

# STAGING THE RACIALIZED BODY

DRM 387D, Unique #24505

Wednesdays 1-4pm, WIN 1.130

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## Course Description:

This graduate seminar explores the relationship between performance and modern processes of racialization. In particular, this course is concerned with the crucial role that performance plays both in constructing racialized bodies and in exposing this very construction. We will locate and interrogate a range of framed performances and everyday performative practices that stage the racialized body within the contexts of imperial expansion, national borders, and diasporic routes. Lines of inquiry that we will pursue include: How exactly does performance engage in processes of racialization? How does performance uniquely reveal processes of racial formation? What are the ideological effects of staging the racialized body in a given historical and geographical moment? How are ideas of affect, sexuality, gender, class, modernity, and citizenship co-articulated with and through performances of racialization? How do particular genres of performance inform and shape our understandings of racialized bodies?

Our investigations will also be enriched by the performances and lectures sponsored by the **Throws Like a Girl** performance series: Marga Gomez and Carmelita Tropicana will perform *Single Wet Female* and Peggy Shaw and Lois Weaver will perform *Dress Suits to Hire* at the Off Center and will visit our class. We will also attend the following events: Deb Margolin's *Index to Idioms*; ProArt Collective's production of Anna Deavere Smith's *Twilight*; and guest choreographer Sita Frederick's lecture/demonstration of her work, *Bitter Suite*. Sita's lec/dem is free; payment details for other performances will follow.

## Performance Details:

*Twilight*: Feb 18-27 (Fri & Sat 8pm, Sat & Sun 2pm), State Theatre, 719 Congress Ave

*Index to Idioms*: Feb 17-19, 8pm, The Off Center, 2211-A Hidalgo St.

*Single Wet Female*: Feb 24-26, 8pm, The Off Center

*Dress Suits to Hire*: Apr 14-24 (Fri, Sat, Sun 8pm), The Off Center

*Bitter Suite*: Apr 21, 2pm, WIN 2.112

### Required Texts (at University Co-op on Guadalupe)

Cheng, Anne. *The Melancholy of Race*  
Fusco, Coco & Brian Wallis. *Only Skin Deep*  
Johnson, Patrick. *Appropriating Blackness*  
Dyer, Richard. *White*  
Lott, Eric. *Love and Theft*  
Parks, Suzan-Lori. *Venus: A Play*  
Rogin, Michael. *Blackface, White Noise*  
Savigliano, Marta. *Tango and the Political Economy of Passion*  
Shimakawa, Karen. *National Abjection*  
Smith, Anna Deavere. *Twilight: Los Angeles*  
Taylor, Diana. *The Archive and the Repertoire*  
Troyano, Alina. *I, Carmelita Tropicana*

### **Recommended:**

Kondo, Dorinne. *About Face*  
McBride, Dwight. *Why I Hate Abercrombie and Fitch*

### Required Course Packet (available at Abel's Copies, 715DW, 23rd St., 472-5353).

#### **Bibliography of Readings:**

Bhabha, Homi. "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse." *The Location of Culture*. New York & London: Routledge, 1994. 85-92.

Fausto-Sterling, Anne. "Gender, Race, and Nation: The Comparative Anatomy of 'Hottentot' Women in Europe, 1815-17." *Skin Deep, Spirit Strong: The Black Female Body in American Culture*. Ed. Kimberly Wallace-Sanders. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002. 66-95.

Fregoso, Rosa Linda. "Voices Without Echo: The Global Gendered Apartheid." *Emergences* 10.1 (2000): 137-155.

Gilman, Sander L. "Black Bodies, White Bodies: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth-Century Art, Medicine, and Literature." *"Race," Writing, and Difference*. Ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985. 223-262.

Gottschild, Brenda Dixon. "[Latitude II]" & "Feet." *The Black Dancing Body: A Geography*

- from *Coon to Cool*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. 102-143.
- Hughes, Holly, Peggy Shaw, and Lois Weaver. *Dress Suits to Hire. Clit Notes*. New York: Grove Press, 1996. 111-150.
- Lowe, Lisa. "Immigration, Citizenship, Racialization." *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996. 1-36.
- Muñoz, José Esteban. "Feeling Brown: Ethnicity and Affect in Ricardo Bracho's *The Sweetest Hangover (and Other STDs)*." *Theatre Journal* 52.1 (March 2000): 67-79.
- Negrón-Muntaner, Frances. "Jennifer's Book." *Boricua Pop: Puerto Ricans and the Latinization of American Culture*. New York & London: New York University Press, 2004. 228-246.
- Paredes, Deborah. "Becoming Selena, Becoming Latina." Unpublished manuscript.
- Piper, Adrian. "Passing for White, Passing for Black." *New Feminist Criticism: Art, Identity, Action*. Eds. Joanna Frueh, Cassandra L. Langer, Arlene Raven. New York: Icon Editions, 1994. 216-247.
- Rno, Song. *Cleveland Raining. But Still, Like Air, I'll Rise: New Asian American Plays*. Ed. Velina Hasu Houston. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997. 227-70.
- Rodríguez, Clara E. ", "Latinos in the U.S. Race Structure," "The Idea of Race" & "Redefining Race in 2000." *Changing Race: Latinos, the Census, and the History of Ethnicity in the United States*
- Schneider, Rebecca. "after us the savage goddess." *The Explicit Body in Performance*. London & New York: Routledge, 1997. 127-151.
- Steen, Shannon. "Pacific Peregrinations: Black Atlantic Negotiations of the Asian Pacific in the *Swing Mikado*." *The Afro-Asian Century*. Eds. Andrew F. Jones and Nikhil Pal Singh, Durham, NC: Duke UP (forthcoming).

## Course Expectations and Assignments:

### **Engagement & Participation**

My first expectation is that you will attend every session; graduate students should never miss class meetings and should always be on time. I'll expect that you'll do the reading closely, coming to class prepared with discussion questions and ways to engage the material. I expect active, enthusiastic participation and generous collaboration in class discussions and activities.

This class relies on frequent Blackboard posts as a form of participation. To get to Blackboard, go to <http://courses.utexas.edu/>. Click on DRM 387D to enter the BB site for

this class. Go to “Discussion Board” and then to the specific “Forum” for the text or performance to be discussed. The first person should add a response, then each person after that should “Reply” to keep one thread going. **Everyone is required to post a comment, assessment, or critical questions about the assigned readings each week by NO LATER THAN MIDNIGHT on Tuesday night.**

Each seminar meeting beginning in WEEK THREE (Feb 2) is divided into three sections: 1) Discussion, 2) Application, and 3) Forum. During the Discussion segment, one seminar participant will facilitate a conversation about and/or a workshop or activities that arise from the assigned readings. During the Application segment, another student will conduct an application exercise of the ideas or methods that arise from the assigned readings. The Forum is reserved for less structured dialogue among seminar participants, film screenings, and/or conversations with guest speakers.

In addition to regular attendance, participation, and Blackboard postings, there are **FOUR ASSIGNMENTS** required for this course:

- |                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| 1) Seminar Facilitation              | 20% |
| 2) Application Exercise              | 20% |
| 3) Group Pedagogy Workshop           | 20% |
| 4) Conference-length Paper (12-15pp) | 40% |

#### **Assignment #1: Seminar Facilitation (20%)**

Each seminar participant is required to present on and facilitate discussion about the assigned readings for **ONE** of the case studies beginning on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. The following guidelines apply: 1) Each facilitator is responsible for conducting lecture, discussion, performance or workshops with fellow seminar participants for **30-45 MINUTES**. 2) Do **NOT** merely summarize the arguments of the assigned readings but, rather, synthesize the materials and address the concerns shared or debated among them.

#### **Assignment #2: Application Exercise (20%)**

Each seminar participant is required to conduct one application exercise in class beginning on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. This exercise is guided by the question: “How might the ideas or practices within the weekly readings help us interpret another text, event, site, or performance?” Thus, for this exercise, the facilitator will demonstrate or suggest possibilities for an application of the issues, methods or theoretical frameworks presented in the assigned readings for **20 MINUTES**.

This exercise can include but is not limited to: interpreting a performance or other event guided by the theoretical premise or methodological choices deployed within the weekly readings OR creating a performance or workshop or pedagogical statement, etc. that directly engages with or is inspired by the readings.

### **Assignment #3: Group Pedagogy Workshop (20%)**

This assignment provides seminar participants the opportunity to develop and share their pedagogical skills. Working in self-selected groups of three or four, seminar members will select and examine cultural artifacts and/or performative acts in everyday life or in public discourse (i.e. inauguration festivities, advertisements, fashion shows, cookbooks, fitness manuals, city ordinances, etc.). Each group will then collectively devise a lesson plan for teaching about how and why these artifacts/events stage racialized bodies. The lesson plan will include the following: 1) a brief description of the kinds of courses for which this plan would be apt; 2) a detailed description of the lesson's goals or objectives; 3) a clearly delineated outline of the plan; 4) questions to stimulate discussion. Each group will conduct a portion of their lesson plan for **30 MINUTES** on **March 9<sup>th</sup>**.

### **Assignment #4: Conference-length Paper (40%)**

The final paper is comprised of the following four steps:

- |                              |                                  |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1) Abstract Draft (1 page)   | DUE: Friday March 25             |
| 2) One-on-One Conference     | Monday Mar 29 - Wednesday Mar 30 |
| 3) Roundtable Discussions    | DUE: May 4 (Final Class Day)     |
| 4) Completed Paper (12-15pp) | DUE: Friday May 6                |

Upon reading abstract drafts and meeting in individual conferences, I will group seminar participants in three or four roundtable groups modeled after those staged at conferences. The members of each group will then meet together during the second half of the semester to discuss the productive intersections and resonances among their work. During these working sessions, each group will craft a name and a brief abstract for their roundtable session. On the final class day, each group will engage in a roundtable discussion for **20 MINUTES** and will invite questions from the audience for **10 MINUTES**. These sessions are intended to provide training for conference participation.

Submit final papers to my department box by 5pm the Friday following the roundtable sessions (yes, this is **TWO DAYS** after the final class meeting).

Take care in crafting your arguments. Take creative risks. Take pleasure in the process.

### Other Important Announcements

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY.

NO INCOMPLETES!

### Course Schedule:

- Jan 19      **Introduction to Course**  
Processes: Race, Performance, Bodies  
In-class screening: "Once More, With Feeling"  
(episode of *Buffy, the Vampire Slayer*)
- Jan 26      **Racial Formations**  
Fusco & Wallis, essays by Fusco, Winant, and Dyer  
Piper, "Passing for Black, Passing for White" (R)  
Rodriguez, "Latinos in the U.S. Race Structure," "The Idea of Race" &  
"Redefining Race in 2000" (R)
- Feb 2      **Conquests**  
Fausto-Sterling, "Gender, Race, and Nation" (R)  
Morillo-Alicea, "Looking for Empire in the U.S. Colonial Archive" in  
Fusco & Wallis, 129-143.  
Taylor, Chapters 1-4, 9, 10  
**APPLICATION suggestions:**  
*The Couple in the Cage*, imagery from the war on terror, archival  
documents from your own research
- Feb 9      **Modernity**  
Schneider, "after us the savage goddess" (R)

Steen, "Pacific Peregrinations" (R)

VIEW: *The Mikado*

VIEW: *Topsy Turvy*

APPLICATION suggestions:

Brecht's "Alienation Effects in Chinese Acting," futurist manifestos,

Eugene O'Neill's *The Hairy Ape*

Feb 16

**Visuality: "ocular proof"**

Dyer, Chapters 1-3

Fusco & Wallis, essays by: Sekula, Mirzoeff, Wallis, Raiford and

González

Gilman, "Black Bodies, White Bodies" (R)

APPLICATION suggestions:

photographs from *Only Skin Deep* exhibit, Nella Larsen's *Passing*,

ethnographic documentaries

Feb 17-19

*TLAG Performance: Deb Margolin: Index to Idioms*

Feb 18-20

*Twilight @ The State Theatre*

Feb 23

**Sexualities**

Johnson, Introduction, Chapters 1-4

Troyano, selections TBA

APPLICATION suggestions:

Dolly Parton, Tonia Harding/Nancy Kerrigan, Josephine Baker

FORUM: *Carmelita Tropicana & Marga Gomez*

Feb 24-26

*TLAG Performance: Carmelita Tropicana & Marga Gomez:*

*Single Wet Female*

Feb 25-27

*Twilight @ The State Theatre*

Mar 2

**Synecdoche**

Gottschild, "Latitude II" & "Feet" (R)

Negrón-Muntaner, "Jennifer's Butt" (R)

Parks, *Venus*

**APPLICATION suggestions:**

Carmen Miranda, Elian Gonzalez, hair

Mar 9 **PEDAGOGY WORKSHOPS**

Johnson, Chapter 6

Mar 23 **| Impersonation I |**

Lott, Introduction, Chapters 1-3, 5, 8

VIEW: *Bamboozled*

**APPLICATION suggestions:**

Elvis, Eminem, "Indian" mascots

Mar 25 **ABSTRACT DRAFTS DUE**

Mar 26 **"Anything for Selenas!" @ ALLGO**

Mar 28-30 **INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES**

Mar 30 **| Impersonation II |**

Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man" (R)

Rogin, Chapters 1, 4-6

VIEW: *The Jazz Singer*

**APPLICATION suggestions:**

Broadway musicals, *I Love Lucy* episode: "Be A Pal," John Hughes'

*Sixteen Candles*

Apr 6 **| Impersonation III |**

Hughes, Shaw & Weaver, *Dress Suits to Hire* (R)

Smith, *Twilight*

Paredes, "Becoming Selena, Becoming Latina" (R)

**APPLICATION suggestions:**

Danny Hoch, El Vez, Caryl Churchill's *Cloud Nine*

**FORUM: Peggy Shaw & Lois Weaver**

- Apr 8-15*      *New Works Festival on campus*
- Apr 13*              **National Citizenship**  
 Lowe, "Immigration, Citizenship, Racialization" (R)  
 Shimakawa, Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, 4  
**APPLICATION suggestions:**  
 inauguration festivities, early 19<sup>th</sup> century U.S. political cartoons,  
 welfare reform discourse
- Apr 14-17*      *TLAG Performance: Peggy Shaw & Lois Weaver,*  
*Dress Suits to Hire*
- Apr 20*              **Transnational Traffic**  
 Fregoso, "Voices without Echo" (R)  
 Savigliano, Introduction, Chapters 1, 3, 5, 6  
 VIEW: *Señorita Extraviada*  
**APPLICATION suggestions:**  
 Puerto Rican Day Parade, runway fashion, Urban Bush Women  
**FORUM: Sita Frederick**
- Apr 21*              *Sita Frederick, Bitter Suite*
- Apr 21-24*      *TLAG Performance: Peggy Shaw & Lois Weaver,*  
*Dress Suits to Hire*
- Apr 27*              **Affect: Once More, With Feeling**  
 Cheng, Introduction, skim remainder  
 Muñoz, "Feeling Brown" (R)  
 Rno, *Cleveland Raining* (R)  
**APPLICATION suggestions:**  
*Mulholland Drive*, jazz funerals, etiquette manuals
- May 4*              **ROUNDTABLE PRESENTATIONS**  
 Concluding Remarks

*May 6*

*FINAL PAPERS DUE*