

Race, Class, & Gender (JINS 311)

Fall 2021, Truman State University
BH212, TR 1:30-2:50
Office: MC 227
Office Hours: TR noon-1:20 over zoom <https://zoom.us/my/marcbecker> (and by appointment)

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Description

How do race, class, and gender—sometimes presented as the “trilogy,” the “contemporary holy trinity,” or (from a BIPOC perspective) a triple burden—interact with each other? Are they analytical categories that are similar or distinct? Can their relative importance be ranked in terms of a hierarchy, are they equivalent to each other, do they intersect with each other, or do they engage with fundamentally different issues and concerns? Using the perspectives of multiple disciplines, students in this seminar explore race, class, and gender as socially constructed categories that continue to wield considerable power over a person’s role in society.

See the syllabus addendum on Blackboard for additional class policies.

Readings

Giménez, Martha. *Marx, Women, and Capitalist Social Reproduction: Marxist feminist essays*. Chicago: Haymarket, 2019. ISBN: 9781642590470

Markovits, Daniel. *The Meritocracy Trap: How America's foundational myth feeds inequality, dismantles the middle class, and devours the elite*. New York: Penguin Press, 2019. ISBN: 9780735222014

Michaels, Walter Benn. *The Trouble with Diversity: How we learned to love identity and ignore inequality*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2016. ISBN: 9781250099334

Reed, Touré F. *Toward Freedom: The case against race reductionism*. New York: Verso, 2020. ISBN: 9781786634382

Wilkerson, Isabel. *Caste: The origins of our discontents*. New York: Random House, 2020. ISBN 9780593230251

Assignments and grades

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>
Personal identity exercise	2 pts
27 reading responses (1 pt each)	27
Class discussion leader (3 times, 3 pts each)	9
5 response papers (8 pts each)	40
Race, class, & gender essay	22

You can check your grade progress on Blackboard. Grades are calculated out of a total of 100 points, and not the percentage of completed assignments as displayed in Blackboard. 90-100 points is an A, 80-89 is a B, 70-79 is a C, and 60-69 is a D. Fewer than 600 points is an F.

Successful completion of all assignments is required to receive credit for this class.

Personal identity exercise. Create an identity wheel (a circle or pie chart) with “slices” whose size indicates the relative importance of each item to your own identity. Label each slice with an “A” if it is an advantaged or privileged part of your identity that benefits you, and a “T” for targeted parts that may put you at a social disadvantage (even if that part of your identity is important to you). Post a copy of this identity wheel to google drive and be prepared to discuss in class on Thursday, August 26 why you constructed it the way you did. 2 pts.

Reading responses: Post a comment, question, response, or reaction for each daily reading to the discussion board on Blackboard. 1 pt each, 27 pts total.

Class discussion leader: For each class period, one student will sign up to lead the discussion (organize the reading responses into a logical flow) and another to moderate discussion (run stack) to assure that everyone has equal space to speak. Sign up for a total of three times for three different books, and at least once for both leading and moderating the discussion. 3 times, 3 pts each, 9 pts total

Response papers: Prepare a three-page typed response to each assigned book. Identify the author’s main arguments and disciplinary assumptions, and examine the use of sources, methodology, and theory. Provide your own assessment or critique of the readings, including how effectively each author engages issues of race, class, & gender. In writing your essays:

- Identify one main point in the reading that strikes you as most interesting or important
- Don’t just summarize the contents—exploring significance is more important
- Be sure to demonstrate that you have completed the entire reading
- Acknowledge authorship, especially since I want you to engage the authors’ main arguments and the evidence that they use, their use of sources, methodology, and theory
- Be sure to provide your own assessment or critique of the readings.

The essays must be typed, double-spaced, and include citations, a bibliography, and page numbers. 8 pts each.

Race, class, & gender essay: Drawing on the material we have covered this semester as well as any additional material you might wish to include, analyze how you have come to understand the constructions of race, class, & gender. How do disciplinary assumptions reinforce or challenge these attitudes and perspectives? This final essay should be about 15 pages long, typed, double-spaced, and include citations, a bibliography, and page numbers. 22 pts.

Class Schedule

Tues, Aug 24: Introduction

Thurs, Aug 26: Identity wheels

Tues, Aug 31: Introductory readings (on Blackboard):

Kimberle Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics,” *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989, no. Article 8: 139-67.

Rita Omokha, "Critical Moment," *Vanity Fair*, no. 731 (September 2021): 86-87.

Barbara Foley, "Intersectionality: A Marxist Critique," *New Labor Forum* 28, no. 3 (September 2019): 10-13.

Templeton, Alan R. "Biological races in humans." *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 44, no. 3 (September 2013): 262-71.

Thurs, Sept 2: Wilkerson, Part 1

Tues, Sept 7: Wilkerson, Part 2

Thurs, Sept 9: Wilkerson, Part 3

Tues, Sept 14: Wilkerson, Part 4

Thurs, Sept 16: Wilkerson, Part 5

Tues, Sept 21: Wilkerson, Part 6

Thurs, Sept 23: Wilkerson, Part 7

Tues, Sept 28: Reed, Intro & Ch. 1

Thurs, Sept 30: Reed, Ch. 2

Tues, Oct 5: Reed, Ch. 3

Thurs, Oct 7: Reed, Ch. 4 & conc

Tues, Oct 12: Giménez, intro, chs. 1-2

Tues, Oct 19: Giménez, chs. 3-5

Thurs, Oct 21: Giménez, chs. 6-8

Tues, Oct 26: Giménez, chs. 9-11

Thurs, Oct 28: Giménez, chs. 12-13

Tues, Nov 2: Giménez, chs. 14-16

Thurs, Nov 4: Markovits, intro & part 1

Tues, Nov 9: Markovits, part 2

Thurs, Nov 11: Markovits, part 3 & conc

Tues, Nov 16: Michaels, intro & ch. 1

Thurs, Nov 18: Michaels, ch. 2

Tues, Nov 30: Michaels, ch. 3

Thurs, Dec 2: Michaels, ch. 4

Tues, Dec 7: Michaels, ch. 5

Thurs, Dec 9: Michaels, ch. 6, conc, afterword

Final Exam: Tuesday Dec. 14, 11:30 a.m. - 1:20 p.m.