

H-France Salon

Volume 13, Issue 18, #5

Race in the 20th Century Atlantic World

Leora Auslander & Tom Holt

This is a graduate course Tom Holt and I co-taught at the University of Chicago in 2018. As the title suggests it ranges well beyond the French Atlantic. Although I think that it would certainly be possible to teach an excellent course limited to the French story, we found this broader framing more appropriate to our intellectual and pedagogic goals. It was also pragmatically necessary; there was not enough demand for a course only on the French story.

I have included the original syllabus here, including, at the end, the assignments and interleaved my annotations in italics.

The first paragraph of the original course description laid out our intellectual ambitions for the course and its parameters:

In this colloquium/seminar we will explore the “work” race does on both sides of the Atlantic, focusing mainly on the period from the turn of the 20th century to the present. Topics covered will include: national variations in how “race” and racial identity have been defined and invoked, including policies on the naming, gathering and use of racial statistics; the fundamental rupture in ideas about race and transatlantic relations during and following the Great War and its impact on popular culture during the interwar period; the transatlantic resurgence and challenges to “scientific racism,” focusing especially on how it was manifested in the politics and practices of biological reproduction and adoption; the social reproduction of racial ideas and identities manifested in children’s books, toys, films, and sports; and how sports and the media shape and are shaped by racial ideologies. We will explore these topics as relatively autonomous developments within the nation-states composing the Atlantic world, while noting the transatlantic transfers, connections, and influences that both strengthened and challenged them. Our readings and discussions will focus heavily on the U.S. and France, but where pertinent comparative references will be made to Great Britain, Germany, and Brazil.

We used the second paragraph to signal our commitment to collective engagement, experimentation, and student empowerment. In retrospect I can see more clearly how challenging this approach was. As you will see, although the course did have a narrative arc, the topics discussed each week were very varied, the texts assigned were written by historians, anthropologists, musicologists, literary scholars, Black Studies scholars, and art historians, and we almost always built our own “edited volume” from book chapters and articles. This structure required both agility and rigorous engagement. Some weeks the students were more up for it than others.

Unlike many courses you have taken in college or graduate school, our goal this fall is *not* to master an established historiography on a canonical problem, but rather to participate in a rethinking of an historical puzzle -- how race worked in the Atlantic World in the twentieth century. You will still do all that you’re used to doing: you’ll critically evaluate the articles and chapters assigned to determine the author’s main thesis and how well s/he demonstrated that argument. You’ll assess the kinds of evidence mobilized and discover the intellectual conversation in which a text is participating. You will consider how each work of historical analysis reflects the period in which it was produced as well as the period it seeks to analyze. For the course to be successful, however, we’ll all have to go beyond that, to working through how reading these disparate secondary and primary texts, films, and images enables us to better understand the theme of that day – laid out in the descriptive paragraph and questions – and the problematic of the course as whole. This is an exciting and challenging task; we are very pleased you’re on the journey with us.

Class Schedule

Week 1: Introduction: The Atlantic World's Contested History

This week's readings should be completed before the first class meeting. They introduce the course's key themes: the racialized 20th century Atlantic World; the place of the African (with a comparative look to the Jewish) Diaspora in making that world; and, how that diasporic experience was shaped by and shaped a multilingual, multicultural intellectual elite responding to its divergent racial dynamics, especially in the U.S., France and the French Caribbean, and Britain and the British Caribbean. This week, as in all subsequent weeks, we will begin to explore all of the manifestations of racialization -- from the political economy that spawned it to the written and spoken language, the material culture, the bodily hexis, and the foodways and music in which it was expressed.

This week served as a kind of quick immersion into the key questions, while introducing some familiar but also less well-known works in the field of race studies. The groupings were framed as conversations or arguments among scholars working on the same or related questions or concepts.

Readings:

Atlantic Encounters

Stuart Hall, "Conscripts of Modernity," "Encountering Oxford: The Makings of a Diasporic Self," and Caribbean Migration: The Windrush Generation," in *Familiar Stranger: A Life Between Two Islands* (Duke, 2017), 132-200.

Leora Auslander and Tom Holt, "Sambo in Paris," in *The Color of Liberty*, eds., Tyler Stovall and Susan Peabody (Duke, 2002), 147-184.

Safoi Babana-Hampton, "Black French Intellectualism and the Rise of Afro-European Studies," *Transition* 101 (2009), 144-149.

Foundational text and responses

Paul Gilroy, "Children of Israel or Children of Pharaohs?" and "Black Culture and Ineffable Terror," in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Harvard, 1992), 205-223.

Laura Chrisman, "Whose Black World is This Anyway? Black Atlantic and Transnational Studies after *The Black Atlantic*," in B. Ledent and P. Cuder-Domínguez, eds. *New Perspectives on the Black Atlantic* (Peter Lang, 2012), 23-57.

The White Atlantic?

Bernard Bailyn, "The Idea of Atlantic History," in *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Harvard, 2005), 1-56.

Other key terms/paradigms

Brent Hayes Edwards, "Translating the Word 'Nègre'," and "The Practice of Diaspora," in *The Practices of Diaspora* (Harvard, 2003), 25-38; 115-118.

Andrew Zimmerman, "Introduction" in *Alabama and Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South* (Princeton, 2010), 1-19.

Views from different shores: US-Britain-France

Tyler Stovall, "Introduction," *Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Light* (Houghton Milton, 1996), xi-xvi.

Judith Misrahi-Barak, "Teaching Caribbean and Black Atlantic Studies in France: A Few Elements of Understanding," in Ledent and Cuder-Domínguez, eds. *New Perspectives on the Black Atlantic*, 249-260.

Week 2. The World Slavery Made

Although our focus will be the Black Atlantic in the 20th century, some preliminary reflection on the diverse forms of slavery and emancipation, and their consequences is essential to understanding the

subsequent history of that spatial and temporal construct. The readings this week provide some insight into the diverse interactions among the peoples racialized (white as well as black) by the slave regimes of the 18th and 19th centuries. The Black Atlantic cannot, in other words, be understood as separate from its white interlocutors, or vice versa; whether one looks to architecture, biological reproduction, religious beliefs, production and consumption, or practices of memoir writing, the two worlds were made together. And although there were enormous local variations, racial categorization and racial thinking undergirded the whole on both sides of the Atlantic World. The consequences of that thinking--and its often unacknowledged social and cultural co-constructions--are shaped the 20th century decisively and are still with us today.

This week was challenging for students who were very focused on the twentieth-century and/or had little background in the history of slavery. That said, the discussion was good and we remain convinced that it is impossible to learn/teach the later history of racial formations in the Atlantic without this. I would also underscore that we chose readings that emphasized the relational and interactive nature of these formations. That is, whiteness as well as blackness was shaped by the history of slavery.

Readings:

The Black-White Atlantic World Slavery Made

Philip J. Havik, "Gendering the Black Atlantic: "Women's Agency in Coastal Trade Settlements in the Guinea Bissau Region," in Douglas Catterall and Jodi Campbell, eds. *Women in Port: Gendering communities, economies and social networks* (Brill, 2012), 315-356.

Mechal Sobel, "World Views of England and West Africa," "English and African Perceptions of Time," "African and English Attitudes," "Black and White Visions in and of America," chs 1,2, 7 & 8 in her *The World They Made Together* (Princeton, 1987), 1-29, 71-99.

The Old World's Dependence on Slavery

Sidney Mintz, "Consumption" (from p. 108) and "Power," in *Sweetness and Power* (Penguin), 108-186.

Madge Dresser, "Gentility and Slavery: Bristol's Urban Renaissance Reconsidered, c. 1673- c.1820," ch. 3 in her *Slavery Obscured: The Social History of the Slave Trade in an English Provincial Port* (Continuum, 2001), 53-96.

The Atlantic World After Slavery

Frederick Cooper, Thomas C. Holt, and Rebecca J. Scott, "Introduction," *Beyond Slavery*, 1-32.

Lisa Lowe, "'The Intimacies of Four Continents,'" in Laura Stoler, et al., *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham: Duke, 2006), 191-208.

Alice L. Conklin, "Introduction" and "The idea of the Civilizing Mission," in *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford, 1997), 1-37.

Andrew Zimmerman, "Conclusion," in his *Alabama and Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South* (Princeton, 2010), 237-250.

Week 3. Race at the Turn of the New Century: The World's Fairs

At the turn of the 20th century, both sides of the Atlantic witnessed the rise of new racial structures and racial "knowledge" following the demise of the last slave regimes in the Americas and the entrenchment of European colonial regimes in Africa and Asia. The ubiquitous world's fairs of that era provide insights into both how this new regime was constructed and resisted. Although nation states remained crucial actors in these developments, the transnational worlds of science, commerce and culture become much more central domains, prefiguring patterns throughout the century that followed. The first pair of readings trace those connections; the second, the opportunities offered by the fairs for contact among racialized peoples across the Atlantic world as well as performers' capacities to use these intrinsically exploitative and objectifying spectacles to their own ends.

Moving from week two to week three, we took a big leap in both time and topic. Like slavery, the Universal expositions were an Atlantic phenomenon, but with them we shifted from an economic system (with cultural

ramifications) to a series of cultural events (with economic ramifications). Although it is not common knowledge in the 21st century, these fairs were critically important sites for the production, diffusion, and transformation of concepts and experience of race. Given that our class was held in a classroom overlooking the Midway of the Columbian Exposition, we gave particular attention to the Chicago fair and encouraged students to work with the extensive primary sources generated by and around that event in local libraries.

Readings:

Of Science and Power

Andrew Zimmerman, "Exotic Spectacles and the Global Context of German Anthropology," "Anthropological Patriotism: The *Schulstatistik* and the Racial Composition of Germany," and "Commodities, Curiosities, and the Display of Anthropological Objects," chs. 1, 6, and 8 in his *Anthropology and Anti-humanism in Imperial Germany*, (Chicago, 2001): 15-37; 135-148; and 172-200.

Alice Conklin, "Science of Man," and "Skulls on Display: Antiracism, Racism, and Racial Science," chs. 1 & 4 in her *In the Museum of man: race, anthropology, an empire in France 1850-1950* (Cornell, 2013), 19-57 & 145-188.

Of Display and Resistance

Mabel Wilson, "Exhibiting the American Negro," in *Negro building: Black Americans in the World's Fairs and Museums*, (Berkeley, 2012), 84-138.

Louis Chude-Sokei, "In Dahomey," in *The Last 'Darky': Bert Williams, Black-on Black Minstrelsy and the African Diaspora* (Duke, 2006), 161-206.

Theresa Runstedtler, "Trading Race: Black Bodies and French Regeneration," in *Jack Johnson, Rebel Sojourner* (California, 2012), 164-195.

Primary Sources:

Marlon Riggs, *Ethnic Notions* (DVD)

There is a massive amount of primary material on the Universal Exhibitions in Crerar and the Reg.

Week 4. Race and the Great War: Encounters with Familiar Strangers

The Great War of 1914 marked the most radical rupture in the political and social dynamics of racial ideas and practices since the destruction of the transatlantic slave regimes during the previous century. The necessity of mobilizing racially subordinated subjects to save Europe underscored the manifold contradictions of existing racial regimes. After the war, with European hegemony discredited by savage warfare and glimmers of colonial rebellions emerging, racial ideas and practices on both sides of Atlantic confronted new challenges. This week's readings address the divergent yet overlapping experiences of African American, African, and Jewish soldiers during the war and in its immediate aftermath. In each case, racialized soldiers experienced racism but also new kinds of empowerment. Those soldiers had unexpected encounters with people they expected to be very different from or like them -- African Americans with Africans, Western European Jews with Eastern European Jews -- and they found their conceptions of race transformed. Finally, all expected their wartime service to be rewarded with respect and full equal rights; they were all disappointed.

This was the first week that we brought the racialization and racialized experiences of Jews and Blacks into direct conversation (although we had touched on the theme in the readings on diaspora during the first week of class). This juxtaposition came as a surprise to many of the students who were much more familiar with the literatures in African American, African, Afro-Brazilian, or Afro-European history than in Jewish

history. The discussions were very productive, however, since the parallels in the context of WWI are both striking and illuminating.

Readings:

African American Soldiers

Chad L Williams, "The 'Race Question' The US Government and the Training Experience of African American Soldiers"; Les Soldats Noirs: France, Black Military Service, and the Challenges of Internationalism and Diaspora; "Soldiers to 'New Negroes': African American Veterans and Postwar Racial Militancy, chs. 2, 4, and 7 in *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in World War I era* (UNC, 2010), 63-103; 145-183; 262-298.

African Soldiers

Dick van Galen Last, "From Barbarian to Soldier" and "Recruitment, Deployment and Controversy, 1914-1917," chs. 1 & 2 in *Black shame: African soldiers in Europe, 1914-1922* (Bloomsbury, 2015).

Richard Fogarty, "Race and the Deployment of Troupes indigènes," "Hierarchies of Rank, Hierarchies of Race," chs. 2 & 3 in *Race and War in France: Colonial Subjects in the French Army, 1914-1918* (Johns Hopkins, 2008).

Gregory Mann, "Ex-Soldiers as Unruly Clients, 1914-40," chapter 2 in *Native Sons: West African War Veterans and France in the Twentieth Century* (Duke, 2006).

Jewish Soldiers

Derek J. Penslar, "An Unlikely Internationalism: Jews at war in Modern Western Europe," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 7/3 (2008), 309-323.

Steven Aschheim, "Strange Encounter: Germany, World War I and the Ostjuden," ch. 7 in his *Brothers and Strangers: The East European Jew in German and German Jewish Consciousness, 1800-1923* (UW, 1982), 139-184.

Paul Mendes-Flohr, "The 'Kriegserlebnis' and Jewish Consciousness," in W. Benz, A. Pulzer, eds. *Jüdisches Leben in der Weimarer Republik/Jews in the Weimar Republic* (Tübingen, 1998), 115-37.

Primary Sources

Days of Glory (Indigènes), DVD

Many entries in Regenstein catalogue under: World War, 1914-1918 -- Participation, African American

Week 5. Modernism and Primitivism in the Diasporic Renaissances of the Interwar Period.

Broad, transnational transformations--urbanization, commercial development, and cultural innovations-- in the interwar period opened spaces in and opportunities for heretofore subordinated and racialized peoples to explore their own histories and relations with each other as well as with the wider world. This week's readings focus on the emergence of politically charged cultural revitalization movements—especially African and Jewish – how they recognized and inspired each other, and thus profoundly reshaped the main currents of culture during the interwar period.

With this week we returned to theme of culture that was dominant in week three, but kept the focus on thinking about Blacks and Jews in the same frame. For the first time this week the focus was on racialized subjects as producers of culture as well as on currents moving between them. Also, like week three, this was a week when the possibilities for primary source analysis were particularly rich.

Readings:**Comparative**

Leora Auslander and Thomas C. Holt, "Translating Languages, Translating Cultures: A Story of Two 20th Century Renaissance Movements," in *Langages, politique, histoire: avec Jean-Claude Zancarini* (ENS Éditions, 2015), 441-451.

Marc Caplan, "Defining Peripheral Modernism" ch. 1 in his *How Strange the Change: Language, Temporality, and Narrative Form in Peripheral Modernisms* (Stanford, 2011), 26-51.

Jewish

Michael Brenner, "Authenticity and Modernism Combined: Music and the Visual Arts," ch. 6 in his *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany* (New Haven, 1996), 153-184.

Gavriel Rosenfeld, "Defining 'Jewish Art' in *Ost und West*, 1901-1908: A Study in the Nationalisation of Jewish Culture," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, 39 (1994): 83-110.

John E. Bowalt, "Ethnic Loyalty and International Modernism: The An-sky Expeditions and the Russian Avant-Garde," ch. 14 in Gabriella Safran and Steven Zipperstein, eds. *The Worlds of S. An-sky: A Russian Jewish Intellectual at the Turn of the Century* (Stanford, 2007), 307-319.

African

Brent Hayes Edwards, "On Reciprocity: René Maran and Alain Locke," and "Feminism and *L'Internationalisme Noir: Paulette Nardal*," in *The Practices of Diaspora*, 69-186. [ebook]

Sieglinde Lemke, "Picasso's 'Dusty Manikins,'" in *Primitive Modernism*, 31-58.

Caroline Goeser, "Remaking the Past, Making the Modern," in *Picturing the New Negro*, 173-206.

T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting, "Femme Negritude: Jane Nardal, *La Depeche Africaine*, and the Francophone New Negro," in *Transnational Blackness: Navigating the Global Color Line*, ed. Manning Marable (Palgrave, 2008), 205-214.

Primary Sources:

Alain Locke, "The New Negro," in *The New Negro* (1925).

Paulette Nardal, *Beyond Negritude: Essays from Woman in the in City* (SUNY, 2009).

Martin Buber, "Renewal of Judaism," *On Judaism*, eds. Nahum N. Glatzer (Schocken), 34-55.

Jump the Sun (biography of Zora Neale Hurston)

Zora Neale Hurston, *Mule Bone*

Shin Ansky, *The Dybbuk*

There is a substantial collection of visual material in Special Collections on this theme.

Week 6. Race after the Holocaust

It is widely agreed that Nazism and the Holocaust fatally undermined racist thought and policy in the aftermath of World War II. This week's discussion will focus not only on precisely how this change was effected but the particular form that anti-racism took and how it shaped politics across the Western Alliance.

This week proved to be conceptually very challenging for the students. The combination of the range of sites – which meant that they were moving in and out of many intellectual and political conversations – and the complexity of some of the readings was overwhelming for some. We decided that in future iterations of the course we would restrict the discussion her to the U.S. case, rather than including both the very brief discussion of Nazi Germany as a racial state and Gary Wilder's on decolonization.

Readings:

Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State: Germany, 1933-1945*, 44-73, 304-07.

John P. Jackson, Jr., "Blind Law and Powerless Science: The American Jewish Congress, the NAACP, and the Scientific Case against Discrimination, 1945-1950," *Isis*, 91, (2000): 89-116.

Barbara Savage, "'Negro Morale,' The Office of War Information, and the War Department," and "Radio and the Political Discourse of Racial Equality," in her *Broadcasting Freedom*, 106-153; 194-241.

Lauren Rebecca Sklaroff, "Constructing G.I. Joe Louis," in *Black Culture and the New Deal* (UNC, 2009), 123-157.

Mary L. Dudziak, "Fighting the Cold War with Civil Rights," ch. 3 in *Cold War Civil rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, 2000), 79-114.

Emily Marker, "Obscuring Race: Franco-American Conversations about Colonial Reform and Racism after World War II and the Making of Colorblind France, 1945-1950," *French Politics, Culture & Society* 33 (2015): 1-23.

Gary Wilder, "Unthinking France, Rethinking Decolonization," and "Situating Césaire: Antillean Awakening and Global Redemption, chs. 1 & 2 in *Freedom Time: Négritude, Decolonization and the Future of the World* (Duke, 2015), 1-48.

Primary Sources

UNESCO, "The Race Question." (1950)

Ousmane Sembène and Thierno Faty Sow, *Camp de Thiaroye* (1988)

Week 7. Social Production and Reproduction of Race

The main thrust of this week's readings focuses on how ideas about race are reproduced in everyday life--as opposed to political economy and state social policies--with particular attention to children's books, dolls, and other toys. Although there had been sporadic protests of this phenomenon in previous decades, the recognition of the pernicious effects on children of racist imagery in literature and material culture emerged as an even more powerful political and legal issue in the postwar era. One could, of course, expand the purview here to include radio, television, children's theater, puppet shows and film as well as playground games and school curricula. All of those would be appropriate topics for primary source work.

To our surprise, this was as challenging as the previous week, but for quite different reasons. The students, particularly the white students, found this everyday production and reproduction of race difficult to address and the conversation was surprisingly slow and uninspired. In retrospect we thought it possible that this topic may, in some sense, come to close to home. It forces students to think about how they themselves have were and continue to be racialized. While the students of color take this for granted and were relatively comfortable with these discussions, that was much less true of the white students. Although we would still include this topic in future version of the course, we'd need to think of a new way to approach it.

Readings:

Christopher Barton, "Racialized Toys," ch. 5 in *Historical Racialized Toys in the United States* (Routledge, 2016), 61-76.

Richard Kluger, "The Doll Man and Other Experts," in *Simple Justice*, 315-345.

Myra N. Burnett, "Doll Studies Revisited: A Question of Validity," *Journal of Black Psychology* 21(1) 1995: 19-29.

Elizabeth Chin, "Ethnically correct dolls: Toying with the race industry," *American anthropologist* 101 (June 1999), 305-321.

Robin Bernstein, "Children's books, dolls, and the performance of race: or, the possibility of children's literature," *PMLA* 126 (January 2011), 160-169.

Violet J. Harris, "African American Children's Literature: The First One Hundred Years," *The Journal of Negro Education* 59 (1990): 540-555.

Bernice A. Pescosolido, Elizabeth Grauerholz, Melissa A. Mikie, "Culture and Conflict: The Portrayal of Blacks in U.S Children's Picture Books Through the Mid- and Late-Twentieth Century," *ASA* 63 (1997), 442-464.

Herbert R. Kohl, "Should we Burn Babar?" ch. 1 in his *Should We Burn Babar?: Essays On Children's Literature And The Power Of Stories*, (New Press, 2007), 1-19.

Stephen O'Harrow, "Babar and the Mission Civilisatrice: Colonialism and the Biography of a Mythical Elephant," *Biography* 22 (1999), pp. 86-103.

Philip Dine, "The French Colonial Empire in Juvenile Fiction: From Jules Verne to Tintin," *Historical Reflections/Réflexions Historiques*, 23 (Spring 1997), 177-203.

Primary Sources:

The Brown v. Bd. of Education Decision (May 17, 1954).

Marlon Riggs, *Ethnic Notions* (California Newsreel DVD, 1987)

Jimmy: Scenes from the Life of a Black Doll. Told by Him- self to J. G. Sowerby (London: Routledge, 1888).

NAACP 1940-55. General office file. Publicity protests –Little Black Sambo, 1945 1955. Microform (includes NAACP protest of "10 Little niggers.")

Special Collections in Regenstein Library has a massive collection of children's books

Week 8. Science and Racial Commonsense in the 20th Century

Academic studies of the social and natural sciences gained unprecedented authority and influence over the first half of the 20th century and, consequently, became major terrains of struggle over racial ideas and public policy. The first selection among this week's readings address the transatlantic flows and connections of these ideas, personalities, and associations, which arguably added greater weight to both racial orthodoxy and the challenges to it. The second set of readings will enable us to address when and how those scientific racial "truths" ultimately shaped people's most intimate decisions – especially those around reproduction and most strikingly those decisions in the contexts of officially sanctioned adoption, and the choices involved when such reproduction entails the use of others' gametes (whether eggs or sperm).

Unsurprisingly, given the reaction to the previous week's readings, the two halves of this class worked very differently. Students were very comfortable discussion the readings under the "Science" rubric, but had much greater difficulty with the "Racial Commonsense" section. (In this case the apparent discomfort seemed to be equally shared between white students and students of color.) The checkered history of scientists' understanding of race was very familiar to the class and we were able to very productively engage these four texts. The question of the racialized choices people make when the impossibility of biological reproduction obliges those who want to have children to adopt or obtain genetic material from others is much more fraught. It is in these moments that people's self-understandings as constructivists are put to the test and

Readings:

"Science"

Thomas C. Holt, "Blood Work: Fables of Racial Identity and Modern Science" in *Race and Blood in the Iberian World*, in Vol. 3 of *Jahrbuch fuer Rassismusanalyse/Analysis of Racism Yearbook*. Eds. Maria Elena Martinez, David Nirenberg, and Max Hering Torres (Berlin: LIT VERLAG, 2012).

Robert Wald Sussman, "The Merging of Polygenics and Eugenics," in *The Myth of Race* (Harvard, 2014), 65-106.

Alain Blum and France Guérin-Pace, "Measuring Integration to Fighting Discrimination: The Illusion of 'Ethnic Statistics' in *French Politics Culture & Society* 26. Special Issue: French Color-Blindness in perspective: The Controversy over 'Statistiques Ethniques' (2008), 32-44.

Owen White, "Race and Heredity," ch. 4 in *Children of the French Empire: Miscegenation and Colonial Society in French West Africa, 1895-1960* (Clarendon, 1999).

"Us" and "Them": Racial Commonsense

Heidi Fehrenbach, "Whose Children, Theirs or Ours? Intercountry Adoptions and Debates about Belonging," ch. 5 in *Race after Hitler: Black occupation children in postwar Germany and America*, (Princeton, 2005)

Emmanuelle Saada, *Empire's Children: Race, Filiation, and Citizenship in the French Colonies*, (2012), pp. 1-8; 13-41; 95-120; 257-260 [**e-book**].

Laura Ann Stoler, "Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race, and Morality in Colonial Asia," in *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge*, ed. Micaela di Leonardo (California,), 51-88.

Nan T. Ball, "The Re-emergence of Enlightenment Ideas in the 1994 French Bioethics Debates," *Duke Law Journal*, 50 (2000): 545-587.

Dorothy Roberts, "Race, Gender, and Genetic Technologies: A New Reproductive Dystopia?" *Signs* 34 (2009): 783-804.

Cynthia R. Daniels and Erin Heidt-Forsythe, "Gendered Eugenics and the Problematic of Free Market Reproductive Technologies: Sperm and Egg Donation in the United States," *Signs* 37 (2012), 719-747.

Primary Sources:

Sembène Ousmane, *Black Girl* (DVD)

Pièces d'identité, (DVD)

Week 9. When the Empire Comes Home: Representations in Film

This week's class will be a discussion of five fiction films we will ask you to watch on your own before class. Each of these -- one British, one US, one French, one Brazilian, and one Congolese -- addresses the experiences of youth in racialized neighborhoods in metropolitan centers of the mid-20th century Atlantic World. We will ask you to be attentive to differences and similarities in their plots, visual framing, casting, urban environment, gender, language, the role of the state, the use of vehicles, and the depictions of violence. More generally, is there evidence in these films of common threads in the historical experience of Europe, Africa, and the Americas? We have also listed some readings that provide historical and sociological background on these neighborhoods. These readings are not required, but may be referred to in the discussion. We have also posted, under supplemental readings, some key texts on music.

This discussion, held over dinner, was one of the liveliest and most engaging of the quarter. After eight weeks of intense discussion of a series of difficult texts, the students clearly enjoyed the opportunity to view and think critically about this set of films. We also found the conversation very rewarding since we had students who were deeply familiar with each of these national film traditions as well as with the analytic work of Cinema and Media Studies. The juxtaposition of films from Britain, the U.S., France Brazil, and

the Congo/DRC, allowed to think about race in the Atlantic world from a very different, and highly productive, angle.

Films:

Isaac Julien, *Young Soul Rebels* (1991). [Available via Netflix and other online]

John Singleton, *Boyz n the Hood* (1991). [Available via HULU, YouTube, and other online]

Mathieu Kassovitz, *La Haine* (1995). [Available via HULU, YouTube, and other online]

Fernando Meirelles, *Cidade de Deus* (2002) (English title: *City of God*) [Available via HULU, YouTube]

Balafu Bakupa-Kanyinda, *Juju Factory* (DRC, 2007)

Week 10. Divergence or convergence? Debating the Transnational Politics of Race in a “Post-Racial” World

In our concluding discussion we will continue to explore the pros and cons of arguments for divergence or convergence in the racial dynamics shaping the Atlantic World, focusing on popular culture as well as academic debates. How useful is a transAtlantic perspective and analysis of these phenomena?

I have to admit that this class was simply too ambitious. In a future version of the course I would assign only: Hanchard (2000), Wacquant (2007) and all of the essays in the activist strategies section. Although the material on HipHop is excellent and fits well into the problematic we couldn't do it justice. Finally, it was more effective, when concluding the course, to discuss texts that themselves took on race in the Atlantic world (rather than in only one corner of it) explicitly.

Readings:

Academic Analysis

Peter Fry, “Politics, Nationality, and the meaning of ‘Race’ in Brazil,” *Daedalus* 129/2(Spring 2000), 83-118.

Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant, “On the Cunning of Imperialist Reason,” *Theory, Culture, and Society*, 16/1(1999), 41-58.

Michael Hanchard, “Acts of Misrecognition: Transnational Black Politics, Anti-Imperialism and the Ethnocentrism of Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant,” *Theory, Culture, & Society*, 20/4(2000), 5-26.

Michael Hanchard, “Black Cinderella? Race and the Public Sphere in Brazil,” in *Racial Politics in Contemporary Brazil*, ed. Michael Hanchard (Duke, 1999), 59-79.

Loic Wacquant, “French Working-Class Banlieue and Black American Ghetto: From Conflation to Comparison,” *Qui Parle*, 16/2(Spring 2007), 1-28.

Pierre-André Taguieff, “The New Cultural Racism in France,” *Quarterly Journal of Critical Thought*, 83 (Spring 1990), 109-122.

Everyday cultural practice: Rap/Hiphop

Tricia Rose, “All Abroad the Night Train” and “Flow, Layering, and Rupture in Postindustrial New York” and “Soul Sonic Forces: Technology, Orality, and Black Cultural Practices,” chaps 2 and 3, in *Black Noise* (Wesleyan,), 21-98.

Tricia Rose, “Cultural Survivalism and Marketplace Subversions: Black Popular Culture and Politics into the Twenty-First Century” in *Language, Rhythm, and Sound: Black Popular Culture and the Twenty-first Century*, ed. Joseph K. Adjaye and Adrienne R. Andrews (Pittsburgh, 1997), 259-272.

André J.M. Prévos, "Two Decades of Rap in France: Emergence, Development, Prospects," in *Black, Blanc, Beur: Rap Music and Hip-Hop Culture in the Francophone World* ed. Alain-Phillippe Durand (Scarecrow, 2002), 1-22.

Activist Strategies

Crystal Marie Fleming, "Activist Groups and Ethnoracial Boundaries," ch. 3 in her *Resurrecting slavery: Racial Legacies and White Supremacy in France* (Temple UP, 2017).

Louis-Georges Tin, "Who is Afraid of Blacks in France? The Black Question: The Name Taboo, the Number Taboo," *French Politics Culture & Society* 26. Special Issue: French Color-Blindness in perspective: The Controversy over 'Statistiques Ethniques' (2008), 32-44.

"Racism in Children's Books: Tintin in the Congo," *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 56 (2007), 14.

Patricia de Santana by Pinto, "Afro Identity Made in Bahia," ch. 2 in her *Mama Africa: reinventing blackness in Bahia*, 2010.

REQUIREMENTS

General preparation for class:

1) Reading

It is, of course, expected that you will attend all classes having read and thought about the readings for the week. Please remember that a major goal of the fall quarter of the seminar is to facilitate your framing of your own research agenda. You should be reading these texts, therefore, not only as consumers, but as producers, of knowledge. In the interest of being able to more thoroughly and precisely discuss the readings we suggest some reading strategies:

1. You should come to class with page numbers listed (and passages noted) for:

- a) statements of the argument or sub-arguments.
- b) statements of the text's project/driving questions/motivation (not always the same thing as the argument)
- c) key terms/important definitions
- d) the meaning of "race" or "Atlantic world" in this text? How does it compare to others read?
- e) what kinds of sources did the author(s) use? Are they effectively mobilized?
- f) is the text interdisciplinary in approach? Does the author use "theory" and if so, how is it defined?
- g) is the author arguing with another scholar? If not, what is the motivation for the text?
- h) good moments-things you especially liked.
- i) trouble spots-incomprehensibilities, things you didn't like

Please also note that if you find that you can't determine the text's argument or project then that is something to be raised in class as well. You should, however, try to figure out what the problem is. Are there several projects? contradicting arguments? no clear statement?

2. Broader questions

- a) Is this a text you wish you had written? Why? Why not?
- b) What skill set (languages, quantitative methods, background in another discipline (such as paleography, oral history...) did the author need?
- c) Who do you think the author has envisaged as his/her audience?

Finally, you should come to class prepared to discuss what the texts do, and do right, as well as their weaknesses. That is, what can you learn from these texts—their achievements as well as their failures—that will help you develop your own project.

2) Participation

Active, thoughtful and responsive participation is expected of all students. Honing your skills in intellectual debate is a crucial part of your graduate education. That you come to seminar with ideas you want to discuss, and are ready to offer those ideas, is expected. Classes in graduate school should not be games of ping-pong between individual students and the instructor, however, but rather a conversation among a group of engaged participants. The goal is not individual brilliance but sessions that end with all feeling that their knowledge of a problem, a book, or a period has advanced. Learning to listen and talk effectively is a key part of our occupation. It comes naturally to no one. This is the time and opportunity to build on what you learned in college and elsewhere.

It is your responsibility to learn to speak/improve your participation in scholarly settings; it is ours to help you to do so. We will, therefore, be happy to provide strategies for participation for those who find speaking difficult. We will also provide you with comments on participation at the end of the fourth week of the quarter. If, however, you discover in the early weeks of the course that you are having difficulty finding your voice, please come to our office hours before waiting for the mid-term evaluation.

Solo assignments:

In addition to advancing our knowledge of a particular problem, this course is designed to improve two key skills historians need:

1. Be able to summarize/assess the relevant literature on a subject succinctly and effectively,
2. Be able to summarize, evaluate, and draw inferences from a primary source.

1) In order to accomplish the first goal, each discussion will begin with randomly selected students being asked to frame the discussion by giving a succinct "takeaway" of the readings for the week (i.e., not a blow by blow but the main themes) – that is, what are key issues and thus questions for discussion in your view? Each class will begin with as few as one or as many as three students being asked to respond.

2) In order to accomplish the second goal, each of you will be asked to submit a rank-ordered list of preferences of the week's discussion to which you would like to contribute a primary source relevant to topics to be addressed that week. By the end of Week 2 you should submit a list of three in order of preference chosen from among weeks 3 through 10 by Friday, October 6th. The source can be text, audio, visual, or material, but you must be able to make it available to the class, and if a text or a film it must be short and succinct. You will also present a short analysis on the Canvas discussion at least 24 hours before the class meets.

Finally: A Collaborative (annotated) Bibliography

We have put together a large but not exhaustive bibliography for the course. We will ask all of you to contribute to that bibliography over the next 9 months, adding articles, books, and primary sources (including films, music, T.V. shows, material culture items, maps, websites, etc.) that you find especially interesting or useful. Please do not simply copy the bibliography for your seminar paper; these should be entries likely to be of general interest. If you can add a brief comment about why you've added the entry, that would be great, but if you can't, please still make the additions. These entries may be in any language. If they are not in English, please be certain to at least translate the title.