Education in the Age of Trump

Fall 2017

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Mondays, 3 pm

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The course, which is based on the Trump 2.0 syllabus published by historians N.D.B. Connolly and Keisha N. Blain on Public Books, explores Donald Trump’s rise as a product of the American lineage of racism, sexism, nativism, and imperialism. It offers an introduction to the deep currents of American political culture that produced what many simply call “Trumpism”: personal and political gain marred by intolerance, derived from wealth, and rooted in the history of segregation, sexism, and exploitation.

The course introduces the past and present conditions that allowed Trump to seize electoral control of a major American political party and acknowledges the intersectional nature of power and politics. The course emphasizes the ways that cultural capital like Trump’s grows best under certain socio-economic conditions. Trump’s open advocacy for race-based exclusion and politically motivated violence on matters both foreign and domestic cannot be separated from the historical and day-to-day inequalities endured by people of color, women, and religious minorities living in or migrating to the United States. Concerned less with Trump as a man than with “Trumpism” as a product of history, this course interrogates the connections between wealth, violence, and politics.

Students will consider how “Trumpism” affects their roles as educators and the lives of the youth and families in their schools and communities. They will leave the course with a deeper appreciation and understanding of the historical and sociological antecedents that have contributed to “Trumpism” and explore ways to challenge its shortcomings in their classrooms, schools, and communities.

**Week 1: Course Introduction**

PBS Frontline: Divided States of America (Part 1 in class, watch Part 2 this week)

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/divided-states-of-america/

**Week 2: “Trumpism’s” Antecedents**

***“Let’s make America great again.”* —Ronald Reagan**

Sean Wilentz, *The Age of Reagan: A History, 1974 – 2008* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), Chapter 5,

*The New Morning*

Christopher S. Parker and Matt A. Barreto, *Change They Can’t Believe In: The Tea Party and Reactionary*

*Politics in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), Introduction and Chapter 1

# Melissa Deckman, *Tea Party Women: Mama Grizzlies, Grassroots Leaders, and the Changing Face of the*

# *American Right* (New York: New York University Press, 2016), Introduction

**Week 3: White Power and Plausible Deniability**

***“I don’t know what you’re even talking about with white supremacy or white supremacists. I don’t know.”***

Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, *White Supremacy and Racism in the Post-Civil Rights Era* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner,

2001), Chapter 4, “The New Racism: The Post-Civil Rights Racial Structure in the United

States,” Chapter 5, “Color-Blind Racism: Toward an Analysis of White Racial Ideology.”

Nolan Leon Cabrera, “Exposing whiteness in higher education: white male college students

minimizing racism, claiming victimization, and recreating white supremacy,” *Race, Ethnicity,*

*and Education,* 17:1, September 2012.

# *Park Avenue: Money, Power, and the American Dream: http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/park-avenue/*

[*Race: the Power of An Illusion*](http://newsreel.org/video/race-the-power-of-an-illusion), directed by Christine Herbes-Sommers, Tracy Heather Strain,

and Llewellyn M. Smith (California Newsreel, 2003), <https://vimeo.com/133506632> (and

online lesson plans to accompany the film, <http://www.pbs.org/race/000_General/000_00-Home.htm)>

**Week 4: Blackness and Right­Wing Multiculturalism**

***“Look at my African American over here! ... Are you the greatest?”***

Manning Marable, *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America: Problems in Race, Political Economy, and*

*Society* (Boston: South End Press, 1983), *selections*.

Ian Haney Lopez, *Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Have Reinvented Racism and Wrecked the*

*Middle Class* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), *selections*.

Ben Smith and Byron Tau, “Birtherism: Where it All Began,” Politico, April 22, 2011.

James Baldwin, “My Dungeon Shook: Letter to My Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of

the Emancipation,” in *The Fire Next Time* (Dial Press, 1963).

**Week 5: Immigration Policies and the Rise of Islamophobia**

***“A total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States”***

Moustafa Bayoumi, *How Does it Feel to Be a Problem? Being Young and Arab in America.* New York:

Penguin, 2009.

Amanda Holpuch, Ed Pilkington, and Jared Goyette, “Muslims in Trump’s America: Realities of

Islamophobic Presidency Begin to Sink in,” *The Guardian,* November 17, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/17/muslim-americans-donald-trump-hate-crimes-surveillance

# Kat Chow, “American Muslims Respond to Islamophobia By Running For Office,” *NPR,* February

# 23, 2017, <http://www.npr.org/2017/02/23/516787802/in-response-to-rising-violence-muslims-run-for-office>

# “[A Guide to the Memos on Torture,](http://www.nytimes.com/ref/international/24MEMO-GUIDE.html?_r=0)” *New York Times,* June 25, 2004.

Aziz Ansari, “[Why Trump Makes Me Scared for My Family](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/26/opinion/sunday/aziz-ansari-why-trump-makes-me-scared-for-my-family.html?_r=0),” *New York Times*, June 24, 2016.

**Week 6: Illusions of National Security and On Mexicans and Mexican Americans**

***“I will build a great wall …” and “… And I will make Mexico pay for that wall.”***

Kelly Lytle Hernández, Migra!: A History of the US Border Patrol. Berkley: University of California

Press, 2010., *selections*

Daniel Denvir, “Obama Created a Deportation Machine. Soon It Will Be Trump’s,” *The Guardian,*

November 21, 2016.

Greg Grandin, “[Why Trump Now? It’s the Empire, Stupid](https://www.thenation.com/article/why-trump-now-its-the-empire-stupid/),” *The Nation*, June 9, 2016.

Wisconsin Students Rally to Support Sanctuary Schools, *The Circus,*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mMBLkNZ62Uw>

*Optional:*

[*Chicano! History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement*](http://www.galaninc.com/site/filmography/1996/04/chicano/), directed by Hector Galan (NLCC

Educational Media, 1996).

**Week 7: Misogyny, Sexism, and Shaming the Female Body**

***“Blood coming out of her … wherever”***

Dorothy Roberts, *Killing the Black Body* (New York: Vintage, 1998)

Elizabeth Flock, “A women's movement grows in 'the most Trumpian place in America'” <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/features/trump-west-virginia/>

Generation M: Misogyny in Media and Culture, directed by Thomas Keith (Cinema Politica, 2008).

**Week 8: Violence, Authoritarianism, and Masculinity**

***“I’d like to punch him in the face.”***

Michael Kimmel, *Angry White Men: American Masculinity in the End of an Era* (New York: Nation, 2015)

Frontline, Betting on Trump: Coal, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/betting-on-trump-coal/>

Frontline, Betting on Trump: Jobs,vin <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/betting-on-trump-jobs/>

**Week 9: Racial Double Standards under Mass Incarceration**

***“I could stand in the middle of 5th Avenue and shoot somebody***

***and I wouldn’t lose any voters.”***

Elizabeth Kai Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in*

*America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016).

Matt Ford, “Donald Trump’s Racially Charged Advocacy of the Death Penalty,” *The Atlantic Monthly,*

December 18, 2015. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/12/donald-trump->death-penalty/420069/

**Week 10: Racism, Real Estate, and the Strange Career of Trump’s Wealth**

***“I’ve never lost in my life.”***

Matthew Desmond, *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* (New York: Crown, 2016)

Bowery Boys. A Short History of Trump: The Roots of Donald’s Wealth, from Quiet Queens Beginnings to Glitzy Midtown Excess, podcast audio, The Bowery Boys: New York City History, 22:3, April 29, 2011, <http://www.boweryboyshistory.com/2011/04/short-history->

of-trump-roots-of-donalds.html

Michael Fletcher, “A Shattered Foundation,” Washington Post, January 24, 2015, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/investigative/2015/01/24/the-american-dream-shatters-in-prince-georges-county/?utm_term=.c57e4681f10d>

Matthew Desmond, “How Homeownership Became the Engine of American Inequality,” *The New*

*York Times,* May 9, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/09/magazine/how->homeownership-became-the-engine-of-american-inequality.html

**Week 11: Disability and Disability Culture in America**

***“What he looks like is his level of intelligence.”***

# Joseph P. Shapiro, *No Pity:* People with Disabilities Forging a New Civil Rights Movement (New York: Crown, 1993).

# Lennard Davis, “Introduction: Disability, Normality, and Power,” in *The Disabilities Readers,* edited by

# Lennard Davis, Fourth Edition (New York: Routledge, 2013), 1 – 16.

It’s Our Story: Of, By and For ... People with Abilities, YouTube channel, posted by It’s Our Story,

2010, *Selections.*

Rachel Maddow, June 21st-segment on disabilities

**Week 12: Sexuality and LGBTQ Rights**

***“I’ll overturn the shocking gay marriage decision.”***

# Jackie Blount, *Fit to Teach: Same-sex Desire, Gender, And School Work in the Twentieth Century* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).

# Nico Lang, “Donald Trump’s Presidency is a Grave Threat to LGBT Students,” *Salon,* January 19,

# 2017, <http://www.salon.com/2017/01/19/donald-trumps-presidency-is-a-grave-threat-to->

# lgbt-students-and-betsy-devos-is-just-the-tip-of-the-iceberg/

**Week 13: God, Family, Country**

***“At this moment, I would like to thank the evangelical and religious community because I’ll tell you what. Because the support they’ve given me, and I’m not sure I totally deserve it, has been so amazing. And has had such a big reason for me being here tonight. True. So true.”***

Kristina Rizga, “Betsey DeVos Wants to Use America’s Schools to Build “God’s Kingdom,” *Mother*

*Jones,* March/April 2017, <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2017/01/betsy-devos-christian-schools-vouchers-charter-education-secretary/>

Valerie Strauss, “The big problem with what Trump just said about religion in schools,” *Washington*

*Post,* June 12, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2017/06/12/the-big-problem-with-what-trump-just-said-about-religion-in-schools/?utm_term=.389e3ea2d491>

Laurie Goodstein, “Religious Liberals Sat Out of Politics for 40 Years. Now They Want in the

Game,” June 10, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/10/us/politics/politics-religion-liberal-william-barber.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcore-iphone-share>

**Week 14: History in Trump’s America: What Can Educators Do**

***“Make America great again.”* —Donald Trump**

Kat Lonsdorf, Teaching in the Age of Trump, http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/11/11/501604685/teaching-after-trump

Teaching the 2016 Election, <https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/splc_the_trump_effect.pdf>

Naomi Klein, “Daring to Dream in the Age of Trump,” *The Nation,* June 13, 2017, https://www.thenation.com/article/daring-to-dream-in-the-age-of-trump/

Naomi Klein, Full Interview, Democracy Now, <https://www.democracynow.org/2017/6/13/full_interview_naomi_klein_on_no>

**Week 15: Class Presentations**