

**POL 210 A**  
**Black Lives Matter: Perspectives on Blackness, State Violence, and Resistance**  
Spring 2016

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and  
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How has the meaning of racial justice transformed over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century in America? What political changes, forms of resistance and societal shifts have contributed to and produced these variations? In polarizing political times, how can we more closely approximate a more racially just world? This course is an effort to understand the contemporary web of social, political, economic, and direct actions operating under the broad theme of Black Lives Matter. Drawing on broad, interdisciplinary approaches, this class will contextualize the long history of racial justice, non-violent, and anti-racist political movements within academic historical, social scientific, and legal frameworks. The course also seeks to develop the critical questioning, writing, and engagement skills of students.

**Course Objectives**

Students will critically engage a wide range of scholarly and popular texts focused on social constructions of blackness, policing and incarceration, and contemporary social movements operating as part of Black Lives Matter activism.

Students will become familiar with broad themes and approaches to social science research about race and contemporary writing by and about activists.

Students will develop skills of critical analysis and practical problem solving.

Students will be introduced to multiple, contested ideas for understanding race, incarceration, and policing.

**Required Texts**

Readings marked with a \* are available as links from the course website.

Megan Ming Francis, *Civil Rights and the Making of the Modern American State*

Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern America*

Assata Shakur, *Assata: An Autobiography*

Charles Epp, Steven Maynard-Moody & Donald Haider-Markel, *ulled Over: How Police Stops Define Race and Citizenship*

Beth Ritchie, *Arrested Justice: Black Women, Violence and America's Prison Nation*

Martha Biondi. *The Black Revolution on Campus*

## **Introduction**

### **Week 1: Introduction to class themes**

Watch videos linked on Sakai for Week 1.

## **Historical Perspectives**

### **Week 2: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Black Lives Matter Manifestos**

\*W.E.B. Du Bois: *The Crisis*, First Edition

\*Martin Luther King, Jr. "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"

\*Ida B. Wells, *On Lynchings* "Southern Horrors"

\*Bayard Rustin, "No More Guns" (1969), "Reflections on the Death of Martin Luther King, Jr." (1968), "Black and Gay in the Civil Rights Movement: An Interview with Open Hands" (1987) *Time on Two Crosses*

Assata Shakur, *Assata: An Autobiography*. *This is an autobiography and best read as a whole, but you can focus on Chapters 10-20*

## **Blackness and Criminality**

### **Week 3: Social Construction of Blackness as Criminality**

Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern America*

### **Week 4: Constructing Black Women and Criminality**

\*Harris-Perry, *Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes and Black Women in America*. Introduction, Chapters 1, 4, 5

\*Cathy Cohen, "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?" *GLQ: Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*. May 1997. Pp. 437-468.

\*Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color" in *Critical Race Theory: Key Writings that Formed the Movement*. Crenshaw, Peller, Thomas (editors) Free Press: 1995. pp. 357-383

\*African American Policy Forum: "Did You Know? The Plight of Black Girls & Women in America." Fact Sheet.

### **Week 5: How the 20<sup>th</sup> Century BLM Movements Made America**

Megan Ming Francis, *Civil Rights and the Making of the Modern American State*

## **Race and Policing**

### **Week 6: Racial Disparities in Policing: Systems and Statistics**

Michelle Alexander. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, Chapters 3-5

Charles Epp, Steven Maynard-Moody & Donald Haider-Markel. *Pulled Over: How Police Stops Define Race and Citizenship*.

\*Rios, Victor M. 2012. "Stealing a Bag of Potato Chips and Other Crimes of Resistance." *Contexts* 11(1):48-53.

\*\*"A Conversation with Police on Race" Op-Ed

#### **Web Resource**

Center for Policing Equity  
<http://cpe.psych.ucla.edu>

### **Week 7: Race and Policing at the Intersections**

Beth Ritchie, *Arrested Justice: Black Women, Violence and America's Prison Nation*.

\*"The Sexual Assault to Prison Pipeline: The Girls Story"

\*"Black Girls Matter: Pushed Out, Overpoliced, and Underprotected"

\*"Say Her Name: Resisting Police Brutality Against Black Women"

\*"A Conversation with Black Women on Race"

## **Locating the Movement Non-violent Social Change in Winston-Salem**

### **Week 8:**

\*\*Readings TBA\*\*

Rev. John Mendez, Policing and Winston-Salem

## **Week 9: The Cities: Ferguson, Baltimore and Beyond**

\*The Ferguson Report

\**Nikole Hannah-Jones*, "School Segregation, the Continuing Tragedy of Ferguson." *ProPublica*

\*Terrance McCoy, "How companies make millions off lead-poisoned, poor blacks." *The Washington Post*.

\*Darnell Moore, "Black Freedom Fighters in Ferguson: Some of us are queer." *The Feminist Wire*. October 17, 2014.

\*Brittney Cooper, "In Defense of Black Rage: Michael Brown, Police and the American Dream" *Salon.com*

\*Carol Anderson, "Ferguson isn't about black rage against cops. It's white rage against progress." *The Washington Post*

\*Tabatha Abu El-Haj. "Defining Peaceably: Policing the Line between Constitutionally Protected Protest and Unlawful Assembly." *Missouri Law Review*. Forthcoming.

### **Web resources:**

Interactive Timeline Ferguson:

<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/08/12/us/13police-shooting-of-black-teenager-michael-brown.html>

Interactive Timeline Baltimore

<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/04/30/us/what-happened-freddie-gray-arrested-by-baltimore-police-department-map-timeline.html>

## **Week 10: The Web: New Media Activism**

\*Paulo Gerbaudo, "Introduction" from *Tweets and the Streets: Social Media and Contemporary Activism*.

\*Derrick L. Cogburn & Fatima K. Espinoza-Vasquez. "From Networked Nominee to Networked Nation: Examining the Impact of Web 2.0 and Social Media on Political Participation and Civic Engagement in the 2008 Obama Campaign."

\*Alicia Garza, "A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement." From *The Feminist Wire*, October 7, 2014

\*Bijan Stephen, "How Black Lives Matter Uses Social Media to Fight the Power." From *Wired.com*

\*John Eligon, "One Slogan, Many Methods: Black Lives Matter Enters Politics." *New York Times*, November 18, 2015.

\*Harrington, Jaira J. 2010. "Political Blog Influence Reconsidered: A Network Analysis of Mainstream and Alternative Ethnic-Racial Political Blogs." *Central European University Journal*, Sept 2010 5(3): 355-381.

\*Neely, Cheryl. *You're dead? So what? Media, Police, and the Invisibility of black women as victims of Homicide*. Chapter 5

### **Week 11: The Campus**

Martha Biondi. *The Black Revolution on Campus*. University of California, 2012

\*Roxane Gay. "Student Activism Is Serious Business: The protesters at Mizzou and Yale need to be heard, not laughed off." *The New Republic*

\*Conor Friedersdorf, "Yale's Activists Deserve Constructive Criticism." *The Atlantic*

### **Blackness in Power**

#### **Week 12: When the power structure is also black**

\*Final Report of President's Task Force of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing

\*Testimony of Professor Jennifer Eberhardt at 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing Taskforce

\* July 19, 2013 President Obama Remarks on Trayvon Martin

\*June 26, 2015 Remarks by the President in Eulogy for the Honorable Reverend Clementa Pinckney

\*President Obama on Black Lives Matter

\*AG Eric Holder at the DOJ African American History Month Program "Nation of Cowards"

\*City of Cleveland Consent Decree

\*The FBI Director's Troubling Comments on the 'Ferguson Effect'

\*Secretary Jeh Johnson on Black Lives Matter

### **Global Perspectives**

#### **Week 13: DR-Haiti, Brazil, Paris, France**

\*Bayard Rustin "A US Coalition on Human Rights" (1977)

\*Bowling, Ben; Sheptycki, James W.E.. "Theorising Global Policing." Global Policing. London: SAGE Publications, 2011.

\*Phillip, Abby. 2015. *The bloody origins of the Dominican Republic's ethnic 'cleansing' of Haitians: The Dominican government is expected to round up and expel thousands of people of Haitian descent.* The Washington Post.

\*Giron, Crosby. "Haitian immigration crisis reaches new heights." *NotiCen: Central American & Caribbean Affairs* 19 Mar. 2015: 3. *World Scholar: Latin America & the Caribbean.*

\*Vargas, João Costa. 2009. "The Liberation Imperative of Black Genocide: Blueprints from the African Diaspora in the Americas." *New Social Movements in the African Diaspora: Challenging Global Apartheid.* Palgrave Macmillan.

\*Scenarios of Racial Contact: Police Violence and the Politics of Performance and Racial Formation in Brazil. Christen Smith, University Of Texas, Austin

Fassin, Didier. 2013. "Discrimination." *Enforcing Order: An Ethnography of Urban Policing.* 1st ed. GB: Polity Press.

## Conclusions

**Week 14: FLEX WEEK**

**Week 15: CLASS PRESENTATIONS of GROUP PROJECTS**

Groups will present their actions plans.

\*\*BTCE\*\*

Advancing Equity for Women and Girls of Color  
Anna Julia Cooper Center Conference  
APRIL 29