

Philosophy and Cultural Diversity

Syllabus

Philosophy and Cultural Diversity

Philosophy 216

Summer 2003 (July 21-August 15)

Dana Berthold

Office: 324 PLC

Hours: Tuesday, Thursday 12:30-1:30 and by appointment

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What is the American Dream and who is the subject of it? This question raises complex political and philosophical issues that become increasingly important in the face of a more culturally diverse America.

Texts

Course Packet, on reserve at the Copy Shop (on 13th near Patterson) and at Knight Library. There may be certain readings that students will be expected to retrieve on-line.

Schedule (subject to change)

reading is to be completed before class on the day listed

July 21-25

What is the American Dream?

Monday

Walt Whitman, "I Hear America Singing"

Langston Hughes, "I, Too, am America"

Angela de Hoyos, "A Walt Whitman"

Martin Luther King, Jr., "I Have a Dream"

[current issue: Eugene's MLK blvd.]

Whiteness and Opportunity

Tuesday

W.E.B. DuBois, "Of Our Spiritual Strivings" from *Souls of Black Folk*

<http://www.bartleby.com/114/1.html>

Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"

<http://www.utoronto.ca/acc/events/peggy1.htm>

Wednesday

bell hooks, "Killing Rage" from Killing Rage: Ending Racism
Cheryl Harris "Whiteness as Property" from Black on White

Thursday

Naomi Zack, "American Mixed Race: The U.S. 2000 Census and Related Issues"

Friday

[current issue news clip: U. Michigan Supreme Court cases]

Debate: Affirmative Action

Bernard Boxill, "Affirmative Action"

Shelby Steele, "Affirmative Action"

July 28-August 1

Assimilation vs. Difference

Monday

Essays due.

Eric Liu, "Notes of a Native Speaker" from The Accidental Asian

Linda Lopez McAllister's "My Grandmother's Passing"

[current issue news clip: bilingual education]

Tuesday

Berel Lang, "Metaphysical Racism"

Wednesday

Iris Marion Young, "Social Movements and the Politics of Difference

[current issue news clip: racial profiling]

Thursday

Debate: Racial Profiling and Civil Liberties

"Profiling Quiz" (utilitarian argument)

Tim Wise, "The Color and the Cause"

Friday

No class. Essays due.

August 4-8

The Individual, Property, and the American Dream

Monday

John Locke, "Of Property"

Recommended: [Molefi Asante, "The African American Warrant for Reparations" and
Armstrong Williams, "Presumed Victims"]
Naomi Zack, "The American Sexualization of Race"

Tuesday

Robert Bernasconi, "America as Promise"

Wednesday

Laurie Whitt, "Cultural Imperialism and the Marketing of Native America"

Viola Cordova, "EcoIndian: A response to J. Baird Callicott"

Thursday

Vine Deloria, "The Red and The Black"

Friday

Debate: Klamath Basin

"Tribes say injustice Flows with Water for Farmers," Bettina Boxill, LA Times

"Half-Measures in the Klamath Valley," Vin Suprynowicz, Sierra Times

August 11-15

Conclusion

Monday

Essays due. Continuation of discussion.

[Southpark Thanksgiving episode]

Tuesday

Maria Lugones "Purity, Impurity, and Separation"

Wednesday

Review

Thursday

no class

Friday

Final exam

Reading Responses:

Every day (besides debate days), students will hand in a reading response addressing the selection for that day. Think of these responses as a cross between an informal homework assignment and an essay. Their purpose is to help students work toward comprehension of, and critical thinking about, each author's argument. On a random basis, one reading response per week will be graded for 5% of your final grade. The others for that week, if

complete and on time, will receive a check mark. Each response should be type-written, double-spaced, and should complete the following (please type out):

1. The most interesting / important idea emerging from ["article title" by author name] is
2. The author wishes to challenge those who think that
3. I am / am not persuaded by this argument because
4. An interesting connection / contrast between this piece and the one by _____ [another author we have read] is
5. In light of this article, a question that I would like to discuss with the class is
6. [on a separate sheet of paper] A multiple choice or short-answer test question about this article

Debate Projects:

Each student will be responsible for contributing to a small-group research project and presentation. Some articles may be provided, but additional sources will need to be collected. Grading will be based on 4 elements: presentation, written component, self-evaluation, and group peer evaluation.

Essays:

Due each Friday (except for the last) will be a 2-3 page formal post-debate reflection essay. This essay should consider in depth a particular philosophical issue raised by the debate, and it should demonstrate why this aspect is important to the whole. You should engage at least one of the theoretical articles we read earlier in the week. It is not necessary to take definite sides on the debated issue; however, the essay should contain critical evaluation of some arguments posed. The essay should have a focused thesis and should not wander or try to cover everything.

Exam:

The final exam will be composed of short answer, multiple choice, and essay questions. The essay questions will be given in advance, but will be written at the time of the exam.

Attendance and participation:

This is a discussion-oriented class, so attendance and participation are required. More than two absences will result in a full letter grade being deducted from your final grade.

Final grade breakdown:

graded reading responses: 20% checked reading responses: 10% essays: 30%

final: 15%

debate project: 15%

participation: 10%

Extra Credit opportunity: Students may bring in illustrations of the American dream from popular culture, and provide a short interpretation (2-3 minutes) for the class. Students should turn in a typewritten paragraph explaining their example and how it relates to something we've discussed. Up to 2 per student. Credit will be added as one letter grade

up on a graded reading response.