**Race, Violence, and Human Security**

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**Course Description**

There are few issues in contemporary politics more important than the security of the world’s creatures, human and nonhuman animals. Scholars, pundits, policymakers, and a whole array of “national security” groups spend their time theorizing and applying visions of how to secure the humans who inhabit the earth; usually by applying a national security perspective that treats various states and state-like actors as potential threats to be guarded against. Yet, where are “the people” in all this? ‘Human Security” has emerged to draw our attention away from power distributions among states and towards the people who strive, everyday, to deal with a whole myriad of insecurities in order to make their lives more peaceful and secure. One area of human life that has seemingly been neglected, at least directly, is race and racism. There are also few forms of oppression and discrimination more important than racism. Yet, envisioning and seeing the various ways that racism leads to vast and deep human insecurity have generally been neglected as political problems and inquiries. This course addresses racism and racial violence as human security issues, encouraging students to search out creative ways to reduce the varied hostile environments that emerge from racist forces. Given that Human Security is a fairly new field in International Relations, and that it has barely been applied to other ways of studying and theorizing politics, we have a great opportunity, as a class. We can work to do several things that would greatly improve the visions, methods, the scope and practical aspects of this burgeoning scholarly approach. Due to this wonderful opportunity, this course can involve excitingly new conversations, studies, and new ways to see racism and human security. The class is arranged so that we spend most of our time understanding the complexities of contemporary racism; therefore, we will be perfectly situated to search for, and apply, what I believe will be a substantial list of connections between human security and racism, especially violence.

**Texts**

There are 7 required books, and various articles and chapters (which can be accessed online and in the reader: *Global Health in Times of Violence*). During the semester, I may add some short readings to the syllabus as I see fit. Note: the reading for this course is important; please finish each set of readings on time and be prepared to discuss, at length and in detail, each text. The required texts include:

*The Racial Contract* by Charles Mills

*The Law is a White Dog* by Colin Dayan

*In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* by Christina Sharpe

*The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander

*Words That Wound* by Matsuda, Lawrance III, Delgado, and Crenshaw

*Ontological Terror: Blackness, Nihilism, and Emancipation* by Calvin Warren

\*Available online at: ontological-terror-blackness-nihilism-and-emancipation.pdf

*Global Health in Times of Violence*, Editors Barbara Rylko-Bauer, Linda Whiteford, and Paul Farmer

\*Articles and *Global Health* chapters, as listed in the course schedule below.

**Course Requirements & Grading Policy**

Students will write two exams, and 12 weekly response papers. Participation and attendance are required. The first 2 **unexcused** absences will each lower your grade by an entire letter grade; any **unexcused** absences after 2 will result in an “F” for the semester. Excused absences must have documentation; and, more than 3 will result in an “Incomplete” for the semester.

Exams @100 points each =200

Response Papers =100

Total =300

Course grades will be determined as follows:

Letter Grade Single Exam Grade Cumulative Grade

A 93 - 100 279 - 300

A- 90 - 92 270 - 278

B+ 87 - 89 261 - 269

B 83 - 86 249 - 260

B- 80 - 82 240 - 248

C+ 77 - 79 231 - 239

C 73 - 76 219 - 230

C- 70 - 72 210 - 218

D+ 67 - 69 201 - 209

D 63 - 66 189 - 200

D- 60 - 62 180 - 188

F < = 59 < = 179

**Response Papers**

Students are required to write **12** **WEEKLY** response papers, one for each reading assignment listed below. The response papers should be 1 single-spaced page, 12-point font. The papers should be thoughtful engagements with major themes or ideas presented in the reading(s). After picking a theme, or set of themes, you should very briefly summarize the theme/idea; then, you should proceed to put forward your own ideas, points of agreement/disagreement, etc. Each paper is due at the beginning of class in which a given set of readings will be discussed.

**Course Schedule**

January 16: Course Introduction: Human Security and Racism

January 23: United Nations Development Programme’s 1994 “Human

Development Report,” Chs 1 through 5; Read Chapter 2 **Closely**

<http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr_1994_en_complete_nostats.pdf>

William Aldis, “Health Security as a Public Health Concept: A Critical

Analysis.”

<http://heapol.oxfordjournals.org/content/23/6/369.full>

GHITOV: Chapter 1: Coming to Terms with Global Violence and Health

January 30: *The Racial Contract*

Yu-tai Tsai, “The Emergence of Human Security: A Constructivist View.” <https://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol14_2/TSAI%20-%2014n2%20IJPS.pdf>

GHITOV: Chapter 2: Recognizing Invisible Violence

February 6: *The Law is a White Dog*, Preface and Chapters 1 through 4

GHITOV: Chapter 3: “Landmine Boy” and the Tomorrow of Violence

February 13: *The Law is a White Dog*, Chapters 5 through 7

GHITOV: Chapter 5: Failure to Protect, Failure to Provide

February 20: *In the Wake*, Chapters 1 through 2

Natasha Marhia, “Some humans are more Human than Others: Troubling the ‘human’ in Human Security from a Critical Feminist Perspective” in *Security Dialogue* (should be able to get online, with OU access)

GHITOV: Chapter 4: Fault Lines

February 27: I*n the Wake,* Chapters 3 through 4

GHITOV: Chapter 6: A Violence of History

**March 6: Midterm Exam**

**March 13: Spring Break, No Class**

March 20: *The New Jim Crow*, Introduction and Chapters 1 through 3

Portia Rowles, “Rethinking the Plight of American Urban Areas as a

Human Security Challenge”

<https://academic.oup.com/cdj/article/49/3/357/302480>

March 27: *The New Jim Crow*, Chapters 4 through 6

Dylan Rodriguez, “De-provincialising Police Violence: On the Recent

Events at UC Davis” (Online)

April 3: *Words That Wound*, Chapters 1 through 3

Robert Cover, “Violence and the Word”

<http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3687&context=fss_papers>

April 10: *Words That Wound*, Chapters 4 through 6

Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics,

and Violence Against Women”

<https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/mapping-> margins.pdf

April 17: *Ontological Terror*, Introduction and Chapters 1 through 2

\*Note: This book should be available for free online at:

ontological-terror-blackness-nihilism-and-emancipation.pdf

GHITOV: Chapter 10: Medicine in the Political Economy of Brutality

April 24: *Ontological Terror*, Chapters 3, 4, and Coda

GHITOV: Chapter 11: Epilogue: Global Health in Times of Violence

**Final Exam**