

GWS 395.01: Racialized Masculinities in the United States

Professor Kimberly McKee

Fall 2013

GWS 395-01

Tuesdays/Thursdays 2:15pm – 4:05pm

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 4:30 - 6, Wednesdays
2-4, Thursdays 12:30 – 2, and by appointment

Course Description:

This course explores the intersections of race, class, and gender to understand the experiences of men of color living in the United States. Students will explore hegemonic, complicit and subordinated masculinities. We will examine the ways in which Latinos, Black and Asian American men are stereotyped in popular culture and their resistance to such images and racialized rhetoric from the nineteenth century to present day. Students will critically engage hegemonic, complicit, and subordinate masculinities found in communities of color.

While exploring various types of masculinity, students will examine topics such as immigration, labor, cultural production, family and community formation, and sexuality. Course materials will be drawn from a variety of disciplines (History, Gender Studies, Cultural Studies) and sources (documentaries, autobiography, etc.). This course will provide students the opportunity to develop their critical thinking, reading and writing skills through discussions, presentations, and written assignments.

The objectives and goals of this course are to help students:

- Increase knowledge of various types of masculinities in relation to understandings of gender, class, sexuality and race;
- Gain competence in how the intersectionality of race, gender, class, ethnicity, sexuality, and ability shapes the institutions and cultures of the United States;
- Understand the role of social diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values; and
- Develop skills in research, critical thinking and communication.

Required Texts:

- Celine Parrenás Shimizu, *Straitjacket Sexualities: Unbinding Asian American Manhoods in the Movies*
- Richeé Richardson, *From Uncle Tom to Gangsta: Black Masculinity and the U.S. South*
- Steven W. Bender, *Greasers and Gringos: Latinos, Law, and the American Imagination*

Additional readings will be available online. Students will be responsible for bringing these readings to class for discussion.

Course Requirements:

1. Discussion/Class Participation (15%)

This is a discussed based class. Students are expected to come to class prepared to deepen their examinations of the readings. Students may find it beneficial to take notes while completing course readings in order to contribute to class discussion. **Please engage only in respectful discussion.** We represent a multitude of different personalities, and diverse

backgrounds, beliefs, and opinions. Please do not attack your fellow students for voicing their opinions. **This course is dialogue-intensive.** It is crucial that students come to class having read all assignments and prepared to participate meaningfully in class discussions. Class discussions are meant to encourage us to think critically about both the content of this course and the world around us. Together, we will be producing knowledge rather than merely consuming it. The inclusion of multiple, and even contrasting, viewpoints will help us with this, and participation is required from everyone.

2. **Co-Lead Discussion (10%)**

Sign up to co-lead discussion once in this course. You should meet with your co-facilitators to generate a list of questions. You also might experiment with more creative forms of discussion, such as media, debates, role-playing, Jeopardy, etc. to enhance peer engagement. *The sign up sheet will be circulated Week 2, Lecture 2.*

You will be working in groups of 2 or 3. Please be mindful of how you construct your group as you will all be responsible of discussion components. **Students are responsible for constructing at least three questions each to guide discussion.** These questions **must be submitted** to the instructor at least 36 hours in advance of your discussion date. More information will be provided regarding the grading process when the sign up sheet is circulated. **Please feel free to meet with the instructor prior to your discussion facilitation.**

You will have **thirty to forty-five minutes** for your discussion. If the discussion is “flowing,” you will have additional time.

3. **Reflection on “Manliness” (Hegemonic Masculinity) (10%)**

Students are asked to complete a 2-3 page (double-spaced) reflection on hegemonic masculinity. Students will be required to analyze an advertisement provided by the instructor. Additional details will be provided in class. *This assignment is due Week 4, Lecture 6 (9/17/2013) at the beginning of class. Guidelines for the assignment will be provided Week 3, Lecture 4.*

4. **Midterm Examination (10%)**

The midterm is a take home examination. Students will gain access to the midterm examination on **Week 10, Lecture 19 (11/7/2013)**. This midterm is a comprehensive examination based on readings and discussion from Lecture 1 to Lecture 17. The exam will include a variety of questions (i.e. multiple choice, true/false, matching, and short answer). A review guide will be provided to students.

The midterm is due at the beginning of class on Week 11, Lecture 20 (11/12/2013).

If you need to complete the midterm on an alternative date, you must notify the instructor within two weeks of the midterm. If an emergency arises, please contact your instructor as soon as possible in order to make accommodations.

5. **Current Media Analysis Papers (45%)**

You are responsible for writing three papers in this course, exploring Black, Asian, Latino masculinities. Students will be provided prompts for the three assignments. Each paper should be 3-4 pages in length. Students must engage course readings. These assignments will require students to examine how historical, racialized understandings of masculinity impacted present day understandings of Black, Asian, and Latino manhood.

a. **Essay #1: Representation of Blackness (15%)**

This assignment asks to students to reflect on how images of black men circulate within popular culture. How do historical stereotypes find themselves re-invented in contemporary society?

This assignment is **due Week 7 – October 16, 2013 by 12pm CST** in the correct Pioneer Web Dropbox.

b. **Essay #2: The Legacies of Bruce Lee and Long Duk Dong (15%)**

This assignment requires students to engage with late twentieth century depictions of Asian (American) manhood. Students will explore how the Fu Manchu and Charlie Chan stereotypes are embodied in martial artist/actor Bruce Lee and *Sixteen Candles* character (1984) Long Duk Dong.

This assignment is **due Week 13 – November 27, 2013 by 12pm CST** in the correct Pioneer Web Dropbox.

c. **Essay #3: Reinscribing Latinos in American History (15%)**

This assignment asks students to consider how historical representations of Latinos and American neo-colonialism impacted the ways in which Latino men are depicted in contemporary popular culture.

This assignment is due **Week 16 – December 17, 2013 by 7pm CST** in the correct Pioneer Web Dropbox.

6. **Group Presentations/Project (10%)**

Utilizing the PechaKucha method, students will be required to complete a 6:40 minute presentation of twenty slides that run for twenty seconds each. Students will work in groups of 2-3 students. Presentations should focus on one aspect of the course concerning Black, Latino or Asian masculinities (hegemonic, complicit or subordinated). The final grade for this assignment will include peer evaluations, journal reflections, and instructor feedback.

Information will be provided when the instructor assigns groups Week 2, Lecture 3.

Written Assignment Guidelines:

All written assignments (unless otherwise noted by the instructor) must be completed in 12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with one-inch margins. The instructor reserves the right to not accept assignments that fail to adhere to these guidelines. **If you submit your paper via online**, your written assignment must be saved as a **Word Document (.doc or .docx)**. All

citations must be standardized (i.e. please be consistent with your use of MLA, Chicago, or APA). For questions about citations, please visit sites such as EasyBib.com or Purdue OWL.

Late Assignment Policy (for written assignments only):

Please note that written assignments will be accepted within forty-eight hours of the deadline. Ten points will be deducted from assignments submitted within twenty-four hours of the deadline. Fifteen points will be deducted from assignments submitted between twenty-four and forty-eight hours of the deadline.

Attendance Policy:

You are expected to attend every class session. Students are allowed two unexcused absences. Please use these absences wisely. For every additional absence you will lose three points per absence from your overall course grade. For example, if you miss three additional classes, nine points will be deducted from your final grade. *Please notify the instructor if you have a personal emergency or health issue causing you to miss class. Proper documentation is required.*

Extra Credit:

Extra credit will be offered by the instructor. Students may only complete **two extra credit assignments**. Extra credit will first and foremost go towards your attendance standing if you exceed the two unexcused absences. If you are not affected by the attendance policy, **two points will be provided per extra credit to your lowest two grades in the course**. Please note that extra credit assignments will be noted on the syllabus **OR** announced in class. The instructor **may not announce extra credit assignments** that are listed in the syllabus.

Academic Misconduct:

All students are responsible for doing their own work and plagiarism will NOT be tolerated. **Please see the Grinnell College Academic Honesty Policy for specific guidelines on plagiarism/academic dishonesty.** Broadly speaking, the Academic Honesty Policy defines academic dishonesty as “a range of behaviors including cheating, plagiarism, deception, fabricating or falsifying results, collaborating on assignments without permission — behaviors that present someone else’s work as one’s own, fail to give credit to sources, or seek to gain unfair advantage over other students.”

Plagiarism is one of the most serious offenses that can be committed in an academic community; as such, it is the obligation of this department and its instructors to report all cases of suspected plagiarism to the Committee on Academic Standing. After the report is filed, a hearing takes place and if the student is found guilty, the possible punishment ranges from failing the class to suspension or expulsion from the university.

Always cite your sources (I can help with this) and ask questions before you turn in an assignment if you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism. To preserve the integrity of Grinnell as an institution of higher learning, to maintain your own integrity, and to avoid jeopardizing your future, **do not plagiarize!**

For questions concerning how to avoid plagiarism, please see: <http://www.grinnell.edu/offices/studentaffairs/shb-11-12/academicpolicies/academichonesty/avoidingplagiarism>.

Resources:

I strive to create a fully inclusive classroom, thus I welcome individual students to approach me about distinctive learning needs. In particular, I encourage students with disabilities to have a conversation with me and disclose how our classroom or course activities could impact the disability and what accommodations would be essential to you. You will also need to have a conversation about and provide documentation of your disability to the Dean for Student Success and Academic Advising, Joyce Stern, located on the 3rd floor of the Joe Rosenfield Center (x3702).

Grinnell College offers alternative options to complete academic work for students who observe religious holy days. Please contact me within the first three weeks of the semester if you would like to discuss a specific instance that applies to you.

- **Your instructor:** Please feel free to contact me at any time over the course of the quarter if you are struggling with papers, course work, etc. I am willing to work with you. ***Email is the best way to contact me.*** I will respond to your email within 24-hours on weekdays, and by Sunday evening at the latest on weekends (beginning Friday evening). Also, I encourage you to use my office hours. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time.
- **The Grinnell College Writing Lab** offers classes in basic and advanced principles of writing, oral communication skills, and teaching writing (which includes training for our Writing Mentors program). For further information, contact our student managers at x3117 or writing@grinnell.edu.
- **PurdueOWL** is a website that provides basic citation information (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>).

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus at any time.

Course Schedule:

PART I: UNPACKING MASCULINITY

Week 1

Lecture 1 (8/29/2013): *Course introduction and overview*

- In class screening and discussion of *Tough Guise* (1999)

Week 2

Lecture 2 (9/3/2013): *Office hours begin this week*
What Does it Mean to be Masculine?
Discussion Sign Up Circulated

Available online:

- Connell, R.W. and James W. Messerschmidt. (2005) "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept." *Gender and Society* 19(6): 829-859.
- "The Social Organization of Masculinity" from *Masculinities* (2005; Second Edition; Cambridge: Polity Press) by R.W. Connell.

Lecture 3 (9/5/2013):

Complicit and Subordinated Masculinities

Presentation Groups Assigned – The instructor will also post the presentation groups on Pioneer Web

- In class screening and discussion of *The Bro Code: How Contemporary Culture Creates Sexist Men* (2011)

EXTRA CREDIT: Write a 2-3 double-spaced page review of the documentary. How does the documentary relate to the assigned lecture readings? What is the significance of the documentary to understandings of masculinity? This assignment is due at the beginning of class on September 10, 2013.

Available online:

- Ricciardelli, R., Clow, K., & White, P. (2010). "Investigating Hegemonic Masculinity: Portrayals of Masculinity in Men's Lifestyle Magazines." *Sex Roles*, 63(1/2), 64-78.
- The Official Bro Code (Articles 1-40)
<http://jigarbpatel.blogspot.com/2008/12/official-bro-code-part-1-articles-1-40.html>

PART II: RETHINKING "BLACKNESS"

Week 3

Lecture 4 (9/10/13):

Theorizing Black Masculinity

Reflection on "Manliness" Guidelines Provided

- Begin in class screening of *I Am a Man: Black Masculinity in America* (1998)

Available online:

- "The Lived Experience of the Black Man" from *Black Skins, White Masks* (1952/2008) by Frantz Fanon
- "Overview" from *The Racial Contract* (1997) by Charles W. Mills

Lecture 5 (9/12/13):

Richardson, Introduction and Chapter 1

Co-Lead Discussion Option One

Week 4

EXTRA CREDIT: Attend one of the Symposium: The Legacy of Title IX events sponsored by the Rosenfield Program. Please see their website for further event information: <http://www.grinnell.edu/academic/rosenfield/events>. Provide a 2-3 double-space paged summary of the event and what you learned from the film, speaker or panel. While these events do not directly seem to connect to the content of this course, I highly encourage you to look at how Title IX has been shaped by and reshapes understandings of masculinity. This assignment is due at the beginning of class on September 24, 2013.

Lecture 6 (9/17/2013): Richardson, Chapters Two and Three
Reflection on “Manliness” Due at the Beginning of Class

EXTRA CREDIT: Demonstrate your note taking skills. Provide the instructor a typed copy of your notes for the Richardson reading (Introduction and Chapter 1 OR Chapters Two and Three). What are the key points that you take from the reading? While you may directly cite from the text (please make sure you include page numbers), I also encourage you to paraphrase the author’s argument. What are the central themes or arguments of each chapter? This assignment is due at the beginning of class on September 24, 2013.

Lecture 7 (9/19/2013): Richardson, Chapter Four
**Co-Lead Discussion Option Two
Essay #1 Prompt Provided**

Week 5

Lecture 8 (9/24/2013): Chapter Five and Conclusion

- In class screening and discussion of *Beyond Hip Hop Beats and Rhymes*

Lecture 9 (9/26/2013): *Locating Gender-Queer and Trans Masculinity*
Co-Lead Discussion Option Three

- In class screening and discussion of *Still Black: A Portrait of Black Transmen* (2008)

Available online:

- Ralph, Lawrence. (2009) “Out of the closet: Homophobia and Homoeroticism in Hip Hop.” *The Black Youth Project*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago.
- Butters, Gerald R. (2012, July 29) “Queering Hip Hop: Frank Ocean and Homophobia.” *FlowTV.Org* <http://flowtv.org/2012/07/queering-hip-hop-frank-ocean/>
- Brother Ali. (2012, September 7) “The Intersection of Homophobia and Hip Hop: Where Tyler Met Frank.” *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved from: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/brother-ali/hip-hop-homophobia-_b_1864676.html

Week 6

Lecture 10 (10/1/2013): *Contemporary Black Men and The Performance of “Blackness” Online*

Available online

- Selections from *Cool Pose: The Dilemmas of Black Manhood in America* (1992) by Richard Majors and Janet Mancini Billson (“Cool Pose: Expression and Survival,” “Cool Pose and Masculinity,” “The Cool Cat Lifestyle” and “Conclusion”)

Lecture 11 (10/3/2013): *Black Masculinities Presentations*

PART III: NOT JUST A MODEL MINORITY

Week 6

Lecture 12 (10/8/2013): *Creating the Forever Foreigner: Historicizing Asians in the U.S.*

Available online:

- Chan, Jachinson. (2001) “American Inheritance: Chinese American Male Identities” and “Epilogue: Contemporary Asian American Men’s Issues” in *Chinese American Masculinities: From Fu Manchu to Bruce Lee* (2001, New York: Routledge)
- ADD SUBSEQUENT READING ON SOUTH ASIAN MIGRATION

Lecture 13 (10/10/2013): Parrenás Shimizu, Introduction and Chapter One

Week 7 (10/13/13 – 10/19/13)

Lecture 14 (10/15/2013): Parrenás Shimizu, Chapter Two

10/16/2013: **Essay #1 Due via Pioneer Web at NOON CST**

Lecture 15 (10/17/2013): Parrenás Shimizu, Chapter Three and Four
Co-Lead Discussion Option Four

Week 8 FALL BREAK (10/20/13 – 10/26/13)

Week 9

Lecture 16 (10/29/2013): Parrenás Shimizu, Chapter Five and Epilogue

Lecture 17 (10/31/2013): *Queer Asian America*
Essay #2 Prompt Provided

- Begin screening *Finishing the Game: The Search for a New Bruce Lee* (2007)

Available online:

- Eng, David L. and Alice Y. Hom. “Q&A: Notes on a Queer Asian America” in David L. Eng and Alice Y. Hom (Eds.) *Queer in Asian America*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 1-24.
- Kim, Daniel. Y. “The Strange Love of Frank Chin” in David L. Eng and Alice Y. Hom (Eds.) *Queer in Asian America*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 270-303

Week 10

PLEASE NOTE REGULAR OFFICE HOURS ARE CANCELLED; THE PROFESSOR WILL BE AVAILABLE IN HER OFFICE ON NOVEMBER 5, 2013 FROM 9:00AM – 10:30AM.

Lecture 18 (11/5/2013): **Midterm Examination Review**

- Finish screening *Finishing the Game: The Search for a New Bruce Lee* (2007) and discussion

EXTRA CREDIT: Write a 2-3 double spaced page critique of the film Finishing the Game: The Search for a New Bruce Lee (2007). How does the film speak to the various strands of Asian American masculinity? How does it reify and/or disrupt stereotypes of Asian American men? What is the significance of the independent film? This assignment is due at the beginning of class on November 7, 2013.

Lecture 19 (11/7/2013): **NO CLASS OR OFFICE HOURS: PROFESSOR AT A CONFERENCE**
Midterm Examination (take-home)

PART IV: DECONSTRUCTING MACHISMO

Week 11

Lecture 20 (11/12/2013): *Asian American Masculinities Presentation*
Take Home Midterm Examination Due at the beginning of class

Lecture 21 (11/14/2013): *Historicizing Latinos in the United States*
Co-Lead Discussion Option Five

Available online:

- “The Good Neighbor on Primetime: Desi Arnez and *I Love Lucy*” from *Latina/o Stars in U.S. Eyes* (2009) by Mary C. Beltrán.
- “Braceros, ‘Wetbacks,’ and the National Boundaries of Class” from *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (2004) by Mae M. Ngai

Week 12

Lecture 22 (11/19/2013): Bender, Preface to Chapter Four

Lecture 23 (11/21/2013): Bender, Chapter Five to Chapter Seven
Co-Lead Discussion Option Six

EXTRA CREDIT: Demonstrate your note taking skills. Provide the instructor a typed copy of your notes for the Bender reading (SELECT TWO CONSECUTIVE CHAPTERS). What are the key points that you take from the reading? While you may directly cite from the text (please make sure you include page numbers), I also encourage you to paraphrase the author’s argument. What are the central themes or arguments of each chapter? This assignment is due at the beginning of class on November 26, 2013.

Week 13 **Office Hours Cancelled All Week**

Lecture 24 (11/26/2013): Bender, Chapter Eight to Chapter Ten

11/27/2013: **Essay #2 Due via Pioneer Web by NOON CST**

Lecture 25 (11/28/2013): **No Class – Thanksgiving**

Week 14

Lecture 26 (12/3/2013): Bender, Chapter Eleven to Fourteen
Essay #3 Prompt Provided

Lecture 27 (12/5/2013): *Interrogating Latino Masculinity*

- In class screening and discussion of *Latinos Beyond Reel: Challenging Media Stereotypes*

Available online:

- Selections from *Hombres y Machos: Masculinity and Latino Culture* (1997) by Alfredo Mirandé (Chapters 2 and 3)

Week 15

Lecture 26 (12/10/2013): *Latino Masculinities Presentation*

Lecture 27 (12/12/2013): *Locating Men of Color in Guyland and Final Course Reflection*

Available online:

- “Welcome to Guyland” and “Boys and Their Toys: Guyland’s Media” from *Guyland: The perilous World Where Boys Become Men* (2008) by Michael Kimmel

Week 16 **Finals Week – Essay #3 Due via Pioneer Web on Tuesday, December 17 by 7pm CST**