

WGS 340 (47788) PERFORMING JUSTICE

AAS 335 (36367), AFR 372E (30378), T D 357T (26657)

Fall 2013 | MEZ B0.302

Tuesday and Thursday, 11-12:30pm

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Office hours: Thursday 1:00-3:00pm, PAR 126

Course Description

In this course students imagine and enact a more just society through the performing arts. We will use performance art to visualize and challenge systems and acts of oppression—including those based on race, gender, sexuality, ability, age, and class—in order to create meaningful social change. The creation of solo and group performances in tandem with the making of a collective archive will offer a powerful means of individual and community activism. A selection of weekly readings will place the work in a broader context and serve to provide historical grounding for student research and reflection.

Students will (1)Develop the skills to engage with multiple audiences about justice in relationship to race, gender, sexuality, dis/ability, class, (2)Create performances as advocacy for and articulation of justice, (3)Reflect on and explain their own relationships to race, gender, sexuality, dis/ability, age, class, (4)Contribute to a collective archive with models, practices, research and performance documentation focused on justice and other core questions which arise during the course.

Methods of Evaluation

50% Performances

15% Archive

10% Reflection Journal

25% Attendance and Participation (measured by Reflection Journal to be used for exercise reflections and reading responses)

+/- grades will be assigned according to the system in effect since the fall of 2009

Assignments

Performances

1 What is justice?: Working with one other person, create a performance that explores an aspect of justice. You might begin with your personal stories as you conceptualize this piece. Think about how your experiences and histories intersect, clash, relate to each other as you develop the work. Also, how does the 'reading' or presence of your (different) bodies affect the meaning of the performance? This piece must happen in a public space.

2 This Historical Moment

"An artist's duty, as far as I'm concerned, is to reflect the times." --Nina Simone

Choose a current event or set of circumstances. Create a performance that speaks to this 'historical moment' in relationship to justice. Be mindful of your audience as you conceptualize this piece. Decide how the particular site or location of your performance informs the meaning of the work. This may be a solo or collaborative performance.

Archive

Create an archive of your performance work in the form of your choice: journal, zine, handmade book, blog, website, etc. This archive is intended to: (1)offer a place to engage with core course questions (2)provide a chronicle of your personal artistic process, methods and philosophies and (3)document

specific performance work/s created in this class. You may include information about the development and production of the work as well as research related to your performances. This assignment is not only intended to serve as an important archive of your performance art; it offers the opportunity to place your work into larger activist, artistic, cultural, political and historical conversations.

Reflection Journal

Attendance and participation in class discussions and performance exercises is critical. You are required to keep a journal in which you write reflections, responses, questions related to in-class performance exercises, readings, films, etc.

Required Readings (additional readings may be assigned)

M. Jacqui Alexander, *Whose New World Order?: Teaching for Justice*, Pedagogies of Crossing

Jafari S. Allen and Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley, *A Conversation "Overflowing with Memory": On Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley's "Water, Shoulders, Into the Black Pacific"*

Kate Bornstein, *My Gender Workbook*

Tisa Bryant, *Autodidact*

Cathy Cohen, *Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics*

Rotimi Fani-Kayode, *Traces of Ecstasy*

Kristen Hogan, *Tribal Libraries as the Future of Librarianship: Independent Collection Development as a Tool for Social Justice*

Michael Kimmel, *Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity*

Peter Lichtenfels and John Rouse, eds., *Performance, Politics and Activism*

Keguro Macharia, *On Quitting*, <http://thenewinquiry.com/essays/on-quitting/>

Peggy McIntosh, *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*

Jennifer Parker-Starbuck, *Shifting Strengths: The Cyborg Theater of Cathy Weis*

Lysa Rivera, *Los Atravesados: Guillermo Gómez-Peña's Ethno-cyborgs*

Carrie Sandahl and Philip Auslander, *Bodies in Commotion: Disability and Performance*

Carrie Sandahl, *Queering the Crip or Crippling the Queer?: Intersections of Queer and Crip Identities in Solo Autobiographical Performance*

Andrea Smith, *Queer Theory and Native Studies: The Heteronormativity of Settler Colonialism*

Women's Rights and Economic Change (Association for Women's Rights in Development), *Intersectionality: A Tool for Gender and Economic Justice*

Schedule and Due Dates

week 1 | Course Overview

Thursday, August 29

core questions

week 2 | Origin Stories

Tuesday, September 3

performance exercises

Thursday, September 5

Jafari S. Allen and Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley, *A Conversation "Overflowing with Memory": On Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley's "Water, Shoulders, Into the Black Pacific"*

weeks 3 | What is justice?

Tuesday, September 10

Intersectionality: A Tool for Gender and Economic Justice, Women's Rights and Economic Change by Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)

Thursday, September 12

performance exercises: visualizing justice

Bring 8 visual images that speak about justice. These may be literal, abstract or metaphoric. They may take the form of photographs, color or black and white copies, posters, etc. Be sure to bring hard copies.

week 4 | The Archive

Tuesday, September 17

creating an archive: tools, techniques, catalogues, indices

Tisa Bryant, *Autodidact*

Kristen Hogan, *Tribal Libraries as the Future of Librarianship: Independent Collection Development as a Tool for Social Justice*

Keguro Macharia, *On Quitting*

Thursday, September 19

****Class meets at PCL 1.124. Please be on time.**

Directions: Find the PCL at the southwest corner of 21st Street and Speedway (<http://www.utexas.edu/maps/main/buildings/pcl.html>). Once you enter, you'll see the Research Help and Check Out desk on your left (stop here if you have any questions or want directions). Take your first left after the Desk and go down the stairs or elevators to the first floor. Walk down the hallway away from the stairs; at the end of the hallway, take a right and PCL 1.124 is the first door on your left. You'll find a map of the first floor here:

http://www.lib.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/imagecache/librarymap-1000/about/librarymap/pcl-01-1000_0.jpg.

week 5 | What is justice?

Tuesday, September 24

M. Jacqui Alexander, *Whose New World Order?: Teaching for Justice*, Pedagogies of Crossing

Thursday, September 26

performance exercises

week 6 | Who am I (in relationship to race, gender, sexuality, dis/ability, class)?

Tuesday, October 1

DUE Performance Proposal (10 minute conferences)

Thursday, October 3

Kate Bornstein, *My Gender Workbook*

Michael Kimmel, *Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity*

Andrea Smith, *Queer Theory and Native Studies: The Heteronormativity of Settler Colonialism*

week 7 | Who am I (in relationship to race, gender, sexuality, dis/ability, class)?

Tuesday, October 8

Peggy McIntosh, *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*

Carrie Sandahl, *Queering the Crip or Crippling the Queer?: Intersections of Queer and Crip Identities in Solo Autobiographical Performance*

Thursday, October 10

performance exercises

week 8 | DUE First Performance Assignment

Tuesday, October 15

Performances

Thursday, October 17

Performances

week 9 | How do I enact and perform justice?

Tuesday, October 22

Lysa Rivera, *Los Atravesados: Guillermo Gómez-Peña's Ethno-cyborgs*

Jennifer Parker-Starbuck, *Shifting Strengths: The Cyborg Theater of Cathy Weis in Bodies in Commotion: Disability and Performance*

Thursday, October 24

performance exercises

week 10 | How do I enact and perform justice?

Tuesday, October 29

DUE Performance Proposal (10 minute conferences)

Thursday, October 31

Stephen Morton, *The Palestinian State of Emergency and the Art Practice of Emily Jacir* in *Zooming In and Out: Tactical Media Performance in Transnational Contexts*

week 11 | How do I live/(re)frame my life based on justice?

Tuesday, November 5

Marcela A. Fuentes, *Zooming In and Out: Tactical Media Performance in Transnational Contexts*, in *Performance, Politics and Activism*

Thursday, November 7

performance exercises

week 12 | How do I live/(re)frame my life based on justice?

Tuesday, November 12

performance exercises

Thursday, November 14

performance exercises

week 13 | DUE Second Performance Assignment

Tuesday, November 19

Performances

Thursday, November 21

Performances

week 14 | DUE Second Performance Assignment

Tuesday, November 26

Performances

Thursday, November 28

Holiday

week 15 | DUE Archive and Reflection Journal

Tuesday, December 3

Share Archive

Thursday, December 5

Final Class Day

University Policies and Resources

Attendance

Class attendance is a requirement and use of the full class period is expected. You will be allowed three sick, personal, physical or mental health days without grading consequences. It is up to your discretion how you use these three days. Being late to class three times or leaving class early three times will count as an absence. 15 minutes late to the start of class will constitute a tardy. Leaving class before being dismissed by your Professor will constitute an early departure. A 4th absence will result in the lowering of your final grade by one letter grade. Absences, tardiness and/or early departures beyond this could result in course failure. If a serious medical or personal situation occurs affecting attendance, please discuss it with your professor. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

Academic Integrity

According to the General Information catalog, “the value of a university degree depends on the absolute integrity of the work done by each student for that degree, a student should maintain a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work”.

University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

Documented Disability Statement

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone).

Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your email for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently—I recommend daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-critical. You can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.

Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office

Course Drop Policy

The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231:

“Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another

Resources for Learning & Life at UT Austin

The University of Texas has numerous resources for students to provide assistance and support for your learning.

The UT Learning Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/>

Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Counseling & Mental Health Center: <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/>

Career Exploration Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/careercenter/>

Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>