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EPSY 490EUI: Whiteness and the University  
Ethnography of the University Initiative  
Wednesdays 1:00-3:45 pm  
37 Education Building  
Fall 2009



Instructor:  
Lisa B. Spanierman, PhD  
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217-244-0787  
[lspan@illinois.edu](mailto:lspan@illinois.edu) (best chance of reaching me)  
Office hours: Tuesdays 4-5pm and by appointment



**Course Description:**

This course offers an introduction to the interdisciplinary critical whiteness studies literature and addresses concepts such as white privilege, white racial identity development, and white anti-racism. It also focuses on various qualitative research methods that scholars use in the empirical investigation of whiteness. Throughout the course, we will consider the ways in which the various content and methods may apply to understanding whiteness at predominantly white universities.

**Course Objectives:**

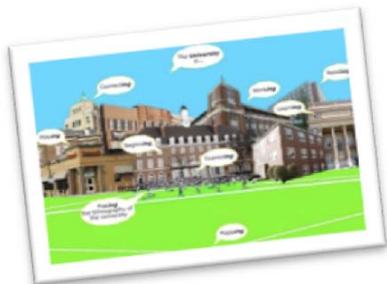
As part of the Ethnographic University Initiative, we will work together to establish a collegial research community in the class. Thus, as you develop your independent research projects we all will have opportunities to give and receive feedback throughout the semester. My hope is that you will strengthen your understanding of the research process and your self-efficacy as researchers. By effectively investigating some aspect of whiteness at the University of Illinois, we will contribute in meaningful ways to understanding how whiteness operates in one of the contexts in which we live. Specific objective include:

- Gaining a basic understanding of key constructs in critical whiteness studies and applying theoretical perspectives to the University of Illinois context
- Enhancing your existing research aptitude and developing new skills (e.g., learning interview techniques, formulating a practical research question, designing an investigation to answer your question, and collecting pilot data)
- Presenting your research at the Ethnography of the University Student Conference

## Unit I (Introduction to Course and Critical Whiteness Studies)

### Week 1 (Aug 26): Introduction to Course

- Review Syllabus and view *Ethnography Short* video
- Bergerson, A. A. (2003). Critical race theory and white racism: is there room for white scholars in fighting racism in education? *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16(1), 51-63.
- Marx, S. (2003). Reflections on the state of critical whiteness studies. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16(1), 3-5.



### Week 2 (Sept 2): Orientation to EUI

- Ethnography of the University Initiative
- Nancy Abelmann, Co-Director
  - **IDEALS ARCHIVES (identify 2 interesting projects that relate in some way to whiteness and the university)**
- Heppner, P. P. & Heppner, M. J. (2004). Chapter 2 (Identifying Your Topic and Making it Researchable). In *Writing and publishing your thesis, dissertation, and research: A guide for students in the helping professions*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

### Week 3 (Sept 9): Critical Whiteness Studies Overview

- Rothenberg, P. S. (2008). *White privilege: Essential readings on the other side of racism* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Worth Publishers.
- Barrett, J. E. & Roediger, D. *How white people became white*.
  - Dyer, R. *The matter of whiteness*.
  - hooks, b. *Representations of whiteness in the Black imagination*
- Doane, A. W. (2003). Rethinking whiteness studies. In A. W. Doane & E. Bonilla-Silva (Eds.), *White out* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Moon, D. & Flores, L. A. (2000). Antiracism and the abolition of whiteness: Rhetorical strategies of domination among "race traitors." *Communication Studies*, 51(2), 97-115.



### Week 4 (Sept 16): Reviewing the Literature

- **Meet at Education & Social Science Library; BRING LAPTOPS**
- Nancy O'Brien: Lecture on searching the literature and utilizing library resources
- Heppner & Heppner (2004). Chapter 4 (Searching and Reviewing Relevant Literature: Finding What has Come Before). In *Writing and publishing your thesis, dissertation, and research: A guide for students in the helping professions*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- McIntyre, A. (1997). Chapter 4 (White Talk). In *Making meaning of whiteness*. New York: SUNY Press.



### **Unit I: Additional Suggested Readings:**

- Bonilla-Silva, E., Goar, C., Embrick, D. G. (2006). When whites flock together: The social psychology of white habitus. *Critical Sociology*, 32, 229-253.
- Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.). (1997). *Critical white studies: Looking behind the mirror*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Harris, C. L. (1993). Whiteness as property. *Harvard Law Review*, 106(8), 1709-91.
- Ignatiev, N. (1995). *How the Irish became White*. New York: Routledge,
- Lipsitz, G. (1998). *The possessive investment in whiteness: How white people profit from identity politics*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Morton-Robinson, A. (Ed.). (2004). *Whitening race: Essays in social and cultural criticism*. Canberra, ACT, Australia: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Roediger, D. (1991). *The wages of whiteness: Race and the making of the American working class*. London: Verso.
- Segrest, M. (2001). Souls of white folks. In B. B. Rasmussen, E. Klinenberg, I. J. Nexica, & M. Wray (Eds.). *The making and unmaking of whiteness*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Towards a Bibliography of Critical Whiteness Studies  
[http://cdms.illinois.edu/pages/Research\\_CDMS/06-07\\_ResearchProjects/CriticalWhiteness/Bibliography.pdf](http://cdms.illinois.edu/pages/Research_CDMS/06-07_ResearchProjects/CriticalWhiteness/Bibliography.pdf)

### **Unit II (Exploring White Privilege)**

#### **Week 5 (Sept 23): White Privilege**

Rothenberg, P. S. (2008). *White privilege: Essential readings on the other side of racism* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Worth Publishers.

- McIntosh, P. *White privilege: unpacking the invisible knapsack*.
- Wildman, S. M. & David, A. D. *Making systems of privilege visible*.

Rains, F. V. (1998). Is the benign really harmless?: Deconstructing some "benign" manifestations of operationalized white privilege. In J. L. Kincheloe, S. R. Steinberg, N. M. Rodriguez, & R. E. Chennault (Eds.) *White reign*, pp. 77-101. New York: St. Martin's Press.

- Watch: White Privilege (What's That?) - Investigating the Invisible (1 hr)

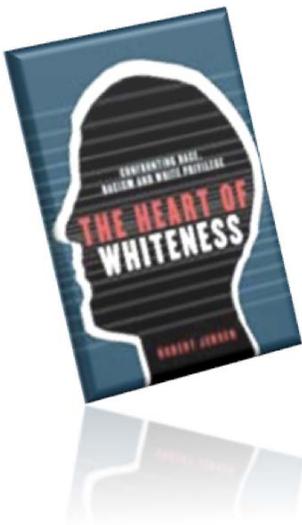
#### **Week 6 (Sept 30): White Privilege continued**

Jensen, R. (2005). *The heart of whiteness: Confronting race, racism, and white privilege*. San Francisco: City Lights.

Magnet, S. (2006). Protesting privilege: An autoethnographic look at whiteness. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(4), 736-749.

Megivern, D. (2005). Supposed to know better: On accepting privilege. In S. K. Anderson & V. A. Middleton (Eds.). *Explorations in privilege, oppression, and diversity*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.

- **Submit annotated bibliography**
- **Schedule interview, focus group, or other means of data collection**



## Unit II Additional Suggested Readings:

- Frankenberg, R. (2001). The mirage of an unmarked whiteness. In B. B. Rasmussen, E. Klinenberg, I. J. Nexica, & M. Wray (Eds.). *The making and unmaking of whiteness*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Kendall, F. E. (2006). *Understanding white privilege: Creating pathways to authentic relationships across race*. New York: Routledge
- Pinterits, E. J., Poteat, V. P., & Spanierman, L. B. (2009). The White Privilege Attitudes Scale (WPAS): Development and initial validation. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 56*, 417-429.
- Wise, T. (2005). *White like me: Reflections on race from a privileged son*. New York: Soft Skill Press.
- <http://academic.udayton.edu/Race/01race/whiteness05.htm> (check out link for resources)

## **Unit III (White Racial Attitudes and Identity)**

### **Week 7 (Oct 7): White Racial Identity Development Models**

- Chesler, M. A., Peet, M., & Sevig, T. (2003). Blinded by whiteness: The development of white college students' racial awareness. In A. W. Doane & E. Bonilla-Silva (Eds.), *White out* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Helms, J. E. (1992). *A race is a nice thing to have: A guide to being a white person or understanding the white persons in your life*. Topeka, KS: Content Communications.
- Spanierman, L. B. & Soble, J. R. (in press). Understanding Whiteness: Previous approaches and possible directions in the study of White racial attitudes and identity. In J. G. Ponterotto, J. M. Casas, L.A. Suzuki, & C. M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Tatum, B. D. (1992). Talking about race, learning about racism: The application of racial identity development in the classroom, *Harvard Educational Review, 62*(1), 1-24.
- EUI Guest Lecture on Research Ethics and IRB
  - **Submit Concept Paper**

### **Week 8 (Oct 14): Costs of Racism to Whites**

- Goodman, D. (2001). Chapter 6 (The costs of oppression to people from privileged groups). In *Promoting diversity and social justice: educating people from privileged groups*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Iyer, A., Leach, C. W., & Pedersen, A. (2004). Racial wrongs and restitutions: The role of guilt and other group based emotions. In M. Fine, L. Weis, L. P. Pruitt, & A. Burns (Eds.), *Off white: Readings on power, privilege, and resistance*, pp. 345-361. New York: Routledge.
- Perry, P. (2001). Whiteness means never having to say you're ethnic: White youth and the construction of "cultureless" identities. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 30*(1), 56-91.
- Spanierman et al. (2008). White university students' responses to societal racism: A qualitative investigation. *The Counseling Psychologist, 36*, 839-870.

- In-class workshop for literature review, if needed
- **Week 9 (Oct 21): Interview / Focus Group Methods**
- Introduction to focus group methodology; Readings TBA
- ***In-class workshop: Developing your research plan***
  - ✓ Interview/focus group protocol
  - ✓ Practice interview/focus group
- **Submit Literature Review Draft (10.26.09)**

### **Week 10 (Oct 28): Color-blind Racial Ideology**

- Workshop research projects (1:00 – 2:15)
  - Guest lecture on color-blind racial ideology (2:30-3:45): Helen A. Neville, Educational Psychology and African American Studies
- Bell, L. A. (2003). Telling tales: What stories can teach us about racism. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, 6, 3–28.
- Lewis, A. E. (2003). Some are more equal than others: Lessons on whiteness from school. In A. W. Doane & E. Bonilla-Silva (Eds.), *White out* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Neville, H. A. (2009). Rationalizing the racial order: racial color-blindness as a legitimizing ideology. In T. Koditschek, S. K. Cha-Jua, and H. A. Neville (Eds.). *Race struggles* (pp. 115-137). Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- **Pilot data must be collected by Oct 28**

### **Unit III Additional Suggested Readings:**

- Feagin, J. & O'Brien, E. (2003). *White men on race: Power, privilege, and the shaping of cultural consciousness*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Frankenberg, R. (1993). *White women, race matters: The social construction of whiteness*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Kivel, P. (2002). Costs of racism to whites. In *Uprooting racism: How white people can work for racial justice* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Philadelphia: New Society.
- Lewis, Heather:  
<http://www.learntoquestion.com/resources/database/archives/000748.html>
- Neville et al. (2000). Construction and initial validation of the Color-blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS). *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 47, 59-70.

### **Unit IV (White Anti-racism / White Allies)**

#### **Week 11 (Nov 4): Moving to Antiracism Action**

- Aal, W. (2001). Moving from guilt to action: Antiracist organizing and the concept of “whiteness” for activism and the academy. In B. B. Rasmussen, E. Klinenberg, I. J. Nexica, & M. Wray (Eds.). *The making and unmaking of whiteness*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Grzanka, P. & Maher, J. (2009). *Stuff White People Like: Reflections on the Blog that Makes it OK to be White (again)*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Lawrence, S. M. & Tatum, B. D. (2004). White educators as allies: Moving from awareness to action. In M. Fine, L. Weis, L. P. Pruitt, & A. Burns (Eds.), *Off white: Readings on power, privilege, and resistance*. New York: Routledge.
- **Submit transcription & key themes (pilot data); workshop one aspect of your data**



**Week 12 (Nov 11): White Anti-racist Allies**

Kendall, F. E. (2006). Chapter 8: Becoming an ally and building authentic relationships across race. In *Understanding white privilege: Creating pathways to authentic relationships across race*. New York: Routledge.

McKinney & Feagin (2003). Diverse perspectives on doing antiracism: The younger generation. In A. W. Doane & E. Bonilla-Silva (Eds.), *White out* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.

O'Brien, E. (2003). The political is personal: The influence of white supremacy on white antiracists' personal relationships. In A. W. Doane & E. Bonilla-Silva (Eds.), *White out* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.

- **Video: Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible**

**Unit IV: Additional Suggested Readings:**

Brown, C. S. (2002). *Refusing racism: White allies and the struggle for civil rights*. New York: Teachers College Press.

O'Brien, E. (2001). *Whites confront racism: Antiracists and their paths to action*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Pewewardy, N. (2007). *Challenging white privilege: Critical discourse for social work education*. Alexandria: Council on Social Work Education.

Thompson, B. (2001). *A promise and a way of life: White antiracist activism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Thompson, C., Schaefer, E., & Brod, H. (2003). *White men challenging racism: 35 personal stories*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

White Antiracism Community Action Network: <http://www.wacan.org/>

**Week 13 (Nov 18): Preparing Your Poster**

- Merinda Hensely presents: *Guidelines for preparing your research poster*
- **Peer feedback on your research and individual meetings with instructor**

Week 14 (Fall break, no class)

**Week 15 (Dec 2 & Dec 3): Poster Presentations**

- DEC 2: Meet for 1 hour in class to review posters/presentations
- DEC 3: Present poster at Ethnography of the University Student Conference (3-8pm)



**Week 16 (Dec 9): Wrap-Up**

- **Submit Research Proposal**
- **Final reaction paper**
- **Reflections**

### Course Grade:

Participation/Reaction Papers	=	20 points
Annotated Bibliography	=	5 points
Concept Paper	=	10 points
Literature Review Draft	=	10 points
Pilot Study (Interview/Focus Group)	=	15 points
Poster Presentation	=	20 points
Final Research Proposal	=	20 points
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Total	=	100 points

### Grading Scale:

90 – 100	=	A
80 – 89	=	B
70 – 79	=	C
60 – 69	=	D
<60	=	F

### Class Participation and Weekly Reaction Papers

We are co-creating a collegial intellectual community in which we develop as researchers of whiteness. Thus, it is essential that you complete the readings for each class and actively participate in group discussions.

You will be asked to write a short reaction paper (2-5 pages) to each set of weekly readings. While it is not necessary to comment on every reading, I am hoping that the collection of readings will inform your reaction. In your papers, please address personal reactions (thoughts or emotions) that you experienced as a result of the readings and class discussions, as well as provide suggestions for research projects that emerge from your understanding of the concepts.

### Annotated Bibliography

You will complete an annotated bibliography of 8-10 scholarly writings (i.e., book chapters and peer reviewed journal articles) on whiteness. Ideally, you will select readings in a specific area of critical whiteness studies that will inform the development of your research questions. See handout for annotation specifics.

### Concept paper

Please provide an approximately 2 page discussion of your research idea. Your job is to describe your idea succinctly and to “sell” it to me. Topics may include, but is not limited to the following: What is your general topic? What specific questions are you thinking of investigating? Are you familiar with any prior work in this area? Why is this of interest to

you? Why might this topic be of interest to others (to the field of critical whiteness studies)? What are some potential implications of examining this topic?

### **Literature Review Draft**

Upon completing your annotated bibliography, you will search additional literature and develop a brief literature review (15 pages maximum, double-spaced, APA style) that links to your pilot study and research proposal. You will provide an explanation of the “problem” under investigation and delineate a compelling argument for how your design will address the problem. In addition to workshops during class, I encourage each of you to meet with me to discuss the development of your literature review.

### **Pilot Study (interview, focus group, and/or observation)**

See handout

### **Poster Presentation**

See handout

### **Final Research Proposal (must relate to your pilot study in some way)**

See handout for complete proposal requirements

Potential proposal topics include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Is whiteness visible to white students at Illinois? If so, what does it mean to be white?
- Are psychological models of white racial identity development relevant for Illinois students?
- How do white students perceive race-relations on campus?
- How do white students make sense of racialized-theme parties on campus?
- What are students’ perceptions of white privilege?
- What differences (if any) do we see among white students across different majors? What about those who complete racialized communities studies courses (and/or gender and women’s studies courses)?
- In what ways (if any) does gender or social class interact with whiteness?

### **Academic Integrity:**

If you are unclear as to any of the university policies about standards of academic integrity, please review *Article 1, Student Rights and Responsibilities, Academic Integrity*: [http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/article1\\_part1\\_1-101.html](http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/article1_part1_1-101.html). You are responsible for knowing your rights, potential infractions, and penalties.

I am committed to the education of each student in this course. If you find yourself having difficulty, please contact me *immediately*. Do not wait until an assignment is due, or until the end of the semester. I encourage you to attend office hours, make an appointment, or contact me via email.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act Statement:**

If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and require assistance, please notify me immediately. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your needs.