Racism, Violence, and the Civil Rights Movement
Sociology 290/Cultural Studies 290

Colorado College
Block 4, Fall 2005
Sociology Seminar Room, 1:00 pm

Instructor: Spencer Wood
Office: 129 Palmer Hall
Office Hours: 3:30-5:00 Mon. and Wed. (Feel free to make an appointment for other times.)
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DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:
Sociology/Cultural Studies 290 “Racism, Violence, and the Civil Rights Movement” explores the relationships between violence and racial justice through a comparative lens. In this course we will frame our inquiry via theories of violence and control and theories of racism. We then will turn to a comparative reading of Native American, African American and Chicano or Mexican American histories.

Our inquiry will focus on the ways history is made by local people. Specifically, we will challenge the overarching and often simplified narrative of non-violence in the civil rights movement. Importantly, as we acknowledge the role of violence in this significant historical chapter, we see how identities have been defined and shaped that justify violence for some and rule it out of bounds for others. Further, by resisting the temptation to reify the narrative of non-violence, we more accurately reflect the history of real people and consequently imagine solutions that resonate more strongly with their lived lives.

COURSE MATERIAL:
The required material for this class consists of six books and a reader. The books (listed below) can be purchased at the Colorado College Bookstore; the reader is available through the Sociology Department webpage, then under my name, and finally under the course title. DO NOT RUSH OUT AND IMMEDIATELY PRINT ALL OF THE READINGS. WE MAY NOT USE THEM ALL AND IT WILL WASTE A TON OF PAPER. CONSULT THE SYLLABUS CLOSELY AND ONLY PRINT OUT THE REQUIRED READINGS AND ANY OTHERS YOU KNOW YOU WILL READ. If you have any difficulties accessing the material, please contact the sociology office IMMEDIATELY. You are responsible for all readings for a given day.


**REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

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**Pop Quiz** (5 points to be assigned at my discretion)

**Daily Journals** (Due daily, distributed via email by 11 am, 30 points total): You are to submit 10 journal entries that review the readings for the day. These should be approximately 1/3 summary, 1/3 analysis, and 1/3 reaction. They should be no longer than 4 double-spaced pages. You will not receive grades on each entry, though you will lose FIVE points for each journal entry that is not submitted. These are meant to be low-pressure opportunities for you to review the day’s material.

**Lead Discussion** (20 points): Each of you will lead two discussion. You should be prepared to stimulate discussion, not simply summarize the readings.

**Class Attendance and Participation** (15 points): Participation includes attendance, reading assigned materials prior to class and being able to articulate and exchange your ideas regularly. In addition to your contributions, unexcused absences or excessively late appearances will be penalized by subtracting 5 points from your grade.

**Comprehensive Final Exam** (Due Tuesday, December 21st, 5 pm, 35 points): True/False, Short Answer, definition, and essay.

**CLASS PREPARATION, ATTENDANCE, AND DEADLINES**

You must arrive for class on time, having done all the required reading for the day, and prepared to discuss class material. This means being able to summarize the main argument of each piece, to relate the main themes of each piece to the overarching theme of the day and/or the section we are exploring, and to relate each piece to other pieces we cover that day.

NOTE: Material that is not covered or discussed in class is still fair game for written assignments and exams, so it is up to you to raise questions about material you wish to discuss if they have not yet been raised.

You may study together for daily classes but may neither discuss nor work together on *any* assignments. This is your opportunity to shine and I want to see you do it!
You must attend each and every class; you must arrive on time and may not leave early. You will not earn points for attendance, and you will lose five points for each unexcused absence or significantly late appearance. You must also attend the showing of each film on time, even if you have seen it before. Legitimate excuses for missing class or arriving late are limited to the following: severe illness or injury (a doctor’s note must be provided to substantiate this), a proven college-related sports event which you must attend, and/or a proven family emergency.

**DAILY ASSIGNMENTS:** Note that readings from the online reader are denoted by ®.

**Monday, November 28: Class Overview,**

**PART I: RACISM AND VIOLENCE**

**Tuesday, November 29: What is Racism?**

Required Reading:


**Wednesday, November 30: Ways to Think About Violence, Punishment, and U.S. History**

Required Reading:


**Thursday, December 1: Race-Based Violence in the United States – Lynching**

Required Reading:


PART II: ARMED SELF-DEFENSE AND CIVIL RIGHTS – CASE STUDIES

Monday, December 5: *Negroes With Guns* – African Americans Organize to Protect Themselves

Required Reading:


Williams, Robert F. *Negroes with Guns*. Entire Book.

Film Screening, *Negroes With Guns*.

Tuesday, December 6: The Deacons

Required Reading:


Audio File Screening, Malcolm X, “The Ballot or the Bullet.”

**Wednesday, December 7: The Deacons, cont’d.**

Required Reading:

**Thursday, December 8: Reading Day – No Class – Get Caught Up and Plow Ahead!**

Required Reading:
Dittmer, John. *Local People*, chapters 1-7, 10-12.

**Friday, December 9: Black Freedom and Black Power**

Required Reading:

Audio File Screening:
Fannie Lou Hamer Testimony Before the Credentials Committee of the 1964 Democratic National Convention.
Stokely Carmichael. Speech in Berkeley.

**Monday, December 12: Native Americans, AIM, and Red Power**

Required Reading:

**Tuesday, December 13: Native Americans, AIM, and Red Power, cont’d.**

Required Reading:

**Wednesday, December 14: Native Americans, AIM, and Red Power, cont’d.**

Required Reading:
Thursday, December 15: Mexican Americans, La Raza, and Brown Power – Reading Day, No Class

Required Reading:
- Chavez, Ernesto. ¡Mi Raza Primero!, entire book.

Friday, December 16: Mexican Americans, La Raza, and Brown Power, cont’d.


Monday, December 19:

Required Reading:
Schedule Review Session for Final Exam.

Film Screening, Chicano! History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement.

Tuesday, December 20: FINAL EXAM DUE BY 5 pm.

Review for final and distribute final.

Wednesday, December 21: NO CLASS