

Spring 2016 Seminar: #BlackLivesMatter: Critical Perspectives

AAS 4013, AMS 4823, HON 3233, HUM 3703, and ENG 4953

I. General Information

Instructor: Sonja Lanehart, Professor and Brackenridge Endowed Chair
Co-Instructors: Drs. Stephen Amberg (Political Science), Theodorea Berry (African American Studies and C&I), Kinitra Brooks (English), Marco Cervantes (BBL), LaGuana Gray (History), Scott Sherer (Art History), and Howard Smith (BBL)
Class held: Tuesdays 6:00 PM-8:45 PM in MH 3.02.40
Office hours: Tuesdays 1:00-2:00 PM in MB 2.306A **AND** by appointment
Contact info: Sonja.Lanehart@utsa.edu; 458-6610 (office)

Texts: Texts & Digital Materials are available in Blackboard Learn;
Required Books (on Reserve at JPL under Sonja Lanehart, ENG 4953)

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* ([available online as an e-book at UTSA Library](#))

Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man* ([available online as an e-book at UTSA Library](#))

Hadden, Sally. *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas*.

Ladson-Billings, Gloria. (2009). *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* (2nd ed.) ([available online as an e-book at UTSA Library](#))

Oshinsky, David M. *Worse than Slavery: Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice*.

Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic. *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* ([available online as an e-book at UTSA Library](#))

II. Course Description and Objectives

#BlackLivesMatter: Critical Perspectives is a multidisciplinary class cross-listed in several departments and offered at both graduate and undergraduate levels. The goal of this class is to critically exam the sociocultural and historical contexts of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. The first three weeks of class will focus on Critical Race Theory, Whiteness Studies, Critical Discourse Analysis, AfroFuturism, AfroPessimism, and Critical Visual Analysis to theoretically ground students as they spend the course analyzing various literary, research, and multimedia texts. At midpoint, the course will include a faculty, staff, and community panel of experts and activists to historically contextualize San Antonio, Texas, and the U.S.'s engagement in racial and social injustice and violence against Black and Brown peoples. The course will conclude with a student panel presentation and discussion based on research over the course of the semester.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Define/articulate #BLM <http://blacklivesmatter.com/>.
- Apply critical theories around #BLM
- Articulate and critique competing discourses around #BLM (e.g., #AllLivesMatter and #BlueLivesMatter)
- Summarize, synthesize, analyze, integrate, and apply research and course content
- Articulate and conduct your own multimodal/digital humanities research on #BLM.

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III. Evaluation Criteria and Requirements

Academic dishonesty is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct. For guidelines on plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty, please consult Sec. 203 of the *UTSA Information Bulletin*, <http://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.html>.

Support services are available to students with documented disabilities through the Office of Disability Services, MS 2.03.18, 458-4157, <http://www.utsa.edu/disability/students.htm>.

ALL PAPERS ARE TO BE UPLOADED IN BLACKBOARD, titled, signed (i.e., include your name), and page numbered with one-inch margins and 12-point font prepared according to the APA, MLA, or Chicago style manual and following their guidelines for non-sexist language.

A. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

EVERY CLASS

Students are expected to attend class, be prepared, and participate in course discussions and activities. Although there is no official point value associated with this aspect of the course, it will be taken into consideration in grading of borderline cases.

B. CRITICAL COMMENTARIES (24 points, or 20% of your grade)

DUE MONDAYS@10AM

Each week, you are to develop a critical, thoughtful, reflective discussion question(s)/observation(s) and short paper (one single-spaced page) based on your own learning, understanding, and critique of the assigned texts. Submit your CC in **Blackboard Learn** as indicated on the course outline by **10:00 AM on Mondays** (i.e., your CC for the week's reading is due the day before the class we discuss the texts). Your question(s) and critique may address the following issues:

- Points of clarification of issues that appear ambiguous.
- Specification of directions in which certain topics could be elaborated or evaluated.
- Points of contention related to conceptual, experiential, or research issues.
- Other research findings that are relevant to issues raised in the readings, especially in conjunction with class discussions and projects.
- New applications of knowledge to historical, sociocultural, or educational issues.

The goals for the CC are to:

- Demonstrate your level of learning and understanding of the assigned texts and course content through thoughtful synthesis, critique, and analysis of course texts;
- question and ask questions;
- contend with your subjectivities and self-expression in a critical way;
- connect #BLM and course materials to your research and teaching realities;
- contextualize your experiences in and out of class with respect to #BLM; and
- reflect on your learning and understanding weekly and over the course of the semester.

As such, each CC should build on previous texts (e.g., your own commentaries, class discussions, reinterpretation of experiences, outside readings, etc.). **N.B.:** If there are parts of your CC you DO NOT want to share with the class, please specify.

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C. CELEBRATIONS OF KNOWLEDGE (60 points total, or 50% of your grade) FEB 23 & MAY 10

There will be Celebration of Knowledge (CK) at Midterm (24 points, or 20% of your grade) and during Final Exams (36 points, or 30% of your final grade) to assess your learning and understanding in the class. More information will be provided in class, but both will include identification, short answer questions, and essays.

D. RESEARCH PROJECT (36 points, or 30% of your grade) MULTIPLE DUE DATES

You will do a research project that addresses conceptual, methodological, and empirical aspects relevant to #BLM. The goal of this assignment is for you to pursue a more in-depth study of research and reading and develop a deeper understanding of a subject as it relates to your research or teaching interests and/or your daily life and personal development. You have two options to choose from to fulfill this requirement: (1) Digital Humanities, Multi-modal Group (or Individual) Research Project; (2) Critical Essay; (3) Wiki; (4) Application Paper; or (5) Other (i.e., pitch me a better, more suitable alternative research project for your discipline and interests). The research option you choose should be the one that can best meet your needs and expectations given your degree program, what stage you are at in your degree program, and your area(s) of interest as they relate to #BLM. Whichever option you choose, you will start with a research question and then you need to:

- **begin early** in the semester;
- **get approval for your topic** from the instructor before proceeding with the project (Your Research Paper Topic and Format should be determined by you and discussed with and approved by the instructor. If you are having a problem coming up with a topic, SEE ME);
- **update instructor regularly** about your progress – or lack thereof;
- **meet with your instructor** about your progress – or lack thereof by **Tuesday, February 2**;
- **submit/upload your Research Question** in Blackboard Learn (**DUE Tuesday, February 9**);
- select and submit **10 Preliminary Research Literature References**, including **3 texts assigned for class** and **1 book** you intend to use for your research project in Blackboard Learn (**DUE Tuesday, February 23**).
- **meet with your instructor again** about your progress by **Tuesday, March 8**;
- refine your research project and intended references and submit/upload your **Final References List** (**20 minimum, including 5 texts from class and 2 books**) in Blackboard Learn (**DUE Tuesday, March 29**).
- **meet with your instructor again** about your progress by **Tuesday, April 5**;
- Submit/upload **Annotations** of all of your References except those from assigned class readings in Blackboard Learn (**DUE Tuesday, April 12**);
- do an **Instructive Video Presentation** on your project and conclusions/product and upload it in Blackboard Learn (**DUE Tuesday, April 19**).
- Submit/upload your **12-15-page (NOT including revised Annotations) Final Research Project** in Blackboard Learn (**DUE Friday, April 29**).

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E. GRADING SCALE AND POINTS

Letter Grade	CCs	CK Midterm	CK Final	Research Paper		Final Grade	Total Grade Points
A+	24	24	36	36		A+	120
A	22	22	33	33		A	119 - 110
A-	20	20	30	30		A-	109 - 100
B+	18	18	27	27		B+	99 - 90
B	16	16	24	24		B	89 - 80
B-	14	14	21	21		B-	79 - 70
C+	12	12	18	18		C+	69 - 60
C	10	10	15	15		C	59 - 50
C-	8	8	12	12		C-	49 - 40
D+	6	6	9	9		D+	39 - 30
D	4	4	6	6		D	29 - 20
D-	2	2	3	3		D-	19 - 10
F	0	0	0	0		F	Below 10

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IV. Course Outline

- JAN 12 **Introduction: #BLM: Demands, Black Rage, and State of the Movement; #BLM to Everyone – Global to Local; Local to Self**
BB Folder: Week 1: Introduction
- JAN 19 ^{CC 1} **Critical Race Theory & Whiteness Studies**
Dr. Theodorea Berry, Dir. African American Studies
Texts: Delgado & Stefancic. *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction.*
BB Folder: Week 2: CRT (Dr. Berry)
- JAN 26 ^{CC 2} **AfroPessimism, AfroFuturism, and Social Justice**
Dr. Kinitra Brook, English
BB Folder: Week 3: AfroPessimism (Dr. Brooks); Derrick Bell’s “Space Traders” (video & story)
- FEB 2 ^{CC 3} **Critical Discourse Analysis and Black Twitter**
Dr. Sonja Lanehart, English and Linguistics
BB Folder: Week 4: CDA (Dr. Lanehart)
- FEB 9 ^{CC 4} **Critical Visual Analysis: Back to the Future**
Dr. Scott Sherer, Art History
BB Folder: Week 5: Art (Dr. Sherer)
- FEB 16 ^{CC 5} **Caught on Camera: Hip Hop in the Rodney King Era**
Dr. Marco Cervantes, Bicultural-Bilingual Studies
BB Folder: Week 6: Caught on Camera (Dr. Cervantes)
- FEB 23 **MIDTERM CELEBRATION OF KNOWLEDGE**
FACULTY, STAFF, AND COMMUNITY SOCIAL ACTIVIST PANEL (TBD)
BB Folder: Week 7: Midterm Panel
- FEB 29 (M) **SEMESTER MIDTERM (GRADES DUE IN ASAP @ 2:00PM)**
- MAR 1 ^{CC 6} **#BLM and Hip Hop**
Dr. Marco Cervantes, Bicultural-Bilingual Studies
BB Folder: Week 8: Hip Hop (Dr. Cervantes)
- MAR 8 ^{CC 7} **#SayHerName: Black Women, Sexuality, Intersectionality & Black Feminist Critique/Mystique**
Dr. Theodorea Berry, Dir. African American Studies
BB Folder: Week 9: #SayHerName (Dr. Berry)
- MAR 15 **SPRING BREAK: NO CLASSES**

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- MAR 22 ^{CC 8} ***Slavery to Beginning of Reconstruction***
Dr. LaGuana Gray, History, American Studies & Honors
BB Folder: Week 10: Slavery (Dr. Gray)
Texts: Sally Hadden's *Slave Patrols*; David Oshinsky's *Worse than Slavery*.
- MAR 29 ^{CC 9} ***Reconstruction to the Rise of the Prison Industrial Complex***
Dr. LaGuana Gray, History, American Studies & Honors
BB Folder: Week 11: Reconstruction (Dr. Gray)
Texts: David Oshinsky's *Worse than Slavery*;
Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow*.
- APR 5 ^{CC 10} ***The Problem of Segregation and the Failures of Integration in Education***
Dr. Howard Smith, Bicultural-Bilingual Studies
BB Folder: Week 12: Segregation (Dr. Smith)
- APR 12 ^{CC 11} ***#BLM and the Problems and Possibilities of Electoral Democracy***
Dr. Stephen Amberg, Political Science
BB Folder: Week 13: Electoral Democracy (Dr. Amberg)
- APR 19 ^{CC 12} ***The Failure of Teacher Education***
Dr. Howard Smith, Bicultural-Bilingual Studies
BB Folder: Week 14: Dreamkeepers (Dr. Smith)
Text: Gloria Ladson-Billings's *The Dreamkeepers*.
- APR 26 ^{CC 13/Last Class} ***The Fear of Blackness: What Do You Do with the Problem of Black Folks?***
Dr. Kinitra Brooks, English Department
BB Folder: Week 15: Black Literary Theory (Dr. Brooks)
Text: Ralph Ellison's *The Invisible Man*.
- APR 29 (F) RESEARCH PROJECT DUE**
- MAY 2-3 STUDY DAYS**
- MAY 10 (T) FINAL CELEBRATION OF KNOWLEDGE, MH 2.01.44, 6:00-8:30PM
STUDENT RESEARCH PANEL PRESENTATIONS**
- MAY 13 (F) Grades DUE in ASAP @ 2:00PM**