

Veranstalter	Lima Sayed
Thema	Race and Racism in the US Today [AA-A3, ENG-7/a, AA11, LAA10, LAA13]
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar Ib/II
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-560
Zeit	Fr 10-12
Raum	Phil 1269
Beginn	7. April 2017

Course Description:

Race and racism have been essential features of American life, culture, politics and economics influencing values and identities already before the formation of the United States. Particularly because of the excessive police violence towards African Americans, the emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement and Donald Trump's rhetoric, racist practices have received increased attention in the recent years. Dealing with the discourse on race it becomes evident that its contents are highly complex and problematic, since very opposing world views and prerogatives of interpretation are challenged. Despite a rich discourse on race, our vocabulary and knowledge are still restricted, flawed and most often emotionally laden. To this day vast differences between racial groups remain in all spheres of life, especially when it comes to legal sentences and incarceration rates. What roles do race and racism really play in the United States today? Why do inequalities remain long after the abolishment of slavery and the Civil Rights movement? How are racial conflicts represented in the media? And to what extent is the discourse of race historically rooted and interconnected with identity formation and issues of economic welfare and political agendas?

The aim of this seminar is to collectively work out an overview on the discourse of race. Initially we familiarize ourselves with the general terminology and the conceptual history of the terms race, racism, ethnicity, as well as whiteness, white privilege and white supremacy. We will be tracing important historical developments, turning points and conflicts within the debate, investigating theories from significant cultural critics. Hence, theoretical texts from a variety of research fields, such as psychology, sociology, cultural studies, anthropology, and media education, will be studied. The objective will be to grasp central thesis of the different approaches and discussing their strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, the concepts and theories on race will be employed to investigate different examples of race and racism in our time. Analyzing journalistic texts, photographs and film documentaries, we will deal with issues such as War on Drugs, Police Violence, School to prison pipeline and the Prison industrial complex and other racial phenomena of our time.

Credit requirements

Regular and active attendance, preparation of all reading material (reading cards), short oral presentations and a term paper.

Reading requirements

A reader will be issued at the beginning of the semester