Critical Race Theory and Praxis
Fall 2011, unique # 31155
T 2-5 SAC 5.118

João H. Costa Vargas
E-mail: costavargas@mail.utexas.edu
Office Hours: Th 12:30-2p, and by appointment, at GRG 234B

Description
Questioning assumptions of United States liberals and conservatives with respect to racial injustice, critical race theorists have presented alternative perspectives that seek connections between race, gender, class, and sexual orientation. By investigating the facets of white supremacy and its subordination of non-white racialized social groups, critical race theorists present analyses of power differentials, and encourage and participate in collective action that challenge such power differentials.

To expand and contrast the initial perspectives on critical race theory offered in the volume edited by Kimberlé Crenshaw et al., we will discuss whether, how, and why other progressive intellectuals/activists anticipated, elaborated and/or criticized those perspectives. Particular attention will be given to how the intersections of gender, sexuality, race, and class are experienced both within and outside the U.S., and how such experiences and their theorizations challenge hegemonic racial constructions and their consequences.

This course serves as an introduction to questions related to the nature and process of global white supremacy. Readings and debates will focus on the ways in which white supremacy depends and builds on, while often veiling, its patriarchal heteronormative anti-black foundations.

Course structure
The seminar is divided in four interrelated modules:

Module I
Weeks 2-3: United States critical race theory

Module II
Weeks 4-7: Colonialism, slavery, White privilege, and the globalization of (anti-Black) racialism

Module III
Weeks 8-12: Black feminist and queer critiques: intersectionality and structures of antagonism
Module IV
Weeks 13-15: Black politics/aesthetics and the imperative of revolt

Requirements

Seminar Dynamics: Two facilitators will be responsible for initiating and framing the discussion.

One facilitator presents for 10-15 minutes, in a conference format. The second person responsible for the week’s readings then proceeds to propose questions. All seminar participants discuss, modify, add to the questions, and agree on a topics agenda for the remainder of the session.

The facilitators are also expected to provide a brief summary of the discussions after the first two hours of the seminar and lead the discussion towards concluding remarks.

Book Review and questions/insights/points for discussion: The facilitator is expected to turn in a review (no more than 5 pages) of the reading for which s/he is responsible to present. Copies of the review should be made for the other participants and brought to the seminar. The same goes for the questions and insights, which should not be more than one page.

Paper: Participants will be expected to write two short critical papers. The papers should be no more than 5 typed pages. They ought to include reflections on 2 authors. The authors you focus on your papers should not be the same about which you wrote your book review(s). It is important that you closely engage with the authors and structure your analysis according to your own methodology and theoretical premises. These are meant to be highly specific, focused theoretical reflection pieces.

Books are available at the PCL Library (2-hour reserve), and at
Resistencia Bookstore
1801 S 1st St # A
Austin, TX 78704-4255
(512) 416-8885

Meeting and reading schedule

Week 1) August 30
   Introduction, presentation assignments

Week 2) September 6

Kimberlé Crenshaw et al., editors. Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings that Formed

**Week 3** September 13

Crenshaw et al., *Critical Race Theory*, pp. 201-494.

**Week 4** September 20


Recommended

**Week 5** September 27


Recommended

**Week 6** October 4

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963)

Recommended
Week 7) October 11


Recommended

Week 8) October 18


Recommended

Week 9) October 25


Recommended

**Week 10) November 1**


Recommended
bell hooks, *Feminism is for Everybody* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2000).

**Week 11) November 8**


Recommended

**Week 12) November 15**


Recommended

**Week 13) November 22**


Recommended

**Weeks 14, 15) November 29**


Recommended:
Incite! Women of Color Against Violence (ed.), *The revolution will not be funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex* (Boston: South End Press, 2007)