

University of Massachusetts—Amherst
WOMENSST 694B
Gender and Race in Brazil
Fall 2016

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In this course we will work from a feminist critical perspective to discuss the argument that a gender feminist perspective has definitely to include the study of the historical-political context of gender and race relations. The main argument in this course is that the constant focus of our inquiry must be on this context in order to understand the sites at which the one cannot be constituted save through the other.

My teaching practice incorporates an interdisciplinary perspective, using Paulo Freire and Enrique Pichon-Rivière's method on group processes. Felix Guattari's work on institutional analysis is also an important guide in this approach, which considers that knowledge has to be situated to be objective (Donna Haraway) and that it is crafted by "partial truths" (James Clifford). That is, researchers and teachers are constantly taking into account the context where they act which is made of many voices and actions. We thus have to be open to the difference that constitutes ourselves in a political gesture that transforms both ourselves and reality, in a permanent praxis (Leandro Konder).

This method consists of arranging the students in a circle to discuss the readings of the course and also daily events and relations that had affected us, since both Freire and Pichon-Rivière value the attention to daily—concrete—life in their teaching. The students are asked to form small groups and work along the semester on the preparation of a seminar that their group should present consisting of the analysis of a novel based on the readings for the course. The students will be evaluated as a group for their oral presentation of the seminar for the class, but each student in the group has to write an essay with her/his own analysis of the book that she/he will present in the seminar and for which he/she will be evaluated individually.

This perspective considers writing as an important tool to learning. Writing and literature help students to deconstruct the idea that opposes writing theory from writing fiction. Following Judith Butler, I think it is important to consider the literary narrative as the place where theory happens. These tools also help them to see the authors of novels as people close to us, making us locate ourselves in the relationship we establish with them in the crafting of our writing.

The course is organized in three different and interrelated readings:

- 1) We will begin by studying the political-historical context in the work of three Brazilian scholars—the sociologist Gilberto Freyre's *Masters and Slaves*, the historian Júnia Furtado's *Chica da Silva: a Brazilian Slave of the Eighteenth Century*, and the anthropologist Darcy Ribeiro's *The Brazilian People: the Formation and Meaning of Brazil*—that show the ways gender and race remain interrelated in Brazilian society since colonization. We will also read João Ubaldo

- Ribeiro's novel, *Viva o Povo Brasileiro*, translated by the author as *An Invincible Memory*, which re-creates the Brazilian history, moving from the colonial to the modern era in an attempt to decipher the psyche of contemporary Brazilians.
- 2) In the second part we will use feminist theory and cultural studies to analyze this work produced by Brazilians.
 - 3) In the final part we will read literary narratives on gender and race by women from Brazil and the United States, who, like Ribeiro's novel, give us tools to re-create these contexts.

Movies

Cacá Diegues, *Xica da Silva* (1976)
Darcy Ribeiro, *O Povo Brasileiro*
Consuelo Lins, *Babás*, Rio de Janeiro, 2010
Jennie Livingston, *Paris is Burning*, New York, 1991

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrhlXB4xxZo>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqlcHGj4f7k>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2aFWiCmvZE>

SCHEDULE

Week 1 (Sept. 8): Introduction

An overview of the course and its key topics.

Discussion of the recent political events in Brazil, which constitute an important concrete experience affecting this course.

Weeks 2-5: Readings of Part 1: Brazilian Writings on the Brazilian Political-Historical Context since Colonization:

Week 2 (Sept. 15)

FREYRE, Gilberto. *The Masters and The Slaves: a Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization*. Tr. Samuel Putnam. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986.

Chapter 1: "General characteristics of Portuguese colonization in Brazil: formation of an agrarian, slavish and hybrid society"

Chapter 2: "The Indians in the formation of the Brazilian family"

Chapter 4: "The black slave in the sexual and family life of Brazilians"

Week 3 (Sept. 22)

FURTADO, Júnia. *Chica da Silva: a Brazilian Slave of the Eighteenth Century*. Cambridge, London: University of Cambridge Press, 2009.

Chapter 1: "Land of Stars"

Chapter 2: “Chica da Silva”
Chapter 3: “Diamonds Contractors”
Chapter 4: “Black Diamond”
Chapter 5: “Lady of the Tejuco”
Chapter 10: “Destinies”
Chapter 11: “Chica who commands”

Week 4 (Sept. 29)

RIBEIRO, Darcy. *The Brazilian People: the Formation and the Meaning of Brazil*. Tr. Gregory Rabassa. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2000.

Introduction

Chapter 1: “Ethnic Matrices”
Chapter 2: “The Confrontation of Worlds”
Chapter 3: “The Civilization Process”
Part II: “Ethnic Gestation”
Part III: “Socio-cultural Process”

Week 5 (Oct. 6)

RIBEIRO, João Ubaldo. *An Invincible Memory*. New York: Harper & Row, 1989.

Weeks 6-11: Readings of Part 2: Feminist Theory and Cultural Studies

Week 6 (Oct. 13): Crossing Borders

ANZAULDUA, Gloria, *Borderlands/La Frontera—The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: spinsters|aunt lute, 1987.

BRAH, Avtar. “Difference, Diversity, Differentiation”. Chapter 5 in *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. New York, 1996

GILROY, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: modernity and double-consciousness*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993.

Week 7 (Oct. 20): Confronting Racism

ALVAREZ, Sonia e BAIROS, Luiza. “Feminismos e antirracismo: entraves e intersecções. Entrevista com Luiza Bairos, ministra da Secretaria de Políticas de Promoção da Igualdade Racial (SEPPIR)”. *Revista Estudos Feministas*, vol. 20, n. 3, 2012, p. 833-850.

AZEREDO, Sandra. “Mestiçagem, igualdade e afirmação da diferença: pensando a política de cotas na universidade, *Revista Estudos Feministas*, vol. 13, n. 3, 2005, 738-754.

----- . “O que é mesmo uma perspectiva feminista de gênero?” in Stevens, Cristina et alii, *Estudos Feministas e de Gênero: ARTICULAÇÕES E PERSPECTIVAS*. Ilha de Santa Catarina: Editora Mulheres, 2014.

HOOKS, bell. *Killing Rage: ending racism*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1995.

Week 8 (Oct. 27): Writing on the Edges: reinventing naturecultures

CLIFFORD, James. *On the Edges of Anthropology (Interviews)*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigma Press, 2003.

----- “Diasporas”, chapter 10 in *Routes: Travel and translation in the late Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997, pp 244-278.

HARAWAY, Donna. “Situated Knowledges”, In *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. London: Free Association Books, 1991.

----- e AZERÊDO, Sandra. “Companhias Multiespécies nas Naturezaculturas: uma conversa entre Donna Haraway e Sandra Azeredo”. In MACIEL, Maria Esther. *pensar/escrever o animal: ensaios de zoopoética e biopolítica*. Florianópolis: editora UFSC, 2011, p. 389-417.

Week 9 (Nov. 3): Can the Subaltern Speak?

FANON, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Trad. Charles Markmann. New York: Grove Press Inc., 1968.

SPIVAK, Gayatri. “Can the Subaltern Speak?” In Nelson, C. and Grossberg, L. (eds.). *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988, 271-313.

Week 10 (Nov. 10): Gender and Race Trouble

BUTLER, Judith, “How Bodies Come to Matter: An Interview with Judith Butler”. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, v. 23, n.2, pp. 275-286, 1998.

----- “Passing, Queering: Nella Larsen’s Psychoanalytic Challenge”, In Abel, Elizabeth et alii, *female subjects in black and white: race psychoanalysis, feminism*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1997, 266-284.

CARBY, Hazel, “The Quicksands of Representation: Rethinking Black Cultural Politics”. Chapter 8 in *Reconstructing Womanhood: The Emergence of the Afro-American Woman Novelist*. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1987, 163-175.

Johnson, Barbara, “The Quicksands of the Self: Nella Larsen and Heinz Kohut”. In Abel Elizabeth et alii, *female subjects in black and white: race psychoanalysis, feminism*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1997, 266-284.

Week 11 (Nov. 17): The Importance of Cultural Studies

FARRED, Grant. “Introduction”. *dispositio/n 48: The British New Left and the Rise of Cultural Studies* (1996 [1999]): pp V-XX.

HALL, Stuart. “The formation of a Diasporic Intellectual: an Interview with Stuart Hall by Kuan-Hsing Chen”. In *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*,

eds. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen. New York/London: Routledge, 1996, pp484-503.

----- “Gramsci’s Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity”. In *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, eds. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen. New York/London: Routledge, 1996, pp 411-440.

WILLIAMS, Raymond. “The Future of Cultural Studies”. In *Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists*. Verso, 1989, 151-162.

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Weeks 12-15: Readings of Part 3: Literary Narratives on Gender and Race

Dec. 01:

Dec. 08:

Dec. 15:

In this third part, students will be divided in small groups and choose one author to analyze and present her work to be discussed in class.

BUTLER, Octavia. *Kindred*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1988

EVARISTO, Conceição. *Insubmissas Lágrimas de Mulheres*. Belo Horizonte: Nandyala, 2011

JESUS, Carolina Maria de. *Child of the Dark (Quarto de Despejo)*. Tr. David Clair. New York: New American Library, 1962 (1960).

LARSEN, Nella. *Passing*. New York: Penguin Books 2003 (1929).

----- *Quicksand*. New York: Dover Publications Inc., 2006 (1928).

LISPECTOR, Clarice. *The Hour of the Star*. Tr. Giovanni Pontiero. New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1992 (1977).

----- *Soulstorm*. Tr. Alexis Levitin. New York: New Directions Books, 1989 (1974).

MORRISON, Toni. *Beloved*. London: Pan Books Ltd., 1988.

----- *Sula*. New York: Knopf, 1973.

----- *The Bluest Eye*. New York: Washington Square Press Publication, 1970.

Breakdown of final grade, by percent:

20 – self-evaluation (contribution to class discussion—questions, group participation, readings)

30 – seminar presentation

20 – **first version of written analysis due December 01**

30 – **final (revised) version of paper due December 15**