THEORIZING CULTURE AND POLITICS

Overview

This class examines entanglements between culture and politics by exploring how these two categories have been articulated in key theoretical writings, literature, film and art. We will ask what is at stake in divisions between politics and culture, studying how these distinctions map onto varying conceptions knowledge, historical and social transformation, as well as how "the public" is conceived.

The Fall 2020 semester presents a number of new challenges, both for faculty and students. The ways politics is practiced has clear life and death consequences for us, even as we negotiate these new challenges through seemingly banal practices. Day-to-day life is upended by the necessities of care for vulnerable persons, including ourselves, and challenged by new limitations to social experiences. The classroom in particular will be a different place. This is the first time I will not have the chance to meet and develop a group dynamic with students in person.

I do not plan to teach a class about COVID-19 or its impacts, though, I am acutely aware of how it has affected my own life. The health, economic and political crisis challenges us to think about our identities, our social relationships and our global connections in new ways. These are certainly topics of the CULP major. Moreover, I want us to think about the classroom community we create and consider how education is an instantiation of the intersection of culture, power and knowledge that the CULP major aims to study.

Instead of a syllabus, I am providing you with an outline for how we will collaboratively develop the expectations for our class: this includes the online environment we will create as much as the list of readings that we will collectively discuss this semester. My aim is that through the process of creating the course together we will also get to know each other and our shared expectations. *The class will be organized so that each student is responsible for one week of classes.* The class format will include approximately 1 hour of asynchronous instruction and 1.5 hours of synchronous instruction.

Below, I have provided a guide for the first three weeks of classes. Please note that I will expect you to review any readings and/or videos as well as assignments before the synchronous class session, which will be held on Fridays from 10:00-11:30 EST.

Class 1, August 28, 2020: Decolonizing Education

- The first class is devoted to thinking about what education does and how power, knowledge and culture are expressed in the classroom. It is my aim to decolonize the Georgetown classroom and to this end, I am sharing with you materials related to this topic. I also hope you are all aware of the legacy of slavery that underwrites Georgetown. Here is the link to the Slavery, Memory, and

[Reconciliation](#) project, if you have not previously discussed this history in one of your other classes.

Asynchronous: (1) Watch Clapperton Mavhunga, "Training Critical-Thinker-Doers." [https://www.blackhistory.mit.edu/archive/clapperton-c-mavhunga-training-critical-thinker-doers 2017](https://www.blackhistory.mit.edu/archive/clapperton-c-mavhunga-training-critical-thinker-doers)
(2) Read Boidin, Capucine, James Cohen, and Ramón Grosfoguel. "Introduction: From university to pluriversity: A decolonial approach to the present crisis of western universities." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 10, no. 1 (2012): 1-6. (3) Spend 15-20 minutes free writing and journaling about your education at Georgetown thus far and how you would put your experiences here in conversation with these texts. You will not be asked to share this writing with anyone but I will ask you to share a take away from this exercise during our synchronous class session.

Synchronous: 10:00-10:05, Zoom check and informal announcements
        10:05-10:15, Introduction to me and the CULP program
        10:15-10:45, Small group discussions (3 groups of 3)
                10:15-10:30, each student spends five minutes sharing their reflections on
                the class readings and their experiences at Georgetown
                10:30-10:45, group discussion to synthesize key takeaways
        10:45-11:00, Each group will report back to the class on their synthetic
        comments 11:00-11:10, outline of the goals for setting up our class and next
        steps
        11:10-11:30, each student will have two minutes for a final reflection and check
        in

Class 2, Friday September 4, 2020: Thinking CULP

• The second class session is devoted to exploring and sharing the interdisciplinary themes that interest you, as well as your goals and expectations associated with the major. I will provide you with a list of many of the texts that have been taught. We will also continue to think about culture, power and knowledge in a global context.

Asynchronous: (1) Watch Achille Mbembe, "Future Knowledges and the Dilemmas of Decolonization." [https://fhi.duke.edu/videos/achille-mbembe-future-knowledges-and-dilemmas decolonization](https://fhi.duke.edu/videos/achille-mbembe-future-knowledges-and-dilemmas)
(2) Review the CULP 045 list of texts, articles, novels, films and art
(3) Develop a draft of your CULP major statement and send it to me before the start of class at 10:00 am on Friday, September 4. Also, have a 3-4 minute synopsis you can share with your classmates.

Synchronous: 10:00-10:05, Zoom check and informal announcements
        10:05-10:15, Outline of goals of CULP 045
        10:15-10:50, Each student will share their goals for the major and how
        they think CULP 045 fit with these aims.

              10:50-11:00, Outline of CULP assignments and UDL guidelines
              11:00-11:15, final check-in and reactions

Class 3, Friday September 11, 2020: Making New Knowledges

• In the third class, we will organize our syllabus. Each student will be expected to come to class with a list of materials that they plan to teach, as well as ideas about how the CULP 045 assignments will fit with the themes for your session. We will also consider the significance of the art practice and creative ways to challenge knowledge practices.

   Asynchronous: (1) Watch bell hooks and Arthur Jafa, "Transgression in Public Spaces." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fe-7ILSKSog
(2) Select a class session and develop a syllabus entry for your week. Please share this with me before class at 10:00 am on Friday, September 11, 2020
(3) Contribute to the Google Doc on community guidelines for CULP 054 by 10:00 am on Friday, September 11, 2020

   Synchronous: 10:00-10:05, Zoom check and informal announcements
              10:05-10:35, Each student will have three minutes to share their syllabus entry and rationale
              10:35-10:55, Guided discussion and elaboration of class syllabus. I will serve as a facilitator and we will rely on feminist consensus (i.e. we will continue to discuss until we are all in agreement) practices to come to our decision.
              10:55-11:15, Discussion of community guidelines and expectations

Bailyn Prichett

Identity Syllabus

Readings:

- Liisa Malkki, "National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity Among Scholars and Refugees," in Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology
https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/sv/sai/SOSANT2210/v11/Malkki_National_Geografic.pdf

- Crenshaw: "Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color"
https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/mapping-margins.pdf

- Butler: "Changing the Subject: Judith Butler's Politics of Radical Resignification" (Bottom of Page 335-338, 344-349) Butler Changing the Subject.pdf

- Moshin Hamid: "Of Windows and Doors" https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/11/14/of-windows-and-doors

- Allen Ginsburg: "Howl" https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/49303/howl

To Watch:

- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: "The Danger of a Single Story"
https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story/transcript?language=en

Assignment: Please spend 15-20 minutes journaling on what your identity/identities are. How does your relationship with your own identity correlate or dissent from the readings and TED Talk? How does the conception of identity in these works differ/relate to the flat conception of identity used by politicians? You will not have to share your journal entry, but please be prepared to discuss these questions in class.

Identity: Identity is a fluid, ever-changing concept that can not be tied down, or made binary, by one definition. Malkki describes identity as "always mobile and processual,..partly a condition, a status, a label, a weapon, a shield, a fund of memories, etc." This identity can be tied to a place, either physically or metaphysically (Malkki); made up of race, gender, or class (Crenshaw, Butler); consumed by capitalism (Ginsburg); or imagined through memories of the past (Hamid). There is no single formula. No matter the source of identity, it may ebb and flow with the inevitable fluctuations in life. It can be ever present to an individual, while also invisible. This contradiction is expressed clearly when Saeed and Nadia arrive through the door and the narrator says, "In this group, everyone was foreign, so, in a sense, no one was. Nadia and Saeed quickly located a cluster of fellow countrymen and women." Identity comes both from within, and from societal categorization. Butler's idea of gender performativity encapsulates this tension of self-construction and societal structure. Gender is performative because we are at all times performing within the constraints of norms that we do not choose, which are the limit and condition of gender at the same time. The actor is performing cultural norms that limit the actor in the situation, but also in play are the cultural norms of reception. Power is inextricably linked to identity. The narratives of feminist and anti-racist movements have only a single story. The story of the white middle-class women and the black man. Intersectionalities of identities, such as the women of color, are doubly subordinated, placed on the margins of both movements and left to flounder between contradicting political groups. Intersectionality is just one example of how a constricting, exclusive idea of identity can reinforce power structures. Adichie says, "The consequence of the single story is this: It robs people of dignity...It emphasizes how we are different rather than how we are similar." There is no single story of identity.

Agenda:
10:00-10:05: Check-in with Kate
10:05-10:10: Introduce Class
10:10-10:15: Each student picks out a sentence from their assigned reading that they think encapsulates one of the many meanings of identity.
- Malkki: Jameson
- Butler: Symone
- Crenshaw: Akanksha
- Ginsburg: Paul
- Hamid: Joe
- Adichie: Ismary

10:15-10:40: Each student shares the sentence they chose and what that sentence contributes to the conversation of identity. In addition, share one takeaway from your reflection assignment last night. The goal of this section is to develop a general understanding and a robust set of definitions of identity (part of what we mean by identity is that it is never clear).
10:40-10:45: Introduction to breakout room discussion.
1. Quotes:

a. "Diasporas always leave a trail of collective memory about another place and time and create new maps of desire and of attachment. (Breckenridge and Appadurai) To plot only "places of birth" and degrees of nativeness is to blind oneself to the multiplicity of attachments that people form to places through living in, remembering, and imaging them." -Malkki

b. "I have also used intersectionality to describe the location of women of color both within overlap-ping systems of subordination and at the margins of feminism and anti-racism...The narratives of gender are based on the experience of white, middle class women, while the narratives of race are based on the experience of black men." - Crenshaw

2. Questions to answer:

a. Given the robust set of definitions of identity that we have discussed, how do these conceptions, as well as the quotes above, set up the idea of identity politics? Can you come up with a new way of thinking about identity politics that draws on the diasporic and imaginaries?

b. In regards to the first quote above by Malkki, how does the idea of identity as a diaspora create the American identity? Think about America as a colony.

c. How do "Howl" and "Of Windows and Doors" provide examples of diasporic identity politics?

10:45-11:00: Breakout Rooms (two groups of 2, one group of 3)
- Spend 4 minutes discussing each of the questions
- Spend 3 minutes at the end coming up with brief synopsis of your discussion to share with the class

11:00-11:15: Class discussion
- Each group shares for 3-4 minutes on their breakout room discussion
- Feel free to respond to any points you find particularly interesting

THEORIZING CULTURE AND POLITICS

BELONGING:

TRANSNATIONALISM & IDENTITY FORMATION IN DIASPORIC COMMUNITIES

Main Idea

The aim of this class is to explore the themes of belonging within the framework of diaspora and migration, both forced and voluntary, in order to analyze the blurring of the lines between colonizer and colonized and its implications of identity formation. We will use film, a medium historically dominated by the West, to look at postcolonial immigrant identities and how they are shaped by distance and displacement. The students will have agency in choosing which film to explore (or both, if they prefer). This approach aims to diversify the discussions in class by providing two different viewpoints and origin stories.

Our goals are to touch upon the topics of: transnationalism, citizenship, the imaginary homeland, and projections of Western perceptions of migration.

Questions to keep in mind while engaging with material & to guide discussion in class:

- ★ How do you experience belonging and otherness in your life? What does community mean to you?
- ★ Do you believe identity is fluid and relational, or static and inherent?
- ★ In what ways can film subordinate perceptions and stereotypes? In what ways can it enforce them?
- ★ Should non-Western artists use Western means like film to reclaim and re-interpret stereotypes? How are they limiting themselves? How are they not?

Movies

La Noire de… (1966) dir. Ousmane Sembène
The film centers on Diouana, a young Senegalese woman, who moves from Dakar, Senegal to Antibes, France to work for a rich French couple. In France, Diouana hopes to continue her former nanny job and anticipates a cosmopolitan lifestyle. But from her arrival in Antibes, Diouana experiences harsh treatment from the couple, who force her to work as a servant. She becomes increasingly aware of her constrained and alienated situation and starts to question her life in France.

The Namesake (2007) dir. Mira Nair
After moving from Calcutta to New York, members of the Ganguli family maintain a delicate balancing act between honoring the traditions of their native India and blending into American culture. Although parents Ashoke (Irrfan Khan) and Ashima (Tabu) are proud of the sacrifices they make to give their offspring opportunities, their son Gogol (Kal Penn) strives to forge his own identity without forgetting his heritage.

Short Video Lecture

What It's Like to Be the Child of Immigrants | Michael Rain [LINK]
Michael Rain is on a mission to tell the stories of first-generation immigrants, who have strong ties both to the countries they grew up in and their countries of origin. In a personal talk, he breaks down the mischaracterizations and limited narratives of immigrants and shares the stories of the worlds they belong to. "We're walking melting pots of culture," Rain says. "If something in that pot smells new or different to you, don't turn up your nose. Ask us to share."

Readings

- Floya Anthias, "Thinking Through the Lens of Translocational Positionality: An Intersectionality Frame for Understanding Identity and Belonging," *Translocations: Migration and Social Change Journal 4.1* (2008) pp 5-20.
- Saskia Sassen, "The Repositioning of Citizenship and Alienage: Emergent Subjects and Spaces for Politics" (2005) pp 79-94.
- Ignacio López-Calvo, "Brazilian Dekasegi Children in Japanese Film" *In Japanese Brazilian Saudades: Diasporic Identities and Cultural Production.* (2019) pp. 212-227.
- Anzaldua, Gloria. "Towards a New Consciousness" *Borderlands / La Frontera.* 79-91

After engaging with the material, try to reflect on the questions mentioned in the first page.

Optional: For Your Own Exploration

Films: *The Mulberry House* (2013) and *Grandma Has a Video Camera* (2015)

Readings: *Imaginary Homelands* (1991, S. Rushdie) and *Out of Place* (2000, E. Said)

Belonging: Transnationalism and Identity Formation in Diasporic Communities

Tentative Class Schedule

- 10:00-10:05 - Sign into Zoom & Professor Chandler's Check-In
- 10:05-10:10 - Class Overview & Outlining of Goals
- 10:10-10:30 - Each student will talk about their first impressions of the movie they watched & relate them to the assigned readings. (~2min each)
- 10:30-10:40 - Students have the opportunity to pose their own questions about identity, film, power/citizenship, homeland/transnationalism. These questions will be compiled and used for breakout rooms. (~1min each)
- 10:40-10:55 - Students will discuss their questions/comments in the breakout rooms.
- 10:55-11:10 - Each breakout room will present their conclusions/thoughts.
- 11:10-11:15 - Final Check-In

Questions

These are questions that arose while you were engaging with the material for the class. *These questions will be used for discussion in the breakout rooms.*

Each group do three questions (please)!

Group one:

- Ismary: Can we say that one identity bracket is greater or more important than another? Are you your gender before your nationality? Before your class? Your religion? - Does this change based on where you are or who you are with?
- Jameson: How is your identity defined by the people around you rather than yourself?
- Elisabeth: Does identity ever actually change in the individual? Can you be one identity and then later change that identity - "I don't identify with that anymore"?

Group two:

- Paul: If nationality and citizenship are breaking bounds and are not as static - are there identities that are less static and arbitrary that hold global relevance.
- Akanksha: What is our relationship to the physical land/space, and how is that modified or harmed by our social context?
- Symone: How does my identity affect my view/relationship with people I identify with across borders?

Group three:

- Joe: Is nationality becoming less important in today's society? Why is that?

- Marianna: Is there ever a full sense of belonging, given the constraints of identity markers? Like the limitations they impose - the markers can be empowering but restricting at the same time.
- Bailyn: How does the idea of belonging as related to location interact with families when the parents are immigrants and the children are not?

Consider:

- *How would it be different if Brazil had treated the dekasegi differently?*
- *Consider family units in these conversations.*

POST COLONIAL LITERATURE
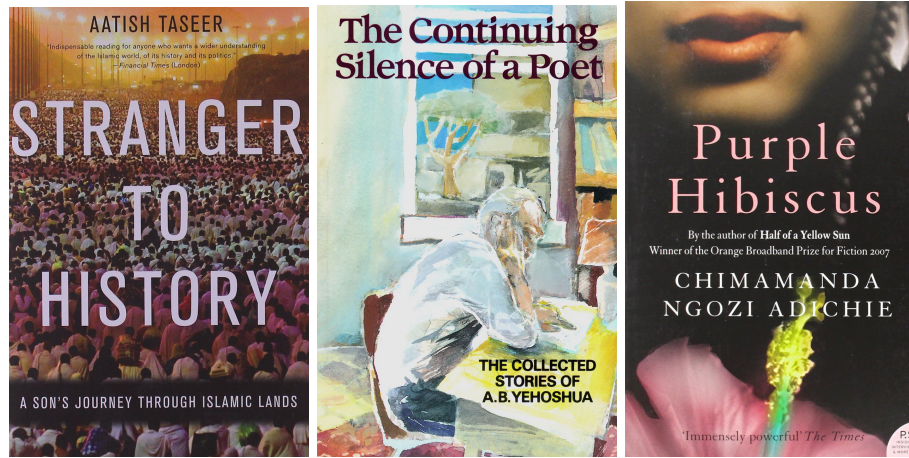
Outline

The aim of this class is to understand the manifestations and implications of the post-colonial experiences and identities in literature through a critical analysis of psychological concepts such as the 'collective unconscious', literary+psychological phenomenon such as the recurrent nature of trauma in writing, and socio-political arguments that question the relationship between presenting and perceiving. These ideas will be debated through post-colonial literary texts, and will refer to past discussions on belonging and identity. Students will be exposed to different post-colonial texts with the idea of highlighting both the diverse and unified nature of the post-colonial experiences.

Questions to keep in mind while engaging with material and to guide class discussion:
1. How 'unconscious' is the trauma and its manifestation in the literature? Does limiting intentionality take away from the author's agency?
2. Is it possible to decolonize, both the physical land as well as the psychological space, completely? Or will Fanon's 'colonized intellectual' remain so?
3. Does awareness of another's perception, and the way it dictates our identity/literature, necessarily lead to the eventual abolition of the perception?

Class Outline:
· 10:00-10:05 - Sign into Zoom & Professor Chandler's Check-In
· 10:05-10:10 - Class Overview & Outlining of Goals

- · 10:10-10:25 - Each student will talk about their first general impressions of the reading they did, and give a first opinion on the idea of awareness vs. abolition of the colonizing perception.
- · 10:25-10:40 - Students will be in breakout rooms, discussing their specific text, unpacking the passage/quotation that they picked, and relating it to the theoretical framework.
- · 10:40-10:55 - Students (i.e. each break out room) will present their findings/impressions/thoughts/conclusions to the class and try to come to an answer on the question of awareness vs. abolition (especially if that answer evolved during the break out room time).
- · 10:55-11:15 - Creation process
- · 11:15-11:20- Final Check-In

Readings:
(Very) Short:
Jung - excerpts from "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry" on the idea of a collective unconscious (Page 316 - from 'When, a little earlier…'- to 322)
Caruth - "The Wound and the Voice" on the literary and psychological rendition of trauma (complete work)
Said - "Orientalism"
Fanon - Wretched of the Earth, On Violence pages 1-10

Longer: (People will read only one of these, and will be grouped to read a certain reading!)
Excerpts from the following books: ''''
1. Purple Hibiscus - Chimananda Adichie (Uploaded excerpt - 54 to 80) - Jameson, Elizabeth
2. Stranger to History - Aatish Taseer (2 Chapters; a. Sind 360: The Open Wound; b. The Idea Country) - Paul, Bailynn, Marianna
3. The Yatir Evening Express (short story) - A.B. Yehoshua - Symone, Joe, Ismary

Pre-Class Work:
1. Pick a passage/quote from the literary work you were assigned - you'll be discussing this with your break out room groups with a focus on the literary aspects that stood out to you, and any relation you saw to the theoretical readings.
2. I'll be sending out a google form later this week: fill that out by Wednesday night!

Class Activities:
1. Initial story+theory reflection

      a. Once together as a general reflection, or specific things that popped out that we want to share.

      b. Break out rooms for each literary reading group, with the aim of reflecting on which particular aspect of theory most complimented their literary reading, and a set of discussion questions

      c. Returning to the main room and sharing these reflections, also commenting via chat so people can drop thoughts on each theoretical reading + their classmates reflections of theory and literature.

2. Short guided literary creation process and subsequent individual reflection process based on certain discussion questions (10-15 minutes) and with regards to theory+readings+learnings from the session

      a. 5 minutes to spend, with cameras off, reflection on the ideas the group discussed with specific attention to trauma

      b. 10 minutes to spend using a specifically created connection packet, writing/journaling/decompressing

3. Check-in :)

Art as Politics

General Question: How can CULP Majors use Art to explore their areas of interest?

Background/Primer

Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*
- Preface to IV, XIV-Epilogue
- https://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/benjamin.pdf

Readings

Susan Sontag, *Looking At War* (New York Magazine December 9, 2002 Issue)
- https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/12/09/looking-at-war
Eli Anapur, *The Strong Relationship Between Politics and Art*
- https://www.widewalls.ch/magazine/art-and-politics

Videos (Expansions on Anapur Article)
- Ai Weiwei, "Art and Politics" Interview
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltQhkK3UmaI
- Shirin Neshat, "Art in Exile" Ted Talk
  - https://www.ted.com/talks/shirin_neshat_art_in_exile?language=en

For Exploring/Engaging

These three links show forms of art that relate to my intended area of study: Migration. Explore these websites to gain a deeper understanding of how art impacts conversations about current political issues such as migration.

- A Walk Through Tate Modern: *On the Theme of Migration*
  - https://www.tate.org.uk/art/walk-through-tate-modern-on-theme-migration
- MoMA Learning: *Migration and Movement*
  - https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/migration-and-movement/
- The New York Times Style Magazine *13 Artists on: Immigration*
  - https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/19/t-magazine/immigration-art.html

Assignments
- Go Outside!
  - Take a walk outside around your neighborhood, city, town, etc.
  - Find a piece of art you encounter (a mural, a sign, a building, a statue, anything and everything is welcome)
  - Take a picture or video of it to bring to class
  - Be prepared to present your selection and discuss it for 2-3 minutes
  - Note: if you feel uncomfortable finding a piece in your area, feel free to go through you instagram feed, twitter, etc. to find a selection
- Journal
  - Collect your thoughts and free-write for 10-15 minutes
  - Reflect on the readings and connect them to the art piece you found around your hometown

In-Class
- Join Zoom and Quick Check-ins(10:00-10:10)
  - Announcements from Kate
  - How was your week?
- General Reactions and Comments (10:10-10:30)
  - Everyone will share their initial thoughts about the readings
  - Emphasize main ideas or particular pieces of interest
- Break-out Rooms (10:30-10:45)
  - In-depth discussions with guiding questions provided by Jameson
  - Focus on **Connections, Contradictions, and Criticisms** within and between the different pre-class material
- Regroup with Whole Class (10:45-11:00)
  - Share what your group discussed
  - Any additional thoughts about the readings
- Individual Art Presentations (11.00-11.20)

- Present your art piece through screen share to the class
- Connect your pre-class journal or in-class discussion to piece
- Reflection (11:20-11:30)
  - Final thoughts and takeaways

SEXISM AND WHITENESS IN MEDIA AND BEYOND

Discussion Leader: Elisabeth Hall

Read:
- Stephanie Grossman's "Women's Support for Gender-Equality Policies: The Roles of Sexism Experiences, Sexist Beliefs, and Psychological Distress (2019) pp 1-16
- Doreen Massey's "A Global Sense of Place" in Space, Place and Gender (1994) pp 146-156
- Abby L. Ferber's "Constructing whiteness: the intersections of race and gender in US white supermacist discourse" (1998) pp 48-60
- Jean-Anne Sutherland and Kathryn Feltey's "Here's looking at her: an intersectional analysis of women, power, and feminism in film" (2016)

Watch:
- "Media Objectification and Devaluation of Women" by Goal Auzeen Saedi
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRoKmxglYN4 (2013)
- "The Day Beyoncé Turned Black" by Saturday Night Live
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ociMBfkDG1w (2016)

Assignments:
- Watch and take notes on a movie from your adolescence. This could be a 20 minute segment or the full movie, your choice!
  - No matter how much of the movie you watch, it is required you watch the opening and closing segments

- While watching this movie reflect on how gender roles and whiteness are included and portrayed in the film. This can be through various factors including but not limited to actors, costumes, and shot framing.
- After watching the movie, spend a few minutes to read over your notes and reflect. Additionally, do some research online about the production team of the film. What do you notice?

- Daily Check-In
  - 10:00- 10:05
- Hall Brief Summary
  - 10:05-10:10
- First class discussion
  - Were there any themes in particular that you found interesting and how did they relate to your analysis of the film or segment you watched?
  - Did you read or watch anything that you didn't know before, or even possibly surprised you?
  - How did both the readings and the segment you watched relate to each other? Did you find that the arguments made by the authors in the assigned readings were supported or contradicted by the film segment you watched?
  - 10:10- 10:30
- In your breakout rooms
  - In your groups, pretend that you are producing your own film.
  - What is your film titled, what is it about? Who is featured in this film?
  - What steps are you and your group taking to prevent sexism and racial stereotypes in your film?
  - What factors aside from the actual film production does this change? Think about aspects such as the economic situation, target audiences, and marketing strategies.
  - 10:30- 10:50
- Come back for final class discussion
  - Each group goes around and gives a brief summary of their films, the ways in which they prevented sexism and racial stereotyping, and the additional elements of their pre and post production processes that were impacted by these decisions.
  - How do the readings assigned align with your decisions? Would the authors agree or disagree with your methods as viable solutions? Why or why not?
  - 10:50- 11:10
- Closing remarks
  - 11:10- 11:15

Symone Harmon

The Commodification of Race and Identity: How Culture and Power Create Each Other

Introduction

The problem of identity as capital stems from two processes that reinforce each other: hierarchical difference, and the commodification of human capital. The formation of hierarchical difference by the bourgeoisie begins the valuing process, and thus the devaluing of capital. This process is inherently exploitative because it is created under the conditions that best benefit and maintain the status of the bourgeoisie. The valuing of human capital reinforces the creation of hierarchical difference, and thus the production and reproduction of identity.

The commodification of Black, Brown, and Indigenous people has forced upon them narratives and identities that best suit the bourgeois. These narratives are essential to the functioning of the capitalist system and maintaining the hierarchical difference previously established.

Readings
- Rosemary-Claire Collard and Jessica Dempsey, "Capitalist Natures in Five Orientations," Capitalism Nature Socialism, 28.1 (2017) pp 1-20
  - Note: When reading, please think about the Five Orientations in terms of human beings, cultures, and identities.
- Hartman, Saidiya: Seduction and the Ruses of Power
  - *Note: This reading talks a lot about the rape of black slave women. However, when reading, try to focus on how the status of chattel and how

the treatment of persons assigned to "chattel" status has contributed to the capitalist social relations of black women (and people of color). Furthermore, reflect on how this exploitative capitalist relationship is personified in Black, Brown, and Indenigous communities.

- Marx, Karl, "The Nature and Growth of Capital," Wage Labor and Capital, https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/wage-labour/ch05.htm

Video

- Re-watch a part of Bell Hooks and Arthur Jafa, "Transgression in Public Spaces." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fe-7ILSKSog
  - Start: 51:38
  - Finish: 58:50
  - "Our obsession with the reproduction of 'real' is something that the white gaze tries to put upon us to prove our experience."

Music
- Kendrick Lamar's "For Free" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ZTYgq4EoRo

Podcast
- Dissect "For Free" 18min
- https://open.spotify.com/episode/6jMgf69d9vkx0R6ULEAZik?si=GrQz_or9RMO VRDJRMhUpiQ

Homework Reflections:
Listen to Kendrick Lamar's "For Free" and spend 3-5min reflecting on your initial thoughts of the song and its contents (it may be more beneficial for you to write down your thoughts, but this is not required). Listen to the podcast, have your thoughts changed? What does the song say about the Black American experience in relation to commerce and capitalism? Do you agree/disagree, why or why not?

In Class:

10:00 - 10:15   Kate's Comments & Daily Check-In
10:15 - 10:30   Initial Class Discussion

- General overview of the readings

Symone Harmon

- Reaction to the song and podcast

10:30 - 10:50   Breakout Rooms

Questions
1. How has capitalism and hierarchical difference created and reproduced the narratives of Black, Brown, and Indeginous people in the United States? How does the valuing process (the act of assigning a price value to human capital) reinforce the racial identities and narratives created by hierarchical difference as a function of capitalism?
2. Is the biological life of people of color considered essential to their value as capital? Justify how your answer is evident in society?
3. Can we escape from our dollar value, when most of the things we do devalue ourselves to a price tag?
4. Can an individual/community be oriented relative to capitalist social relations and not be subjected to exploitation? If so how, and what would that entail? Would we have to fix the system, which inherently exploits the perceived "inferiors"? Or does the system need to be destroyed and built anew? What would this look like?
5. How are we a product of the capitalist system, and how do we perpetuate the commodification of other cultures and ethnicities in the capitalist system?

10:50 - 11:10   Class Discussion
11:10 - 11:15   Closing Remarks

Mass Culture and The Internet
Discussion Leader: Joe

Saladdin Said Ahmed, "Mass Mentality, Culture Industry, Fascism," Kritike 2.1 (2008): 79-94.
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DT9CiKSl-XUVS1dpTny18SAbt72QZFHU/view?usp=sharing

Edward Said, "The Clash of Ignorance," The Nation vol. 278, no. 12 (October 22, 2001): 11-14
Link.

Arendt, Hannah. "The Human Condition," "The Public and the Private Realm," "The Vita Activa and the Modern Age," *The Human Condition*. 50-58.
https://drive.google.com/file/d/13rkjvJec0JXD5L3x0N1WWINdtJDfsO6l/view?usp=sharing

Viewings:
The Internet, Globalization and the Media Future
https://youtu.be/XuzvmoMCygg

Pre-Class Assignment:
      Spend 15 minutes after completing the readings to think on how the internet impacts mass culture. These writings do not explicitly discuss the post-internet world, so use your own personal experiences to reflect on how they complicate or reinforce the arguments in the readings. Is identity and culture becoming more or less homogenized with the prominence of the internet in our lives? How has the internet impacted the way that you interact with identity and culture?

- 10:00 - 10:10: Daily check-in
- 10:10 - 10:30: Initial discussion on readings
- 10:30 - 10:50: Simulation activity
- 10:50 - 11:10: Debrief of activity, discussion
- 11:10 - 11:15: Final thoughts

Blurb:

  The prevalence of mass culture within society today is inextricably linked to the role that capitalism and consumerism play in our lives. Mass culture describes the way in which individuals within a society become homogenized through media into entities incapable of substantive engagement in the public realm. The corporations that control the media are commercial enterprises primarily interested in generating profit. This profit can come in the form of sensationalism and the emphasizing of the "otherness" of different cultures.

  The primary practice of politics centers on the ways in which humans become individuals through our relationship with others. The process becomes corrupted through the homogenization of individuals and the sensationalism of modern media, including the internet.

Simulation Activity:

- Everyone will be split into groups of two and placed in separate breakout rooms
- Each breakout room will be assigned a role for the simulation
- Their job will be to design a presentation (whether through PowerPoint or simply speaking) explaining to their shareholders how they plan to respond to the fictional crisis in a way that will maximize their profits and influence
- Groups will then discuss with one another the reasoning behind their decisions and explain the probable outcome of their actions

Crisis: Election Day arrives, and no candidate is declared the winner. However, both candidates make acceptance speeches and firmly hold to the position that they are victorious.

Group 1: Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook
- Elisabeth and Symone
- Things to consider:
  o How will you go about censoring misinformation?
  o Will you place restrictions on who you will allow to place ads on your site?

o   What kind of groups would you designate as hostile and deactivate their pages?

Group 2: Jeff Zucker, President of CNN
-       Akanksha and Bailyn
-       Things to consider:
        o   How will you decide how much time during the 24-hour news cycle to devote to the crisis?
        o   Will you attempt to present both sides of every argument?
        o   Are clips of heightening tensions and chaos going to make you more money or less?

Group 3: Jack Dorsey, CEO of Twitter
-       Ismary and Paul
-       Things to consider:
        o   Will you fact-check tweets from prominent individuals?
        o   What would be grounds to ban someone from Twitter?
        o   How will you manage the spread of misinformation?

Group 4: Martin Baron, Editor of the Washington Post
-       Jameson and Marianna
-       Things to consider:
        o   How does the idea of journalistic integrity impact what stories you run?
        o   What is more important, publishing newsworthy pieces, or generating as many clicks as possible on your website?
        o   How does the fact that your company is owned by Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos impact your priorities?

Power and Language

Introduction

Language is one of the most powerful forces in human culture, providing us a way in which we can communicate with one another. Yet, language also serves to support structures of power and privilege, shaping our assumptions and beliefs. To understand how language functions, we must understand what power is and how language has been used to uphold power structures and systems of oppression. As we begin to question the role of language in power and culture, we can better understand how it operates within our own lives.

Readings & Viewings

hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom.* New York: Routledge, pp.167-175. http://sites.utexas.edu/lsjcs/files/2018/02/Teaching-to-Transcend.pdf

Michel Foucault on Power (https://youtu.be/AY0ub1mfk5k)

Paulo Freire on Language and Power (https://youtu.be/DTwY2nGONs8)

Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. "'Good and Evil,' Good and Bad.'"*On the Genealogy of Morality*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 10-34. https://philosophy.ucsc.edu/news-events/colloquia-conferences/GeneologyofMorals.pdf

Foucault, Michel. "The Incitement to Discourse."*The History of Sexuality*. New York: Pantheon Books, pp. 17-35. https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/currentstudents/undergraduate/modules/fulllist/special/endsandbeginnings/foucaultrepressiveen278.pdf

Preparations for Class

For this class, I would like you to reflect on how language and power correspond in your life. How have these readings on language and power helped inform your understanding of race, gender, and class?

Your assignment to bring in for class is to record a 10-15 minute conversation with someone in your life (roommate, friend, family member, etc.). After doing so, reflect on the conversation and on the ways in which you see the power structures that exist in language operating in your dialogue. Make sure you anonymize the conversation and focus on the specific takeaways of the language used, rather than the content of the conversation.

(Note: please ask for permission before recording the conversation to insure the participant(s) is consenting.)

Recommendations

- I would suggest starting with the hooks reading, which is a shorter reading that will provide you with an introduction to the dynamics of language and power we will be discussing. I would follow that reading with the Foucault and Freire videos, which will provide you with some foundational theories and thoughts on power and language. Lastly, I would read Nietzche's and Foucault's examinations on how language constructs understanding and, ultimately, reality.

Questions to think about while reading/viewing these sources:

- What is the relationship between language and power? What is language saying/doing?
- How is power exerted through this use of language? How is language used to propagate ideas and ideologies?
- How does the construction of language alter our perceptions and understandings? How does Foucault's analysis of sexuality highlight the power of language and its ramifications?
- How can understanding the structures behind the construction and use of language help understand how knowledge and power operate in our lives?
- How does language inform or limit our understanding of our identities?

Class Schedule

- 10:00-10:10   Check-In + Overview (discuss objectives for the day)
- 10:10-10:20   Introductory Discussion Question: Why Does Language Matter?
- 10:30-10:40   Breakout Rooms to Share HW
- 10:40-10:50   Share Conclusions and Thoughts from Breakout Rooms

- 10:50–11:05   Breakout Rooms to Discuss Questions
- 10:05–11:15   Sharing Thoughts from Breakout Rooms
- 11:15–11:30   Final Thoughts

<u>Posthumanism</u>

What alone can be our doctrine? That no one gives man his qualities-neither God, nor society, nor his parents and ancestors, nor he himself . . . . No one is responsible for man's being there at all, for his being such-and such, or for his being in these circumstances or in this environment. The fatality of his essence is not to be disentangled from the fatality of all that has been and will be. Man is not the effect of some special purpose, of a will, and end; nor is he the object of an attempt to attain an "ideal of humanity" or an "ideal of happiness" or an "ideal of morality." — Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols

Guiding Questions:

1. Is there a viable way of decentering the human in "human science" discourses?

2. How can posthumanist principles better our approach to studying CULP?

Introductory Video:

Michael Shirzadian, There is No "I" in Human: Toward a Posthuman Ethics
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=575cr_05kzQ

Posthumanist Theory & Ecological Posthumanism:

Katherine Hayles, Unthought, p.1-5, 16-20, 30-33, 213-216 (16)
https://ageingcompanions.constantvzw.org/books/Unthought_N._Katherine_Hayles.pdf

Sylvia Wynter, Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument*, p. 257-283, 311-317 (32)
https://law.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/2432989/Wynter-2003-Unsettling-the-Coloniality-of-Being.pdf

*CW: racial slurs

Val Plumwood, Feminism and the Mastery of Nature, p. 19-27, 36-40, 190-196 (18)
https://takku.net/mediagallery/mediaobjects/orig/f/f_val-plumwood-feminism-and-the-mastery-of-nature-pdf.pdf

Further Reading:

Anna Tsing, The Mushroom at the End of the World

Judith Butler, Performative Acts and Gender Constitution

Ihab Hassan, Prometheus as Performer: Toward a Posthumanist Culture?

Assignment:

Come up with a short entry or list of ways in which you unconsciously center yourself, humans or man in particular in your daily life. Where do these ideas have their roots? What would it take to consciously change these patterns of thinking? What would a reframing of the human mean to you specifically? Additionally, take a picture or draw a sketch of what your room would look like in a posthumanist world; what stays, and what gets removed? Only share if you feel comfortable doing so.

Class:

- A short recap of posthumanism and its rupture from humanist thinking; elements of posthumanist theory; clarifying questions (10:10-10:20)

- Breakout rooms: discuss your journal exercise as well as any compelling or confusing things from the readings; create one open-ended discussion question for the rest of the class (10:20-10:35)

- As a group, discuss major themes from breakout room discussions; compile a list of the discussion questions, and work through them together (10:35-10:55)

- Pivot to talking about the two guiding questions; where does this theory take us in studying CULP? (10:55-11:10)

- Check-ins and any housekeeping information

  Paul James

Paul James
17.9.20
CULP 045

Crenshaw, Kimberlé Williams. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color." In: Martha Albertson Fineman, Rixanne Mykitiuk, Eds. *The Public Nature of Private Violence.* (New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 93-118.

In an effort to combat routine violence in their lives, women have organized into a political voice drawing a collective strength from this delineated group. They are able to publicly call out issues that affect women as a class, including battering and rape. In contrast to threads of liberal thought that hold there is no realist meaning to these social categories, this social justice strand of identity politics is grounded in womanhood as a distinct identity. Nevertheless, these group collectives are helpful only insofar as they recognize intra-group distinctions—intersectionality—between members who may fall under the broad umbrella of womanhood but also contend with differing racial or ethnic backgrounds and sexual orientation, to name a couple. Political movements with an identity politics foundation fail when they create a false dichotomy between two categories of progress, in this case feminism and anti-racism. Contemporary feminist and anti-racist movements are at risk of instituting or affirming oppressive patriarchal and racist structures when they are siloed as discrete rather than interrelated.

Women of color in particular have trouble finding a space that represents their intersectional identity as women and as people of color. The separated agendas of feminist and anti-racist movements either ignore or inadvertently harm the bodies and interests of women of color. Beside the political effects of these ideologies, structural differences in societal implications for the groups "women" and "people of color" also mean that women of color, at the nexus, experience gender and race in a different—and less visible—way than white women and Black men.

Taking the example of the experiences of battered women seeking help at shelters or other social resource centers, we see that seeking help for a domestic assault is never just about the assault for women of color. It's impossible to address the incident without also working through a history of layered domination and discrimination on the basis of race and economic class as well as gender. White women, while it does not diminish the brutality of domestic and sexual assault, can be relatively sure of receiving service for that issue without having to also confront and untangle racial trauma and sometimes economic need as well. As the more visible subgroup of the identity category, white women are also the clients in mind when shelters are funded or policies designed. A provision designed to prevent marriage fraud in the Immigration Act of 1990 also forced

immigrant women to stay in unhealthy and abusive relationships for fear of deportation; funding agencies provide money for the basic needs of largely white and middle-class women without devoting resources to centers for the treatment of layered and related traumas as well. Language barriers prevent women from even getting places at shelters in the name of protecting those very women.

Political movements have a similar tendency to sacrifice necessary distinctions for the perceived good of the larger movement as well. Feminist movements tactically obscure high rates of domestic violence among minority communities to avoid the issue being branded as only a minority issue. Conversely, communities of color silence battered women for fear of playing into the dominant racist narrative of violent men of color. Rather than benefiting from the progress of two social and political movements, women of color are instead left behind by both.

Even the purposeful inclusion and featuring of women of color can have adverse effects. A tokenizing and objectifying inclusion of women of color to prove a point takes away power and agency in the same way that isolation does as well.

The solution is not an erasure of categories of personhood; whether or not we want to see the distinctions, they have very real implications in the lives of everyone. But existing, rigid social categories overlook intra-group differences with grievous aftershocks. Instead, a recognition of intersectionality across many different lines and a re-imagination of how our layered identities define us provide the surest way to progress without sacrificing some of the very people who are supposed to benefit. Beyond that, forming ties based on new intersections of identity opens up a wide range of possible coalitions and new communities.

Joe Stewart
CULP
September 24, 2020
Précis Assignment

Sassen, Saskia. "The Repositioning of Citizenship and Alienage: Emergent Subjects and Spaces for Politics." *Globalizations: Empire or Cosmopolis?* 2.1 (2005): 79–94.

Recent changes to the role of the nation state warrants a reexamination of the notion of citizenship. Citizenship has changed for two reasons: first, globalization through the emergence of an international human rights regime and economic deregulation have strengthened cross-border ties. Second, there has been an emergence of groups of people in society that are reluctant to maintain a strong identification with their nation state. Through these developments, the traditional relationship between the citizen and the nation state is destabilizing. This may lead to a denationalized form of citizenship where the nation state is not as important to the individual. Most states do not provide equal citizenships to all of its members. For this reason, and the other reasons listed above, people are moving to build power in other ways

Citizenship's evolution in the past centuries might be indicative of where it is headed. Europe's history of nationalism and territorial competition discouraged the idea of dual nationality. The increase in those with dual or multiple nationalities may signal a dilution of the importance of nationality. Globalization of the world economy has tightened cross-national connections because it discourages war and limits states' need to have a large number of loyal citizens ready to fight in a war effort. People used to feel a deep dependence on their state due to welfare entitlements. With the emergence of a global capitalist market economy, welfare entitlements are lowering and so are people's dependence on the state for assistance.

Citizenship has moved in the past century to become more equal through legislation and constitutional amendments. However, equal citizenship has not been accomplished everywhere. Minority groups as well as the extremely poor are excluded from civic engagement. Because of this, disadvantaged groups are now starting to make human rights claims to supra-national organizations such as the UN. People are looking to other places for social membership and human rights protection.

Two groups of people highlight the shortcomings of formal citizenship: the unauthorized yet recognized and the authorized yet unrecognized. The first group includes undocumented immigrants who can, for example, receive recognition, if not authorization, from both their home and current countries if they contribute to the economies. The second group includes those who are discriminated against by the state and denied recognition such as housewives.

Denationalization leads to the transformation of the nation itself as well as the citizen. Due to the growth of legal protections for citizens, they can make more claims against their government. This diminishes their dependency on a benefactor state. Foreign actors are also now able to receive rights similar to those of a citizen due to globalization.

The global city is the site of many of these changes to citizenship. That is because they are home to both centers of global capital and disadvantaged populations. Disadvantaged people have a presence and political power in these cities due to the importance of the cities to the global economy. Global cities around the world are seeing groups of disadvantaged people identify less with their nationality and more with global and local communities that are better able to represent their interests and defend their human rights than the nation state.

Marianna De Souza
October 2, 2020
CULP 045
Précis
Fanon, Franz. "On Violence." *The Wretched of the Earth*. (New York: Grove Press, 2004), p. 1-10.

Decolonization always involves violence, considering that the process of colonization itself exists and operates on the use of violence. In order to liberate and restore a nation to its people, the colonized must approach the colonial situation under the same terms in which it was established. The relationship between the colonizers and the colonized is one of conflicting objectives, where the exploitation and subjugation of those colonized lies at center of the system from which the colonizers derive their power and wealth. The success of the decolonization process relies on a complete restructuring of the system, in which liberation elevates the colonized subject to the empowered man. The social structure of the colonial situation must be completely rethought and reimagined in order to eliminate a system and framework that is incompatible with the liberation of the colonized. To decolonize man requires a new education and mindset consistent with the language of freedom, rather than that of subjugation and oppression the colonial system operates on.

The confrontation of diametrically opposed actors cannot occur without considering all avenues of action, including violence. The creation of a new system, and of a new man where the last becomes the first, can only succeed if the colonized do not shy away violent means that supported the reality of colonialism. Those who decide to apply this theory into practice must be resolute in efforts to capsize the organization of violence that restrains their existence from birth.

The divisions at the heart of the colonial world and its success must be extrapolated from this system to formulate how the decolonized nation will be built. The colonial world is systematically divided into matters of the colonizers and the colonized, which is evidenced by the application of violence and absence of peace in the space of the colonized. Those in the colonial state experience constant intervention from authorities, with the threat and use of violence the main vehicle through which the colonized subject is dominated. Yet, it is this kind of oppression and violence that the empowers the colonizer to label the other as evil and disreputable.

The unequal nature of these worlds, characterized by extreme levels of difference, is further evidence of the oppression experienced by colonized people. While the capitalist world of the colonizers is filled with abundance, health, and life, the world of the colonized subject is marked by neglect and misery. These worlds can only exist in opposition to one another, as the success of one relies on the subjugation of the other. As such, the envious colonized subject's calls for action are met with the complacency and indifference of the colonizers who thrives off such systems of oppression.

The colonizer and the colonized cannot be viewed on the same plane of humanity, as two entirely different species that represent incompatible values and morals. The very existence of the colonial system dehumanizes the colonized person, one who is thought of as incapable of having the values to exist in the capitalist space. Characterized as inhuman and treated as such, the colonized subject is denied of any capacity for ethics and values. However,

the moral depravity of the colonial situation invalidates the position of the colonizer as the enforcer of fair values and justice. Nevertheless, efforts by the colonized to resist colonial rule are confronted with calls for reason and morality. The colonized subject is painted as regressive and forced to operate on the Western ideals preached by those in power, despite the absence of such ideals in practice.

  The process of liberation is slowed and complicated by the emergence of a class of colonized intellectuals. The colonized elite perpetuate the established structures of power, allowing the framework of Western thinking and supremacy to maintain its dominance even in the colonizers' absence. Such a system entraps the native people in a cycle of oppression, in which the colonial situation replicates itself and creates further trauma. In order to complete the process of decolonization, the native people must resist efforts to indoctrinate the colonized elite and be unified in understanding that their independence relies on their collective power to dismantle the colonialist superstructure.

Elisabeth Hall
October 9, 2020
CULP 045
Critical Précis

Sontag, Susan. "Looking at War." *The New Yorker*, 9. Dec. 2002,
www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/12/09/looking-at-war.

In her article, "Looking at War," Susan Sontag describes the impacts that photography has on the public perception of war. The author begins her article describing an interview conducted between English writer Virginia Woolf and a male lawyer. When Woolf is asked how to prevent war, she explains that she is unable to have a fully transparent conversation with the man due to the role that gender dynamics play in warfare. Woolf states that men, and not women, are inclined to go to war because of their need and desire to fight. This conversation between Woolf and the man starts the article with a clear argument: that the concept of war is subjective, and changes based on characteristics of the individual.

Next in the article, Sontag discusses the perception of war throughout history. In the past, war was understood as preventable. One of the ways that war was thought to be prevented was through photographs and literary works. These medias allowed the public to see the brutal and violent reality of war, something which was not previously possible. Ultimately, this allowed the public to not only be exposed to the difficulties of war, but also have empathy for those involved.

Although images are a well-founded way to study and be exposed to truths, one must also acknowledge that photography obtains a paradoxical nature, one of which demonstrates the art as both objective and subjective. Photographs are perceived to be objective because they are an exact representation of a person, place, or thing. However, this is not actually the case. Photographs are able to deceive the viewer about the scene it depicts based on the way that the subject is staged and presented in the image. This manipulation was, and is, used in order to achieve certain political, economic, and cultural motives.

One example of staged imagery that was used for political motives was a deal made between the British government and a man named Roger Fenton in the 1850s. Fenton was hired by the British government to photograph the Crimean War as a means to improve war sentiments amongst the public. In order to improve these sentiments, Fenton took staged photos of soldiers and other aspects of the war that painted war as something of an honorable gentlemen's club. Even more, these photos allowed the British government to announce deaths and other difficult news without actually portraying the violence or death itself. Because of both of these aspects, the perception of war was altered, and the public was more inclined to support the war.

Today, beginning in the 1970s during the Vietnam War, it has become much more difficult to stage a photograph. The reason for this is because of the increase of other technologies, including video streaming and film. With more exposure amongst more media, the public is more informed on the realities of recorded events. Even more, the impact of photography on the public has lessened through overexposure. Sontag describes how non-stop imagery of war, including television, movies, and streaming video, has less of an effect on the viewer than a photograph.

However, today, even photographs are now getting lost in the constant channel of content. This is a cultural problem, formed by the public need for action and spectacle.

Nonetheless, public exposure remains as important as ever as the way that the public views photography is a crucial component to the human awareness of the truths of the world, according to Sontag. Sontag states that the purpose of photography is to create feeling. This feeling can often be conflicting, especially in war photography. Even though it may be difficult to expose oneself to these images, it is necessary. When observing and reflecting on this media, regardless how disturbing they may be, the individual has the responsibility to understand what occurs in the image as a representation of systemic social beliefs. Once this is acknowledged, the individual can then use this information to act and create positive change.

Sontag concludes her article affirming that, ultimately, no matter how much time and effort one spends studying the images and narratives representing the events of war, the individual cannot fully understand the true devastation and brutality of war without experiencing it first-hand. This, she states, is something that all journalists, soldiers, aid workers, and independent observers know, and something that the public must learn.

Jameson Nowlan
October 21 2020
CULP 045
Critical Precis

Abby L. Ferber (1998) Constructing Whiteness: the intersections of race and gender in US white
supremacist discourse, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 21:1, 48-63

Historically, scholars and academics have long neglected the study of 'whiteness' or the
construction and development of the white racial identity. However, as referenced by Toni
Morrison in *Playing in the Dark*, the impacts of racism extend far past the victims of oppression
and infiltrate the lives of those who perpetuate it. This notion has pushed a collective shift in
contemporary racial discourse towards the study of race as a construction within society, rather
than pure descriptions of biological realities. This new movement have coincided with similar
pushes in the world of feminist dicourse on gender. Together, the connection between these
emerging ideas on race and gender relations within society, provide a fundamental basis for
deconstructing and analyzing the contemporary white supremacist discourse.

At its core, white supremacy works to naturalize and hierarchize white racial and gender
identities. While white supremacy seeks to rationalize and institutionalize the biological
conceptualization of race, in reality, the discourse constructs race itself. Fundamentally, white
supremacy preaches essentialism, superiority of the white race, eternal difference between races,
and the fear of a genocidal plot against the white race on behalf of Jews. However, below the
surface, there is an ultimate fear of losing male dominance that leads the groups to consistently
attempt to rearticulate white male identity and privilege. This innate insecurity outwardly
manifests itself in the fierce protection of womanhood and depiction of white women as passive
victims of Jews and Blacks. In response to the ongoing Civil Rights Movement, the movement
repeatedly attempted to publicly paint themselves as an "oppressed majority" through
propaganda and journal pieces. This emphasis continued to escalate as the violence between
races in the 1980s reinforced the fear of an impending 'race war'.

In addition to the core motivations of the movement, white supremacist discourse rests on the
ability to create racial and gender distinction. The discourse primarily emphasizes the importance
of the binary oppositions: male vs. female and black vs. white. It establishes a clear subservient
relationship and system of inequality between these two binaries. White supremacy perfectly
equates inequality with difference therefore, in the eyes of supporters, it is impossible to achieve
equality while recognizing difference. Therefore, any attempt to question inequality poses as a
not only a threat to the entire white supremacist philosophy, but questions the existence of any
difference between races at all. Through various published articles by pro-white magazines it is

clear that the recognition of difference between races is common sense to supporters, even comparing it to a relationship between a man and his dog.

The emphasis on the binary opposition white vs. black relies primarily on producing racial essence. When identifying racial difference, people are exclusively defined and distinguished by physical appearance and presentation. Therefore, race becomes a matter of presentation and performativity by people in society. The only continual reinforcement of the construct is simply repetition and reiteration by individuals. However, when asked to defend this central claim, the discourse repeatedly resorts to fundamental biological differences and uses science as the ultimate justification of their prejudice.

Similar to the construction of race, gender difference in the white superamcist discourse is purely rooted in nature and biology. While the movement idealizes the image of the white woman as beautiful and representative of perfection, the movement simultaneously reduces women to passive breeders of the white race. Women are exclusively defined by their reproductive abilities and sexual capacities in submission to white men. Further, the constant use of female specific words or phrases reinforces the incredibly real gender division as a form of deeper, symbolic segregation. The movement consistently emphasizes the beauty and sexual will of white women, but it also warns against the ultimate threat: intteracial sexuality and race-mixing. Therefore, the limited power bestowed to women in white supremacist discourse is ultimatley fiercley regulated and protected.

Ultimately, the white supermacist discourse relies on the identification of physical difference in order to marginalize and discriminate against groups. The creation of this difference, both between races and genders, is fundamental to the contruction of white supremacist discourse and therefore the white identity itself. Racism and misogyny are not the mere products of this discourse, but rather strategies to maintain hierarchies, reinforce difference, and establish inequality. In order to truly combat harmful ideologies and rhetoric surrounding race and gender difference, researchers must move away from identifying race as a natural distinction in order to avoid accidental contribution to the white supremacy movement.

Bailyn Prichett
10/21/20

Collard, Rosemary-Claire & Dempsey, Jessica (2017). "Capitalist Natures in Five Orientations."
Capitalism, Nature, Socialism, 28(1), 78-97.

  The capitalist value, or lack thereof, of living beings - both non-human and human - is determined by the bodily orientation of these beings. Orientation is relational, "a body is always oriented or positioned in relation to something else." Orientation is never static. In order for capital to accumulate, bodies must be ordered into a variety of hierarchical positions that are determined by difference. These hierarchies, in turn, organize social relations. Often, only value production - in the form of formal commodification - is considered in the relationship between capitalism and nonhuman and human beings. This disregards the significance of entities that are designated as "waste" or "useless" in the capitalist system and undermines the injustice and exploitation of bodies in subordinate orientations. This process of capital value production reinforces the hierarchal orientation of social relations, which manifests as patriarchy, racism and colonialism. Historically, law has been used as a toll to maintain these hierarchies, as it deems some bodies worthy of protection and some inferior. Collard and Dempsey present a typology of five different orientations of capitalist natures that shows how the orientation of nonhuman and human bodies can lead to devaluation and exploitation.

  The first orientation is the "officially valued," which includes all bodies that are formally commodified by capitalism. For humans, this includes both waged and enslaved labours. Although these workers are essential for capital accumulation, they are seen as fungible and superfluous. It is noted that there is a body of scholarly work focused on how commodification depends on how hierarchy creates disinvestment and devaluation. When groups are devalued as humans through racialization and gender, they become of more value to capitalism because they are disposable. For nonhumans, this orientation includes lively commodities like exotic pet brands and ecosystem carbon, property, and farmed animals. Lively commodities are similar to enslaved labour because they perform labour that does not belong to them. Property law differentiates the type of property depending on the type of animal, reinforcing capitalist order.

  The second orientation is the "reserve army," which consists of surplus populations that are deemed inferior or different, often through place in the form of historical land grabs, gender or race. These populations wait on the outskirts until they are moved into the "officially valued" category. When the reserve armies are needed by firms, or need wages in order to survive, their marginalization allows the capitalist system to pay less than their labour is worth, resulting in surplus value. For humans, this includes the transiently unemployed due to land enclosures and unmarried women. Nonhumans, including species, communities and ecosystems, with future exchange value - masses of resources waiting to be commodified - are oriented in this way.

  The third orientation is the "underground," which makes capitalism possible, but is unpaid and treated as common goods. Maria Mies describes this typology as an "invisible iceberg" consisting of three colonies: third world peoples, women and nature. Capitalism is built

on the backs of women through the unwaged labor of reproduction. Women can be used as machines to produce new workers, because they are positioned as non-workers. Similarly, "public goods" such as ecosystems are seen as freely "working" for humans.

The fourth orientation is "outcast surplus," which includes communities that have no benefit to the accumulation of capital. They are wholly ignored, left to live or die. Tania Li presents the example of a landless community in Southeast Asia, who are seen as ultimately irrelevant to capitalism, placing them outside of the reserve army. Loss of species, evident through rising extinction rates, go unrecognized if they are not considered a loss to capitalist production. Through direct value to capitalism, law determines which ecosystems and species are deemed as a "Valued Ecosystem Component" or endangered.

The fifth orientation is "threat," which includes entities conceived as a threat to capitalist accumulation or human populations. Millions of wild animals are killed each year to make land more congenial for human life and to protect the capitalist value of property and agriculture. Invasive species are deemed invasive because of their negative economic effect.

Violence and exploitation in the capitalist system cannot be challenged if only looked at through a lens of "officially valued" commodification from an anthropocentric and capital centric view. There is a multiplicity of hierarchies over nature, all of which keep the capitalist wheels turning. Collard and Dempsey end with this question: "What does the utopian, social nature look like? What are its orientations and how might it grapple with these differences and hierarchies?"

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Theorizing Culture and Politics
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Ahmed, Saladdin.. *Mass Mentality, Culture Industry, Fascism*. Kritike: An Online Journal of
Philosophy. 2. 79-94. 2008.

      Mass mentality is the core foundation of the culture industry and of fascism, though both
have a two-fold relationship with mass mentality in facilitating its growth. Within the culture
industry, which is the standardization and proliferation of culture as embodied by the masses, the
masses are the targets and the mediums of consumerism - despite being passive participants in
upholding commercialism and commodification. Corporations appeal to their happiness and their
fetishization of commodities to turn over a profit. What is profitable is popular, and through a
process of persuasion and consent, capitalism drives the creation of popular culture.
      There is no system of domination where the customer is the king, nor is there a system of
domination where an elite group maneuvers mass culture; in the culture industry, both mass
mentality and dominant groups are essential. Horkheimer claims that the creation of culture is
part of an individual's defense system reacting to external forces by power figures. This kind of
reaction is essential in fascism; ultimately, fascism is not pushed by elites but rather is found in
mass culture. Political correctness in today's society facilitates fascism by creating masks that
shield people from saying that they really feel. This is the danger of fascism - its invisibility. In
order to root it out, it requires an abundance of intellectual thinking and reasoning that is not
inherent in mass thinking and which middle-class persons will often over-simplify and miss.
      Political stupidization and the creation of the apolitical, simplified mass thus lends to the
growth of insidious fascism in apparently impregnable and democratic Western societies. By
creating the idea of the "other", the threat to a collective existence is presented. Fascism thrives
on having an enemy and someone to vilify. In the absence of an individual identity, fascists seek
a collective identity of sisterhood/brotherhood in reaction to the existential crisis of
individualism. By reducing everything and everyone to categories or stereotypes, Adorno states
that the creation of "they" and "us" fall along the lines of "bad" and "good". Stereotypes are the
manifestations of paranoiac thinking which presents the main groups attitude to the rest of the
world. Culture is thus a screen of pre-digested perspectives for a group, rooted in paranoia. This
helps in the minimization of thinking and logic, and thus the stupidification of politics and the
masses.
      Because our mass mentalities are attracted to the simple, superficial, and uncomplicated,
the culture industry produces that which adheres to the simplicity, superficiality, and
uncomplicatedness in order to attain the most consumption possible. Adorno describes popular
culture as needing to be repetitive and familiar; culture thus uses its facist power to eliminate
individualist cases, or the unfamiliar, akin to the dichotomization of "them" and "us." Mass
mentality is then addicted to these simple ways of thinking - of the repetition, routine, and

stupidity of culture. Art and culture must be pre-digested in order to be consumed by the masses. This "babyficaton" of culture allows for it to be commodified, commercialized, and consumed within the capitalist system. The popular mentality is not inclined to make serious philosophical analyses or think critically about what it is consuming. It prefers the anesthetization of the mind and the use of institutions to relegate what is considered to be "good" art. Without the Nobel Prize for Literature, some books would not become popular. Without the lauding of Beethoven, his music would not be as ubiquitous. The popular thus becomes popular regardless of its artistic value and merely based on its capitalistic value. This lends to the creation of multi-layered works in order to appeal to the most audiences as possible, thus deconstructing the idea that art is only for the sophisticated, cultured elites.

   The culture industry takes the stupidification of mass culture a step further by curating the ideas of variety and rebellion. Without these illusions of rebellion or variety, the culture industry dies from not having new commodities to commercialize. This manipulated freedom is a core part of the culture industry - the creation of dissatisfaction and boredom are inherent in culture and the reason it survives. As long as mass groups can maintain an attraction to illusions of "outside-ness", then the culture industry can survive. The illusions of the culture industry are also apparent in the formation of the dreams in the form of individuality, which is inherently curated by the popular mentality. Ultimately, the culture industry is capitalism's weapon for commodifying culture and resulting in a conformity that breeds fascism as the celebration of a collective identity rooted in mass culture.

   Fascism is rooted in mass culture because both are inherently paranoiac by virtue of its collective nature and the ideas of unity. By having an alleged threat from the outside world, mass culture and fascism are sustained. In other words, the external and the minorities are essential for the passion and drive of fascism. This is evident in the categorization of minorities in the U.S. and the classification system that delegates them as either assimilated or terrorists and criminals. Because of the simplified nature of mass mentality, though, "others" are reduced to being "others" and nothing more. Therefore, even for descendants of certain cultures, a cultural or ethnic link to an enemy is sufficient to be classified as an enemy. Thus, depriving individuals of their individuality by reducing them to their ethnic/cultural heritage and, consequently, demonizing them. This is the phenomenon of stereotyping that adopts the simplified thinking of mass culture, providing the pre-digested perspectives of the world and of communities for collective thinking.

   The phenomenon of fascism and the formation of masses requires the loss of rationality and the establishment of a hierarchy based around the father-child relationship. Fascism thus focuses on the hierarchy and the image of the father and his greatness to subdue the masses to specific ideologies. This idealization is necessary for fascist systems, and it manifests in the forms of love - not only in government, but also in religion, and other such hierarchical institutions. The fascist leader is, consequently, the ideal embodiment of a relatable figure - familiar, simple, and easy to follow and love.

Fascism relies heavily on the creation of the in-groups and the out-groups by consistently vilifying the other and elevating the established group. As long as the in-group feels threatened by the out-group, individuality can be repressed to create a collective identity rooted in a so-called "fascist brotherhood" that is built on repression rather than equality. This de-individualization is necessary for those who are too weak to live without their collective identity. Therefore, fascism is a standard part of culture.

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Hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom.* New York:
Routledge, pp.167-175.

Oppressed people use non-standard English as a means of intimately expressing themselves and is distanced from the limitations and oppression of standard English. The oppressed find liberation and community in their language. However, standard English--the oppressor's language--is inherently opposed to black vernacular. The oppressor's use Standard English as a tool to define the limits of thought, and shame those who use non-standard English and do not stay within those limits.

For displaced Africans, standard English was the sound of oppression and captivity, and simultaneously their only hopes for creating a culture and community among each other. Black vernacular was born of the displacement and isolation of African slaves. The displaced African slaves were not only alienated from their native cultures and languages, but isolated among each other due to their lack of a common language. They were forced to adopt some semblance of the oppressor's language in order to form a community, and eventually a culture. However, black vernacular was not easily understood by their oppressors. Therefore, the language of conquest--standard English--became a method of resistance for African slaves and continues to be for the black community in the United States.

The English language has been used as a tool to maintain the hierarchical difference established by the colonizers. Standard English is used to define the boundaries of thought and expression, and shame those who use non-standard English. The vast scope of these limitations on language is seen in the loss of diverse Native Americans tongues and the reluctance of white Americans to acknowledge the existence--let alone the importance-- of these languages.

The presence black popular culture in mainstream culture runs the risk of devaluing black vernacular. The creation of the black vernacular--through which the black culture is commonly expressed-- from the oppressor's language has created "a culture of resistance" to the limitations of standard English enforced by their oppressors. Black vernacular is a space where black culture and thought can be expressed outside of the "limitations of standard English." This resistance is most commonly seen in black popular culture. For example, in rap music creators use black vernacular speech to express themselves through art. However, the use of black vernacular in mainstream culture is subversive to its legitimacy, regulating black speech to the entertainment sphere and bracading it from academic circles. When white people imitate black speech attempting to be funny, they are suggesting that black vernacular is only useful as entertainment.

The lack of diverse voices in academia reinforces the idea that standard English is the language of academia because it is the language most easily understood by white scholars. The expectation of standard English used in academia alienates students and scholars--whose first language is not standard English--from their native tongue and culture. This is the continuation of imperialism and ownership of speech in the classroom. However, spaces of learning without

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the ownership of speech are created by integrating non-standard English into academia. This is useful in "white supremacist [society], that uses English as a weapon to silence and censor" minorities (172). Integrating non-standard English into academia creates spaces of listening and learning without mastery, which subverts the idea that "one is worthy of being heard only if one speaks in standard English" (174).

Our complicity with the domination of the oppressor's language, is evident in the unconscious subversion of non-standard English in academia. However, the demand for diverse voices in feminist spaces threatens the domination of standard English, and forces us to change how we think about language and knowledge. For example, at a lecture the audience may hear segments of unfamiliar vernacular speech. In these segments the speaker is able to freely express their narratives without the invasion of standard English. Although the audience may not understand these segments, it is unnecessary for them to "conquer" the speaker's speech to understand their narrative.

The language of the oppressed is an attempt to fully express themselves and their ideas away from the invasion and domination of the oppressor's language. The language of the oppressed is simultaneously a space of suppression and resistance and freedom.

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CULP 045

Wynter, Sylvia. "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation--An Argument." CR: The New Centennial Review, vol. 3 no. 3, 2003, p. 257-283, 311-317.

The argument ("Argument") is that the struggle of the new millennium is between securing the well-being of the Western bourgeois conception of the human that overrepresents itself (the "Man") as though it were the human itself, and securing the well-being (i.e. behavioral and cognitive autonomy) of the human species itself (the "human"). Attempting to unsettle the coloniality of power will necessitate the unsettling of this overrepresentation. All present struggles regarding race, gender, environment and more are facets of this struggle. The "New Poor" – those stranded outside of the global North, those criminalized and deprived in the US, in the so-called "underdeveloped" areas, are central to this struggle. The Black population group, in global, regional, diasporic contexts, is placed at the bottom of social hierarchies, with non-white/non-Black groups claiming normal "human" status (i.e. that of the overrepresented Man) via distance from the Black population group, which occupies the space farthest from this Man. The struggle is therefore against this overrepresented Man, and saw its first phase in the brief period of "The Sixties" with multiple anticolonial social-protest movements. It has since continued to be articulated, but functioned in its re-elaboration of the central overrepresentation to keep the interests, reality, and well-being of the "human" world subordinated to those of the globally hegemonic "Man".

The origins of this "Man" lie in the creation of the modern European state after the intellectual revolution of Renaissance humanism that subverted the centrality of the world of the Church, i.e. finding the human outside of the theocentric sphere that had previously enabled the hegemony of the Church over the world of Latin-Christian Europe, but also brought with it the modernity/coloniality binary and the idea of race that would then function as the "most efficient instrument of social domination". It's major empirical effect is the "rise of Europe", the creation of its "world civilization", and the complementary world of African enslavement, Latin American conquest, and Asian subjugation.

The existence of the "Man" and its mapping on to today's global reality stems from a series of modifications and subversions of previous mappings. Archaeo-astronomy has shown historic practices of mapping descriptive statements of being human onto the physical cosmos, thereby absolutizing each criterion as an objective set of facts for the society and turning them into modes of commanding obedience and necessitated behaviors, therefore still only remaining adaptive truths-for. With Greek/Hellenistic astronomy, the moral/political laws of the Greek polis were projected upon the physical cosmos. This projection of an order onto the physical cosmos had the ontological difference between the celestial realm of perfection and true knowledge, and the terrestrial realm of imperfection and doxa.

The projection of human authorship onto the extrahuman agency of Imaginary Beings is central to mechanisms that invert cause and effect, and repress the recognition of our collective production of society, even in the contemporary secular order of Evolution/Natural Section and its imagined entity of Race. The descriptive statement of the human within Judeo-Christianity's master code of the "Redeemed Spirit" (celibate clergy) and the "Fallen Flesh" (laypersons) follows the Greek mapping with degrees of spiritual perfection as well as a space of Otherness.

The conceptual break from this pattern of mapping made possible the rise of a nonadaptive mode of cognition with respect to the "objective set of facts" of the physical

level of reality. With the context of the revalorizing of the human two orthodox assumptions of the theocentric order were dispelled – the nonhomogeneity of the earth, by the West's global expansion voyages (which disproved that realms outside of the temperate regions that centered on Jerusalem, under God's grace, were uninhabitable), and the nonhomogeneity of the earth and the heavens, by Copernicus' new astronomy. It was the reinvention of the humanist Man as the Rational Self and as a political subject allied to the modern state (reasoning via adherence to state laws rather than seeking redemption via adherence to the Church), that made this dispelling possible.

It also made possible that the people of the West saw themselves as one mode of being, those with the one true religion, unable to conceive an Other to replace the dichotomous space previously occupied by God, thereby overrepresenting their conception of human, and inventing and institutionalizing the indigenous of the Americas as well as the transported enslaved Black Africans as the projected irrational/subrational Human Other to its civic-humanist, rational self-conception. All other forms of being human were therefore adaptable while the West's was the ontologically absolute self-description, allowing it to repress the truth of its own local culturality, necessitating the overlooking of the culture and class-specific relativity of Man, the present mode of being human. Darwin mutates from this paradigm of the Rational Man and the Human Other, with the theory of Evolution redefining Man as a purely biological being rather than an optimally economic Man.

The Argument proposes that the new master code of selected by Evolution/dysselected by Evolution were mapped onto the only remaining "objective" set of facts – that of the phenotypic differences that at its most extreme were between the Caucasoid physiognomy (good, selected by Evolution) and the Negroid physiognomy (evil, dysselected by Evolution). The Color Line was the new projected "space of Otherness". It is indispensable to the production and reproduction of our present genre of the human Man, alongside the global bourgeois order and its modes of production, alone able to ensure the production and reproduction of the ethnoclass/Western-bourgeois answer of who and what we are. The Negro, the Native, the Colonial Question, and the postcolonially "Underdeveloped" are not the issue of the present mode of economic production but of the continual production and reproduction of this answer – the capitalist mode is but a proximate function of it.

Disregarding, and even demonizing, such as of all Amerindian ways of knowing and knowledge production were part of a central imperative of sustaining the new mode of being human, Man. While "Indians" were the savage, irrational Other, the "Negroes" were assimilated as its most extreme form – this then followed into the construction of any persons of Black African descent as the ultimate referent of the "racially inferior" Human Other, and all other colonized dark-skinned peoples were now assimilated to its category. Various subcategories then formed, the most salient of which was the Black Other of sub-Saharan Africans and their Diaspora descendants to verify the overrepresentation of Man as if it were the human and legitimize the subordination of all else – all done through a lawlike, systemic manner.

Fanon, Bateson, writing during the sixties, reconceived the human. Bateson proposed the psyche/soul determinant in addition to physiologic and neurological determinants, of higher level learning and overall range of acquired know-how produced by interactions of the wider society. Fanon analyzed the systemic representation of the Negro, and the pre-colonial and colonial existences, to show that the Antillean Negro had been socialized to be Anti-Negro, and that a deliberate "blocking out" of a Black counter-voice, a Black positive self-conception, defines the way our current ethnoclass dictates what is human. Unsettling coloniality therefore necessitates reimagining the human.

The Argument proposes that humans, like each other purely organic species, must know the world in the adaptive truth-for terms, which means that varying modes of being human as per each culture's descriptive statement will give rise to varying respective modalities of adaptive epistemes. The Argument returns to the principal metaphysical significance of artificial intelligence, linked to the "objective" set of facts and each organism's need to know its reality with regards to its own advantageous production/reproduction. The anticolonial movements of the sixties reveal the gap between the global social reality and the present "mental construction of reality" as one projected from and to the advantage of our present ethnoclass genre of the human, Man. The global social reality is outside of Man's genre of being, truth, freedom. The initial impacts of these anticolonial movements remain despite the reterritorialization and re-cooptation of those theoretical departures. Feminist studies was able to survive in a way that other questions, such as the Negro Question and the Native Question were not, due to its reconception outside of the Marxian Labor issue to target specifically patriarchy, and those others now labelled as Third-World and Minority Questions need to be redescribed in the terms of an issue specific to them, but has not had such a name given that within the present order of knowledge it simply has not existed as an "object of knowledge". The issue is that of the abolition of the ongoing collective production of the present ethnoclass mode of being human; the overrepresentation of Man through the West and the westernized global middle classes.