

York University
Graduate Program in Critical Disability Studies
CDIS 5040 3.0 Experience, Identity, and Social Theory
Winter 2016

Thursdays 11:30am-2:30pm in VH 1156 from January 4 to March 31, except February 18

Instructor: Prof. Rachel Gorman
Office: HNES 407
Hours: Thursdays from 2:30-4:00pm
Email: gorman@yorku.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will engage with contemporary critical theory in disability studies, and trace the conceptual currents through which these theories have emerged. We will explore how contemporary disability theorists deal with questions of experience, identity, and the politics of race, gender, sexuality, disability, and class. We will highlight questions of ontology and epistemology within strands of critical race, feminist, and Marxist theory; and examine recent contributions of transnational, Native, and queer theory to disability studies. For critical social theorists, the point is not merely to understand the world, but to change it. The purpose of a close engagement with genealogies of contemporary theory is to help us to develop anti-racist, anti-colonial, queer- and trans-inclusive disability politics capable of challenging the political economic status quo. This seminar course requires close engagement with the readings, especially in the weekly seminar. In your first assignment you will investigate a concept that emerged in the first four weeks. In the second assignment, you will develop your approach to subjectivity. In your final paper you will produce a critical essay drawing on the theorists we studied in the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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| 1. Reading and participation | Ongoing | 20% |
| 2. Critique of a concept (6 pages) | Due Jan. 31 | 20% |
| 3. Reflection on subjectivity (6 pages) | Due Mar. 6 | 20% |
| 4. Theoretical framework (12 pages) | Due Apr. 3 | 40% |

REQUIRED READINGS

I will email the sixteen articles we will be reading for the first four classes. For the following eight classes, we will read a monograph in preparation for every other class. The monographs are available as e-books through [York's library](#) ; or in hardcopy new or used on-line, or at the Scott library. Participants are encouraged to share pdf versions of the books.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

PART ONE: Investigating Themes and Concepts

January 7 Theme—Nationalism

- McRuer, Robert (2010) Disability nationalism in crip times, *Journal of Literary and cultural Disability Studies* 4 (2): 163-178.
- Puar, Jasbir (2013) Homonationalism as assemblage: Viral travels, affective sexualities, *Jindal Global Law Review* 4 (2): 23-43.
- Simpson, Audra (2008) Subjects of sovereignty: Indigeneity, the revenue rule, and juridics of failed consent, *Law and Contemporary Problems* 71 (3): 191-215.
- Snyder, Sharon & David Mitchell (2010) Introduction: Ablenationalism and the geopolitics of disability, *Journal of Literary and cultural Disability Studies* 4 (2): 113-126.

January 14 Concept—Affect

- Haritaworn, Jin (2013) Beyond 'hate': Queer metonymies of crime, pathology and anti/violence, *Jindal Global Law Review* 4 (2): 44-78.
- Puar, Jasbir (2009) Prognosis time: Toward a geopolitics of affect, debility and capacity, *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 19 (2): 161-172
- Fritsch, Kelly (2013) The neoliberal circulation of affects: Happiness, accessibility and the capacitation of disability as wheelchair, *Health, Culture and Society* 5 (1): 135-149.
- Best, Beverley (2011) 'Frederic Jameson notwithstanding': The dialectic of affect, *Rethinking Marxism* 23 (1): 60-82

January 21 Theme—Colonialism

- Fanon, Frantz (1967) French intellectuals and democrats and the Algerian revolution, in *Toward the African Revolution: Political Essays* (New York: Grove Press) pp. 76-90.
- McKittrick, Katherine (2013) Plantation futures, *Small Axe* 42 (November): 1-15
- da Silva, Denise Ferreira (2011) Notes for a critique of the 'metaphysics of race,' *Theory, Culture & Society* 28 (1): 138-148.

Mitchell, Davis & Sharon Snyder (2003) The eugenic Atlantic: Race, disability, and the making of an international eugenic science 1800-1945, *Disability & Society* 18 (7): 843-864.

January 27 Concept—Necropolitics
31st

CONCEPTUAL CRITIQUE DUE

Razack, Sherene (2013) Timely deaths: Medicalizing the deaths of Aboriginal people in custody, *Law, Culture, and the Humanities* 9 (2): 352-374.

Mbembe, Achille (2003) Necropolitics, *Public Culture* 15 (1): 11-40

Smith (2014) Native Studies at the horizon of death: Theorizing ethnographic entrapment and settler self-reflexivity, in Audra Simpson & Andrea Smith (eds.) *Theorizing Native Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press)

Hughes, Bill (2009) Wounded/monstrous/abject: A critique of the disabled body in the sociological imaginary, *Disability & Society* 24 (4): 399-410.

PART TWO: Theorizing Subjectivity

February 4 Disabling Worlds—Thematic Investigation

Dossa, Parin (2009) *Racialized Bodies, Disabling Worlds: Storied Lives of Immigrant Muslim Women* (University of Toronto Press)

February 11 Disabling Worlds—Conceptual Investigation

Dossa, Parin (2009) *Racialized Bodies, Disabling Worlds: Storied Lives of Immigrant Muslim Women* (University of Toronto Press)

February 25 Racial Mattering—Thematic Investigation

Chen, Mel (2012) *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect* (Durham: Duke University Press)

March 3 Racial Mattering—Conceptual Investigation

REFLECTION DUE 6th

Chen, Mel (2012) *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect* (Durham: Duke University Press)

PART THREE: Theorizing the Social

March 10 Therapeutic Nations—Thematic Investigation

Million, Dian (2013) *Therapeutic Nations: Healing in an Age of Indigenous Human Rights* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press)

March 17 Therapeutic Nations—Conceptual Investigation

Million, Dian (2013) *Therapeutic Nations: Healing in an Age of Indigenous Human Rights* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press)

March 24 Global Difference—Thematic Investigation

Erevelles, Nirmala (2011) *Disability and Difference in Global Contexts: Enabling a Transformative Body Politic* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan)

**March 31 Global Difference—Conceptual Investigation FRAMEWORK
DUE**

Erevelles, Nirmala (2011) *Disability and Difference in Global Contexts: Enabling a Transformative Body Politic* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan)

NOTE ON LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

As an instructor, it is my responsibility to foster a supportive, inclusive learning environment that will encourage both individual and collective growth. As emerging scholars, organizers, and policy-makers, it is your responsibility to become conscious of, and engaged in, the creation of a transformative, anti-oppressive collegial environment. Through collective reflection, discussion, and action, we become better researchers and activists.

POLICIES ON ASSIGNMENTS

1. Assignments one and two should be six pages (1500 words) minimum, and assignment three should be twelve pages (3000 words) minimum. Please cite at all relevant

references from the course reading list, as well as additional sources you may be applying to your work. Please **email assignments in Word format with subject line “CDIS 5040 Assignment 1 (or 2 or 3)”** by midnight on day they are due.

2. Assignments format and referencing must follow a style guide (APA, MLA, Chicago).
3. As an instructor, I am bound by the Faculty of Graduate Studies guidelines around grading practices, missed assignments, and late work (link to [Student Survival Guide](#) and see page 66 for policy details on the **Assignment Deferred Standing Agreement**). My desire is for all students to finish their course work in a timely manner, and in my experience, accommodation and modification before the fact is key to accomplishing this. Please approach me with your hopes, fears, and concerns for completing this course, and we can work out a solution.
4. Please also see pages 65-66 & 73-81 of the Student Survival Guide set out York policies on **Grading Systems, Academic Honesty**, and the **Senate Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**.