

Teaching #BlackLivesMatter: Countering the Pedagogies of Anti-Black Racism
A Collaborative, Crowd-Sourced Syllabus

Friday, December 19 10:00-12:00

Skylight Conference Room at The Graduate Center, CUNY

JOIN US: <http://bit.ly/1wJJKWZ>

[Teaching #Ferguson: Current Events in the Classroom](#)

[Resources for teaching race, Ferguson, and police brutality at CUNY](#)

[Ferguson Theatre Syllabus](#)

Live notes:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DKSsMJo8yXMd5L8hPsL9PetjnuX_P8rCT0ZYrOiwAMU/edit?usp=sharing

A sample section could include...(please copy and paste this template to the end of the document and add your contributions)

Recommended Readings from Panelists:

- Robert Gooding Williams, *Reading Rodney King/Reading Urban Uprising* (Routledge 1993)- specifically essays by Judith Butler and Ruthie Gilmore
- Interview with Katherine McKittrick:
<https://bullybloggers.wordpress.com/2014/12/17/katherine-mckittrick-author-of-demonic-grounds-on-trigger-warnings/>
- Stuart Hall et al, *Policing the Crisis* (particularly Chapter 10 on The Politics of Mugging)
- George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics*
- Andrea Smith's "The Three Pillars of White Supremacy"
<http://laylacassim.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/andrea-smith.pdf>
- Fanon's "On Violence"
- Fanon's *Black Skin White Masks*
- *Black Power Mixtape* (film)
- Hazel Carby's *Cultures in Babylon*
- Moustafa Bayoumi's *How does it Feel to Be a Problem? Being Young and Arab in America*
- Jonathan Kozol, *The Shame of the Nation?*
- Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*
- Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations"
<http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/05/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>
- Gwendolyn Brooks Poem, "The Children of the Poor"
- Kendrick Lamar - Good Kid Maad City album
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ek3ZZn3KwzA>
- Kanye West's Blood on the Leaves song paired with Strange Fruit by Billie Holiday
- Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*
- Fruitvale Station (film)
- Anna Devere Smith, *Twilight* Los Angeles, 1992

play: <http://tdps.umd.edu/sites/default/files/program-notes/Twilight%20LA%202014spring.pdf>
book:

http://books.google.com/books?id=2DpEBQAAQBAJ&source=gbs_similarbooks

- Joan Scott's "Experience"
<http://conceptsinsts.wikispaces.com/file/view/Joan+Scott+Experience.pdf>
- Kevin Browne, "Rhetoric and the Stoning of Rachel Jeantel"
(<http://drbrowne.me/2013/06/28/thestoningofracheljeantel/>)
- Mariame Kaba, "Rachel Jeantel: Through a Glass Darkly..."
(<http://www.usprisonculture.com/blog/2013/06/27/rachel-jeantel-through-a-glass-darkly/>)
- Questlove's Facebook account of being racially profiled in his apartment building
(<https://www.facebook.com/ahmir.thompson/posts/10151491382337051>)
- Angela Davis, "Masked Racism: Reflections on the Prison-Industrial Complex"
(http://colorlines.com/archives/1998/09/masked_racism_reflections_on_the_prison_industrial_complex.html)
- Ruth Wilson Gilmore, "Globalization and U.S. Prison Growth: From Military Keynesianism to Post-Keynesian Militarism"
(<http://www.usprisonculture.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Globalization-and-US-Prison-Growth.pdf>)
- Stop-and-Frisk Desist, a Tumblr of readings on stop-and-frisk, racial profiling, policing, mass incarceration, prison abolition, and restorative justice, including the previous four readings above (<http://stopandfriskdesist.tumblr.com/>)

Resources

- materials on teaching against stop-and-frisk, racial profiling, and policing, including course rationale, readings, and sample assignment
(<http://seanmkennedy.commons.gc.cuny.edu/2014/07/24/teaching-against-stop-and-frisk-and-racial-profiling/>)
- usprisonculture.com, an incredible resource on racialized social control generally and prison abolition specifically, maintained and updated by the organizer Mariame Kaba in Chicago

And this was the summer of Jordan Davis, the summer of bodies when every day, a black parent could log on to the Internet and see the bodies of black people [choked into oblivion](#), [beaten on the side of the road](#), [stalked and raped](#), [tased for straying too long](#), [pistol-whipped for running too fast](#), [shot down for mental illness](#), [shot down for cos-play](#), [shot down for allegedly ignoring orders](#), [shot down for too quickly obeying orders](#).

Activities (in class or homework) (<http://www.theatlantic.com/ta-nehisi-coates/>)

Discussion questions

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

Resources

http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/the-police-in-america-are-becoming-illegitimate-20141205?utm_source=CCDSLinks+weekly+-+Dec+12%2C+2014&utm_campaign=CCDSLinks&utm_medium=email

<http://www.counterpunch.org/2014/11/28/the-shoot-first-mentality-of-american-police/>

“A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement,” Alicia Garza

<http://thefeministwire.com/2014/10/blacklivesmatter-2/>

Activities (in class or homework)

Discussion questions

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

Resources (1981) Audre Lorde, “The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism” -

<http://www.blackpast.org/1981-audre-lorde-uses-anger-women-responding-racism>

Activities (in class or homework)

Discussion questions

How is anger useful to a political/social movement? Why is there a tendency to downplay anger or other emotions within political/social movements? Why are Ghandi and MLK often evoked to diffuse anger?

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

See also:

Resources - Ta Nehisi Coates (2014) The Case for Reparations

<http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/05/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

Activities (in class or homework)

Map the article:

1. use a blue pen or a highlighter and mark facts (names, dates, laws, incidents etc.)
2. use a red pen or a highlighter to identify all instances when Coates makes an argument.
3. Discuss Coates' use of evidence to support his arguments. What types of evidence does he use the most? If you are persuaded by his arguments, what are his most persuasive arguments and why?
4. How does Coates' focus on Clyde Ross help shape his article?
5. Why does Coates begin with epigraphs from the Hebrew Bible and Enlightenment philosopher John Locke?

Discussion questions

1. how does the history of housing policies influence the present circumstances of Black people in U.S. cities?

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

Resources: Thaddeus Russell, Review of *This Nonviolent Stuff Will Get You Killed: How Guns Made the Civil Rights Movement Possible* by Charles E. Cobb Jr.

<http://reason.com/archives/2014/07/22/how-crazy-negroes-with-guns-he/>

Activities (in class or homework)

Discussion questions

1. Why do our history textbooks place such a strong emphasis on *nonviolent* resistance when teaching the Civil Rights movement?
2. How have the conditions that have historically made armed resistance possible changed in our current moment of militarized policing?

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

Resources “[Cisgender] Black [Male Straight] Lives Matter...Or, on Dismissing the Black Feminist Queer Praxis Behind the Movement” By Dr. A. Breeze Harper

<http://sistahvegan.com/2014/12/16/cisgender-black-male-lives-matter-or-on-dismissing-the-black-feminist-queer-praxis-behind-the-movement/>

I’m working on this entry, and hope to have it done by 12/91/2014 ~Dale Ireland
Activities (in class or homework) (Coming soon!)

Discussion questions (Coming soon!)

Assignment (Coming soon!)

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.) (Coming soon!)

Resources

Brit Bennett, “[I don’t know what to do with good white people.](#)” Blog post on *Jezebel*.

Activities (in class or homework)

Get students to write about the full range of people who they’ve heard talking about or not talking about Ferguson/BlackLivesMatter/racist bullshit.

Discussion questions

How can people (including professors) act in a racist way even when they have good intentions?

What does it mean to be a “good ally”?

Why are white folk such assholes? (with reference to the comment section)

How does racism and anti-racism work in digital media? (social media/blogs/comment threads)

What role does affect play in the lived experience of raced subjects, i.e. everybody?

Assignment

Create a blog post summarizing class discussion, asking students to comment with further reflections and/or sharing links to other online resources they’ve found helpful/aggravating.

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

I’d just like to note that “we” as instructors shouldn’t take our anti-racism for granted. As suggested in the blog post, a lot of anti-racist/progressive talk, while coming from a good place, ends up to further white self-aggrandizing, or at the very least, makes us feel good about being anti-racists when we work in an inherently racist institution. I also think we should be mindful of unintended consequences. I came across a discussion of “[stereotype threat](#)” recently and was embarrassed that I had to look up what it meant, although I’d read about the phenomenon before, and even thought about whether/how I’d been affected by it. I worry that discussions of race in the classroom might reinforce stereotype threat. If a student of color has been able to succeed academically by bracketing their race, then asking them to reflect on race might at the very least distract them from their academic work.

I won’t be able to make the discussion in person or online, but if anybody wants to talk to me about this further, I’d love to.

mia.chen.mtl@gmail.com

Resources

“[The Ferguson Theatre Syllabus](#)” by: Claudia Alick, Megan Sandberg-Zakian (*American Theatre* magazine, December 17, 2014)

Activities (in class or homework)

Discussion questions

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

This is more than a single article so it is not something to base one lesson around. This is a list of over 45 plays, some canonical and some lesser known, as well as a few anthologies and further reading recommendations. They've linked as many of the plays as possible so you can download or order them.

Resources

[“Hands Up: 6 Playwrights, 6 Testaments.”](#) The New Black Fest commissioned 6 emerging black male playwrights to write 10-15 monologues that explore their feelings about the well-being of black men in a culture of institutional profiling.

This important event actually took place at the GC's Segal Center on November 17, 2014 and is [streaming here](#). Participants include:

1. **Nathan James** (8:00 - 24:15)
2. **Nathan Yunberberg** (24:40 - 37:30)
3. **Idris Goodwin** (37:50 - 46:05)
4. **Glenn Gordon** (46:30 - 1:04:27)
5. **Eric Holmes** “Walking Next to Michael Brown: Confessions of a Lightskinned Halfbreed” by (1:04:45- 1:19:12)
6. **Dennis Allen II** (1:19:20-1:30:35)

Activities (in class or homework)

1. Listen to all six monologues streaming at home.
2. Blog entry: Which of the six playwrights' monologues did you find the most compelling? Why?
3. Select a key quote from one of the monologues. What is so striking or meaningful about this quote? How does it relate to or summarize the monologue as a whole?
4. In-class pair and share: after reviewing blog entries due the night before, identify pairs or small groups of students who wrote about the same monologue. Group them for small scale discussions about their blog entries. Come back to the full class to make more connections and have a full discussion of the material.
5. Depending on the specific educational context and classroom atmosphere, it might be great to have a free write during which students discuss their own encounters with racism, police, or social injustice.

Discussion questions

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

Resources

Activities (in class or homework)

Discussion questions

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

Resources

Activities (in class or homework)

Discussion questions

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

Resources

Activities (in class or homework)

Discussion questions

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

Resources

Activities (in class or homework)

Discussion questions

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

Resources

Activities (in class or homework)

Discussion questions

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

Resources

Activities (in class or homework)

Discussion questions

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)

Resources

Activities (in class or homework)

Discussion questions

Assignment

Other notes (time frame, skills, advice, etc.)
