

Department of Sociology & Anthropology  
Soci 83711 960-01 Readings Race Ethnic  
Soci 83695 900-01 Readings Soc Theory  
Fall 2004 - Tuesday 3:40 - 5:00 pm & as needed  
Douglass Hall 201/228  
Autumn Saxton-Ross, Grad Assistant

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## The Subversive Syllabus ... continued

November 2004 marks a defining election moment for many folks in the US. Some have observed that all the world's people are profoundly affected – usually adversely – by US presidents, power, today's empire building, war and militarism. So a big picture question is – ***What happens on Nov. 3, 2004 regardless of who becomes president to fundamentally change the lives of exploited and oppressed peoples in the US and world over?***

The election season and the crisis in our lives, our communities and our planet challenge us to take a fresh look at the whole question of power, elections and democracy from the vantage point of 2004 – an electronically globalized capitalist world, growing US empire and police state repression and war, and an emerging popular movement – and through the lenses of class, gender/sexuality, race/ethnicity/nationality, age, ability etc. ***What has changed over the last 500+ years? What have our popular movements won and what challenges/opportunities face us today?***

We will examine these issues and questions within the historical and global context of capitalist development up through today's electronic age and the theory-practice nexus of scholarship, political struggle, today's growing scholar activism and local-global bottom-up movement building to develop the consciousness, vision and strategy for fundamental social transformation. The following works will help us in this process:

- ✍ ***It ain't just about a vote: defining democracy for movement building*** – the Project South toolkit – frames these issues of power, elections and what is real – popular – democracy in 2004, but also throughout US history.
- ✍ ***Cancel the Debt*** – an interview with Njoke Njehu – looks at the role of international financial institutions (Bretton Woods – IMF & WB & more recent ones such as WTO) in imposing neoliberal policies – SAPs, crushing debt, privatization, deregulation, race-to-the bottom, etc. on the world's peoples. The entire collection ***Movement of Movements – is another world really possible?*** (ed. – Mertes) helps connect local-national-global issues & bottom-up struggles to building today's local-global justice movement to challenge these horrors & create another world.
- ✍ ***The Sugar Industry and the Abolition of the Slave Trade 1775-1810*** by Selwyn Carrington asks what forces brought about abolition of the slave trade in the Caribbean in the period 1775-1810. He links the slave trade to the growing and profitable sugar industry and connects changes in the sugar industry to the abolition of the slave trade. We ask how does that history inform this moment and what does it mean for today?
- ✍ ***The Role of Religion in Caribbean History: From Amerindian Shamanism to Rastafarianism*** by Patrick Hylton investigates “the role of religion in the lives of the Caribbean people from the pre-Columbian period to the present, particularly during periods of their greatest tribulations: invasion, plunder, genocide, abduction, enslavement, colonization and racial oppression... [It] provides a perspective of the collective spirit of the people.
- ✍ ***The future is up to us: A revolutionary talking politics to the American people*** by Nelson Peery sums up his understanding and struggles around the realities of “capitalism, communism and fascism; ... poverty in the midst of plenty; and ... what makes our era different from all others.” He says “we are underestimating the [American people's] readiness for a new kind of politics...”

Through readings – texts, background texts (see below), class discussion, community dialogue, and lived experience we locate our own intellectual and political development (theory-praxis) within the context of social and intellectual history and the complex and total realities of the moment – social historical, ideological and systemic structural analysis. Finally, we will try to assess where today's movement is in terms of consciousness, vision and strategy and where we are in terms of our research/scholarship and practice.

Popular education principles of participatory pedagogy (see ***Popular education is ...*** in Project South toolkit & handouts on Freire, Horton & hooks) will be used in the class. Students will have major responsibility for leading class discussion. Small group work and class projects will be emphasized. Relations with community groups most marginalized by living

the reality of the new global electronic economy will be developed. Organizing and facilitating “teaching & organizing for justice” book forums, videos and community-based popular education workshops will be part of the class assignments.

Evaluation will be a collective process including self-evaluation and group evaluation as well as evaluation by the professor.

### Course activities:

1. Read all texts and in teams prepare class presentation on each book and handouts answering the “critical questions” (on attached sheet), summarizing the text & locating it within the historical timeline and economy, power/policy, popular movement/ideology framework presented in class. Develop the book forum questions. 25%
2. Lead all class discussion using a participatory pedagogical method. 20%
3. Participate in the “teaching & organizing for justice” forums as facilitators & organizers for 3 class books and as facilitators &/or participant observers for possible community workshops 25%
4. Answer questions – *italicized/bolded* – throughout the course & hand in final written answer – can be collectively or individually done. 30%

*How do the history of capitalist globalization, white supremacy and patriarchy – colonialism, imperialism & today’s globalization – and struggles for social transformation – power, popular democracy and liberation – inform our contemporary reality? How does it inform my scholarship and practice? What are the research questions I want to pursue in my thesis and/or dissertation?*

### Readings:

- de Garcia, D. Horowitz, et. al. (ed.). 2004. *It ain’t just about a vote: defining democracy for movement building*. Atlanta: Project South (available in class, not bookstore).
- Peery, Nelson. 2002. *The future is up to us: A revolutionary talking politics to the American people*. Chicago: Speakers for a new America books (available in class – not bookstore).

### **Meet the Author Books/Essays (forums on Sept. 23, Oct. 19 & Nov. 18)**

- Njehu, Njoke. 2004. “Cancel the Debt” in *A Movement of Movements* (ed. T. Mertes), NY, NY: Verso Press.  
Forum: Thurs., Sept. 23, 2004, 5:30 pm @ American U (leave HU at 4:15 pm – 6th St. center gate to DH)
- Carrington, Selwyn. 2003. *The Sugar Industry and the Abolition of the Slave Trade*. Gainesville: U Press FL.  
Forum: Oct. 19, 2004, 5:30 pm @ Howard U – Blackburn Center
- Hylton, Patrick. 2002. *The Role of Religion in Caribbean History*. Kearney, NE: Morris Publishing.  
Forum: Thurs., Nov. 18, 2004, 5:30 pm @ Howard University – Blackburn Center

### **Handouts**

Freire, Horton & hooks on “popular education” – book excerpts & other

### Additional Resources:

- Berberoglu, Berch. 2001. *An Introduction to Classical and Contemporary Social Theory*. 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Healy, Joseph. 1998. *Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Class ...* Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press. Or other.
- de Garcia, D. Horowitz, W. Katz-Fishman, et. al. (eds.). 2002. *Today’s Globalization*. Atlanta: Project South

### Course outline:

Weeks 1-2: Theory overview, paradigm chart & interactive social history globalization & popular movement timelines (1400s-present), emphasis 20<sup>th</sup> century & today’s stage of capitalist globalization in the electronic age, critical questions & handouts on popular education.

*Locating social theory paradigms & our lives in social history & social philosophy*

*Economy, power, popular movements – understanding politics, social inequality & social struggle*

- ✍ Introductions – name, major, year & question/issue you are most interested in – questions in small groups

- ✍ What is social theory? What is social history? What are the 3 social theory paradigms? How do they present power, politics & democracy, social inequality, social struggle & revolution, etc?
- ✍ Reframing – developing our collective frame – power relations, gender, social inequality, social history & transformation.
- ✍ How are the “banking” methodology & “popular education” methodology different? Understanding popular education as strategy for movement building and social transformation. Creating an alternative model of scholar activism, theory & practice and struggle.  
**Read & begin: *It ain't just about a vote*** – Horowitz de Garcia et al, & Freire, Horton & hooks on “popular education” We will keep *It ain't just about a vote* going throughout the semester.  
**Discuss who will take assignments for the 3 book forums & get started**

Weeks 3-5: **Read & discuss: *Cancel the Debt*** - Njehi & rest of *Movement of Movements* – Mertes (ed.) & prepare for & do book forum Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>. Revisit *It ain't just about a vote*

Weeks 6-9: **Read & discuss: *The Sugar Industry and the Abolition of the Slave Trade*** – Carrington & prepare for & do book forum Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>. Revisit *It ain't just about a vote*

Weeks 10-13: **Read & discuss: *The Role of Religion in Caribbean History*** – Hylton & prepare for & do book forum Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>. Revisit *It ain't just about a vote*

Weeks 14-15: **Read & discuss: *The future is up to us*** – Peery. Finish discussing all readings, course question & your research questions & evaluation

Assignments (projects and presentations) are due throughout the semester as indicated in the course outline. All written assignments, including final book analyses using “critical questions” & your research questions, are due by Mon., Dec. 13, 2004. Please consult course schedule & handbook for rules on classes, grades, “I”s, plagiarism, etc. Incompletes will not be given except under the most extraordinary circumstances and must be accompanied by a signed student contract prior to the last day of formal class. No student on financial support may receive an “I.”

7-25-04

## Subversive syllabus

### critical questions for analysis

Walda Katz-Fishman

#### **What is the main subject matter analyzed?**

##### **socio-historical context:**

- ✍ time, place & people
- ✍ political economy & technology
- ✍ power, politics & the state
- ✍ culture & ideology
- ✍ social life
- ✍ popular struggles

#### **What is the main theory used for analysis?**

Are other theoretical perspectives discussed & how are they evaluated?

## What does the theory used bring to the analysis?

- ✍ What are the problems or issues – root causes & immediate context – discussed?
- ✍ What solutions are proposed? [see organizing models chart]
- ✍ Is social change – reform or revolutionary (anti-capitalist) – part of the solution?
- ✍ Who/what are the agents of this change?
- ✍ How are they organized?

## Who is the main intended audience for this work?

### Through the lens of the scholar & academic:

- ✍ What is most useful about this work?
- ✍ What could be different?

### Through the lens of the activist & movement builder:

- ✍ What is most useful about this work?
- ✍ What could be different?

### Personal reflection:

- ✍ How does this work help you shape your own intellectual & political worldview?
- ✍ How does it help you shape your theoretical perspective & your practice – your action orientation?

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Project South: Institute for the Elimination of Poverty & Genocide  
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4-2-03

hi all,

just spoke with **Njoke Njehu** – yea! – and she has agreed to do the book forum – teaching and organizing for justice – on her piece “**Cancel the Debt**” in a really good collection ***Movement of Movements – is another world really possible*** (edited by tom mertes, verso press, 2004)

the best date for her was

**Thursday, September 23, 2004 - usual time 5:30-7:30pm**

(so we apologize to the AU OMA folks that this is a conflict – but hopefully we can work enough together in the future to try to avoid such conflicts – sorry)

**we hope you can still get the Butler Board Room for then for the event.**

will have copies of the article by Njoke soon – email if you need a copy.

***Njoke is director of “50 years is enough” – an organization dedicated to raising consciousness about the horrible effects of the IMF/WB, the crushing debt imposed on and extracted from developing world countries and their people, and building today’s global justice movement to challenge this & create another world.***

*this event - in addition to being part of the regular “teaching and organizing*

*for justice” book forum series - is also part of an ongoing effort that project south and many others are part of to make the local-global connect so folks in DC struggling for affordable housing, health care, education & safe water can see how their struggles are linked to today’s globalization and neoliberal policies and build a broader and deeper movement that is locally grounded, nationally networked and globally connected.*

1<sup>st</sup> day – brainstorm local-global  
why pop ed pedagogy? & teaching & organizing for justice  
review readings, dates tojs  
who will do what

2<sup>nd</sup> day – review glob toolkit & timeline  
introduce 1<sup>st</sup> book

what is the local-global connect for you & your work? consider in the context of ..... (old Q)

below is 1<sup>st</sup> book we will be doing – ***Movement of Movements – is another world really possible***  
(edited by tom mertes, verso press, 2004)

2<sup>nd</sup> is Selwyn Carrington's ***The Sugar Industry and the Abolition of Slave Trade ...1775-1810***  
univ press of florida, 2003

3<sup>rd</sup> in Patrick Hylton's ***The role of religion in Caribbean history*** – which I am getting 5 copies of today.

also – the project south 2<sup>nd</sup> ed ***Roots of Terror toolkit*** – ready later this summer

& if you have not read it – Nelson Peery's ***The Future is up to us – a revolutionary talking politics with the American people*** - available from me

finally - I have lots of race-ethnic/class & gender books & will ask each student to pick one ot read & report on – they are too boring at this stage to teach – but have some basic theory/data