

⌘ Intersectional Activism, Decolonization, Incarceration ⌘

www.intersectionalactivism.com

sunday afternoons (2-4PM) @ Silent Barn

603 bushwick ave, brooklyn, ny 11206

summer 2015

facilitated by christopher joseph lee

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"There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives."

-Audre Lorde

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A class describing the rise of intersectionality theories, deployed to mean both intersectional bodies and intersectional analysis. We'll explore the intersections of race, gender, class and disability, and consider the recognition and limits of a politics grounded in identity markers. We'll be particularly attentive to the language used in activist and social justice circles, including such terms as diversity, inclusion, safe(r) spaces, privilege, and appropriation. Our goal, in focusing on questions of language, is not to use these terms uncritically, but to understand the historical or cultural conditions in which they came into being, and evaluate their potentials for political organizing.

In situating decolonization and prison abolition as our political agendas, we recognize the dismantling of carceral and colonial systems as a project where intersectional analysis is most necessary.

GUIDELINES AND PARTICIPATION:

Each unit of the class is conceptualized as a standalone session, though participants are encouraged to build their own intersectional frameworks by attending other sessions or exploring on their own. I've deliberately assigned too much reading, and the readings are listed in order of priority, so the first reading will almost always be the primary focus of a discussion. All of the readings are available online to follow along remotely, and all classes are free.

WHAT THIS CLASS ISN'T:

- A sensitivity training course
- A substitute for the work of organizing
- A space for any one individual (including myself) to dominate discussion

SAFER SPACE POLICY:

Silent Barn has a safer space policy, meaning that those expecting to attend class sessions should expect to abide by its commitments, which can be read below:

"The Silent Barn is a community art space committed to being a safe, respectful and positive environment. Silent Barn supports experimental artists by providing a space for free expression of all people. We believe that many hierarchical structures allow a minority of people to have a voice at the expense of silencing others, and that the most interesting, spontaneous, and creative ideas can best be realized in spaces where an anti-oppressive policy is nurtured with intention and care.

In maintaining this ethos, we feel it is important to directly confront social hierarchies and oppression as they manifest within our space and at our events. We define oppressive behavior as any kind of uninvited physical contact, sexual or otherwise, as well as comments or other behaviors that are racist, sexist, homophobic, or transphobic, ableist, classist, ageist, or otherwise discriminatory on the basis of

physical appearance, orientation, gender presentation, ability, or cultural, economic, ethnic, national, educational, or religious background. Silent Barn will not tolerate language or behavior that is oppressive.

Individuals who have engaged in oppressive behaviors outside the Silent Barn will still be held accountable within it. Those with a history of being called out for sexual assault or abuse or other oppressive behaviors may not be permitted entry into the space."

Week I: Introductions to Intersectionality [June 21]

Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics"

Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color"

Combahee River Collective Statement

Audre Lorde, "A Woman Speaks"

-----, "Poetry is not a Luxury"

bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, p. 1-15.

Week II: Diversity, Inclusion, Multiculturalism [June 28]

Dean Spade & Craig Willse, "Sex, Gender, and War in an Age of Multicultural Imperialism"

Sara Ahmed, *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*, p. 141-186.

Fred Moten & Stefano Harney, *The Undercommons: Fugitive & Black Study*, p. 17-43.

Week III: Disidentifications, Borderlands, and Indigeneity [July 5]

José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*, 1-34.

Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, p. 1-23, 78-91.

Andrea Smith, "Queer Theory and Native Studies: the Heteronormativity of Settler Colonialism"

Week IV: *~~~NO CLASS~~~*** [July 12]**

Week V: Anticolonialism and Postcolonialism [July 19]

Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

Frantz Fanon, "Concerning Violence," from *Wretched of the Earth*, p. 35-106.

Gayatri Spivak, "Can There Be a Feminist World?"

W.E.B. Dubois, Excerpts from *Souls of Black Folk*, p. 7-32.

Week VI: Cyborg Feminism [July 26]

Donna Haraway, "Cyborg Manifesto"

Lisa Nakamura, *Indigenous Circuits: Navajo Women and the Racialization of Early Electronic Manufacture*

Lisa Nakamura, "Race In/For Cyberspace: Identity Tourism and Racial Passing on the Internet"

Mimi Thi Nguyen, "Queer Cyborgs and New Mutants: Race, Sexuality, and Prosthetic Sociality in Digital Space"

Week VII: Cultural Property and "Appropriation" [August 2]

Andrea Smith, "Spiritual Appropriation as Sexual Violence"

Richard Fung, "Working Through Appropriation"

Minh-Ha T. Pham, "Fashion's Cultural-Appropriation Debate: Pointless"

Week VIII: Labor, Disability, and the Right Not to Work [August 9]

Sunaura Taylor, "The Right Not to Work: Power and Disability"

Rosemary Thomson, "Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory"

Mia Mingus, "Care Under Conditions of Capitalism & White Supremacy: Interview"

Week IX: Privilege Politics and Safer Spaces [August 16]

Andrea Smith, "The Problem with Privilege"

Christina Hanhardt, Excerpts from *Safe Space: Gay Neighborhood History and the Politics of Violence*, p. 1-33.

Sara Ahmed, "Against Students"

Week X: Orientalism, Ornament, Cultural Imperialism [August 23]

Edward Said, Excerpts from *Orientalism*, p. 1-28.

Angela Davis, "Afro Images: Politics, Fashion, and Nostalgia"

Wendy Chun, "Orienting the Future" from *Control and Freedom*, p. 171-244.

Week XI: Queering Abolition and the Prison Industrial Complex [August 30]

Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (entire book)

Eric Stanley & Dean Spade, "Queering Abolition, Now?"

Victoria Law, "Against Carceral Feminism"