review*.
- **Catherine S. Ramírez**, "Indians and Negroes in Spite of Themselves: Puerto Rican Students at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School," in *Studying Race Relationally*.
- **Devon Carbado**, "Racial Naturalization," *American Quarterly* 57.3 (2005) 633-658.
- **Margarita Aragon**, "'The Mexican' and 'The Cancer in the South': Discourses of Race, Nation and Anti-blackness in Early Twentieth-Century Debates on Mexican Immigration," *Immigrants & Minorities*, 35:1, 2017, 59-77.

**WEEK ELEVEN: April 10, No class meeting—individual meetings with instructor to discuss final papers.**

**WEEK TWELVE: April 17, No class meeting—individual meetings with instructor to discuss final papers.**

- By April 19, a draft of at least ten pages of your final paper must be posted to Canvas.

**WEEK THIRTEEN: April 24— Workshop paper drafts in small groups**

*Reading:*

- Students will be divided into small groups to read (in advance) and workshop individual papers during class meeting.

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**OTHER COURSE POLICIES**

1. **CLASSROOM CONDUCT & CLIMATE.** We are all accountable to create a climate of mutual respect and engagement in the classroom. While differences of opinion, perspective and analysis are important and will be encouraged, common courtesy as well as University policy prohibit personal attacks and discriminatory conduct.
2. **ATTENDANCE.** You are expected to arrive on time and stay for the entire class and participate fully in class discussions. Please contact the instructor in advance to request an accommodation for any anticipated absences.
3. **ELECTRONIC DEVICES.** Wireless devices and cell phones must be turned off prior to class. Please see the instructor if you need to use your laptop in class.
4. **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.** All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. Penalties for plagiarism can include a failing grade for the course..
5. **ACCOMMODATIONS.** If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability related barriers to your participation, please notify the instructor as soon as possible. You may also wish to contact the Yale Resource Office on Disability <http://rod.yale.edu/course-accommodation>.