

# AFROAM 295/WGSS 295: Policing, Politics, & Protest: Queer Feminisms & Black Lives Matter

University of Massachusetts-Amherst | Spring 2019  
MW 4:00-5:15 | South College W101

**Instructor: Adina Giannelli, JD**

*gender pronouns: she/her/hers*

Email: [agiannel@umass.edu](mailto:agiannel@umass.edu)



Over the last five years, a movement has emerged in the United States--and the world--that contests police violence and other policing that makes black communities unsafe while challenging the imputation of race to crime. Sparked by the killing of Trayvon Martin and George Zimmerman's subsequent acquittal, as well as myriad police



powerful social movements emerged, affirming to the world--that Black Lives Matter. Sparked by the killing of Trayvon Martin and George Zimmerman's well as myriad police

killings of other black men, women, and children, including Michael Brown, Rekia Boyd, and Freddie Gray, this movement contests police violence and other policing that makes black communities unsafe while challenging the imputation of race to crime.

Police violence against black people, and the interrelated criminalization of black communities have history that precedes the formation of the United States. There is a similarly long and important history of activism and social movements against police violence and criminalization. Today, black people are disproportionately subject to police surveillance and violence, arrest, and incarceration.



So, too, are other people of color, and queer, trans, and gender nonconforming people of all races but especially those of color. This course will examine the history of policing and criminalization of black, queer, and trans people and communities and related anti-

racist, feminist, and queer/trans activism. In so doing, we will interrogate how policing and understandings of criminality -- or the view that certain people or groups are inherently dangerous or criminal -- in the U.S. have been deeply shaped by understandings of race, gender, and sexuality.

**- GENERAL EXPECTATIONS -**

1. Students are expected to come to class on time, having carefully read the material assigned, and ready to engage in serious discussion. **Students are expected to silence and put away their cell phones and computers for the duration of class.** Participation is required, and critical to your success in this class. In addition, everyone is asked to do the following:

- (i) **Respect your classmates' rights to speak**, and listen attentively to what is being said, even if you disagree with what your peers might have to say. **You don't have to agree with everything that is said in class, but you are expected to use discretion and sensitivity when speaking, and be respectful of everyone present.**
- (ii) **Be willing to consider new ideas.** Over the course of the semester, we will explore themes, concepts, and material that may be new, challenging, and unfamiliar. **This is the art of a good education. Keep an open mind.**
- (iii) **Participate actively.** We all learn best when we are present and engaged in the course material. **Don't be afraid to ask questions.** This is why we are here!
- (iv) **If you have a question, an issue, a need, a concern, or a problem that cannot be addressed in class, please send me an email at your earliest convenience.**

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Your grade in this course will be based on the following components:**

Component	Percent of Grade	Due Date(s)
<b>Class Participation</b>	20%	ONGOING
<b>Take Home Exams:</b>	20%	<b>February 13; March 27; April 8</b> (you complete 2)
<b>Midterm/Book Review</b>	10%	<b>Wednesday, 3/6</b> in class
<b>Final Project Meeting</b>	ungraded but mandatory	Meetings scheduled between <b>2/25-3/9</b>
<b>Final Project</b>	30% project: 25% presentation: 5%	PRESENTATIONS: <b>4/17-5/1</b>
		PROJECT: <b>Monday, May 1</b> in class
<b>Final Exam</b>	20%	(Due Electronically <b>May 9</b> (last day of finals))

**Regarding Class Participation:** Class participation is mandatory. (For additional information on attendance and participation, see "Regarding Attendance and Participation" below.)

**Regarding the Midterm:** Your midterm will take the form of a book review. Students will read and critically review a text, selected from a list provided during the second week of class, in consideration of course themes, readings, and discussions. **\*\*More information and guidelines to follow.\*\***

**Regarding the Final Project:** Your final project will be student-directed and self-designed, in consultation with your instructor. This may take the shape of a creative project (poetry, documentary film, etc.), a traditional paper, website, or another form. **\*\*More information and specific guidelines to follow.\*\***

**Regarding the Final Exam:** The final assignment will assume the form of an open-book, open-note take-home examination, due electronically by the last day of final exams (Thursday, May 9, 2019). **\*\*More information and specific guidelines to follow.\*\***

## REGARDING ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attendance is mandatory and critical to your success in this course. All students are allowed two unexcused absences over the course of the semester. Please note: Each additional unexcused absence will result in a 2-point reduction of your final grade.

For an absence to count as excused, it must relate to an illness, emergency, religious observance, or documented athletic conflict.

## REGARDING EVALUATION OF YOUR WORK

If you are dissatisfied with any evaluation of an assignment or your performance in this class, you may petition your grade **in writing, no earlier than 24 hours after I have returned graded work to you.** To do so, you need to submit to me a typed explanation detailing why you believe the grade is unwarranted, what grade you feel you deserve with arguments in support of your request, a reply to my comments on your work (e.g. if I say that your explanation is too brief, you should argue why it is not), and a copy of the original piece of written work.

## REGARDING WRITTEN WORK

IF YOU WOULD LIKE FEEDBACK ON ANY ASSIGNMENT BEFORE IT IS DUE, I AM HAPPY TO PROVIDE THIS. SIMPLY EMAIL ME A COPY OF YOUR WORK NO LATER THAN 48 HOURS PRIOR TO ITS DUE DATE, AND I WILL READ AND RETURN THIS TO YOU WITH MY COMMENTS AND SUGGESTED REVISIONS.

## COURSE POLICIES

All undergraduate students are responsible for complying with the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures contained in this publication as well as those in other official University publications and announcements which may be issued from time to time. This document includes policies on absences, grading, late withdrawal and related issues.  
<https://www.umass.edu/registrar/students/policies-and-practices/academic-regulations>

**Academic Honesty:** Academic dishonesty, in any form, will not be tolerated and you are responsible for educating yourself about the University's official policy on academic honesty. Following is a summary (you can read it in full at [http://www.umass.edu/dean\\_students/code\\_conduct/acad\\_honest.htm](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/code_conduct/acad_honest.htm)): "If an instructor finds that

a student has violated the University's Academic Honesty Policy, the instructor has the right to lower the student's grade, or even to fail the student for the course. Students have the right to appeal such a grade penalty by an instructor. The University Academic Honesty Board, which must be notified by instructors of any grade penalty, reviews all student appeals. The Board may sustain or recommend modification of the penalty given by the faculty member, or may recommend sanctions exceeding those originally given, such as suspension or expulsion from the University. The Board may also recommend sanctions for offenders who have committed multiple violations of the Academic Honesty Policy but who have not appealed the faculty members' decisions."

**Accessibility:** The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), Learning Disabilities Support Services (LDSS), or Psychological Disabilities Services (PDS), please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements:

<http://www.umass.edu/disability/procedures.pdf>

**Pronoun Use:** There is a long history of dialogue and activism around how we address one another, with respect to both names and pronouns. Students should be referred to by the name they prefer, and with the proper pronunciation, by faculty and other students. I will gladly honor your request to address you by the name and gender pronouns you prefer. Please advise me of your name's proper pronunciation, and any name or pronoun preferences not reflected in Spire early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies (WGSS) classes are a place where issues of sexual violence and other sexual misconduct are discussed as a matter of course. It's not a taboo subject, and feminists have long worked to develop theory and activism around sexualized violence, including rape, dating violence, child sexual abuse, and the like. If you want to discuss your own personal experiences of sexual violence in a class, we don't consider that a "report" covered by Title IX (although if you want faculty help and support in reporting sexual violence, we are here to help you do that). Other available resources on campus for addressing sexual violence include both confidential and non-confidential resources—non-confidential resources will keep your concerns private but will report your concerns to the Title IX coordinator, or, the Dean of Students Office who will provide you with different options to assist you. Confidential resources will keep your concerns confidential and will provide you support, assistance in addressing safety concerns as well as other services such as providing you with an advocate. The resources can be found at [www.umass.edu/titleix/](http://www.umass.edu/titleix/).

WGSS Librarian: WGSS has specialized librarians, Isabel Espinal and Anne Moore who can assist students with research. These librarians have developed a subject area research guide which has links and information to contact them directly. <http://guides.library.umass.edu/wost>

### **WGSS HAS A WRITING TUTOR:**

You can access everything you need to know about WGSS Writing Tutoring (announcements, session sign ups, resources, office hours, updates, a writing blog, etc.) on the Tutoring Website, [www.wgsswritingtutor.com](http://www.wgsswritingtutor.com). Email: [wgsswritingtutor@gmail.com](mailto:wgsswritingtutor@gmail.com).

**COURSE READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS** (subject to change)

Note: All readings are available on the course Moodle, and are due on the date listed. (In other words, the reading for Monday, January 28 is due on that date.)

I will regularly assign short, non-academic readings derived from current events in addition to the readings outlined below.

**Week One: Introductions****Day One****Wed. Jan 23****INTRODUCTION TO COURSE**

Review of Syllabus, Course Expectations, Survey, Preliminary Questions

**Week Two: Genealogies****Day Two****Mon. Jan 28**

- Hanhardt, Christina. 2016. "[Broken Windows at Blues: A Queer History of Gentrification and Policing.](#)" Verso.
- Ewing, Maura. 2017. "[We, Too, Are Targets of Police Violence.](#)" *The Atlantic*.

**Day Three****Wed. Jan 30**

- Jackson, Jenn M. 2018. "[Calling the Police on Black People Can Put Them In Danger.](#)"
- Lopez, German. 2016. "[There Are Huge Racial Disparities in How US Police Use Force.](#)" Vox.
- Nodjimbadem, Katie. 2017. "[The Long, Painful History of Police Brutality in the U.S.](#)"

**Week Three: Black Lives Matter & The Movement for Black Lives****Day Four****Mon. Feb 4**

- Garza, Alicia. 2014. "[A Herstory of the Movement](#)" *The Feminist Wire*.  
BlackLivesMatter Statement. "[11 Major Misconceptions About Black Lives Matter](#)"  
BlackLivesMatter Statement. "[Guiding Principles](#)"

**Day Five****Wed. Feb 6**

- Movement for Black Lives, [A Vision for Black Lives: Policy Demands for Black Power, Freedom, and Justice](#)

**Week Four: Resisting****Day Six****Mon Feb 11**

- African American Policy Forum. 2015. "[Say Her Name: Resisting Police Brutality Against Black Women.](#)"

**Day Seven****Wed Feb 13**

- Cobb, Jelani. 2014. "[Between the World and Ferguson.](#)" and 2015. "[What I Saw in Ferguson.](#)" *New Yorker*.
- *2 Fists Up: We Gon' Be Alright.* (Dir., Spike Lee, 2016.)

**Week Four: State Violence****Day Eight**

UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY - NO CLASS

<b>Day Eight</b> <b>Tues Feb</b> <b>19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jacobs, Michelle, <a href="#"><i>The Violence State: Black Women's Invisible Struggle Against Police Violence</i></a>, 24 Wm. &amp; Mary J. Women &amp; L. 39 (2017).</li></ul>
<b>Day Nine</b> <b>Wed Feb 20</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dyson, Michael Eric. 2018. <i>What Truth Sounds Like In Public</i>. Excerpts.</li></ul>

<b>Week Five: Abolition</b>	
<b>Day Ten Mon Feb 25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Davis, Angela. 2003. <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i> Ch. 1 ("Introduction– Prison Reform or Prison Abolition?") &amp; Ch. 2 ("Slavery, Civil Rights, and Abolitionist Perspectives Toward Prison.")</li> </ul>
<b>Day Eleven Wed Feb 27</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">SECOND TAKE HOME DUE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Davis, Angela. 2003. <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i> Ch. 3 ("Imprisonment and Reform") and 4 ("How Gender Structures the Prison System").</li> </ul>
<b>Week Six: Abolition, Continued</b>	
<b>Day Twelve Mon Mar 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Davis, Angela. 2003. <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i> Ch. 4 ("How Gender Structures the Prison System") and Ch. 5 ("Abolitionist Alternatives")</li> </ul>
<b>Day Thirteen Wed Mar 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meares, Tracey L. 2017. "<a href="#">Policing: A Public Good Gone Bad.</a>" <i>Boston Review</i></li> <li>Purnell, Derecka. 2017. "<a href="#">What Does Police Abolition Mean?</a>" <i>Boston Review</i></li> </ul>
<b>March 10-March 17   SPRING BREAK   Have Fun Be Safe</b>	
<b>Week Seven: Social Movements and Exclusion</b>	
<b>Day Fourteen Mon Mar 18</b>	The Politics and Practice of Social Movements
<b>Day Fifteen Wed Mar. 20</b>	Kiesling, Elena. "The Missing Colors of the Rainbow: Black Queer Resistance."
<b>Week Eight: Stonewall and its Genesis</b>	
<b>Day Sixteen Mon Mar 25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Death and Life of Marsha P. Johnson.</i> (Dir., David France, 2017)</li> <li>Gossett, Che, Reina Gossett, and AJ Lewis. "<a href="#">Reclaiming Our Lineage: Organized Queer, Gender-Nonconforming, and Transgender Resistance to Police Violence.</a>"</li> </ul>
<b>Day Seventeen Wed Mar 27</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Death and Life of Marsha P. Johnson.</i> (Dir., David France, 2017)</li> <li>Armstrong, Elizabeth A. and Suzanna M. Crage. 2006. "<a href="#">Movements and Memory: The Making of the Stonewall Myth.</a>" <i>American Sociological Review</i>, Volume 71, October, 724-751.</li> </ul>
<b>Week Nine: Immigrant Rights</b>	
<b>Day Eighteen Mon Apr 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Terriquez, Veronica. 2015. Intersectional Mobilization, Social Movement Spillover, and Queer Youth Leadership in the Immigrant Rights Movement. <i>Social Problems</i> 62(3):343-362</li> </ul>
<b>Day Nineteen Wed Apr 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adam, Erin M. 2017. "Intersectional Coalitions: The Paradoxes of Rights-Based Movement Building in LGBTQ and Immigrant</li> </ul>

**Week Ten: Invisible No More**

<p><b>Day Twenty</b> <b>Mon Apr 8</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THIRD TAKE HOME DUE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ritchie, Andrea J. 2017. <i>Invisible No More: Police Violence Against Black Women and Women of Color.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Day Twenty-One</b> <b>Wed Apr 10</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ritchie, Andrea J. 2017. <i>Invisible No More: Police Violence Against Black Women and Women of Color.</i></li> </ul>

**Week Eleven: Invisible No More**

<p><b>Mon Apr 15</b></p>	<p>NO CLASS</p>
<p><b>Day Twenty-Two</b> <b>Wed Apr 17</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ritchie, Andrea J. 2017. <i>Invisible No More: Police Violence Against Black Women and Women of Color.</i></li> </ul>

**Weeks Twelve & Thirteen: STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

<p><b>Day Twenty-Three</b> <b>Mon 4/22</b></p>	<p><i>STUDENT PRESENTATIONS</i> Readings TBA</p>
<p><b>Day Twenty-Four</b> <b>Wed 4/24</b></p>	<p><i>STUDENT PRESENTATIONS</i> Readings TBA</p>
<p><b>Day Twenty-Five</b> <b>Mon 4/29</b></p>	<p><i>STUDENT PRESENTATIONS</i> Jordan, June. "Some of Us Did Not Die."</p>
<p><b>Day Twenty-Six</b> <b>Wed 5/1</b></p>	<p><b>LAST DAY OF CLASS</b> <i>STUDENT PRESENTATIONS</i> Baldwin &amp; Lorde. "Revolutionary Hope."</p>

