

**Topics in Political Theory (Privilege and Race in Global Perspective)**  
**POL381H**  
**Fall 2020**

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Virtual office hours: Wednesdays 12-2pm, or by appointment

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**Class Meetings:** Blackboard Collaborate, Mondays, 2-4pm

**Course Description:**

Critical Race Theory (CRT) has emerged as a profoundly impactful field of study, whose influence has travelled far beyond its original grounding in legal studies in North America. It has spawned a host of “response” subfields that adopt CRT methods and orientations, but seek to identify the particularities of subject positions beyond the distinctly racial focus of the field. It has also developed alongside studies of Whiteness and privilege, particularly intersectional and contextual understandings of privilege. However, much of the academic and policy focus of CRT and its offshoots still makes reference to racial identity structures common to the US context. This course will consider how notions of race and privilege “travel” and how they have developed and functioned in contexts outside of a North American White/non-White categorization.

We will review arguments that seek to situate “Whiteness” globally, as well as other localized iterations of ascriptive privilege, trying to identify particular dynamics and mechanisms of privilege, including its nested nature when moving from the local to the global. Similarly, we will look at how colonial histories and ongoing settler-colonial occupations have shaped identities and the relationships between them in specific places. In doing this work, we will also study the ways in which theoretical formulations of race do and do not map on to categories such as indigeneity, caste and ethnicity. This will help us to identify ways in which CRT’s insights can be useful in understanding identity privilege elsewhere, as well as the ways in which studies of privilege in other places can help inform broader academic and policy discussions on addressing privilege and its accompanying effects.

*[Please note: while course assignments and delivery/participation methods may seem extensive, the number and type of assignments is designed to lower the stakes for any given assignment and to give you an opportunity to practice and develop a range of important skills. The many modes of delivery and participation are intended to allow you to engage with course materials on your own time as much as possible, and to provide multiple pathways for doing so, knowing that some students will face challenges in an online-only platform and that some students are not necessarily comfortable participating in large group settings. Please feel free to talk to me if you have questions or concerns about the course design.]*

**Course Readings:**

All required and additional course readings are available online, either as copyright-compliant postings on the course Quercus site or as links to the University of Toronto Libraries electronic collection. You are responsible for completing all readings by the dates indicated on the syllabus. The additional readings are optional but strongly encouraged. I also strongly encourage you to look at several of the class discussant responses each week as they are posted by your fellow students.

### **Course Requirements:**

**Class Participation (10%):** Recognizing the challenge of robust participation in a fully online setting, the base score for this portion of your grade will be calculated through the completion of regular “in-class” writing responses, usually assigned in a pre-recorded lecture, with responses submitted on Quercus. You can boost this score through participation during synchronous full-class discussions (by audio, video or chat); during synchronous small group discussions; by participating in weekly open discussion threads on Quercus; or by talking with me about course ideas over email or during virtual office hours. I know that not everyone is comfortable speaking regularly in class, so I hope this range of possible methods provides an option that works for you. I still expect you to attend class regularly and maintain contact with me in order to ensure that you are meeting my expectations regarding course participation.

**Class Discussant (15%):** Each student must sign up to be a discussant at **three** class sessions during the course of the term. (Sign-up will be online and must be completed by the second class.) For each discussant session you are expected to read all assigned readings closely (I recommend that you also read the additional readings) and write a 500-800 word critical response. This is **NOT** a summary of the readings, but should include personal reflection on what the readings make you think about and could include questions about the readings that you wish to pose to the class, as well as your provisional responses to those questions. Each of these response papers must be posted to the course page in the appropriate “Discussions” thread **no later than 12am (midnight) the day before class**. These papers do not have to be fully developed essays, nor do they need to address all of the readings, but they should demonstrate to me that you’ve prepared for the discussion and considered some of the implications of the reading(s). You do not have to prepare a formal presentation for class. Note that discussants are discussion *leaders*; I still expect all of you to have read the assigned readings and a selection of other students’ discussant responses and to be prepared to participate in our discussions. Discussant responses and the questions and ideas they generate will form part of the framework for our synchronous all-class discussions online during the assigned class period. Discussant responses will be graded on a scale of “check-plus” (87), “check” (75) and “check-minus” (65). Summaries of the readings, without personal reflection or interpretive engagement, will be scored no higher than “check.”

**Small Group Reflections (10%):** During Weeks 4-12, students will be randomly assigned to small groups of 4-6 members, which will rotate every 2-3 weeks. Each class session will include some time in these small groups to discuss the readings and respond to specific prompts that I will provide. Each student will write **two** (out of three) short reflections on the dynamics and process of the small group discussions, in response to a separate prompt provided by the professor. These will be informal, personal reflections designed to get you to think about how knowledge is generated and how different discussion formats can facilitate learning and understanding. Students will write reflections for the two sub-topic periods that they have **not** chosen for their second essay. Each of these reflections must be posted to the course page **no later than 12am (midnight) on the last class day for the period (Week 7, Week 10, Week 12)**. I encourage you to think about submitting these earlier than the deadline, as you are allowed to reflect on small group work from any or all of the weeks in a particular topic. Reflections will also be graded on a scale of “check-plus” (87), “check” (75) and “check-minus” (65).

**Essay Questions (20% first essay, 25% second essay):** Each student will submit essays of 1,500-2,000 words responding to given prompts **two** times throughout the term. All students will respond to the first essay option (**due on Quercus no later than 12am (midnight) on Week 4**) and can then choose another essay option (**due on Quercus no later than 12am (midnight) on Weeks 7, 10 or 12**). (Sign-up will be online and must be completed by the second class.) For these papers, I expect a level of organization and clarity of argument that is *different* than the more informal or speculative reflection that characterizes the Class Discussant responses. You will be required to cite something from the relevant readings (and you are welcome to use additional sources); you may use any standard citation style but you must be consistent. I will provide more guidance on essay writing in a mini-workshop during Week 3’s class.

**Final Exam (20%):** The final will be an open book, take-home exam that is a mixture of 1) short answer explanation questions that ask you to apply course concepts to topics we have not explicitly studied or ask you to reflect on the implications of some of our readings and 2) longer comparative and exploratory essays that invite you to put the authors we have read in conversation in creative ways. It will draw on all the required readings from the course but you will have a choice of which questions to answer and I will provide a review guide several weeks in advance. The final will take place during the December exam period and, although it is intended to be completed in 2 hours, you will have no less than 24 hours to complete it, to take into consideration time differences or other impediments.

### **Delivery/Participation Methods:**

- **Readings** (available through Quercus; to be done in advance of the scheduled class meeting)
- **Reading Questions** (*optional*; posted weekly on Quercus; designed to help guide your study and provide confidence that you are recognizing and understanding some of the main arguments from each reading)
- **Background Lecture** (short, pre-recorded lecture; posted weekly on Quercus; providing context and background on each author or set of ideas in the readings; ideally watch/listen to this lecture *before* you do the readings)
- **Class Lecture** (longer, pre-recorded lecture(s); posted weekly on Quercus; providing an overview of the readings and their arguments; ideally watch/listen to this lecture *after* you do the readings but *before* the scheduled class meeting)
- **Reflection Lecture** (from time to time, I might post a short video or audio recording to re-iterate an important point from previous discussions, to reflect on some connections between readings that we didn't have a chance to explore, or to offer additional thoughts about a reading or topic)
- **Class Discussant Posts** (assigned short response papers—described above—that are posted publicly on Quercus to share students' reactions to and analysis of the readings; I will read all of these in advance of the scheduled class meeting and use them to plan our group discussion)
- **Open Discussion Thread** (*optional*; for posting brief questions, ideas, responses or concerns about the readings that you'd like to share with classmates and incorporate into our group discussion)
- **Small Group Discussions** (after meeting together on Bb Collaborate during the scheduled class time, we will go to small breakout rooms; I will provide 2-3 discussion questions each week to guide 20-30 minutes of small group discussion)
- **All-Class Discussions** (after the small group time, we will reconvene on Bb Collaborate to share insights from the small groups and discuss further implications of the readings)
- **Open Discussions** (feel free to stick around for any time remaining after the Small Group and All-Class Discussions, and I will answer questions)
- **Office Hours** (held virtually for 2 hours a week, on Bb Collaborate; also available by appointment via Skype or another platform)
- **Announcements** (reminders of assignments due, updates on course plans or changes)

### **Course Policies:**

#### **Late Work/Make-up Exams**

If you are unable to complete an assignment by its scheduled date for a valid reason, you must inform me before the due date and we will make alternate arrangements. All late work that is not excused in advance will be penalized at a rate of **2% per day of lateness**. Assignments submitted more than 1 full week late will not be accepted, unless excused in advance through accommodation, illness or other documented reason. Please contact me in advance if you expect you will be late submitting an assignment.

### Accessibility Policy

I do my best to welcome students with diverse learning styles and needs in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Accessibility Services Office as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. I know that this formal process can be slow, so I want to encourage you to come to me in advance to talk about any accommodations you might need or challenges you might be facing. I am also open to hearing about ways in which the course environment or structure might unintentionally exclude or disadvantage certain people and will work to respond to any such concerns.

I'm always willing to work with **any** student to help facilitate your participation and success in this course, whether you have a formal accommodation granted or not. I recognize that a range of other circumstances might affect your ability to engage fully with course expectations. Please feel free to come to me to discuss any difficulties you are experiencing and we can work together to address them.

### Attendance Policy

I expect you to be engaged with course matters as much as you are able, including doing the weekly readings, listening to pre-recorded lectures, and participating in discussions during the scheduled class time. I also recognize that your ability to access materials or participate in discussions might fluctuate, due to technological limitations, environmental stresses or other factors. If you're having trouble keeping up, please get in touch with me and we can work together to find a suitable way forward.

### Grading Policy

I will be happy to discuss any grades that I give on assignments. I will do my best to communicate the criteria I'll be grading on in advance but please ask questions if you are confused. If you feel that I have made an error, you can take it up with me through the following procedure (Please note that I will only discuss issues with grading during the 7 days after the assignment has been handed back):

1. Wait a minimum of 24 hours after receiving your grade to contact me.
2. Put in writing the reasons why you are dissatisfied with the grade.
3. Bring the assignment/exam and your written statement to my office hours to discuss.

For assignments graded by the Grader, the same policy applies, and your first submission to discuss a grade should be to the Grader. If you are still dissatisfied with the resolution, you may contact me, providing the previous communication with the Grader and a further explanation of why you think the assigned grade was not appropriate.

### **Academic Integrity:**

Cheating and plagiarism are offenses against academic integrity and are subject to disciplinary action by the university. Plagiarism is copying someone else's work and presenting it as your own (by not attributing it to its true source). If you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me. I take this matter very seriously and will **NOT** tolerate plagiarism. Let me stress again: if you are unsure about how to properly cite an idea, please ask me. Otherwise, I expect university students to know proper citation methods, styles and norms. Your Essays will all be submitted using turnitin.com; if you would like to request an alternate method of submission, please let me know and we can arrange this.

## Course Readings:

### Week 1 (Sept 14): Starting Points I: Privilege

#### Required Readings

- Du Bois, W.E.B., 1935. *Black reconstruction: An essay toward a history of the part which black folk played in the attempt to reconstruct democracy in America, 1860-1880*. Harcourt, Brace. [\*\*pp.700-701]
- Memmi, Albert. 1965 [1957]. *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press. [\*\*pp.10-18]
- McIntosh, P. 2003. "White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack." In S. Plous (Ed.), *Understanding prejudice and discrimination*. New York, NY, US: McGraw-Hill.

#### Additional Readings

- Wildman, Stephanie M. and Adrienne D. Davis. 2013. "Language and Silence: Making Systems of Privilege Visible." in *Critical race theory: the cutting edge*. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic (ed.), Philadelphia, Pa: Temple University Press, 3rd edition.

### Week 2 (Sept 21): Starting Points II: Race and Critical Race Theory

#### Required Readings

- Lopez, Ian F. Haney. 2013. "The Social Construction of Race." in *Critical race theory: the cutting edge*. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic (ed.), Philadelphia, Pa: Temple University Press, 3rd edition.
- Bell, D.A. 1995. "Who's afraid of critical race theory?" *University of Illinois Law Review*, Volume 1995, Issue 4, pp. 893 – 910.

#### Additional Readings

- Perea, Juan F. 2013. "The Black/White Binary Paradigm of Race." in *Critical race theory: the cutting edge*. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic (ed.), Philadelphia, Pa: Temple University Press, 3rd edition.
- Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. 2005. "The theoretical status of the concept of race." In *Race, identity, and representation in education*. Cameron McCarthy et al. (ed.), New York; London: Routledge. 2nd ed.

### Week 3 (Sept 28): Starting Points III: Intersectionality and the Racial Contract/Mini-Writing Workshop

#### Required Readings

- "Combahee River Collective Manifesto." 2018. In *Feminist Manifestos: A Global Documentary Reader*. PA Weiss (ed.) New York University Press, New York.
- Harris, Angela P. 2013. "Race and Essentialism in Feminist Legal Theory." in *Critical race theory: the cutting edge*. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic (ed.), Philadelphia, Pa: Temple University Press, 3rd edition.
- Mills, Charles W. 1997. *The Racial Contract*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. [\*\*Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 3 (pp.120-133)]

#### Additional Readings

- Massaquoi, Notisha. 2007. "An Unsettled Feminist Discourse." in *Theorizing empowerment: Canadian perspectives on Black feminist thought*. Njoki Nathani Wane and Notisha Massaquoi (ed.), Toronto, Canada: Inanna Publications and Education.
- Crenshaw, Kimberlé. 1991. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review*, Volume 43, Issue 6, pp. 1241 – 1299.

#### **Week 4 (Oct 5): Colonial Constructions of Race**

##### Required Readings

- Fanon, Franz. 1967 [1952]. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York, NY: Grove Press. [\*\*Chapter 4: The So-Called Dependency Complex of Colonized Peoples]
- Mahmud, T., 1998. "Colonialism and Modern Constructions of Race: A Preliminary Inquiry." *U. Miami l. Rev.*, 53, p.1219-46.

##### Additional Readings

- Kapila, Shruti. 2007. "Race Matters: Orientalism and Religion, India and Beyond c.1770–1880." *Modern Asian Studies* 41, 3: 471–513.
- Stoler, A.L., 1989. "Making empire respectable: the politics of race and sexual morality in 20th-century colonial cultures." *American Ethnologist*, 16(4), pp.634-660.

**(\*\*First Essay Question due date)**

**\*\*Please Note: No class in Week 5 (Oct 12) due to holiday\*\***

#### **Week 6 (Oct 19): Racialized Onto-Epistemologies**

##### Required Readings

- Moreton-Robinson, A., 2004. "Whiteness, epistemology and Indigenous representation." In Aileen Moreton-Robinson (ed.), *Whitening Race: Essays in Social and Cultural Criticism*. Canberra, ACT: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Watts, Vanessa. 2013. "Indigenous Place-Thought and Agency amongst Humans and Non-Humans (First Woman and Sky Woman Go on a European Tour!)." *DIES: Decolonization, Indigeneity, Education and Society* 2(1): 20–34.

##### Additional Readings

- Bernal, D.D., 2002. "Critical race theory, Latino critical theory, and critical raced-gendered epistemologies: Recognizing students of color as holders and creators of knowledge." *Qualitative inquiry*, 8(1), pp.105-126.
- Mignolo, W.D., 2009. "Epistemic disobedience, independent thought and decolonial freedom." *Theory, Culture & Society*, 26(7-8), pp.159-181.

#### **Week 7 (Oct 26): Positionality and Perspective**

##### Required Readings

- Chatterjee, Piya. 2006. "Taking Blood: Gender, Race and Imagining Public Anthropology in India," *India Review* 5 (July/October): 551-71.
- DiAngelo, Robin. 2011. "White Fragility". *The International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*. 3(3): 54-70.

##### Additional Readings

- Borell, Belinda A. E., Amanda S. Gregory, Tim N. McCreanor, Victoria G. L. Jensen and Helen E. Moewaka Barnes. 2009. "'It's Hard at the Top but It's a Whole Lot Easier than Being at the Bottom': The Role of Privilege in Understanding Disparities in Aotearoa/New Zealand." *Race/Ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts*, Vol. 3, No. 1, Race and the Global Politics of Health Inequity, pp. 29-50.
- Lee, Wen Shu. 1999. "One Whiteness Veils Three Uglinesses: From Border-Crossing to a Womanist Interrogation of Gendered Colonialism." In *Whiteness: The Communication of Social Identity*. Thomas K Nakayama and Judith N Martin (ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

**(\*\*Second Essay Question/Small Group Response due date)**

## **Week 8 (Nov 2): Race in Latin America: Discourses of *Mestizaje***

### Required Readings

- Hooker, Juliet. 2017. *Theorizing race in the Americas: Douglass, Sarmiento, Du Bois, and Vasconcelos*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [\*\*Chapter 4: A Doctrine that Nourished the Hopes of the Nonwhite Races: Vasconcelos, *Mestizaje*'s Travels, and US Latino Politics]
- Moreno Figueroa, Mónica G. and Emiko Saldívar Tanaka. 2016. "'We are Not Racists, we are Mexicans': Privilege, Nationalism and Post-Race Ideology in Mexico." *Critical Sociology* 42 (4-5): 515-533.

### Additional Readings

- Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1999. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books. [Chapter 7: *La conciencia de la mestiza/Towards a New Consciousness*]
- Costa Vargas, J.H., 2004. "Hyperconsciousness of race and its negation: The dialectic of white supremacy in Brazil." *Identities: global studies in culture and power*, 11(4), pp.443-470.

**\*\*Please Note: No class on Nov 9 for Reading Week\*\***

## **Week 9 (Nov 16): Indigeneity and Settler Colonialism**

### Required Readings

- Reyes, Nicole Alia Salis. 2018. "A space for survivance: locating Kānaka Maoli through the resonance and dissonance of critical race theory." *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 21:6, 739-756.
- Sen, Udit. 2017. "Developing Terra Nullius: Colonialism, Nationalism, and Indigeneity in the Andaman Islands." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 59(4):944-973.

### Additional Readings

- Wolfe, P., 2006. "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." *Journal of genocide research*, 8(4), pp.387-409.
- Kauanui, J. Kēhaulani. 2016. "'A structure, not an event': Settler Colonialism and Enduring Indigeneity," *Lateral* 5.1.

## **Week 10 (Nov 23): "Indigeneity" as Privilege?**

### Required Readings

- Nah, A.H. 2006. "(Re)Mapping Indigenous 'Race'/Place in Post-colonial Peninsular Malaysia." *Geogr. Ann.*, 88 B (3): 285-297.
- Cheesman, Nick. 2017. "How in Myanmar "National Races" Came to Surpass Citizenship and Exclude Rohingya." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 47 (3): 461-483.

### Additional Readings

- Murray Li, Tania. 2000. "Articulating Indigenous Identity in Indonesia: Resource Politics and the Tribal Slot." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Volume 42, Issue 1, pp. 149 – 179.
- Gomes, Alberto. 2013. "Anthropology and the Politics of Indigeneity." *Anthropological Forum*, Volume 23, Issue 1, pp. 5 – 15.

**(\*\*Third Essay Question/Small Group Response due date)**

## **Week 11 (Nov 30): Ethnicity and Privilege**

### Required Readings

- Walton, Matthew J. 2013. "The "Wages of Burman-Ness": Ethnicity and Burman Privilege in Contemporary Myanmar." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 43 (1): 1-27.
- Simpson, A., 2014. "Identity, ethnicity and natural resources in Myanmar." In *The Australian Political Studies Association Annual Conference*.

### Additional Readings

- Thawngmung, A.M., 2016. "The politics of indigeneity in Myanmar: competing narratives in Rakhine state." *Asian Ethnicity*, 17(4), pp.527-547.
- Rocha, Zarine L. 2018. "Re-viewing Race and Mixedness: Mixed Race in Asia and the Pacific." *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 39:4, 510-526.

### **Week 12 (Dec 7): Caste and Privilege**

#### Required Readings

- Slate, N., 2011. "Translating Race and Caste." *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 24(1), pp.62-79.
- Jayawardene, S., 2016. "Racialized Casteism: Exposing the Relationship Between Race, Caste, and Colorism Through the Experiences of Africana People in India and Sri Lanka." *Journal of African American Studies*, 20(3-4), pp.323-345.

#### Additional Readings

- Rege, Sharmila. 2003. "A Dalit Feminist Standpoint." In Anupama Rao (ed.), *Caste and Gender*. London: Zed Books.
- Banerjee-Dube, Ishita. 2014. "Caste, race and difference: The limits of knowledge and resistance." *Current Sociology*, Volume 62, Issue 4, pp. 512 - 530

**(\*\*Fourth Essay Question/Small Group Response due date)**

### **Make-up Class (Dec 10): Identity Privilege in the Academy/Exam Review**

#### Required Readings

- Todd, Z. 2016. "An Indigenous Feminist's Take On The Ontological Turn: 'Ontology' Is Just Another Word For Colonialism." *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 29: 4-22.

#### Additional Readings

- Bouteldja, Houria. 2010. "White Women and the Privilege of Solidarity." *Decolonial Translation Group*, October 22.
- Ellwanger, A., 2016. "No exit: White speech and silence in classroom conversations on race." *Pedagogy*, 17(1), pp.35-58.