

PO 390 The Politics of Multi-Ethnic Societies
Thursday 4:30 JEM 373
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NOTE: Because we meet once a week, there is a brief reading for the first class session.

I. Introduction: The Politics of Difference

This course examines concepts of “race,” “ethnicity,” and “difference” – or diversity – as they shape political possibilities, define political actors, and express national political understandings. We will consider race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality as “constructed” categories that are both the result of and influence on political processes. Such categories are not “biological” or “genetic,” but instead socially produced; brought to life through social action, forms of difference in general have specific shared meanings. We will consider theories that define race, ethnicity, and other forms of difference in broad and global terms, and then seek to understand how we can compare racial politics across national contexts as well as how racial and ethnic politics are uniquely domestic (or national). To be “common” or generally understood in a given context, categories of difference must reflect unique historical and political experiences that differ from country to country despite many cross national similarities.

The key to understanding the politics of race, ethnicity, and diversity, is to understand how these categories are used to define belonging within a given nation, and so to define what the nation is and is not. These processes result in specific forms of marginalization – the oppression of communities or peoples who reside within a national territory, who in theory are entitled to the protections of citizenship, and yet are considered “other” and so marginalized or removed from political and social power. In effect, marginalized racial and ethnic communities, and those marginalized because of any form of difference, are not truly citizens and so are denied social protections or recognition.

Even as marginalized communities have been granted greater rights, the legacies of marginalization remain in the cultural definition of the nation as a community and the citizen as a member of that community. Legal protections do not trump the power of national culture, the use of race and difference as political tools, and the perpetuation of racial ideologies and symbols.

We begin by focusing on what we mean by race and ethnicity. We can then turn to the intersections of the various forms of difference. What is the relationship of race to ethnicity, for example, and of both to sexuality and gender? Today, how do we understand global communities (Africans, Latinos, Muslims, gays and lesbians) outside of, across, and within a given national context? Next, we move to specific national

studies of racial politics and gain a broader theoretical and historical understanding of race, ethnicity, and difference. Finally, we examine the disintegration of the multi-ethnic nation.

II. Texts

Anthony W. Marx, *Making Race and Nation*
Françoise Gaspard, *A Small City in France*
Tariq Modood, *Multicultural Politics*
Koiki Wa Wamere, *Negative Ethnicity*
Laura Silber and Allan Little, *Yugoslavia, Death of a Nation*
Readings for week 1 and 2 are on e-college.

III. Evaluations

Attendance: Weekly Notes (20):

You are recorded as attending a class session when you hand in a typed, 2-3 page outline of the readings for that day, highlighting the argument and key points, due at the end of each class (No notes due for week 1). These are a brief synopsis, but not in narrative form – think bullet points. You need to grasp the central argument or theme and the most important evidence supporting it. You will be evaluated on the completeness of the assignment – does it reflect all the readings for a week? 2 points possible each week. You have two “sick days” during the semester – to cover absences or not turning in notes. This does not count the first day of class, the midterm date, or the last day.

Two Personal Reflection Essays (6 points each):

Two short essays (2-3 pgs) as scheduled on the syllabus, topics to be announced one week prior.

Participation (12):

Your considered and thoughtful participation in classroom discussion is required. Points will be rewarded to students who raise questions or issues from the readings, from current events that relate to the topic for the week, and for insightful comments that advance the discussion in class. Participation means informed comments or questions, but you do not have to be “right” in your comments, only thoughtful and related to the readings, assignments, and discussion. In fact, you are encouraged to ask questions and point out anything you find confusing or difficult to understand. That is also participation. Bring several questions or key points that you might want to raise.

Midterm (26):

A midterm, made up of not more than 3 questions, will be distributed 1 or 2 weeks prior to the date it is due.

Final Project (30):

Analytical paper about a specific recent controversy (within 15 years) related to race, ethnicity, or other forms of difference in any country of your choosing. Be reasonable in your ambitions given the page length but originality can be rewarding. You must turn in a paragraph about your topic and the resources you will use with your midterm.

Bonus (5):

Engaged Participant Observation: perform 9 hours of community service during the semester in some way associated with race, ethnicity, and diversity. You should try to work in class groups of no less than 3 and no more than 6, but exceptions can be made. Proposal must be submitted by the fourth week of class. On campus examples are: Diversity Coalition, Student Global AIDS Campaign, Common Ground, Women's Center, Amnesty International, and commemoration of the Fifth Anniversary of the Iraq War. Also check with MOVE. Off Campus examples are Vermont Cares (www.vtcares.org), Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program (802) 655-1963, and the Vermont Peace and Justice Center (<http://www.pjcv.org/center.htm>)

An EPO project is explained in greater detail in a separate document on e-college.

General Rules and Regulations:

No late assignments will be accepted, except in cases of emergency as determined by college policy. Papers with evidence of plagiarism or significant grammatical errors will not be accepted, and no resubmissions are allowed in such cases. Please see the college policy on plagiarism, and if you have any questions about grammar, contact the college writing center. Word Processing programs include spell and grammar checkers – pay attention to the red and green lines!!! Email submissions are allowed ONLY WITH PRIOR APPROVAL.

All written work (excepting notes) will be double spaced, and all will be Times New Roman 12 pt. font, one inch margins, and STAPLED.

Note on sources for written work: Online encyclopedias and dictionaries are helpful for retrieving facts (statistics, institutions, leaders), but are not legitimate sources for research projects. You typically do not need to cite these sources for facts that are generally known (the president of a country, for example); only cite them for more obscure information (the percentage of citizens of foreign birth, for example). Legitimate research sources are academic books and articles, editorials and opinion articles, and political speeches or proclamations, that express an argument or perspective. Ask a librarian about online searches through JSTOR and other databases.

IV. Schedule

Defining Race and Difference: From Global to Local

Week 1

Jan 17 Introduction
 Winant, "Race and Race Theory" (17 pgs)
 NO NOTES

Week 2

Jan 24 Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?" (26 pgs)
 Stepan, "Race, Gender, Science, and Citizenship" (27 pgs)

Massad, "Re-Orienting Desire" (25 pgs)
 Bosia, "Rock the Kasbah?" (19 pgs)

Essay 1 Topic Announced

Comparing Racial Histories

Week 3

Jan 31 Making Race and Nation
 Introduction, Part One (77 pgs)

Essay 1 Due

Week 4

Feb 7 Making Race and Nation
 Part Two (98 pgs)

EPO Proposal

Week 5

Feb 14 Making Race and Nation
 Part Three (73 pgs)

Racism, Religion, and Multiculturalism in Britain

Week 6

Feb 21 Multicultural Politics
 Introduction, Part I, 1 -2 (103 pgs)

Week 7

Feb 28 Multicultural Politics
 Part II, 5-7 (48 pgs)
 Part II, 8-9 (34 pgs)

Immigration and Race Politics in France

Week 8

Mar 6 A Small City in France
Forward, Pages 1 – 100

Week 9

Mar 13 A Small City in France
Pages 101 – 179

BREAK

Week 10

Mar 27 Midterm Due
Film

Colonial Legacies, Power, Ethnic Identity, and Genocide

Week 11

Apr 3 Negative Ethnicity
Intro, Ch. 1 – 8 (85 pgs)

Week 12

Apr 10 Negative Ethnicity
Ch. 9 – 11, 12, 13 (110 pgs)

National Disintegration and Ethnic Cleansing

Week 13

Apr 17 Yugoslavia, Death of a Nation
Intro, Ch. 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 10 (98 pgs)

Week 14

Apr 24 Yugoslavia, Death of a Nation
Ch. 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24 (94 pgs)

Essay 2 Topic Announced

Review and Conclusions

Week 15

May 1 Essay 2 Due