

Race and Philosophy

Race and Philosophy (4 credits)

Humanities 195 (crn # 6913)

Fall 2003

Tues / Thurs 7:00 pm - 8:15 pm (at night)

Humanities Center, seminar room

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Philosophy has never cared about race. Philosophy has never cared about race because it has never cared about the particular. There are notable exceptions, but ever since Plato philosophy's concern has been with the universal, the purely or merely rational, the incorporeal timeless demand for answers to questions about how to live. And philosophy's answers to these questions have traditionally run full speed away from the material reality of difference.

In the US, this flight from material difference made it very easy for philosophers to close their eyes to issues of race. These philosophers closed their eyes to race not only for the obviously self-serving reason that their privileges derived from the slave economy on which the US was built but also from what they thought was the high moral ground of universalism. But this high moral ground was no less self-serving, and as we are now discovering the high ground is uninhabitable by those who are still alive, those who still eat and drink.

This course is an introduction to the large body of literature by African Americans who for more than a hundred years have struggled to force a philosophical discussion of race. Authors to be studied will include: David Walker, Alexander Crummell, W.E.B DuBois, Alain Locke, Malcolm X, Angela Davis, Leonard Harris, Lucius Outlaw, Charles Mills, and Cornel West.

Three special events.

(1) On November 13, 2003 Charles Mills (*The Racial Contract* 1997) will visit Lehigh.

(2) On October 23, 2003 (date still may change) Cornel West (*The American Evasion of Philosophy* 1989) will be at visiting Lehigh.

(3) Members of the course will be invited to attend the 10 anniversary Philosophy Born of Struggle conference whose theme this year is "Philosophers of Struggle: Rethinking the Intellectual Life." (Rutgers University. Friday October 24 and Saturday October 25)<http://www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~marto/pbs/>

TEXTS

1. Leonard Harris, editor, *Philosophy Born of Struggle*, second edition. Dubuque Iowa: Kendall Hunt Publishing Co. 2000.
2. W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*. (1903) With introduction by Henry Louis Gates. New York: Bantam Books 1989.
3. Lucius T. Outlaw (Jr.), *On Race and Philosophy*. New York: Routledge, 1996.
4. Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997, 1999.
5. Malcolm X, *Words From the Front Lines*. BMG Music. (This is a CD.)
ISBN: 1-882753-00-3

REQUIREMENTS

- 2 five page papers worth 20%
- 1 twelve page paper worth 60%
- this deal was struck on the first day of class

ASSIGNMENTS

T 8/26----starting

Th 8/28

- (a) Zinn Peoples History chapter 2 pp. 23 - 38. (Photocopy)
- (b) David Walker in Harris Philosophy born of struggle, pp.3-28

T 9/2

- (a) Zinn chapter 9 pp. 167-205 (photocopy)
- (b) Douglass in Harris PBOS, pp. 113-129

Th 9/4

- (a) Zinn chapter 17 pp. 435-459.
- (b) Harris in Harris PBOS, pp. 345-352 and also 273 - 288.

T 9/9

- (a) DuBois "The Conservation of Races" (photocopy)
- (b) DuBois "The Talented tenth" (photocopy)

Th 9/11 Appiah on DuBois (photocopy)

T 9/16

Lucius Outlaw On Race and Philosophy, pp. 1-21 and also 135-157.

Th 9/18

West in Prophecy Deliverance ch. 3, pp. 69-91 (photocopy)

T 9/23

- (a) West in PBOS, pp. 401-412
- (b) West "prophetic pragmatism" in West Reader, pp. 149-173 (photocopy)

Wednesday 9/24 LECTURE Davarian Baldwin 4:10

"New Negroes in a New World 1890-1940: Race and Globalization before

'Globalization''

Th 9/25

- (a) West "Pragmatism and sense of the tragic" in West Reader, pp.174-182. (photocopy)
- (b) West "limits of neo pragmatism" West Reader, pp.183-187(photocopy)
- (c) Introduction West West Reader, pp. xv-xx (photocopy)
- (d) "chekhov coltrane and democracy" West Reader, pp. pp. 551-563 (photocopy)

T 9/30

Mills, Racial Contract, 1-40

Th 10/2 *****

5 page paper plus Angela Davis in Harris PBS, pp. 102-108

T 10/7 Mills, pp. 41-89

PACING BREAK THURSDAY 10/9 TO SUNDAY 10/12

T 10/14

Mills, pp. 91-133

Th 10/23

Outlaw On Race and Philosophy 23-50

LECTURE Cornel West "The heart of american darkness" 4:10

Fri 10/24 Philosophy Born of Struggle Conference Rutgers Friday 10/24 Saturday 10/15

Sat 10/25 <http://www.pbos.com/>

T 10/28

Outlaw On Race and Philosophy 51-95

Th 10

Outlaw On Race and Philosophy, 97-134

T 11/4

Outlaw On Race and Philosophy 158-204

Th 11/6

Dubois Souls of Black Folk, pp. xxi-42 and also Booker T. Washington speech (photocopy)

T 11/11 *****

5 page paper plus Locke in Harris PBOS, pp. 223-234.

Th 11/13

Crummell in Harris PBOS pp. 195-219

Charles Mills LECTURE 4:10

T 11/18

Dubois Souls of Black Folk, pp. 43-93

Th 11/20

Dubois Souls of Black Folk, pp. 94-145

T 11/15

Dubois Souls of Black Folk, pp. 146-185

THANKSGIVING BREAK WED 11/26 TO SUNDAY 11/30

T 12/2

Malcolm X CD

Th 12/4

McGary and King and Jones in Harris PBOS pp. 255-270 and also 165-179 and also 85-100.

Friday 12/5

Last day of classes

Final 12 page paper due noon Thursday December 11 in the HUMANITIES CENTER