Modern Race and Racial Politics:  
Culture, Identity, & Power

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Summer Session I—AMER-0180  
2019

Course Overview:  
This course is an interdisciplinary exploration into the complexities of race, racial formation, and racial politics in the United States. We will not simply examine how race is socially constructed, but just as importantly how it is politically contested and shaped by social actors and social movements. Participants will begin by examining the historical development of the modern concept of race and the experiences of different ethnic and racial communities in the United States. We will look at a range of racial histories and a host of theories and debates surrounding such concerns. Pursuing an “intersectional” approach, students will also examine racial identity as it is influenced and molded by gender, religion, class, sexuality, and nationalism. This course will challenge us to explore how different communities of color live in relation to one another and in relation to “Whiteness.” Central themes also include the portrayals of Arabs and Muslims by Hollywood, the impact of social movements and anti-racist activist struggles in the US, and questions of the border and the politics of immigration. Visual culture, films, and documentaries will be integral to the course.

Readings:  
The reading load for this class will be moderate. We will be reading selections from a variety of texts as well as a few articles—all made available on CANVAS. You are not required to buy any of these books. There are no book costs for this course.

Films and Documentaries:
1) “Race: The Power of an Illusion”  
2) “In Whose Honor: Native American Stereotypes in Sports”  
3) “Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People”  
4) “Chicano!”  
5) “Eyes on the Prize: The US Civil Rights Movement”  
6) “Crips and Bloods: Made in America”  
7) “Paris is Burning”