



*Onstage at the People's Bicentennial Commission Rally, Washington, DC National Mall, July 4, 1976*

# Race and Politics in the Americas

*Spring 2009 • Black Studies & Political Science 416 • Mon. & Wed. 11:30-12:45 p.m. • Feinstein 308*

## **About this Course**

*Race and Politics in the Americas* is an advanced, 400-level course about racial politics in North America, the Caribbean, Central America and South America. For political science majors this course can be used to satisfy either the American politics or the comparative politics field requirement. For Black studies students this is BLS 416, an option for the minor requirement in Series A – “Race and Racism.” In this course you will learn to understand and use analytical perspectives such as postcolonialism, pan-Africanism, *negritude*, *indigenismo*, critical race theory, racial patriarchy, and the ‘racial contract.’ Our subjects include the politics and political history of Indigenous, African-descent, Latino, and Asian American populations.

## **Your Responsibilities**

This is a challenging course in which each student is expected to satisfy all course requirements. Attendance is required. With an honest effort and a willingness to unlearn much of what you’ve learned about race in the Americas, you will find this course to be very rewarding. Academic requirements include weekly reading assignments and class discussions, an oral presentation at mid-semester, and a take-home final exam.

## **In-Class Presentation and Final Exam**

Instead of a midterm exam, you will prepare and deliver a concise oral presentation to the class, about a selected topic in racial political studies, using a book you select from the “Recommended Texts” list (see below). These in-class presentations will be scheduled on March 16 (Group A) or March 23 (Group B). Presentation guidelines will be distributed on February 23. Final exam questions will be distributed at our class meeting on April 29, and will be due in the professor’s office no later than 11:00 a.m. on May 11.

## Grades

Final grades will be based on your effort (10%), classroom participation (20%), midterm presentation (30%), and the take-home final exam (40%).

## Required Texts (All Students)

*American Holocaust*, David Stannard (1992)  
*American Indian Politics & the American Political System, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.*, David Wilkins (2007)  
*African American Perspectives on Political Science*, Wilbur Rich (2007)  
*Latino Politics*, Rodolfo Espino, David Leal and Kenneth Meier (2008)  
*Asian-American Politics*, Andrew Aoki and Okiyoshi Takeda (2009)  
*White Privilege, 3rd Ed.*, Paula Rothenberg (2008)

## Recommended Texts (Select ONE)

*Patriot Chiefs*, Alvin Josephy (1993)  
*All Our Relations*, Winona LaDuke (1999)  
*Neither Enemies Nor Friends*, Anani Dzidzienyo and Suzanne Oboler (2005)  
*Racial Politics in Cuba*, Mark Sawyer (2006)  
*Black Visions*, Michael Dawson (2001)  
*Critical Race Theory*, Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic (2001)  
*The Racial Contract*, Charles Mills (1997)  
*Fluid Borders*, Lisa García Bedolla (2005)  
*Políticas*, Valerie Martinez-Ebers et. al. (2008)  
*Democracy's Promise*, Janelle Wong (2006)  
*Politics of Asian Americans*, Pei-te Lien (2004)

## Library Reserves

John Henrik Clarke, "Africa and World History in Perspective" from *A Turbulent Voyage: Readings in African American Studies, 1st Ed.* Collegiate (1992).  
Alphonso Pinkney, "Historical Background," from *Black Americans, 4th Ed.* Prentice Hall (1992).  
Tony Affigne et al., "Latino Politics in the United States," from *PS: Political Science and Politics* American Political Science Association (2000).

## COURSE SCHEDULE WITH READING ASSIGNMENTS

Readings on library reserve are indicated with (✚); others are from required texts as indicated.

## INTRODUCTION: EUROPEAN COLONIZATION AND RACIAL STRATIFICATION

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In the United States and in other nations of the New World, wealth and power are not evenly distributed. In fact, racial inequalities are similar across the region; in the American hemisphere, descendants of Indigenous Americans, African slaves, and Asian indentured laborers are disproportionately poor, in material possessions and access to life opportunities.

### January 21

*Course Overview; Perspectives on Race and Power*

### January 26

*Indigenous America Before Columbus*

**Reading assignment:** Stannard, pp. ix-54.

**Video** — *Cahokia Mounds: Ancient Metropolis* (partial)

### January 28

*The Character of Conquest*

**Reading assignment:** Stannard 57-95.

**Video** — *1492: Conquest of Paradise* (partial)

## February 2

*Explaining the Conquest*

**Reading assignment:** Stannard 97-193.

## February 4

*The Quest for Gold and Souls*

**Reading assignment:** Stannard 195-281.

# UNIT 1 • NATIVE AMERICAN POLITICS: RESISTANCE AND ADAPTATION

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In almost every nation of the Americas, communities of Indigenous people continue to exist, five hundred years after the arrival of European *conquistadores*. Some American Indian populations are large, others are small. In some places *indigena* culture is valued, in others it is suppressed. Native communities are important participants in local and national political systems, because these people of the land's original nations are still contesting the European conquest and colonization, especially with respect to land and natural resources.

## February 9

*Contemporary Indian Peoples and Nations*

**Reading assignment:** Wilkins Chapters 1-3 (pp. v-108).

**Video** — *Alcatraz is Not an Island* (Part 1)

## February 11

*Federal Indian Policy and Tribal Governance*

**Reading assignment:** Wilkins Chapters 4-6 (pp 109-192).

**Video** — *Alcatraz is Not an Island* (Part 2)

## February 16 – NO CLASS: Presidents' Day

## February 17 – Monday Schedule

*Indian Politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

**Reading assignment:** Wilkins Chapters 4-6 (pp 193-267).

# UNIT 2 • AFRICAN AMERICAN POLITICS: LEGACIES OF SLAVERY, REBELLION AND SURVIVAL

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The modern politics of Africans in the Americas are shaped by nearly four centuries of Atlantic slavery, lasting from 1502 to 1890. During that period, Black men and women of Africa were kidnapped, shipped as trade goods across the Atlantic to be bought and sold as bound prisoners, they and their children forced to live without freedom and work without pay, in white-owned plantations, mines, mills, and private homes. The era of Black slavery formally ended in 1890, but today's racialized political cultures in former slaver colonies preserve many economic and social legacies of the slave-holding period, in the continued concentration of wealth and power in the hands of European Americans (whites), the racial stratification of labor markets and life opportunity, and the racial distortion of political democracy. However, the central feature of "Black politics," i.e., politics as practiced in communities of Black people, is resistance.

## February 18

*Historical Legacies of Slavery and Racial Stratification*

**Reading assignments:**

- ❖ John Henrik Clarke, "Africa and World History in Perspective" from *A Turbulent Voyage: Readings in African American Studies, 1st Ed.* Collegiate (1992) and Alphonso Pinkney, "Historical Background," from *Black Americans, 4th Ed.* Prentice Hall (1992).

## February 23

*Black Status and Racial Consciousness*

**Reading assignment:** Selected chapters from Rich, *African American Perspectives on Political Science* (2007)

PRESENTATION INSTRUCTIONS AND TOPICS

## February 25

*Social Science and Black America*

**Reading assignment:** Selected chapters from Rich, *African American Perspectives on Political Science* (2007)

## March 2

*African American Political Thought*

**Reading assignment:** Selected chapters from Rich, *African American Perspectives on Political Science* (2007)

## March 4

*Empowerment and Participation*

**Reading assignment:** Selected chapters from Rich, *African American Perspectives on Political Science* (2007)

**March 9 – NO CLASS: Spring Break**

**March 11 – NO CLASS: Spring Break**

## March 16

MID-TERM PRESENTATIONS (GROUP A)

**March 18 – NO CLASS: Black Political Science Conference**

## March 23

MID-TERM PRESENTATIONS (GROUP B)

## UNIT 3 • LATINO POLITICS, COLONIZATION, MIGRATION, AND CULTURE

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Most people known in the United States today as “Hispanic” or “Latino” are immigrants or descendants of immigrants, from former colonies of the Spanish Empire, especially México, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. Since the mid-1980s these three oldest and largest Latino communities have seen their own populations swell with recent arrivals, and have been joined by new migrants from the Spanish Caribbean, Central America, and South America. By 2050, as the nation’s minority groups together become its majority population, Latinos will be the largest of them all, comprising more than one-fourth of the U.S. total, a share already surpassed in New Mexico, California, and Texas.

## March 25

*Overview: Latino Politics in the United States*

**Reading assignment:**

❖ Tony Affigne et al., “Latino Politics in the United States,” from *PS: Political Science and Politics* American Political Science Association (2000).

## March 30

*Latino Immigration and Socialization*

**Reading assignment:** Selected chapters from Espino, Leal, and Meier, *Latino Politics*

**Video** — *Mi Familia* (Part 1)

## April 1

*Latino Identity, Community, and Political Culture*

**Reading assignment:** Selected chapters from Espino, Leal, and Meier, *Latino Politics*

**Video** — *Mi Familia* (Part 2)

## April 6

*Latino Participation and Empowerment*

**Reading assignment:** Selected chapters from Espino, Leal, and Meier, *Latino Politics*.

## UNIT 4 • ASIAN AMERICAN POLITICS: DIVERSITY AND PAN-ETHNICITY

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People of Asian descent, including those with ancestry in the Pacific Islands, have been in the Americas for a very long time. (The earliest people in the New World were walking migrants from Asia, perhaps 75,000 years ago.) The European colonial period from 1492 to the 1960s, brought many millions of Asians to the Americas, primarily from China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Indian subcontinent. More recently, many people from southeast Asia have joined earlier migrants, to Canada, the United States, and Latin America.

## April 8

*Asian American Political Identities*

**Reading assignment:** Selected chapters from Aoki and Takeda, *Asian American Politics*.

## April 13 – NO CLASS: Easter Vacation

## April 15 – Monday Schedule

*Asian American Panethnicity and Social Movements*

**Reading assignment:** Selected chapters from Aoki and Takeda, *Asian American Politics*.

## April 20

*Political Beliefs and Partisanship among Asian Americans*

**Reading assignment:** Selected chapters from Aoki and Takeda, *Asian American Politics*.

**Video** — *Chinatown*

## April 22

*Patterns of Asian American Political Participation*

**Reading assignment:** Selected chapters from Aoki and Takeda, *Asian American Politics*.

## UNIT 5 • WHITENESS, PRIVILEGE, AND SOCIAL POWER

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## April 27

*Whiteness and Social Power*

**Reading assignment:** Rothenberg, Parts 1 and 2

**Video** — *The Secret History of the KKK*

## April 29

*Whiteness, Privilege, and Resistance*

**Reading assignment:** Rothenberg, Parts 3 and 4

**FINAL EXAMS DISTRIBUTED**

## May 11

**FINAL EXAMS DUE : 9:00-11:00 AM, HOWLEY 316**